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Job Satisfaction Among Registered Dietitians

in Various Settings in the United States

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Abstract

Background. Registered Dietitians (RD) are employed in various practice settings, yet little is known regarding their job satisfaction. Not all states have RD licensure, perhaps influencing levels of job satisfaction.

Objective. The purpose of this graduate student research study was to analyze job satisfaction among RDs and identify influential factors in order to better equip policy- and strategy- makers.

Design. The study consisted of an anonymous online survey completed through the Qualtrics® website and an optional interview completed by email, phone, in-person, or through Zoom. RDs were recruited using flyers, word of mouth, email, and the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

Participants/setting. Eligibility criteria included employment as an RD in the United States and being between the ages of 21 and 90. A total of 533 responses to the survey were received. Of those, 489 responses qualified. Twenty RDs participated in the interview.

Statistical analyses performed. Statistical analyses for the survey included a reverse negative method to find the overall job satisfaction score, descriptive analysis, and the Kruskal-Wallis test. The interviews were analyzed using qualitative data analysis methods.

Results. The overall mean job satisfaction score was 2.97 out of 5. Of the survey respondents, 73.2% (n =358) indicated that they worked in the clinical area of practice, which had the lowest overall job satisfaction ranking of all practice areas. There were significant differences (p = .007) between the overall mean satisfaction ranks of the lowest income category ($10,000 to $30,000) versus the highest (> $90,000). Autonomy, meaning, recognition, and respect were main factors affecting job satisfaction.
Conclusions. This study has led to a deeper understanding of factors influencing job satisfaction and identified opportunities to improve RD job satisfaction. This study may contribute vital information to support state licensure laws for RDs and promote whole person well-being.
INTRODUCTION

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) acquire employment in various settings including administrative, clinical, community, university, and non-traditional positions (online, home-based, etc). All settings are important and require a well-rounded knowledge of nutrition and how it interacts with human health and well-being. In order to be successfully carried out, each area of dietetics calls for a specific skill set and a certain personality type to provide a “good fit” for both the task and the person accomplishing it. Often, RDNs may find themselves working in a situation which does not bring them joy or satisfaction. It is important to uncover the reasons and factors influencing one’s level of job satisfaction in order to best help the individual, the patient, and the community.1

An essential part of any full-time career is being satisfied with one’s chosen field of work. Job satisfaction refers to an emotional state that describes how pleased and content one is when carrying out one’s job.2 Those who are satisfied and feel a sense of achievement in their workplace may experience greater life satisfaction and well-being overall.3 Employees who are happy and content may also greatly benefit the organization they are working for and improve customer and patient satisfaction.4

In addition, job satisfaction is important for employers in regards to turnover rate. Knowing what motivates dietitians will help employers know how to better meet their employees needs and retain them. A study done in Queensland, Australia investigated factors contributing to employee retention of dietitians.5 They found that co-worker atmosphere, opportunities at work, and the distance from work to home were key factors in employee retention.5 Factors that were negatives for the employees included increased workload and being frustrated with the bureaucratic system.5
Perhaps one of the most significant potential implications of this graduate student research study is its contribution to pave the way for RDNs to be licensed in California, which is the state with the most dietitians (9,366). New York comes in second with 6,166 RDNs and has state licensure. There are currently five states in the United States that still lack state licensure for dietitians: Arizona, California, Colorado, New Jersey, and Virginia. Licensure is important for RDNs, but it’s also needed in many other professions as it provides assurance to the patient or client that the healthcare they are receiving is of the highest quality. It provides a protective measure for both the patient and the professional and may contribute to job satisfaction.

Knowing job satisfaction rates among the different areas of dietetics is very useful. Analyzing the factors that influence job satisfaction will allow policies or strategies to be developed that may lead to more satisfied dietitians and better health outcomes for patients. This information may also provide significant insight for future dietitians who wonder if dietetics is truly their calling, as well as for current dietitians who may need reminders of why they first chose to dedicate their life to nutrition. This study will also contribute vital information to support and enact state licensure laws for RDNs in those states that are still void of these regulations. The purpose of this graduate student research study was to analyze job satisfaction among dietitians in various work settings and identify what factors increase or decrease the subject’s determined job satisfaction in order to better equip policy- and strategy- makers with the information needed to successfully transform the workplace into a valuable and noteworthy experience.

METHODS
Each respondent had to be board certified as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) as decreed by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) in order to be included in the study. Participants needed to be currently working in a dietetics-related field and be between the ages of 21 to 90 years old. Recruitment of participants occurred by word of mouth, emails, and flyers containing the link to the anonymous online survey. All methods and procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board of Loma Linda University. All participants consented to participate by either clicking on the link to the anonymous online survey or through verbal consent to participate in the interview. In addition, the participant was given the option to enter into a drawing to win a $50 gift card. Risks involved included a possible breach of confidentiality, and the participant feeling uncomfortable while answering questions. The respondent’s participation has led to a more profound understanding of the factors influencing job satisfaction among dietitians. It may also provide information for policymakers to improve work environments and support licensure laws, thus, improving patient and customer satisfaction.

This study involved conducting an anonymous online survey and obtaining qualitative data through an optional interview. The anonymous 41-question online survey was developed by graduate students based on a review of the literature and guidance from research faculty. The survey was launched using the Qualtrics® website (an online survey and software company) and took less than ten minutes to complete. Questions utilized both a multiple choice and a 5-point Likert scale format.

Participants were given the option to choose to participate in the interview portion of this research study at the end of taking the survey by voluntarily providing their contact information. The interview part included 16 open-ended questions that were created by the graduate student.
researchers. The questions were sent to the participants who acknowledged that they would like to be a part of the interview before the actual interview. Verbal consent was obtained at the scheduled interview time, prior to questioning. The participant was able to opt out of the interview at any time. The interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and destroyed following analysis.

Questions on the survey included: “Would you advise a friend that was interested in nutrition to pursue your career path?” Statements on the survey that asked for their level of agreement included: “I feel unappreciated when I think about what I am paid,” or “I feel like my profession is well respected by the general public.”

Examples of questions for the interview part of the research include: “What specifically motivated you to do this work? And what keeps you motivated?” and “If you could do it again, would you still choose dietetics as your profession? Why or why not?” and “What suggestions do you have for improving the workplace, environment, and job satisfaction of dietitians?”

The scoring system utilized a reverse negative method to find the participant’s overall score regarding job satisfaction. Descriptive statistics were used to categorize the subjects using the demographic data. The results were compared using the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test based on the demographic categories. The interviews were analyzed using qualitative data analysis methods which involved identifying descriptive codes, organizing the codes into meaningful categories, and then identifying themes that reflected the participant’s perspectives. The level of significance was set at \( p \leq .05 \).

Subjects were recruited by word of mouth, emails, social media, and flyers. A list of 5000 RDNs’ email addresses was also provided by the CDR for recruitment. Subjects for the interviews were recruited from those who took the survey and were given the choice to
participate in the interview through various methods including in-person, through Zoom, by phone or by email.

Subjects participating in the anonymous survey portion of the research study provided their consent by clicking on the link to the survey. The anonymous online survey had an expected completion time of less than ten minutes; however, participants were given the option to start the survey and complete it at a later time during the data collection period. Subjects were also given the option to participate in the interview portion of this research study at the end of the online survey.

Verbal consent and the interview took place at a location convenient to the subject, whether it occurred in-person or by phone, email, or through Zoom. The interviews ranged from less than twenty minutes to a little over an hour. The subject could choose to opt out of the interview at any time. The interview questions were emailed to the subjects a few days prior to their scheduled interview meeting time, and the interviews were recorded, transcribed, analyzed, and destroyed.

RESULTS

Survey Data

A total of 533 participants responded to the survey providing representation from a total of forty-four states and the District of Columbia. Of these, 91.7% (n = 489) of the responses qualified for data analysis, for their surveys were completed. Of the survey respondents, 96.9% (n = 474) were female, 2.7% (n = 13) were male, and 2 respondents chose not to indicate their gender. Complete demographic data can be viewed in Figure 1.

The mean job satisfaction score from the survey results was calculated on a scale of one to five, with one being the lowest and five being the highest job satisfaction score possible. The
The overall average job satisfaction score for all participants was 2.97 out of 5, indicating an average of 59.4% satisfaction, with a mode of 3.13, minimum at 1.23, and maximum at 4.37. Seventy-five percent of respondents had an overall job satisfaction score below 3.33 (indicating 66.7% satisfaction).

Of the survey respondents, 73.2% (n = 358) indicated that they worked in the clinical area of practice. Analyzing each of the practice areas separately, the clinical category had the lowest overall job satisfaction ranking. Respondents reporting an income level greater than $90,000 per year (6.7%, n = 33) showed significantly higher job satisfaction ratings than those in the lowest income levels.

Survey results demonstrated significant differences in a variety of areas as demonstrated in Table 1. There was significance when looking at overall job satisfaction scores and the independent variables of practice area ($p = .02$), income ($p = .002$), and whether or not the participant would advise a friend to enter the dietetic profession ($p < .001$). Job satisfaction scores specifically pertaining to work environment and responsibilities demonstrated significant results when analyzing practice area ($p = .04$), income levels ($p = .03$), how many hours worked per week ($p = .008$), and whether or not the participant would advise a friend to enter their profession ($p = .001$). Job satisfaction scores specifically pertaining to recognition from coworkers and others demonstrated significant results when looking at education level ($p = .004$) and whether or not they would advise a friend to pursue their career ($p < .001$), and job satisfaction scores specifically pertaining to meaningfulness in their chosen career demonstrated significant results when looking at the gender variable ($p = .047$) and whether or not they would advise a friend to pursue dietetics ($p < .001$). In summary, the above mentioned independent
variables were found to have an impact on the overall and specific category job satisfaction scores.

However, some independent variables did not demonstrate statistical significance when compared to the overall and specific category job satisfaction scores (Table 1). No independent variable indicated significance of pay affecting job satisfaction.

As shown in Table 3, when analyzing each of the practice areas and their overall mean satisfaction rank, those in the Other area of practice had the highest mean satisfaction rank ($x=269.57$) while those in the Clinical area of practice had the lowest mean rank ($x=209.14$), where a higher rank indicates a higher level of satisfaction. There was a significant difference between the overall satisfaction ranks of the Clinical versus Community ($p = .048$) and the Clinical versus Other ($p = .01$) areas of practice (Table 3A). None of the other comparisons between practice area indicated significance.

When looking at the significant job satisfaction factor of environment and practice area, several category comparisons indicated significance. There were significant differences seen between the categories of Clinical and Community ($p = .042$), Clinical and Other ($p = .043$), Community and Administrative ($p = .03$), and Administrative and Other ($p = .02$). The Administrative practice area had the highest environment satisfaction rank ($x = 271.96$), while the Other practice area had the lowest environment satisfaction rank ($x = 191.41$) (Table 3A).

Significant differences were also found when comparing the various categories of income levels. There were significant differences between the overall mean satisfaction ranks of the lowest ($10,000 to $30,000) category versus the highest (>$90,000) category ($p = .007$), between the $30,000 to $60,000 category versus the $60,000 to $90,000 category ($p = .02$), between the $30,000 to $60,000 category versus the >$90,000 category ($p = .001$), and between
the $60,000 to $90,000 category versus the >$90,000 category \((p = .04)\). Mean satisfaction ranks increased as the income level increased ($10,000 to $30,000, \(x = 183.70\); >$90,000, \(x = 284.57\)) (Table 3B).

When looking at the significant job satisfaction factor of environment and income, there was significance seen when comparing the lowest income level of $10,000 to $30,000 versus all three of the other levels of income \((p = .02\) for $30,000 to $60,000; \(p = .004\) for $60,000 to $90,000; and \(p = .02\) for >$90,000). The lowest mean environment satisfaction rank was for the category of $10,000 to $30,000 \((x = 157.71)\). The highest mean environment satisfaction rank was for the category of $60,000 to $90,000 \((x = 246.28)\) (Table 3B).

Although there was no significance seen with age and overall job satisfaction, there was a significant difference between the oldest age category of >65 years when compared to the age category of 26 to 35 years \((p = .02)\). Those in the age category of 36 to 45 years had the lowest overall mean satisfaction rank \((x=205.95)\) while those in the age category of >65 years had the highest overall mean satisfaction rank \((x=361.92)\) (Table 3E).

Those who would advise a friend had a significantly \((p < .001)\) higher overall satisfaction mean rank \((x=259.67)\) than those who said they would not advise a friend to pursue a career in the dietetics field \((x=122.85)\). Upon analyzing the significant factors contributing to the overall satisfaction score, those who said they would advise a friend had a higher mean satisfaction rank in meaningfulness \((x=261.83)\) and recognition \((x=255.66)\) than those who said they would not advise a friend \((x=150.97\) and 177.03, respectively; \(p < .001\) for both factors). However, those who said they would not advise a friend to pursue a dietetics career had a higher mean satisfaction rank in their environment satisfaction \((x=268.33)\) than those who said they would advise a friend \((x=221.07; p = .001)\). Although the pay category did not show significance, those
who said they would not advise a friend also had a higher satisfaction score for pay (x=242.12) than those who said they would advise a friend (x=230.80; p = .41) (Table 3G, H).

Education level demonstrated significance when analyzing the recognition satisfaction score. Specifically, there was significance found when comparing those in the Undergraduate degree category to those in the Master’s degree category (p < .001), with the Undergraduate degree category having a higher mean recognition satisfaction rank (x=254.48) than the Master’s degree category (x=209.92). None of the other education level categories demonstrated significance (Table 3C).

Gender indicated significance (x = .047) when compared to the meaningfulness factor of job satisfaction. Analysis demonstrated that females had a higher mean meaningfulness satisfaction rank (x=232.60) than males (x=158.46) (Table 3D).

When comparing the categories of hours worked per week to the significant job satisfaction factor of environment, there were significant differences seen between those in the 24 to 35 hours per week category versus those in the >45 hours per week category (p = .002) and between those in the 36 to 45 hours per week category versus those in the >45 hours per week category (p = .04). Those in the 24 to 35 hours per week category had the lowest mean environment satisfaction rank (x = 208.50), those in the 36 to 45 hours per week category had a mean rank (x = 235.44), and those in the >45 hours per week category had the highest mean rank (x = 272.82) (Table 3F).

**Interviews**

Twenty dietitians participated in the individual interviews (19 female, 1 male). They represented 13 states and various areas of practice including clinical, academic, community, private practice, and administrative.
Qualitative analysis of the interviews resulted in four overarching themes describing factors impacting job satisfaction: 1) “It’s a Passion,” 2) Licensure: Does it Matter, 3) Desired Changes, and 4) Food for Thought.

“It’s a Passion”

This theme describes aspects of the work environment that make the participant’s job enjoyable or not. Many aspects were related to external motivators, such as the importance of receiving respect and trust from coworkers and others, while other aspects were related to internal motivators, such as choosing to continue their education and striving to make a difference in the lives of their patients.

Participants often expressed the importance of passion, motivation, and meaningfulness as a factor affecting their satisfaction with their career. Olivia, a dietitian working in the academic field, declared her zeal for her job and shared, “I love what I am passionate about which is eating well in order to live well, and so being a registered dietitian nutritionist gives me that avenue to enjoy what I love doing.” Mary, a clinical dietitian and diabetes educator, when explaining what makes her job meaningful, shared that “sometimes, living with a disease can be really scary, but if I can help people to make one positive step forward, they can usually take another step and another step, and it’s not about being perfect, it’s about making progress, and that’s really fun and satisfying. . . . and it’s also fun to take science and make it understandable for people.” Similarly, Victoria, a dialysis dietitian who also owns her private practice, discussed the importance of being valued by the team, especially the medical doctors and shared that “once the doctors are on board, and they know what you’re doing and they trust you, then, life is good. . . . and many times I [hear] the doctors [saying] to the patients, ‘You know, you should listen to the dietitian, she knows exactly what she’s doing.’ It makes me feel so good, like they’re giving
me importance, and they know what I’m doing. I know my job is also important, and they know it’s also important to keep the patients healthy.” Recognition from others and feeling like a needed and valuable part of the team and of the patient’s life was expressed as an important factor when discussing job satisfaction.

Licensure: Does it Matter

This theme described the views of the dietitians regarding state licensure and its importance for protecting the public and the profession of dietetics. The participant’s views varied from strongly promoting licensure to questioning its value and necessity.

Many participants understood the importance of licensure. For example, Felicia, who works as a clinical pediatric dietitian said, “I think licensure is important . . . to protect the public more than to protect our profession . . . I think . . . that just as much as medicine, nutrition is an area where people can push some ethical boundaries . . . and so I think licensure is important for that reason.” Similarly, Gwendolyn, a dialysis dietitian, expressed that licensure “elevates [dietitians’] expertise . . . it’s been a long haul for us dietitians to get respect for our knowledge and being licensed . . . would also put us more in the realm of being [the] nutrition expert . . . [and] generally, it'll give us more credibility, and it might also [help] with reimbursement.” Credibility, respect, and protection for the public and the profession were notable comments promoting state licensure for dietitians.

Other participants held a differing opinion. Nellie, a clinical dietitian, believed that there are “benefits . . . if the state license is actually being enforced . . . I think it's good to help control [those who are not licensed who are practicing]. However, I would say right now our state is not very good at controlling it . . . I think in theory it was designed . . . for really good things, but at times I think it holds us back . . . the state licensure law has really . . . limited us and . . . has
stopped our profession from moving forward . . . I know that it's intended to . . . prevent harm to the public, but I don't think it's being enforced.” Although licensure may have good intentions, state enforcement seemed to be an important issue addressed by a few of the participants.

**Desired Changes**

This theme described the various areas of the dietetic profession that demonstrate valuable opportunities for job satisfaction improvement as expressed by the interviewees. Some examples included the need for more autonomy, a more manageable workload, recognition from colleagues and more. Zara, a clinical pediatric dietitian, identified the need to “have more autonomy . . . write diet orders, do things more independently without having to be under a physician . . . [and wishes] the salary could be higher across the board for dietitians, and also . . . [have] a higher pay based on experience.” Joe, an outpatient dietitian, expressed his desire for the “senior people [to listen]. It’d be nice to feel like you’re actually heard and it makes a difference, you know, if you bring up an issue, [to know] that it makes a difference.” Lydia, a clinical dietitian, gave thoughts for improving the work environment of dietitians and suggested “having windows where dietitians chart, having standing desks for long [time] periods of charting, [and] ensuring adequate staffing to prevent burnout.” From more autonomy to recognition to work environment, there were many places for improvement identified within the various work settings of registered dietitians.

**Food for Thought**

This theme described words of advice and encouragement from the interviewed dietitians for those entering the profession that are related to improving the work life and job satisfaction of dietitians in any work setting. Being more involved, being assertive, building rapport with
team/coworkers, having a good heart for people, and not being afraid to fail summarize the
majority of the advice given by the dietitians. According to Felicia, “You’re gonna learn a lot
more on the job than you ever thought . . . be prepared for that. Be prepared to feel like an idiot
sometimes . . . and just sort of approach that with as much humility as you can . . . be open to
learn and be open to challenge yourself, and again, show up . . . just go after it, just try to do as
much as you can [and look] for other things to be involved in.” Another clinical dietitian, Hailey,
advised future dietitians “to incorporate yourself into the healthcare team and make your
presence known. [Also], accept feedback from other disciplines and build rapport with nursing.”
Camelia, a dietitian working in the academic field, encouraged others “to develop some career
goals or some professional goals . . . in the beginning of your program . . . [and at] the same
time try to . . . find [your] passion and feed off of that and . . . really invest yourself in that. Find
a mentor or somebody who can kind of guide you, . . . and just work towards those goals. Write
them down and work towards them . . . I think it is very important to keep your eyes on the goal .
. . and always help others, I think that’s very important to do along the way, you’re not just
focused on yourself but also be involved in community and helping your classmates . . . because I
think, in the end, that’s also a big part of who you become.” Wise words of encouragement and
support were readily expressed by the participants to inspire the future leaders of the dietetic
profession.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this graduate student research study was to identify what factors impact
the job satisfaction levels of registered dietitians working in various practice areas within the
United States. The importance of health and wellbeing is a key factor as to why many dietitians
become dietitians. Nourishing our bodies with healthful and delicious food and being physically active in order to maintain well-being are behaviors that dietitians encourage others to do, as well. However, it’s important to realize that true health and wellness involves much more than just nutrition and exercise. In order to promote wellness in the whole person, it is important to address the other established dimensions of wellness which include social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, intellectual, and occupational wellness. Specific to this research study, occupational wellness means that one’s chosen career or field of employment provides fulfillment, enjoyment, and enhances well-being. Thus, analyzing what factors influence dietitians’ job satisfaction levels is important to know in order to better improve working conditions and support wellbeing.

Although the researchers started with the premise that licensure would benefit all dietitians, some individuals responded to the contrary, going even so far to say that “it made no difference.” Although licensure has many benefits, it is ultimately the enacted licensure that makes a difference, which is the responsibility of state legislators to enforce. Dietitians must raise their voices in order to see changes in the profession. They must speak up when it matters and do their part to ensure that licensure protects both the profession and the public. For dietitians, the benefits of licensure outweigh the cons. Not only would it give dietitians more freedom and autonomy, which were factors in contributing to job satisfaction, but it would improve reimbursement for RD outpatient services through health insurance. Licensure allows dietitians to establish their own private practice and bill health insurance for services beyond diabetes, renal disease, and malnutrition.

Respondents to our study represented each of the five areas of practice; however, 73.2% were part of the clinical area of practice and may not be an accurate representation of how
dietitians are dispersed throughout the United States. Clinical dietitians also had the lowest overall job satisfaction score, which could have lowered the overall mean job satisfaction score for all respondents. Contributing factors for this may be due to the higher stress levels in an acute care setting, understaffing, inadequate pay, and overwork.

Another factor based on human behavior that may have influenced the job satisfaction results is that a significant number of the dietitians who responded to the survey may have been those with strong views concerning their dietetic careers, so may have more readily responded and voiced their opinions. However, it may also be that the profession simply has a lower satisfaction score in general. Further research is needed on this subject to support or disprove these speculations.

Upon comparing the significant values from the survey results with the themes from the interviews, there were several overlapping themes. Income indicated significance when looking at overall job satisfaction in the survey, and in the interviews, salary was one of the main themes that was related to job satisfaction. Poor compensation compared to other disciplines, little to no raises, and paid below worth (education and knowledge-wise) were all mentioned as components that negatively impacted RDs’ feelings of job satisfaction. The dietetic profession is mainly female-dominated may have to do with the lower pay scale. A parallel may be seen in the nursing profession which also tends to be female-oriented. On average, women earn less than men, who generally require a premium to go into a field that is female-dominated. In the past, recruiters started targeting males to join the nursing profession to help during nursing shortage. Once more males started joining the nursing profession, the pay scale increased. It has been postulated that the same thing could happen for dietitians if more males joined the profession.
Practice area was significant to overall job satisfaction scores from the survey data and was also noted as an important part of job satisfaction by the interview participants. Many interview participants shared that entrepreneurship was more fulfilling than having a clinical job. Autonomy came up as a recurring theme from the data which may be why entrepreneurship had such high job satisfaction scores and clinical had lower scores. In a clinical setting, one must adhere to certain protocols and policies whether the dietitian believes in them or not. The dietitian may feel unappreciated, unheard, and unimportant when their suggestions are not listened to or followed through. Having recognition from the doctors or co-workers was also a big part of job satisfaction. In non-traditional roles such as owning one’s own business or working from home, the dietitian has the freedom to decide how they will carry out their roles.

Meaningfulness and self-actualization were not significant factors after analyzing the survey data, although the researchers thought they would be influential factors. It could be speculated that this is because these factors are often intrinsically driven whereas the other survey categories of environment/responsibilities, recognition, and pay come from external sources. Therefore, it would not matter where a person worked, or the income they received, or how many hours they worked per week, etc. because they either would or would not feel a sense of meaningfulness and self-actualization depending on their outlook, rather than being dependent on their surroundings and circumstances. These factors were significant when looking at gender and whether or not the participant would advise a friend to pursue a field in dietetics which suggests that although meaningfulness and self-actualization are primarily internally driven, they do play a part in determining if someone else should join the career (those who would advise a friend to pursue dietetics had a higher satisfaction level than those who would not give such advice to a friend; Table 3H).
From the survey analysis, those who worked the most hours per week (>45 hours) were significantly more satisfied with their environment and responsibilities than those who worked the least hours per week (24-35 hours). Perhaps, those who are working more hours are spending more time doing the things they love with people they enjoy.

Education level was significant when looking at the factor of recognition and appreciation. During the interviews participants shared that dietitians are often poorly compensated when compared to other disciplines with similar or lesser education levels. Also, the majority of current income levels do not match the education required to be a dietitian. Especially since a Master’s degree will soon be required for anyone who wants to become a dietitian, many doubt that the pay will increase in relation to the rising education requirements.

Participants also mentioned that there is often a need for more time and less tasks due to a shortage of dietitians and dietitian job positions, especially within the hospital settings. This could be due to RDs not being valued as a necessary component of the team and leads to more work being infringed upon dietitians without any extra raises or promotions. It is simply expected that the work be accomplished by the required deadline. This, in turn, may lead to unhappy RDs because they are not being paid what they are worth, which may lead to less internal motivation from the RDs, and in the end, feeds into RDs not being seen as valuable. This becomes a vicious cycle that negatively impacts dietitians’ job satisfaction and work ethic.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this graduate student research study was that the survey did not include a question asking how long the participant had worked as a dietitian. This is a limitation because it could provide further insights and help explain why some dietitians were more satisfied than others with their job. For example, one might assume that the longer a person...
works in the same job, the higher the risk for burnout, boredom, and dissatisfaction in that person’s current position.

Another limitation was that the survey did not have an option for U.S. territories as the place of residence. All fifty states and the District of Columbia were included, but there were no U.S. territories on the list. This prevented some people from entering the research study since their location was not on the list. One person did reach out to the graduate student researchers and stated that she lived in Guam, but had been able to complete the survey because she put Hawaii as her place of residence.

Future studies on the subject of job satisfaction among registered dietitians could include more in-depth or follow-up questions during the interview. More representation from each of the areas of practice may also help provide more insight into job satisfaction for dietitians. Other allied health professions could also be studied and compared with job satisfaction ratings of registered dietitians.11

CONCLUSION

Satisfaction, whether on a personal or professional level is vital to human well-being. People spend many hours a day in their chosen profession. Finding meaning in one’s work is important not just for the individual, but for the world at large. Dissatisfied workers lead to dissatisfied patients/clients, which can lead to a dissatisfied society, which may translate into a dissatisfied world. Knowing what factors contribute to job satisfaction can help dietitians make intelligent decisions about their work settings, and how they interact with their colleagues and supervisors. Licensure can potentially increase one’s job satisfaction. California has the largest number of registered dietitians in the United States; however, is still lacking licensure. Raising
awareness of the issue and the need for licensure will help not only dietitians by protecting their profession, but the public as well.
Figure 1. Demographic Characteristics (%) of Survey Participants (n = 489)
Table 1. Significance of Demographic Characteristics to Factors that Affect Overall Job Satisfaction (n = 489)

<table>
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<th>Environment</th>
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<th>Meaningfulness</th>
<th>Pay</th>
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<td>Age</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>0.344</td>
<td>0.582</td>
<td>0.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>0.330</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>0.554</td>
<td>0.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hours per week</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.582</td>
<td>0.569</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>0.456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.521</td>
<td>0.374</td>
<td><strong>0.047</strong></td>
<td>0.905</td>
<td>0.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Status</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>0.904</td>
<td>0.402</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>0.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>0.691</td>
<td><strong>0.004</strong></td>
<td>0.537</td>
<td>0.592</td>
<td>0.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise Friend</td>
<td><strong>0.001</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.000</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.000</strong></td>
<td>0.409</td>
<td><strong>0.000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Themes Describing Job Satisfaction Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing Factors</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect</strong>&lt;br&gt;Involves value, recognition, and trust from team members, colleagues, and the public.</td>
<td>“I feel that sometimes we don’t &quot;fit in&quot; as do other disciplines. The best part of my job is when patients listen to me and see the improvements in their health. Also, when MD's take me seriously.&quot; — Pamela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“… the providers don’t really treat the dietitians as well as they should be and they don’t utilize them as much as they should ...” — Kaylie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong>&lt;br&gt;Involves freedom to practice.</td>
<td>“If I could change something it would be... to sign orders for supplements or change diet orders without first having an MD sign it... because both can potentially delay patient’s care and satisfaction.” — Lyssa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I have a... protocol signed by physicians... that allows me almost complete autonomy in ordering diet changes, tube-feeding and PN orders. This significantly contributes to my job satisfaction...” — Survey Respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meaningfulness</strong>&lt;br&gt;Involves making a difference in the lives of others by empowering them and helping them overcome challenges.</td>
<td>“I love diabetes education... I love empowering people to make positive changes in their life... Living with a disease can be really scary, but if I can help people to make ... positive step[s] forward ... that’s really fun and satisfying” — Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Connecting with ... the patients, uh, that’s definitely my favorite part and the part that I feel has the most meaning ... [being], able to develop some relationship ... see [them] making changes over time, ... [and] they feel better, they feel healthier, that’s very neat” — Joe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Licensure</strong></td>
<td>“Licensure allows us to give credibility to dietitians. It stops non-dietitians from working as dietitians.” — Renee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protects Public and Profession</strong>&lt;br&gt;Verifies real RDNs, useful for insurance and reimbursement, gives credibility and respect, defines scope of practice.</td>
<td>“I think licensure is important ... to protect the public more than to protect our profession. Um, I think ... that just as much as medicine, nutrition is an area where people can push some ethical boundaries, um, and so I think licensure is important for that reason.” — Felicia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas for Improvement</strong></td>
<td>“Dietitians work so hard, we are so dedicated... and I wish we get paid better... I mean we work as hard as any PT or OT... and we are nowhere near [their] salary.” — Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“This field is dominated by women who accept low pay and are content with the lack of upward mobility... We need to come together and demand higher wages.” — Survey Respondent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (A-H) Mean Job Satisfaction Ranks by Demographic Characteristics (n = 489)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Practice Area</th>
<th>Mean Overall Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$) $p = .02$</th>
<th>Mean Environment Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$) $p = .04$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>209.14</td>
<td>240.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>233.32</td>
<td>218.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>249.31</td>
<td>197.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>255.75</td>
<td>271.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>269.57</td>
<td>191.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Income Level</th>
<th>Mean Overall Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$) $p = .002$</th>
<th>Mean Environment Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$) $p = .03$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-$30,000</td>
<td>183.70</td>
<td>157.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$60,000</td>
<td>202.81</td>
<td>229.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000-$90,000</td>
<td>233.15</td>
<td>246.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;$90,000</td>
<td>284.57</td>
<td>243.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Education Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Recognition Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$) $p = .004$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>254.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>209.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>277.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>249.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Meaningfulness Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$) $p = .047$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>158.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>232.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### E. Age Range

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Overall Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;25 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>224.95</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35 years</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>233.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 years</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>205.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55 years</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>212.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65 years</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>224.47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;65 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>361.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### F. Hours Worked per Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Worked</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Environment Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24-35 hours</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>208.50</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 hours</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>235.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;45 hours</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>272.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### G. Advise Friend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advise Friend</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Overall Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>259.67</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>122.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### H. Advise Friend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advise Friend</th>
<th>Mean Environment Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$)</th>
<th>Mean Recognition Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$)</th>
<th>Mean Meaningfulness Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$)</th>
<th>Mean Pay Job Satisfaction Rank ($\bar{x}$)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>221.07</td>
<td>255.66</td>
<td>261.83</td>
<td>230.80</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>268.33</td>
<td>177.03</td>
<td>150.97</td>
<td>242.12</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


2. Job Satisfaction. Cambridge Dictionary online. Available from:


7. Professional Regulation of Dietitians: An Overview. 2017. Academy of Nutrition and
Dietetics. Available from: 


Appendix

1. Survey Questions
2. Interview Questions
3. Information Sheet
4. Informed Consent
5. Verbal Recruitment Script
6. Flyer
Survey Questions

1. Are you currently certified as a Registered Dietitian in your state of residence working at least part time (at least 24 hours per week)?
   a. Yes
   b. No
      - If Yes, Please continue with the survey
      - If No, Thank you for your time and interest in participation

2. Average hours worked per week
   a. 24-35 hours
   b. 36-45 hours
   c. >45 hours

3. In what state are you currently working in? (Choose from the 50 states)

4. Gender:
   a) Male
   b) Female

5. Age:
   a) <25
   b) 26-35
   c) 36-45
   d) 46-55
   e) 56-65
   f) >65

6. Predominant Race/ Ethnicity
   a) American Indian or Alaska Native
   b) Asian
   c) Black or African American
   d) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   e) White
   f) Hispanic/Latino
   g) Other

7. Relationship Status:
   a) Single
   b) Married/Living with partner
   c) Divorced
   d) Other

8. Education:
   a) Undergraduate degree
   b) Masters degree
   c) PhD
   d) Other
9. What best indicates your area of practice as a Registered Dietitian?
   a) Clinical (Adult, Nutrition Support, Pediatric, Renal, Diabetes, Long Term Care, Oncology, Weight Management)
   b) Community (Public Health Nutrition, Nonprofit, Federal Government, Wellness/Prevention)
   c) Administrative (Foodservice, Management)
   d) Academic (Research, Education)
   e) Other (Public Relations/Consumer Affairs/Marketing, Private Practice/Consultation, Sport/Fitness Industry, Other)

10. Which category best estimates your average annual income?
    a) $10,000-$30,000
    b) $30,000-$60,000
    c) $60,000-$90,000
    d) >$90,000

11. Would you advise a friend that was interested to pursue your career path?
    a) Yes
    b) No

---

**RD CAREER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

**PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel unappreciated when I think about what I am paid.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel like my profession is well respected by the general public.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel that my field of work is not challenging.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I like the people I work with.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My job is enjoyable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I have too much to do at work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>There are few rewards for those who work in this field.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I have too much charting/paperwork.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>My job makes good use of my skills and abilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I feel that my job makes a difference in the lives of others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I experience personal growth such as updating skills and learning different things.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Raises are far between and too few.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I feel like my profession is well respected by my peers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>There is too little chance for promotion for my job.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I have a good work-life balance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>The leadership team takes my feedback seriously.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I feel comfortable giving upwards feedback to my supervisor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>I feel a great sense of satisfaction with my career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>I feel that my job makes the world a better place.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Licensure contributes to my perceived job satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Survey Categories:** Environment/Responsibilities: 6, 8-9, 11; Recognition/Appreciation: 1, 3, 5, 10, 19, 24-25; Meaningfulness/Self-Actualization: 4, 7, 12-16, 23, 26-30; Pay: 2, 17-18, 20-22
**Interview Questions**

1. What setting of dietetics do you work in? Which state do you work in?
2. Do you participate in any networking? If so, what kind?
3. Do you ever talk/communicate with top-level administrators? If so, have they listened to your feedback?
4. In the past or present, describe your involvement in the decision-making process at your institution or in policymaking.
5. What are your perceived benefits of licensure? What would a reasonable fee for licensure be?
6. Would you be willing to turn in/report illegal actions that occurred in the workplace?
7. If you could change one thing about your job, what would it be? Why?
8. What is the most meaningful or best part about your job? Why?
9. What is the greatest challenge in your job? Why?
10. If you could do it again, would you still become a dietitian? Explain.
11. What suggestions do you have for improving the workplace, environment, and job satisfaction of dietitians?
12. What specifically motivated you to do this work? And what keeps you motivated?
13. How much satisfaction do you get from your job, and do you feel your job makes the world a better place? Explain.
14. Do you have anything you’d like to say to future dietitians (or wish someone had told you when you first started?)
I, Dr. Georgia Hodgkin, EdD, RD, FADA, Associate Chair, Professor in Nutrition and Dietetics at Loma Linda University, am the principal investigator in a graduate research student research study titled "Job Satisfaction Among Registered Dietitians in Various Settings in the United States". The graduate students in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Loma Linda University, will be receiving credit towards their degree.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

The purpose of this graduate student research study is to analyze job satisfaction among dietitians in various work settings and identify what factors increase or decrease the subject’s determined job satisfaction in order to better equip policy- and strategy-makers with the information needed to successfully transform the workplace into a valuable and noteworthy experience.

You are invited to be in this study because you are:
- A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, as specified by the Commission on Dietetic Registration
- 21-90 years of age
- Currently working in any dietetics-related field

Up to 30 subjects will be enrolled in this part of the study.

HOW WILL I BE INVOLVED?

Your participation in this study involves taking part in a one-time, hour-long face-to-face interview with one or both of the graduate student investigators at a location convenient to you.

You will need to provide basic demographic information such as:

- Age
- Gender
- Years of experience in dietetics
- Area of dietetics currently working in
You will also be asked to provide your personal opinion regarding questions related to job satisfaction, work environment, sense of meaningfulness in the workplace, and licensure issues.

Your interview will be recorded and transcribed for use in the study. The recordings and transcripts will be destroyed after their use in the study.

WHAT ARE THE REASONABLY FORESEEABLE RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS I MIGHT HAVE?

This study poses no greater risk to you than what you routinely encounter in day-to-day life. Participating in this study will involve the following risks:

- Possible breach of confidentiality
- Possible uncomfortable answering questions

All records and research materials that identify you will be held confidential. Any published document resulting from this study will not disclose your identity without your permission. Information identifying you will only be available to the study personnel.

WILL THERE BE ANY BENEFIT TO ME OR OTHERS?

Although you may not personally benefit from this study, your participation may help researchers understand factors influencing job satisfaction among dietitians and may provide information for policymakers to improve work environments and licensure laws.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS A SUBJECT?

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw once the study has started. Your decision whether or not to participate or terminate at any time will not affect your standing with the researchers or with Loma Linda Health. You do not give up any legal rights by participating in this study.

WHAT COSTS ARE INVOLVED?

There is no cost to you for participating in this study.
WILL I BE PAID TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY?

No, but you may enter into a drawing to win one of three $50 gift cards by providing your contact information to the graduate student investigator conducting the interview.

WHO DO I CALL IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

Call 909-558-4647 or e-mail patientrelations@llu.edu for information and assistance with complaints or concerns about your rights in this study.

Thank you in advance for considering this invitation to participate. If you have any questions, please give me a call during routine office hours at (909) 558-4300 ext. 47244.

If you wish to proceed and participate in this study after reading this information letter, please give us your verbal consent. By verbally agreeing to participate, you are providing your consent to take part in this interview portion of the study.

Sincerely,

Georgia Hodgkin, EdD, RD, FADA
Date:

Dear [Name],

You are invited to participate in a survey by graduate student researchers studying titled “Job Satisfaction Among Registered Dietitians in Various Settings in the United States.” Inclusion criteria are: you are board certified as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) as decreed by the Commission on Dietetic Registration, you are currently working in a dietetics-related field, and you are between the ages of 21 to 90 years. This study will help us fulfill requirements for our Master of Science in Nutrition & Dietetics.

Participation in this study involves answering questions about job satisfaction and fulfillment as a dietitian and will take approximately 8 minutes to complete. Whether or not you participate is entirely voluntary and will not affect your relationship with Loma Linda University or its affiliates. You do not give up any legal rights by participating in this study.

There is a minimal risk of breach of confidentiality; however, this risk will be minimized by using software that allows you to complete and submit the survey anonymously. The link below will take you to the survey. After finishing the questions, you will submit the survey electronically. You may skip questions at any time or choose not to submit your answers at the end. When we receive the results, no information will link your answers back to you.

Your participation may help researchers understand factors influencing job satisfaction among dietitians. It may also provide information for policymakers to improve work environments and licensure laws, thus, improving patient and customer satisfaction.

You may contact an impartial third party not associated with this study regarding any questions or complaints by calling 809-558-4647 or e-mailing patietrelations@llu.edu for information and assistance.

Thank you in advance for considering this invitation. If you have any questions, please give me a call at (809) 558-1000 ext. 47244.

If you wish to proceed and participate in the survey after reading this letter, please click on the link provided below. By clicking on the link, you are giving your consent to participate. Information requested is your level of job satisfaction as a registered dietitian.

A Seventh-day Adventist Organization
DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS | Loma Linda, California 92350
909-558-4593 · www.lluhealth.org
Sincerely,

Dr. Georgia Hodgkin, EdD, RD, FADA
Principal Investigator

Anonymous Survey Link:

https://llu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3xAXiGVCja6YBkF

Note: If, after completing the survey, you would like to be in a drawing for 1 of 3 $50 gift cards, please email jamartin@llu.edu. There will be no connection between your survey results and emailing for the gift card raffle.
Verbal Recruitment Script Element

- Hello, my name is Jaime Martin (or Marysol Zaragoza) with Loma Linda University's Department of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- I would like to tell you about a graduate student research study that is being done by our program.
- Would it be convenient for me to talk to you about this study right now?
- The purpose of this graduate student research study is to analyze job satisfaction among dietitians in various work settings and identify what factors increase or decrease determined job satisfaction in order to better equip policy- and strategy-makers with the information needed to successfully transform the workplace into a valuable and noteworthy experience.
- The inclusion criteria are that you be a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) as decreed by the Commission of Dietetic Registration (CDR) and be currently working in any dietetics-related field. To be included in this study you must be between 21 and 90 years of age.
- If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take an anonymous online survey and/or be asked to take part in a face-to-face interview.
- The survey will take about 8 to 10 minutes of your time. The interview will take about an hour of your time.
- You may enter to win one of three $50 gift cards. If you participate in the interview, you may enter to win in a separate drawing for one of three $50 gift cards.
- This study poses no greater risk to you than what you may routinely encounter in day-to-day life. There is a risk of breach of confidentiality and a possible risk that you may be uncomfortable answering certain questions.
- Although you may not personally benefit from this study, your participation may help researchers understand the factors influencing job satisfaction among dietitians and may provide valuable information for policy-makers to change or improve legislative laws involving dietitians.
- Do you have any questions?
- You can contact the principal investigator, Dr. Georgia Hodgkin, during routine office hours at (909) 558-4300 ext. 47244 if you have questions about this study.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Would you like to participate in this study? You are not officially enrolled until you click on the link to the survey or provide verbal consent for the interview which lets us know that you are providing your consent to participate.
- Do you have 8-10 minutes to complete the anonymous survey now? Do you have an hour to do the interview now? If not, we can reschedule to a more convenient date and time.
- Thank you for your time.

Loma Linda University
Adventist Health Science Center
Institutional Review Board
Approved June 2007
# 5172280 Chair

Draft OSR 2/24/04

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CALLING ALL RDs!

Are you a Registered Dietitian (RD)?

We need YOU to take part in our research study in order to benefit RDs!

We're graduate students studying:

"Job Satisfaction Among Registered Dietitians in Various Settings in the United States"

If you are:

- A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (as specified by the Commission on Dietetic Registration)
- 21-90 years of age
- Currently working in any dietetics-related field

THEN COME PARTICIPATE IN OUR GRADUATE STUDENT STUDY!

All you need to do is take this 8-10 minute Anonymous Online Survey.

https://llu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3xAXlGvcja6YBkF

After completing the survey, you may email your contact information to mazaragoza@llu.edu to enter to win one of three $50 gift cards!

Questions? Contact:
Graduate Student Investigator
Marysol Zaragoza, mazaragoza@llu.edu

Sponsored by: Loma Linda University School of Allied Health, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics
Principal Investigator: Dr. Georgina Hodgkin, EdD, RD, FADA, Associate Chair, Professor, Dept. of Nutrition and Dietetics