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ABSTRACT

Some of the research done to date concerning job satisfaction of junior college faculty is reviewed in this "Brief." Part I of the "Brief" describes four frameworks that have been applied to the analysis of job satisfaction: the traditional approach, the two-factor approach, the need hierarchy, and the cognitive dissonance approach. Part II describes the junior college as a workplace from three points of view: the traditional, the sociological, and the psychological. Finally, Part III catalogs the major job satisfaction and dissatisfactions perceived by junior college faculty members. (Author/DB)

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR JUNIOR COLLEGES

JUNIOR COLLEGE FACULTY JOB SATISFACTION

by

Joanne Frankel

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of job satisfaction touches everyone, as evidenced by the themes of popular shows, books, and movies. More personally, perhaps we have complained about our employer through a Monday morning joke, leafed through the classifieds, or wished for the weekend. Job satisfaction has been considered important not only for humanitarian reasons, but also because it has been held that the worker who likes his job will work with efficiency and enthusiasm--the dissatisfied one will show the opposite effect. As educators try to upgrade the educational environment, they should apply this idea to teachers, theorizing that those who find satisfaction in their jobs will create a better learning environment for students than those who do not. Thus, the study of faculty job satisfaction might well become an important area of investigation.

This Brief reviews the literature of work satisfaction, focusing specifically on faculty at the junior college level. Since research in this field has been complicated by problems in analyzing exactly what work satisfaction means, Part I summarizes various theoretical frameworks that have been used; Part II describes the junior college as a work environment; and Part III is concerned with the job satisfactions and dissatisfactions expressed by junior college faculty members.

I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Researchers have not agreed on a precise definition of job satisfaction. The terms "morale," "job attitudes," and "job satisfaction" are used interchangeably, but sometimes distinctions are drawn among them. A review of the literature of job satisfaction is made more difficult not only by differing semantic approaches, but also by differing conceptual frameworks. Because of this lack of commonly accepted terms, a comparison of the results of studies must be made with caution.

Carroll (1969) summarized the four major frameworks of analysis of job satisfaction: the traditional approach, the two-factor theory, the need hierarchy, and the theory of cognitive dissonance.

The Traditional Approach

The traditional approach used the idea that satisfaction is a continuum ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. Workers shifted along the continuum as they responded to particular variables whose presence increased job satisfaction and whose absence decreased it. Carroll illustrated this approach as follows:

> If a worker earns $200 per month and gets a $40 increase, he will be pushed further on the satisfaction continuum than if he only received a $20 increase. If he has his salary cut by $20, he will accordingly be pushed on the continuum toward the dissatisfaction end [p. 6].

However, as Carroll pointed out, the traditional framework cannot deal with incongruities such as workers leaving a job for one that pays less or being dissatisfied with a $20 increase because they expected a $40 one. Because of these inconsistencies, other theories have arisen to contest the traditional approach. One such challenge was proposed by Herzberg et al. (1959).

The Two-Factor Approach

This theory assumed that there are two kinds of variables that influence job satisfaction. The first, intrinsic factors or motivators, lead to satisfaction. They include the work itself, as well as a sense of responsibility, achievement, and advancement. The second, extrinsic factors or "hygienes," may lead to dissatisfaction. They include working conditions, interpersonal relations, and economic factors. Herzberg et al. claimed that, while hygienes could prevent discontent, they could not, by themselves, produce a motivated, satisfied worker. Only when the actual tasks of a job are stimulating to the worker does he feel satisifed and motivated.

This theory has been criticized on several grounds, the most damaging of which is that the dichotomy of intrinsic and extrinsic variables simply does not hold true, since both hygienes and motivators can cause either satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Wernimont, 1966).

The Need Hierarchy Approach

Because of these drawbacks, some theorists have rejected the intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy and focused instead on personality theory. The most important work has been done in applying Maslow's (1943) need hierarchy to job satisfaction research. Maslow's hierarchy consists of five levels which develop in sequential order. These are: physiological needs, safety needs, affection needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. As researchers (e.g., Beer, 1964) measured job satisfaction based on these categories, they found that need level and occupational status seem related, with all workers concerned with the lower order needs, but mainly professional and white collar groups concerned with high order needs (Duffy, 1967, Centers and Bugental, 1966).

Other investigators (Lahiri and Srivastva, 1967, and Ewen, et al., 1966) have attempted to reconcile the Herzberg and Maslow theories by synthesizing the salient features of both. In this approach, lower order needs are equated with extrinsic variables and higher order needs with intrinsic variables. It is contended that "hygiene needs must be met before motivation needs become operative . . . . Once the basic needs are fulfilled, higher-order needs, such as self-actualization, which are related to the intrinsic job factors will emerge [Carroll, p. 9]."

The Cognitive Dissonance Approach

Although this synthesis seemed a step in the right direction, it was not found to be entirely satisfactory. Therefore, still another approach was formulated using Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance. Festinger contended that individuals strive to achieve consistencies in their beliefs. To do this, they may change conflicting attitudes or beliefs, or they may reassess their importance. Handyside and Speak (1964) applied this mechanism by defining job satisfaction as the dynamic process of balancing one thing against another or finding good things in the job and balancing them against the negative aspects. Lahiri and Srivastva (1967) suggested that if a worker cannot readjust his attitudes successfully when dissonance occurs, he will, in extreme cases, leave his job for one that looks better.

The major frameworks described above are implicit in studies of job satisfaction of junior college faculty members. Some of these studies take a traditional approach, but others measure Herzberg's intrinsic-extrinsic variables, or (less frequently) try to uncover Maslow's need characteristics. However, no matter which viewpoint is used, most of the studies assume that the instructor's work environment impinges in some way upon his job satisfaction. Therefore, the junior college as a work environment will be described as a background for understanding the faculty job satisfaction studies.

II. THE JUNIOR COLLEGE WORK ENVIRONMENT: THREE POINTS OF VIEW

The work environment was defined by Lofquist and Dawis (1969) as the setting in which work behavior takes place. This setting may be described in several ways. The traditional approach takes the point of view of the employer, using such categories as tasks to be performed, working conditions, tools and materials used, and economic benefits. In this scheme, the basic concept is the job or position, which is a set of tasks done by the worker.

The sociological approach incorporates the idea of position but enlarges it to include not only tasks, but dimensions such as power, prestige, and goals. It also looks at the larger environment in terms of subcultures, and formal-informal organization.

A third approach is psychologically oriented because it studies the environment in terms of the worker's behavior and point of view. This may be done through an analysis of the worker's personality traits, attitudes and values, and perceptions of the environment, or, quite frequently, by focusing on the sources of his satisfactions and dissatisfactions.

The Traditional Approach

Each point of view, the traditional, sociological, and

psychological, has been used at one time or another to categorize the junior college as a work environment. The traditional model, for example, is found in junior college collective bargaining agreements which define the tasks of the faculty, their working conditions, and the economic benefits they will accrue. Although content varies from contract to contract, most carefully describe the tasks of instructors to include meetings with students inside and outside of class, participation in course and curriculum development, attendance at faculty-administration meetings, and selection of department chairmen, whose tasks are also outlined.

The working conditions of faculty are delineated in terms of class assignments and size, the definition of the work week and college calendar, the size and availability of faculty offices, the provision for released time for meetings and administrative duties, the use of college facilities, and the procedures for grievances. In addition, provisions for instructional support services are usually included, such as secretarial and paraprofessional help, and media centers.

Economic factors found in the bargaining agreements include conditions of employment such as contracts, probation, evaluation, promotion, demotion, seniority, tenure, and retirement. Salary schedules, some with provisions for overtime pay, are almost always included. Conditions for outside employment, travel reimbursements, sabbatical and other leaves, holidays, and insurance are also spelled out.

Although the categories of tasks, working conditions, and benefits that are described are similar from contract to contract, comparative studies suggest that there is much variability from one college to another in actual salary schedules, teaching loads, etc. For example, Shugrue (1970), in a national study of junior college English faculty, found considerable difference in their teaching loads, with 57 percent of the teachers averaging 13-15 contact hours per week, 32 percent averaging 9-12 hours, and 6 percent averaging 16 hours or more. The NEA (1971) found a similar variability in salary schedules used for the 1970-71 school year. Beginning salaries for junior college instructors with M.A.s ranged from $6,270 to $9,881, while beginning salaries for instructors with doctorates ranged from $7,225 to $14,700. Maximums for an M.A. ranged from $7,675 to $18,000; the maximum range for a doctorate was from $9,050 to $22,975.

The Sociological Approach

The sociological approach to the junior college environment is illustrated by two studies, both of which analyzed the dimension of power attached to the faculty position. Barrett (1969), in his investigation of North Carolina community colleges, found that power and job satisfaction seem to be related. When the faculty perceived an increase in their ability to make decisions concerning their college, their degree of job satisfaction was increased. Blackburn and Blysma (c. 1970) studied power as it is affected by collective bargaining. Their analysis of six Michigan junior colleges suggested that, since the onset of

collective bargaining in 1965, the decision making power of the faculty had increased in all areas relating to their welfare, such as class size, work load, and salaries. However, while it diffused the decision making process by involving faculty in decisions, collective bargaining also resulted in a more tightly structured bureaucracy, because it specifically defined faculty and administrator roles. Interestingly, the size of the institution and the affiliation of the bargaining unit were unrelated to the changes which occurred.

The Psychological Approach

The psychological approach has been taken by several analysts of the junior college environment. Garrison (1967), Koile and Tatem (1966), and Blai (1972) used the concepts of value and attitude. Garrison concluded that the attitudes of most junior college instructors are student centered and pragmatic. They evaluate their teaching according to the competency of their graduates and feel that the junior college should help students acquire skills useful to their careers. Koile and Tatem, in a comparison of junior college and four-year college faculty, substantiated Garrison's conclusion. Eighty-four percent of their subjects ranked teaching as their first preferred activity, as compared to far fewer at the four-year level. Further support of the importance of the student-centered values of junior college instructors was given in Blai's study (1972) at Harcum Junior College in Pennsylvania. The Harcum faculty rated the problems surrounding the effective teaching of students as their first concern.

The concept of personality was applied to the study of the junior college by Friedman (1965) and Park (1971). The application of this concept to the junior college environment assumed that "workers select work environments congenial to their work personalities; . . . it is [therefore] possible to distinguish among work personalities typically found in different work environments [Lofquist and Dawis, p. 39]." Friedman described two major personality types in his study of Missouri junior colleges. These were: the Pre-Organizational Type, who had come to the junior college from another educational setting, and the Organizational Tenure Type, who had come directly to the junior college for his first teaching experience. Park's study underscored the importance of personality, to the institutional environment contending that the teacher's personality affects the role he assumes within an environment and that the junior college itself has an "institutional personality that is a reflection of the . . . staff [p. 16]."

The intriguing idea of an "institutional personality" has been investigated using CUES (College and University Environmental Scales). Researchers (Wilson, 1969, Wilson and Dollar, 1970, Gelso and Sims, 1968) have suggested that there is an institutional personality, because the environment of a particular college is perceived in a remarkably similar way by different groups,including vocational and academic faculty and students. Paul Dressel (in Buros, 1971, pp. 108-112), however, disagreed, saying that this is true only at small uncomplicated campuses, but that at large heterogeneous institutions, each group sees the

college environment from its own point of view. Therefore, CUES can not be used to generalize about a total institution, but reveals something only about its parts.

The psychological approach to the analysis of the junior college work environment has been most often applied in studies that use Herzberg's and Maslow's concepts of job satisfaction. These studies assume that the work environment "provides a major means for satisfying more than just the most basic human needs (food, clothing, shelter) [Lofquist and Dawis, p. 40]." Various higher order or intrinsic needs may also be satisfied by the work setting. Therefore, these studies look at the junior college environment from the faculty member's point of view, in terms of how the environment satisfies or fails to satisfy his various needs. Studies of the major sources of junior college faculty job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are summarized in Part III.

III. JUNIOR COLLEGE FACULTY: JOB SATISFACTIONS AND DISSATISFACTIONS

On the whole, junior college faculties express satisfaction with their jobs. For example, more than 80 percent of the Minnesota teachers surveyed by Eckert and Williams (c. 1971) said that they liked their jobs. Ninety-five percent of the Florida faculty studied by Kurth and Mills (1968) said that they were happy with teaching as a career. Moreover, although comparisons between studies are tenuous, the situation seems to have improved since the late fifties, when only 25 percent of faculty in nine states (Medsker, 1960), and only 31 percent in Minnesota faculty (Eckert and Stecklein, 1959) expressed satisfaction with their jobs.

Most pleasure seems to be derived from working with students (the job content, to use Herzberg's term). Garrison (1967) found "genuine enthusiasm for teaching undergraduates and for working with them often on a person-to-person basis where individual students needed and sought help [p. 18]." Similarly, the California junior college faculty surveyed by Park (1971) felt that they had a high commitment to their students.

Although they generally like their jobs, junior college faculty members are concerned with several major problems. Their greatest dissatisfaction centers around what they see as obstacles to their primary goal: effective teaching. This frustration stems from too many students, too many classes, and too little time to do a really professional job. Garrison (1967) illustrated this point with some anecdotal evidence obtained through interviews with junior college instructors across the nation:

> History instructor: Teaching hours per week: 15. Student load: 150 . . . . Because we are, after all, a student centered college, I find most of my office hours taken up with individual students who need help, and I find it difficult to get much of my own work done. So there's 40 hours. Now suppose I give each student one three page paper a week

> and one brief objective quiz . . . and can correct a paper every seven minutes: that adds 17.5 hours. And let's say I correct a quiz every four minutes: that adds 10 hours. Add the division time and my advisor time for another 2 1/2 hours. Total time per week: 70 hours give or take a couple.
>
> Biology instructor: He has 23 contact hours a week, 15 of which are lecture classes, 8 are laboratories; a total of 218 students . . . . When asked whether he thought this sort of load would continue another year, he responded: "I certainly hope not. But I'm told that the budget is awfully tight--and our projections of enrollment show a big jump in student numbers next year [pp. 31-32].

Teachers seem concerned not only by the number of students they must meet, but also, by what they perceive as their students' overly heterogeneous backgrounds and limited abilities. Bushnell and Zagaris (1972) illustrated this point. When they asked instructors to rank their goals, the faculties' first priority was to help students respect their own limitations. Moreover, they wanted the goal of financial assistance to students to receive less attention than it presently enjoyed. From these data, Bushnell and Zagaris concluded that faculty would like less heterogeneity among students since teachers bear "the brunt of attempting to accommodate widely varying student needs [p. 61]." Siehr (1963) found the same desire among new faculty members whose major problems included "adapting instruction to individual differences, and dealing with students who required special attention to overcome deficiencies [as well as], challenging superior students." A similar problem reported by Burnett (1971) was that students did not compare academically with those at four-year colleges. The Harcum faculty (Blai, 1972) thought that their college would be a better place if "students were more inclined to study."

Just as they decry their students' lack of academic ability, faculty members sometimes feel that their own academic prowess is slipping. Because of this, another area of major concern is their sense of academic isolation, a feeling of being cut off from their subject area and from the university. Again, a poignant illustration of this point was given by Garrison's (1967) interview of an English teacher: "For the past couple of years, I have had the awful feeling that I am spending my accumulated intellectual capital faster than I can replace it. I just don't have any time to replace it, and I would love to [p. 38]." Similarly, Siehr (1963) found new faculty members complaining about their lack of time for scholarly study. Faculty members seemed to want offerings designed to help them teach at the undergraduate level, rather than theoretical or research oriented graduate courses designed for the Ph.D. (Garrison, p. 39).

The need for closer contact with the university is expressed in several ways. On the one hand, Eckert and Stecklein's (1959) subjects felt that the university faculty didn't understand the special problems of the junior college. Garrison's subjects said that their university colleagues sometimes treated them as "second cousins." On the other hand, while they did express resentment of the university, it was still looked upon as a good place to work. Applying Maslow's framework, perhaps this

means that for some faculty members' needs related to self esteem are better satisfied in a university rather than in a junior college environment. Garrison gave some support to this assertion by referring to the low self concept some junior college teachers expressed. They saw themselves as "the Ph.D. candidate who 'couldn't make it,' 'the former high school teacher who wants to go into higher education,' or 'the intellectual baby sitter' [p. 37]." Burnett (1971) reported that many teachers saw themselves at the bottom of the totem pole and aspired to move up. Unfortunately, data on the pervasiveness of this attitude are scarce.

While frustrations with teaching and feelings of isolation are major problems felt by junior college faculty, other important dissatisfactions are expressed, including inadequate economic benefits and problems with school administration. Data from several sources suggest that faculties are concerned about their salaries. For example, Crawfurd's (1971) description of Yavapai College indicated that the primary morale problem there was unrest surrounding salaries under a merit pay arrangement. One of the top priorities for change in Park's (1971) research was a higher salary schedule. A barometer of the uneasiness about salary is the increasing willingness of faculties to use collective bargaining as a tool to, among other things, increase salaries and fringe benefits. Seventy-seven percent of the junior college faculty contacted by the NEA (1971) supported the use of negotiations or collective bargaining for faculty salary and welfare policies. Sixty-nine percent said that they would strike under some conditions.

The movement toward collective bargaining may also be an indication of faculty discontent with the teacher-administrator relationship. Garrison (1967) pointed out that this relationship is changing:

> Historically, junior colleges have been "administrator colleges." For the most part, program initiation and development, curriculum pattern and offerings, and even (in some cases) the choice of instructional materials have been decided by deans and presidents; and then faculty have been hired to teach these programs. This was doubtless a natural development, since public junior college administrators would have closest contact with community leaders . .... and would therefore be able to design the local college's offerings to respond to community needs.
>
> However, . . . faculty are [now] having increasingly direct relationships with the community, through advisory committees and other mutual working devices . . . (p. 57).

Garrison concluded that because of increased faculty contact with the community, the traditional idea of the faculty role in college governance needed rethinking. As this rethinking occurred, faculty began to feel the need to develop more of a say in curriculum, teaching conditions, and other factors affecting both their welfare and that of their college. Studies (Macomb Community College, 1969; Blackburn and Blysma, c. 1970, and Lombardi, et al., 1971) suggest that collective bargaining is emerging as a mechanism to increase the faculty's role in governance, and that it

has resulted not only in increased participation in decision making, but also, in some cases, in improved relations with the administration.

As researchers studied the major satisfactions and dissatisfactions summarized above, they made some effort to find relationships between various classifications of teachers and the kinds of problems and priorities they perceived. Barber (1971), for example, in a survey concerning economic benefits, discovered that tenured faculty placed more importance on security benefits and less on salary supplements than did their non-tenured counterparts. His other data showed that faculty recruited from public schools placed less emphasis on research benefits than did those from business, college teaching, or recent college graduation. Kurth and Mills' (1968) comparison of satisfied and dissatisfied teachers indicated that the former tend to be female, older, married, and come from rural backgrounds. Sanders (1971), in a study of full-time faculty members of the University of Kentucky Community College System, found that teachers with high morale were more personally secure about themselves than those with low morale. These and similar studies are important because they suggest that both future research and attempts at implementation of job satisfaction findings may profit by taking faculty characteristics into account.

IV. SUMMARY

This Brief has reviewed some of the research done to date concerning job satisfaction of junior college faculty. It was assumed that job satisfaction is important not only for humanitarian reasons, but also because a satisfied faculty would create a better learning environment for students.

Part I of the Brief described four frameworks which have been applied to the analysis of job satisfaction: the traditional approach, the two-factor approach, the need hierarchy, and the cognitive dissonance approach. Part II described the junior college as a workplace from three points of view: the traditional, the sociological, and the psychological. Finally, Part III catalogued the major job satisfactions and dissatisfactions perceived by junior college faculty members.

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