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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to ascertain whether two-year college faculty are significantly different than faculties at research, doctoral granting, comprehensive, or liberal arts institutions on four measures of job dissatisfaction. Drawing from responses to the 1989 Survey Among College and University Faculty conducted by the Carnegie Foundation, the study compared faculty perceptions about the context of higher education in society; time constraints; salary; and thoughts about leaving the profession. A total of 510 two-year college faculty survey responses were compared with equivalent numbers of responses from each of eight institutional categories (Research types I and II, Doctoral Granting types I and II, Comprehensive types I and II, and Liberal Arts types I and II). Study results included the following: (1) two-year faculty were less confident about the quality of students and higher education's ability to help society than faculty at Liberal Arts I institutions; (2) two-year college faculty were less likely to perceive problems with time constraints than faculty at all other institutions; (3) two-year faculty respondents held significantly higher perceptions of their salary than other faculty; and (4) two-year college faculty did not hold significantly different thoughts about leaving the profession than other faculty, with all groups expressing little intention of leaving the profession. Data tables and 14 references are included. (PAA)

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY DISSATISFACTION:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY DISSATISFACTION:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Abstract

The literature suggests that post-secondary faculty are dissatisfied with their academic status. In considering all faculties, the community college faculty is alleged to be the most dissatisfied. The purpose of this study is to ascertain whether community college faculty are more or less dissatisfied than faculties at four-year institutions. This study utilizes 1989 Survey Among College and University Faculty items operationalized in four measures of dissatisfaction: (1) Context of Higher Education, (2) Time Constraints, (3) Salary, and (4) Thoughts About Leaving the Profession. Reliability procedures were conducted and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) techniques were used to test for significant differences on the constructs by faculty groups of the nine Carnegie classifications. Post-hocs were determined by the Tukey-HSD default value of $p < .05$. Two-year college faculty are less dissatisfied with their time constraints and salary than faculty groups at all four-year institutions, while they are more dissatisfied with the overall context of higher education than faculty at Liberal Arts I institutions. No significant differences existed on the thoughts about leaving the profession construct.

Community College Faculty Dissatisfaction
A Comparative Analysis

The community college system in America sought to establish an institution dedicated to training students for business and industry. "College going was for job getting, job certifying, job training" (Cohen & Brawer 1989, p. 21). However, the term "junior college" carried a set of pejorative meanings to the faculty at those institutions. There are numerous factors which add to the "junior" status of the community college: the initial and continued connection with the high schools, the lower qualifications to teach, the open door access policy, and the lack of "upper" division courses to name a few. Indeed, community college faculty serve at the bottom of the hierarchy of the system of higher education (Karabel, 1972).

Given this status, it is not surprising then to realize that faculty in two-year institutions rely on intrinsic factors as motivation for their work. Indeed, the American professoriate as a whole "are most influenced by their own internalized standards for professional performance" (Finkelstein, 1984 p. 220). According to Finkelstein's (1984) synthesis of research since World War II, American professors are satisfied with the "the nature of their work itself and the autonomy with which it is pursued, ... whereas their dissatisfaction centers largely on extrinsic factors..." (1984, p. 222). For example, Austin and Gamson (1983)

concluded that high levels of job satisfaction are related to intrinsic motivators such as rewards in doing academic work, recognition from peers and students for instruction. In addition, Bowen and Schuster (1986) concluded that American professors were generally "frustrated and dispirited" over extrinsic motivators such as low salaries, inadequate working conditions, lack of leadership, increasing work demands and career immobility.

However, Finkelstein (1984) notes that faculty at different institutions could exhibit significant differences among indicators of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The purpose of this study is to ascertain whether two-year college faculty are significantly different than faculties at research, doctoral granting, comprehensive or liberal arts institutions on four measures of dissatisfaction. The 1985 Carnegie faculty survey report entitled "The Faculty: Deeply Troubled" concluded, "[R]ebuilding the professoriate must rank high not only on higher education's agenda, but on the nation's as well" (p. 34). The study of faculty dissatisfaction is important. Our assumption is that if we can lessen or eliminate factors leading to dissatisfaction, higher education faculty will be less dissatisfied and:

a college with an enthusiastic, personally satisfied staff is more likely to further student development than one with an apathetic group of time-savers going through the motions of information transmitted in their teaching and little more (Cohen, 1974 as cited in Moxley, 1977; p. 6).

The importance of faculty satisfaction/dissatisfaction enters into all aspects of the effectiveness of institutions. The overall satisfaction of any employee affects her/his quality of work and

the effectiveness of the organization. Stuntebeck (1982) has shown job satisfaction to be significantly correlated with student perceptions of teaching effectiveness. McGee and Ford (1987) found that faculty productivity and turnover are also related to satisfaction. They encouraged college leaders to identify strategies to encourage scholarly activity and keep the faculty challenged within their institutions. However, in these times of increasing accountability and retrenchment, a study focused on the factors related to dissatisfaction may provide clues as to how we can decrease dissatisfaction within the professoriate.

Conceptual Framework and Related Theories

Frederick Herzberg's (1959) dual factor theory emphasizes the influence of two factors related to satisfaction: motivators (job content) and hygiene (job context). Motivators (achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement) contribute to satisfaction, while hygiene factors (interpersonal relations with superior and peers, policy and administration, and working conditions) contribute to dissatisfaction.

The dual factor theory has been applied to faculty at both four-year and two-year institutions (Moxley, 1977; Wille and Strechlein, 1982; Piland & Frase, 1992). For example, Moxley (1977) validated the dual factor theory on faculty teaching higher education:

The hygiene factors of "policies and practices", "salary/budget", "supervision-technical", and the "time element" were strong contributors to dissatisfaction. The motivators of "achievement", "recognition" and "growth opportunities" were strongly associated with satisfying experiences (p. 45).

In related research Mobley's (1977) work suggests that there are several links in the chain of job satisfaction-dissatisfaction. Initially, one evaluates the existing job and determines a level of job satisfaction-dissatisfaction. Next, this "experienced" level leads to thoughts of quitting. Finally, these thoughts of quitting lead to a decision to quit or stay on the job.

The focus of this paper is on the factors which lead to dissatisfaction. The assumption being that these are the factors upon which administrators can affect change. Therefore, two scales and a single item were utilized to measure Herzberg's hygiene factors associated with faculty dissatisfaction across institutions of the nine Carnegie classifications. Another scale was developed to measure the faculties' intent to leave the profession with regards to Mobley's work.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Sample

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching conducted a two stage, stratified, random sample design to collect data through the 1989 Survey Among College and University Faculty. Initially, institutions were selected and then faculty within each institution were designated to receive the questionnaire. One significant change was made in the data collection. Previous Carnegie survey samples were weighted: seventy-five percent (75%): four year institutions and twenty-five percent (25%): two-year colleges. The 1989 sample surveyed nearly 34 institutions from each of the nine Carnegie classifications. The overall response

rate was 54.5%. The faculty responses for each Carnegie type institution follow.

Research I:	618
Research II:	649
Doctoral Granting I:	668
Doctoral Granting II:	647
Comprehensive I:	623
Comprehensive II:	589
Liberal Arts I:	691
Liberal Arts II:	455
Two-Year:	510

Variables

One scale was developed to measure the faculties' perceptions of the overall **context of higher education** using questions 45:1 through 45:4. The Cronbach Alpha was .72. Respectively, the items were:

I am less confident today than I used to be about the capacity of higher education help make a better society.

Too many students ill-suited to academic life are now enrolling in college and universities.

The United States is creating an overtrained workforce in terms of available jobs.

There has been a widespread lowering of standards in American higher education.

Another scale was created to measure the faculties' perceptions of their **time constraints** using questions 45:5 through 45:7. The Cronbach Alpha was .70. Respectively, the items were:

My job is the source of considerable personal strain.

I tend to subordinate all aspects of my life to my work.

I hardly ever get time to give a piece of work the attention it deserves.

Question 40:1 measured a major extrinsic motivator, *salary*, which has been established by Herzberg (1959), Eckert and Williams (1972), Bowen and Schuster (1986), and Willie and Stecklein (1982); "Are you satisfied with your own salary?".

The final scale measured the faculties' *thoughts about leaving the profession* using questions 45:12 through 45:16. The Cronbach Alpha was .86. Respectively, the items were:

If I had it to do over again, I would not become a college teacher.

I am considering entering another line of work because prospects for academic advancement seem limited now.

I may leave the profession within the next five years.

I often wish I had entered another profession.

I feel trapped in a profession with limited opportunities for advancement.

Analysis

Analysis of Variance procedures were used to test for significant differences between institution types on the four dissatisfaction constructs. The tests revealed that significant differences at the $p < .001$ level existed on all four dissatisfaction constructs. Tukey-HSD Post-Hocs were used to determine which institutions were significantly different from others at the $p < .05$ level.

RESULTS

Because the focus of this study was on the differences between the faculty at two-year colleges and those at four year institutions, only those differences will be presented here. Figure 1 presents the sums of squares, f-values and probability

values for each ANOVA. Group means are presented in Tables 1-4.

{Insert Figure 1 here}

Context of Higher Education

Two-year respondents held significantly lower perceptions of the general context of higher education than faculty at the Liberal Arts I institutions. Thus, two-year faculty were less confident about the quality of students and higher education's ability to help society.

{Insert Table 1 here}

Time Constraints

Two-year respondents held significantly higher perceptions of the time constraints than faculties from all other institutions. Thus, two-year faculty are less likely to perceive problems with time constraints than faculty groups at all other institutions.

{Insert Table 2 here}

Salary

Two-year respondents held significantly higher perceptions of their salary than faculty groups from all other institutions. Thus, two-year college faculty are less likely to perceive problems with their salary levels.

{Insert Table 3 here}

Thoughts about Leaving the Profession

Two-year respondents did not hold significantly different thoughts about leaving the profession than faculty groups at any other institution. Thus, two-year faculty were neither more or less likely to consider leaving the profession than faculty groups

at any other institution.

{Insert Table 4 here}

DISCUSSION

The major question asked in this study was whether two-year college faculty are more or less dissatisfied that their counterparts at four-year institutions. Two-year college faculty are less dissatisfied with their time constraints and salary than faculties at all four-year institution types, while they are more dissatisfied with the overall context of higher education than faculty at Liberal Arts I institutions. Furthermore, in spite of the overall dissatisfaction of all groups on these three constructs, faculties at all institutions are not intending to leave the profession. These findings mirror the results of the 1985 survey conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1985).

What might explain these findings? The finding that two-year faculty are more dissatisfied with the context of higher education than faculty at Liberal Arts I institutions may be confounded by the selectivity of those institutions. The individual items referred to the ill-preparedness of students, the lowering of academic standards, and the lack of higher education to help society. Certainly, the two-year faculty are much more likely to serve educationally and economically disadvantaged students which contributes to their dissatisfaction with the overall context of higher education.

One might suggest that the singular focus on teaching of two-

year college faculty may account for their lower levels of dissatisfaction than faculty members at four-year institutions. For example, the higher perception regarding adequacy of salary levels may be based on their singular duty of teaching and their lower levels of degree attainment. Four-year faculty may perceive their salary levels as poor or fair based on their multiple duties of teaching and research and their capital investment in attaining higher level degrees. Also, the two-year faculty's lower level of dissatisfaction with time constraints may be related to their singular focus on teaching.

Most interesting, however, is the finding that in spite of the dissatisfaction of faculty members at all institutions on the above constructs, no intent to leave the profession is evident in any of the group means. Thus, the faculty respondents were intent on staying within the profession in spite of perceived dissatisfaction with the context of higher education, the time constraints experienced, and the inadequacy of salaries.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are three primary areas which need further consideration and research. First, the finding that no faculty groups exhibited intentions to leave the profession implies that the autonomy and nature of academic work appear to be more important than the contextual difficulties encountered. Does this mean that the intrinsic factors of peer and student recognition of individual faculty member's academic work outweigh the extrinsic factors which produce job dissatisfaction? Further research must include

measures of both job content and job context and must gauge the relative importance of each upon the overall evaluation of the faculty regarding intent to leave the profession.

Secondly, the finding that two-year faculty were more dissatisfied with the context of higher education than faculty at Liberal Arts I institutions implies that the "open door" access policies of two-year colleges has resulted in the additional responsibility of widespread remediation. The increased remedial function may be negatively impacting the faculty's perspective regarding student preparedness and higher education's ability to serve non-traditional and traditional student needs as well as the needs of society. Thus, the question to be considered and researched further is: how does the comprehensive mission and the "open door" policy of the two-year college affect faculty's satisfaction-dissatisfaction with their academic work.

Finally, what can administrators do to relieve the sources of faculty dissatisfaction? It is clear that higher education administrators cannot apply the same means of improvement across all institutional types. Our findings would suggest that administrators at two-year institutions should focus on the assessment and placement of entering students to increase the preparedness of students to perform at the college level. Also, the community colleges should extend their cooperative work with district high schools and elementary schools to improve the preparedness of students. Our findings would suggest that four-year college administrators focus on alleviating time constraints

and reducing faculty concerns over salary levels. Also, all administrators should be concerned with faculty members' lack of confidence in the preparedness of students and the professions' ability to prepare these students to meet society's demands.

FIGURE 1

SUMS OF SQUARES, F-VALUES & PROBABILITY VALUES

ANOVA 1: Summary Values for Context of Higher Education.

Main Effect	Sums of Squares	F Value	Probability Value
Carnegie Type	42.2166	7.59	.0000

ANOVA 2: Summary Values for Time Constraints.

Main Effect	Sums of Squares	F Value	Probability Value
Carnegie Type	47.6190	5.67	.0000

ANOVA 3: Summary Values for Salary.

Main Effect	Sums of Squares	F Value	Probability Value
Carnegie Type	283.4644	46.20	.0000

ANOVA 4: Summary Values for Thoughts About Leaving the Profession.

Main Effect	Sums of Squares	F Value	Probability Value
Carnegie Type	35.4894	4.19	.0001

GROUP MEANS

TABLE 1

Context of Higher Education

	NOT CONFIDENT			CONFIDENT	
	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00
Research I			2.97		
Research II			2.93		
Doctoral Granting I			2.89		
Doctoral Granting II			2.86		
Comprehensive I			2.77		
Comprehensive II			2.84		
Liberal Arts I			3.05*		
Liberal Arts II			2.75		
Two-Year			2.82		

* SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM TWO-YEAR GROUP



GROUP MEANS

TABLE 2

Time Constraints

	CONSTRAINED			NOT CONSTRAINED	
	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00
Research I			3.00*		
Research II			3.02*		
Doctoral Granting I			3.09*		
Doctoral Granting II			3.00*		
Comprehensive I			3.00*		
Comprehensive II			3.09*		
Liberal Arts I		2.99*			
Liberal Arts II			3.03*		
Two-Year					3.32

* SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM TWO-YEAR GROUP

GROUP MEANS

TABLE 3

	<i>Salary</i>			
	POOR 1.00	FAIR 2.00	GOOD 3.00	EXCELLENT 4.00
Research I			2.31*	
Research II			2.23*	
Doctoral Granting I			2.22*	
Doctoral Granting II			2.07*	
Comprehensive I			2.22*	
Comprehensive II		1.87*		
Liberal Arts I			2.34*	
Liberal Arts II		1.69*		
Two-Year			2.57	

* SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM TWO-YEAR GROUP



GROUP MEANS

TABLE 4

Thoughts about Leaving the Profession

	LEAVE			STAY	
	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00
Research I				4.04	
Research II				3.98	
Doctoral Granting I				3.92	
Doctoral Granting II				3.85	
Comprehensive I				3.88	
Comprehensive II				3.84	
Liberal Arts I				4.09	
Liberal Arts II				3.89	
Two-Year				3.94	

* SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM TWO-YEAR GROUP

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