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Dimensions of Part-Time Faculty Job Satisfaction: Development and Factor Analysis of a Survey Instrument

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Abstract

The purpose of this research study was to develop a reliable and valid survey instrument for assessing the satisfaction of part-time faculty teaching in continuing higher education at Brigham Young University (BYU). This article describes the reliability and validity of the instrument that may be used by other administrators and researchers interested in evaluating part-time faculty job satisfaction at their respective institutions. The researchers hypothesized that dimensions of overall job satisfaction (adapted from the Herzberg model) would be measured by subscales on the survey instrument. The factor analysis provided empirical support for eight dimensions. The failure of two subscales in the factor analysis (status and job security) and one subscale on the test of internal reliability (challenge) will necessitate a revision of applicable survey questions.

Introduction

Much research has been conducted concerning job satisfaction of full-time faculty as demonstrated in literature reviews in works by Hagedorn (2000) and Tack and Patitu (1992). The ongoing research shows several studies completed more recently (Ambrose, Huston, & Norman, 2005; Isaac & Boyer, 2007; Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Reybold, 2005).

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However, peer- reviewed studies on part-time faculty job satisfaction are limited to just a few (Antony & Valadez, 2002; Feldman & Turnley, 2001; Townsend & Hauss, 2003; Truell, Price, & Joyner, 1998). This is the case despite the fact that "part-time faculty are a permanent and important part of teaching and learning at community, junior, and vocational colleges; four-year colleges; and universities" (Baron-Nixon, 2007, p. 1).

Prior studies on part-time faculty job satisfaction have relied on data from the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) or other in-house survey instruments. Despite poor reliability, institutional instruments were comprised primarily of single survey questions to measure job satisfaction constructs with the exception of one summated rating scale of overall job satisfaction used in a study by Feldman and Turnley (2001). Antony and Valadez (2002) were able to develop three summated rating scales using the NSOPF data: satisfaction with students, satisfaction with personal autonomy, and satisfaction with demands and rewards. Other standardized surveys such as the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey were not designed with summated rating scales to measure part-time faculty job satisfaction. Several subscales on the National Survey of Faculty sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation could be utilized in future studies. However, it is lengthy, and many questions are not applicable to part-time faculty.

Hill (1986) states that "there are many well-known measures of job satisfaction in use in business and industry . . . ; [nevertheless], they do not seem to be wholly applicable to the work situation of faculty in higher education" (p. 39). Likewise, while instruments to evaluate full-time faculty job satisfaction are available, they lack relevance for part-time faculty on several fronts. For example, questions for full-time faculty about tenure, rank, grants, service responsibilities, and research facilities or expectations do not apply to part-time faculty. Questions regarding various aspects of collegiality and shared governance are worded in ways that do not fit part-time faculty. Since they are often residents in the community and have not relocated to obtain the job, questions about the desirability of the surrounding community are rarely relevant to part-time faculty job satisfaction. As well, questions about balancing family and work life are not as applicable because, by definition, part-time faculty should be employed only part-time.

The purpose of this research study was to develop a reliable and valid survey instrument for assessing the satisfaction of part-time faculty teaching in continuing higher education at Brigham Young University

(BYU). This article describes the reliability and validity of the instrument that may be used by other administrators and researchers interested in evaluating part- time faculty job satisfaction at their respective institutions. An analysis of the survey results is not presented in this article but is discussed in another publication (see Hoyt et al., 2008).

Methodology

Survey Development

In order to more accurately measure constructs and achieve greater reliability and consistency over time, 12 summated rating scales on factors related to part-time faculty job satisfaction were developed using Herzberg's theoretical model. Herzberg (1968) categorized the needs of employees into two categories: (a) hygiene factors that extrinsically bring dissatisfaction and (b) motivating factors that intrinsically motivate employees. The “hygiene factors include company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security” (p. 57). The motivator factors are “achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement” (p. 57).

A few questions were modified from other instruments, but the large majority of questions on the instrument were developed by the researchers. The instrument utilized a 6-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Somewhat Agree, 5 = Agree, 6 = Strongly Agree). To control for acquiescence, which is "the tendency for people to agree with all items regardless of content," several negatively worded questions were included on the instrument (Spector, 1992, p. 12). The instrument was refined with the help of part-time faculty who pilot tested the survey during July 2007.

Because "a construct cannot stand alone, but only takes on meaning as part of a broader theoretical network," each set of four questions was carefully mapped against Herzberg's theoretical model of job satisfaction with two construct categories: hygiene factors and positive motivators (Spector, 1992, p. 13). Hygiene factors were autonomy, class facilities, faculty support, pay, job security, quality of students, status, and teaching schedule. Although pay, status, and job security relate directly to the Herzberg model, other variables could be explained further. The quality of classroom facilities, quality of students, and convenience of teaching

schedule are variables measuring working conditions. Autonomy is associated with supervision in the Herzberg model, measuring the extent to which part-time faculty members are closely supervised or given greater independence. Faculty support represents interpersonal relationships within the model.

Positive motivators were challenge, recognition, and work preference. Challenge and recognition correspond directly with the Herzberg model. Work preference measured the type of work in the model (whether part-time faculty preferred teaching over other types of work). Single questions were used to measure the constructs of achievement (engaging in collaborative research), responsibility (serving on academic committees), and advancement (desiring a full- time teaching position).

Survey Distribution and Sample

After the Institutional Review Board at Brigham Young University authorized the study, the online instrument was distributed by the university's Office of Institutional Assessment and Analysis to 762 part-time faculty members via a hyperlinked, e-mail invitation. The initial mailing and two follow-up reminders were sent over a 3-week period ending in August 2007, and 346 part-time faculty members (45%) completed the survey.

The survey respondents represented all colleges and schools at the university and had similar population demographics. Respondents were largely full-time working professionals (45%), homemakers (18%), graduate students (18%), and retired workers (5%). They taught a median of three courses per calendar year, were 59% male, and were a median of 42 years of age. About 45% had a full-time job, 20% worked another part-time job (fewer than 35 hours each week), and 35% had no other work.

Statistical Tests

All statistical tests were conducted using SPSS 15.0. The summated rating scales were first analyzed for reliability with the Cronbach's Alpha test (Alpha for short); Alpha estimates internal consistency reliability by determining how all of the items in the instrument relate to each other and to the total instrument. The Alpha value required to "demonstrate internal consistency" was set at .7, following guidelines established by Spector (1992, p. 32). Negatively worded questions were reverse scored as required

for the statistical test. The survey sample size more than met the minimum requirement of "100 to 200 respondents" for an item analysis (Spector, 1992, p. 29).

In factor analysis, "groups of items that tend to be inter-related with one another more strongly than they relate to other groups of items will tend to form factors" (Spector, 1992, p. 53). The factor analysis for this research was conducted to determine whether specific questions (items) would load heavily on the factors or constructs as hypothesized and load poorly on other factors. Factor loading coefficients represent the strength of the association of the question or item with the factor, and the loadings were interpreted using cutoffs established by Comrey (1992): .71 or higher, excellent; .63 to .70 very good, .55 to .62 good, .45 to .54 fair, and .30 to .44 poor.

The inclusion of 346 respondents with 40 questions or variables in the current study also met standards for sufficient sample size to conduct a factor analysis. Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999) recommend that researchers have 150 to 300 cases for factor analysis. Bryant and Yarnold (1995) indicate that the ratio of subjects to variables should be no lower than five to one. The ratio for the current study is eight to one.

"Several types of stopping rules have been developed . . . [to] determine the number of factors to extract (i.e., to retain) in a given analysis" (Bryant & Yarnold, 1995, pp. 102-103). Researchers have based this decision on the percentage of the variance accounted for in the model, eigenvalues of at least one, the average eigenvalue, scree plots, parallel analysis, the minimum average partial criterion, a priori hypotheses about the number of factors, and whether or not factors are meaningful, with various arguments for and against each criterion (Grimm & Yarnold, 1995; Lance, Butts & Michels, 2006; Norusis, 1994; O'Connor, 2000; Rencher, 1998; Spector, 1992). Ultimately, some level of "subjective judgment is necessary to determine the number of factors and their interpretation" (Spector, 1992, p. 55). Decisions for the current study were made by examining eigenvalues, scree plots, and the percent of the variance, but they also relied heavily on a priori hypotheses developed from the Herzberg model.

The factor analysis incorporated Principal Axis Factoring extraction and Varimax rotation. Methods also involved specifying the number of factors based on a priori hypotheses as well as using the SPSS default of an eigenvalue of at least one. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant, which indicated that the population correlation matrix was unlikely to be an identity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was

.867 or "meritorious to marvelous" (Norusis, 1994, p. 53).

In the interest of examining the effects of various statistical methods, the researchers ran several exploratory factor analyses with alternative extraction methods (i.e., Generalized Least Squares, Maximum Likelihood, Alpha, and Image) and rotation options (i.e., Quartimax, Equimax, and Promax). The rotated matrices showed small differences in the scores, and questions loaded in a very similar manner on factors resulting in no substantial differences in the interpretation of results. According to Rencher (1998), "if a model is valid . . . , most methods yield similar loadings at least after rotation" (p. 385).

Findings

Reliability of the Summated Rating Scales

The Alpha value of .85 supported the reliability or internal consistency of the summated rating scale measuring overall part-time faculty job satisfaction (see insert). This construct was only analyzed with Cronbach's Alpha and not factor analysis because each of the other subscales measured satisfaction with specific aspects or dimensions of a part-time faculty position that would contribute to overall job satisfaction.

Nearly all the other summated rating subscales measuring various dimensions of overall job satisfaction had high alpha values (see Table 1). However, the subscale measuring the variable *challenge* was not included in the table as reliable since it had a low Alpha value of .60. In retrospect, the word *challenge* seems unclear in terms of how part-time faculty may interpret its meaning. It can have negative connotations such as struggling to meet teaching responsibilities and difficulty in dealing with students, or it can have positive associations such as the work engaging instructors and making full use of faculty skills and abilities. Future work is needed to more clearly delineate this construct. The subscale for *work preference* was retained because the alpha value was nearly .70; however, additional questions could be experimented with in future studies to increase internal reliability.

Validation of the Summated Rating Subscales

In factor analysis, "items that inter-correlate relatively high are assumed to reflect the same construct . . . , and items that inter-correlate

Table 1. Ten Dimensions of Overall Job Satisfaction

Dimension	Items	Alpha
Autonomy	1-4	.82
Teaching Schedule	5-8	.87
Pay	9-12	.94
Work Preference	13-16	.69
Faculty Support	17-20	.86
Recognition	21-24	.72
Status	25-28	.81
Class Facilities	29-32	.85
Quality of Students	33-36	.87
Job Security	37-40	.71

relatively low are assumed to reflect different constructs" (Spector, 1992, p. 54). The questions for the subscales of satisfaction with pay, class facilities, quality of students, and work preference had good to excellent loadings on the intended factors with no loadings on any of the other factors (see Table 2). The questions measuring satisfaction with teaching schedule also had very good to excellent loadings on the intended factor. Questions for the factor autonomy had good to excellent loadings. Factor loadings were also very good to excellent for questions on the level of faculty support, and two of these questions (numbers 18 and 19) had only poor to fair cross-loadings with the first factor in the rotated matrix.

Despite these positive results, the status and recognition questions loaded on the same factor, suggesting that the constructs should be combined into one subscale. While re-examining the questions, the researchers realized that questions did overlap and that the status subscale included questions measuring recognition. It was difficult to clearly delineate the two constructs, and there did not appear to be a substantial difference between status and recognition. A new and parsimonious subscale is recommended, using questions 23-26, each having very good to excellent loadings on the factor. These same questions also maximized the value on the Alpha test (.87) when dropping the other questions. It is possible that the construct of status may be more accurately measured by asking questions about the importance of part-time faculty jobs relative to other jobs on campus, but this would need to be done in future studies.

Table 2. Rotated Factor Matrix in Order of Eigenvalues

Item	Auto.	Teach	Pay	Work	Faculty	Rec/Stat	Class	Quality	Job
1	0.58	0.18	0.04	0.14	0.15	0.08	0.07	0.09	-0.02
2	0.86	0.07	0.03	0.05	0.06	0.08	0.09	0.09	-0.02
3	0.87	0.06	-0.02	0.09	0.06	0.06	0.09	0.12	0.05
4	0.61	0.02	0.04	-0.10	0.02	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.09
5	0.06	0.83	0.06	0.04	0.09	0.10	0.11	0.06	0.03
6	0.15	0.79	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.17	0.09	0.11	0.06
7	0.09	0.74	0.12	0.14	0.08	0.16	0.13	0.09	0.04
8	0.05	0.66	0.22	0.05	-0.05	0.15	-0.02	0.07	0.17
9	0.04	0.11	0.88	-0.04	0.06	0.22	0.07	0.08	0.03
10	0.00	0.17	0.87	0.05	0.10	0.24	0.08	0.07	0.07
11	0.02	0.14	0.89	-0.01	0.07	0.22	0.08	0.11	0.04
12	0.04	0.07	0.78	-0.06	0.02	0.18	0.00	0.05	0.04
13	0.09	0.09	-0.05	0.66	0.12	0.12	0.10	0.17	-0.12
14	0.15	0.18	0.04	0.57	0.14	0.25	0.11	0.22	-0.10
15	-0.01	0.00	-0.03	0.68	0.10	0.07	0.06	0.03	-0.01
16	0.00	0.11	-0.04	0.57	-0.02	-0.07	-0.03	0.06	0.18
17	0.02	0.07	0.14	0.08	0.66	0.26	0.04	0.04	-0.02
18	0.16	-0.01	0.04	0.05	0.63	0.51	0.07	0.04	-0.05
19	0.16	0.06	0.04	0.13	0.69	0.31	0.05	0.13	0.08
20	0.09	0.11	0.02	0.13	0.82	0.19	0.16	0.07	0.02
21	-0.03	0.14	0.16	0.06	0.17	0.41	0.05	-0.03	0.03
22	0.06	0.01	0.12	-0.02	0.06	0.40	-0.05	0.10	0.12
23	0.02	0.07	0.09	0.10	0.28	0.67	0.13	0.16	0.08
24	0.02	0.12	0.18	-0.01	0.25	0.71	0.17	0.03	0.06
25	0.10	0.17	0.17	0.09	0.15	0.80	0.06	0.11	0.06
26	0.13	0.19	0.19	0.14	0.19	0.64	0.11	0.08	0.03
27	0.10	0.25	0.21	0.36	0.04	0.50	0.15	0.15	-0.06
28	0.03	0.11	0.10	0.37	0.13	0.34	0.22	0.20	-0.04
29	0.04	0.12	0.09	0.15	0.09	-0.02	0.81	0.15	0.02
30	0.10	0.05	0.02	-0.04	0.10	0.10	0.75	0.12	-0.01
31	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.00	0.05	0.20	0.83	0.11	0.05
32	0.09	0.09	0.06	0.29	0.03	0.10	0.56	0.14	0.05
33	0.11	0.16	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.22	0.12	0.77	-0.01
34	0.14	0.08	0.09	0.19	0.12	0.08	0.22	0.73	0.01
35	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.23	0.18	0.19	0.23	0.69	0.07
36	0.09	0.01	0.10	0.08	-0.03	0.00	0.07	0.76	0.13
37	0.07	0.36	0.08	0.19	-0.05	0.19	0.09	-0.02	0.38
38	0.17	0.34	0.05	0.12	-0.03	0.17	0.04	-0.03	0.46
39	0.01	0.11	0.10	-0.01	0.07	0.04	0.05	0.02	0.67
40	-0.01	-0.03	-0.02	-0.08	-0.01	0.07	-0.02	0.13	0.82

For the job security subscale, two of the questions only had a poor or fair loading on the intended factor. These same questions cross-loaded poorly on the teaching schedule construct. The remaining two questions had very good to excellent loadings on the job security factor; nevertheless, Velicer and Fava (1998) state that researchers should not interpret factors with fewer than three items or questions. Thus, this subscale failed the factor analysis.

The job security construct may be worth exploring further because part-time faculty members, who have taught for several years, are given priority teaching courses or senior status at some institutions. This may contribute to a personal sense of job security in this context. Institutions may also routinely lack full-time faculty in particular subjects, resulting in an ongoing need for part-time instructors in specific areas. On the other hand, part-time instructors lack tenure, and the question arises as to whether job security really applies to them.

Conclusion

The researchers hypothesized that 11 dimensions of job satisfaction and the subscale measuring overall job satisfaction would be reliable and valid (a total of 12 subscales). The item analysis and factor analysis provided empirical support for eight dimensions and the overall job satisfaction subscale. The failure of two subscales in the factor analysis (job security and status) and one subscale on the test of internal reliability (job challenge) may be caused by a need to improve survey questions. The hygiene factor of job security may not be applicable to part-time faculty.

Although the current study considered several dimensions of part-time faculty job satisfaction, the work is incomplete. Researchers conducting future studies could explore other potential dimensions of job satisfaction such as administrative policies, campus climate, academic freedom, altruistic needs, and intellectual stimulation. Rather than using single questions for the constructs of achievement, responsibility, and personal growth or advancement, other researchers may develop additional summated rating subscales for these factors.

Part-time faculty job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct, and additional studies are needed to better understand the needs of part-time faculty and refine instruments that will measure their job satisfaction. Given the reliance of higher education on part-time faculty and the limited

research on part-time faculty job satisfaction, further study is warranted.

Despite the possibility of improving the instrument by adding new subscales, the survey measures a variety of reliable and valid dimensions of job satisfaction that colleges may use to improve the work environment for part-time faculty. After administering the survey, the values on questions for each dimension and for the overall job satisfaction construct can be summed and divided by four (number of questions per dimension or construct) to examine how the institution scores on the instrument. The institution can view areas where it is rated lower and in need of improvement and areas where it scores high. Scores in the range of 4-6 are on the positive end of the scale; however, a score of 4, Somewhat Agree, uses wording that indicates some hesitancy to rate the area well. Any average scores at about a 4 or lower on the 6-point scale would be areas of possible improvement. Obviously, negatively worded questions would need to be reverse scored when following these guidelines. It would be helpful to include an open-ended question on the survey requesting feedback on how to improve. If an institution scores low on a dimension, open-ended comments that relate to the low-rated dimension can provide more descriptive detail and should receive increased attention to make program changes. Institutions may also add additional faculty demographic and background questions.

The researchers have published the results of using the instrument at a major university and found it to be very helpful in identifying policies and other aspects of the work environment that could be improved for part-time faculty (Hoyt et al., 2008). Readers are referred to this second publication for these results. The institution scored lower on part-time faculty recognition (4.3), faculty support (4.3), and honorarium or pay (3.9); however, results may vary by type of institution. The second article also contains a comprehensive literature review in the implications for practice section that provides a wide variety of ideas for improving the work environment for part-time faculty.

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Dimensions of Part-Time Faculty Job Satisfaction

Directions: Read each item and rate it using the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Somewhat Agree, 5 = Agree, 6 = Strongly Agree.

Overall Job Satisfaction		
1 .	I am completely satisfied with my job teaching courses as a part-time faculty.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2.	Based on my experience teaching as a part-time faculty, I would highly recommend the job to others.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3.	Considering everything, I have an excellent job as a part-time faculty teaching courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4.	I am dissatisfied with aspects of my job as a part-time faculty.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Recognition		
5.	I am often thanked for teaching here.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6.	I feel well respected as a part-time faculty.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7.	Part-time faculty are recognized for their teaching contribution.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8.	A part-time faculty job is a valued position.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Work Preference		
9.	I really enjoy teaching courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10.	I almost always look forward to teaching classes.	1 2 3 4 5 6

11.	If I had the choice, I would rather teach than do other types of work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12.	I would prefer to do work other than teaching.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Autonomy		
13.	I am completely satisfied with the level of autonomy that I have in teaching my courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
14.	I have a lot of freedom to develop and modify course content to meet the needs of my students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15.	I have a satisfactory level of autonomy to select material and texts for my courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16.	I would like more freedom to determine the content, materials, and texts for my courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Classroom Facilities		
17.	The classroom space where I teach classes is excellent.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18.	The classrooms in which I teach are very well maintained and clean.	1 2 3 4 5 6
19.	The classrooms in which I teach have up-to-date audiovisual equipment, computer connections, and equipment.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20.	Space for my classrooms is well designed to meet my teaching and my students' learning needs.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Faculty Support		
21.	I receive very helpful advice and support from academic department faculty to improve my teaching.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22.	Faculty in my academic department(s) are always available and accessible to me when I need assistance.	1 2 3 4 5 6

23.	Full-time faculty in my academic department(s) take a sincere interest in my success as a teacher.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24.	I feel very comfortable requesting assistance from academic department faculty when I have questions about my courses or students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Honorarium		
25.	The payment I receive for teaching classes is adequate.	1 2 3 4 5 6
26.	I feel that I am well compensated for my teaching.	1 2 3 4 5 6
27.	I am paid fairly for the amount of work I do to teach courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
28.	I am dissatisfied with the pay I receive for teaching courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Quality of Students		
29.	I am completely satisfied with the quality and caliber of students in my classes.	1 2 3 4 5 6
30.	Students in my classes are very well prepared academically to take my courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
31.	Students here are highly engaged and very interested in their academic work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
32.	Students lack motivation or the academic skills to succeed in my courses.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Teaching Schedule		
33.	The times scheduled for my class(es) have been convenient to my schedule.	1 2 3 4 5 6
34.	I have been very satisfied with my teaching schedule.	1 2 3 4 5 6

35.	The times that I teach my classes work well with my personal or other family commitments.	1 2 3 4 5 6
36.	I have to teach at times that are inconvenient for me.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Note: When conducting surveys, items should be randomly arranged rather than organized by construct.

Scoring

The Dimensions of Part-Time Faculty Job Satisfaction contains both positive and negative items. The negative items are items numbered 4, 12, 16, 28, 32, and 36. For these negative items, assign the following values: 6 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Disagree, 4 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Agree, 2 = Agree, 1 = Strongly Agree.

Scores for each of the 8 dimensions and for the separate measure of overall job satisfaction are calculated by summing the value of the four items and then dividing the total by 4 (the number of questions for each subscale). The 8 dimensions can be correlated with overall job satisfaction or be used to predict overall job satisfaction as a dependent variable.

This instrument should be cited as follows:
Hoyt, J. E., Howell, S. L., & Eggett, D. (2007). Dimensions of part-time faculty job satisfaction: Development and factor analysis of a survey instrument. *Journal of Adult Education, 36*(2), pp. 23-34, Insert.