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A Study of Industrial Arts Teacher Job Satisfaction

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A STUDY OF
INDUSTRIAL ARTS TEACHER
JOB SATISFACTION

A Research Project

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School
Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

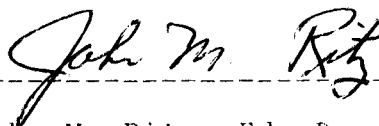
by

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May 1987

This research paper was prepared under the direction of the instructor in Problems in Vocational Education, VTE 636. It is submitted to the Graduate Program Director for Vocational and Technical Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The City of Virginia Beach, Virginia takes great pride in its public school system. Because of this, it is only right that everything should be done to improve the outlook and satisfaction of the Industrial Arts teachers that are employed at this time in order to keep them. There should also be an ongoing commitment to searching out and hiring good teachers.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study was to assess the Industrial Arts teachers', employed in the public school system of Virginia Beach, concern regarding job satisfaction. Information obtained from this study will be used to separate and point out major and minor factors which influence the Industrial Arts teacher's decisions concerning job satisfaction, working conditions, input on decision-making and future outlook in the teaching field.

Research Questions

The research questions were as follow:

1. Are Industrial Arts teachers lacking in job satisfaction?
2. Are the laboratories over-crowded for the jobs

being assigned to those facilities?

3. Do the teachers feel they have enough input into curricula and decision-making policies?

4. Do the teachers lack supervision?

Background and Significance of the Study

Nationally, public schools have a problem getting and keeping qualified teachers. On most any given day, one can read in daily newspapers of unrest among teachers. Teachers across the nation are going out on strike for one reason or another. Those strikes cause unknown numbers of lost teaching hours and unrest for the parents. Because the state has a law against teachers' strikes, we do not have this problem in Virginia. That does not mean, however, that the teachers are all completely satisfied.

One problem that faces the State of Virginia and the City of Virginia Beach is the shortage of qualified Industrial Arts teachers. Because of their training and education, it is very easy for Industrial Arts trained personnel to go directly from college to industry or to shift from teaching to jobs in industry at a much higher pay scale. According to an N.E.A. survey, 45% of the teachers polled said they would not become a teacher if they could start over again.¹

To stem the flow of good teachers into industry or

other private enterprise, Virginia Beach must offer positions which will attract and keep experienced teachers in the public school system. Because of monetary constraints, job satisfaction seems the best way to motivate teachers to stay in the teaching field and to continue to do the excellent job they have done in the past.

Limitations

The following limitations were recognized as affecting this study:

1. Only Industrial Arts teachers employed by Virginia Beach at the time of the study were polled.
2. A percentage of Industrial Arts teachers chose not to participate in the study.

Assumptions

1. It was assumed, for this study, that all schools in the system operate under the same basic administrative structure.
2. The problems or lack of problems at one school were basically the same at all schools.
3. Class loading and distribution was about the same at all schools.
4. Teachers polled were of the opinion they had made the right career choice.

5. There would be some discrepancies between new teachers and old teachers.

Procedure

Each Industrial Arts teacher employed in the Virginia Beach Public School system was mailed a package of material for the study. The package of material contained instructions for filling out the questionnaire, the questionnaire, and a self-addressed stamped envelope for the return of the questionnaire. A Likert scale was used on the questionnaire.

Definition of Terms

Major Problem. A major problem was determined to be any overall responses that fell into the following category:

- 65% of population indicating 3 on Likert scale
- 50% of population indicating 2 on Likert scale
- 40% of population indicating 1 on Likert scale

Minor Problem. A minor problem was determined to be any overall responses that fell into the following category:

- 30% of population indicating 3 on Likert scale

Summary

Chapter I described the purpose of the study, which was to determine the level of job satisfaction among Industrial Arts teachers employed in the Virginia Beach Public Schools. Problems of teacher unrest and factors that influence keeping a supply of Industrial Arts teachers was also outlined.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature reviewed was primarily other polls conducted to determine job satisfaction among teachers. The object of each poll, with the exception of one, was to try to define what made up job satisfaction.

The first poll was conducted by the NEA and published in Today's Education. The results came from a random sample of more than 2 million public school teachers. Some of the results were as follow:

1. 37% of the nation's school teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs.
2. Of the 37%, 42% are men and 33% are women.
3. Teachers in large cities and suburbs are more dissatisfied than other teachers.
4. Fewer than 1/2 of those teaching in 1980-81 plan to stay in teaching until retirement.
5. One teacher in 10 plans to leave teaching as soon as possible.
6. Almost half (45%) said they would not become a teacher if they could start over again.²

In a study conducted by David Chapman (State University of New York at Albany) and Malcolm Lowther (University of Michigan), a conceptual scheme for describing the influences

affecting teacher career satisfaction was used. This framework suggests that career satisfaction is influenced by personal characteristics, skills and abilities, criteria used to judge professional success and job challenge and recognition. The study confirms to some degree these assumptions. What is interesting to note is that there are several other factors that come into play. First, they found that teachers that have autonomy in carrying out their tasks and who feel adequately rewarded are more apt to be satisfied. The initial image that teachers have autonomy to run their classrooms as they wish is often not the case. Teachers operate with constraints from school boards, city supervisors, school administrators and department chairpersons.³

Another factor to look at is job challenge. Teaching new students each year is somewhat of a challenge but after several years this seems to become dull and gives way to routine. If the routine cannot be broken, spontaneity is lost and both teacher and student are short-changed as an outcome. In a study conducted by Sweeney (Associate Professor of Professional Studies, Iowa State University), he states that teachers who teach students with a high-ability level are more satisfied than teachers who teach students with a low-ability level. If an Industrial Arts teacher is locked into teaching basic woodworking or

basic metal working and never gets to teach advanced courses, that teacher never gets to really work with high-ability students. He teaches basics every year but never is challenged with difficult problems found in advanced studies.

Sweeney also found that teachers wished to exert control over professional matters. He found that teachers were reasonably satisfied with their influence over teaching techniques and textbook selection but wanted more say in school policy formulation and representation on important school committees. The greater their influence on policy making, the more they were satisfied. Gender did not appear to play a role but age did. Sweeney found that teachers, ages 25-34, were susceptible to burnout and suggested counseling or some kind of supervision for this group to help them through this difficult time.⁴

A recent study conducted by Mark Clements Research, Inc. for "Parade" (Dec. 1, 1985) confirms findings of the previous stated research. Some of Mark Clements Research Inc. findings were that only 40% of the teachers were satisfied with their jobs, as opposed to 52% of the total working force. One third of the teachers would leave their profession for another job even if the salary were no more than what they are making now. One out of five teachers mentioned problems with school bureaucracy. Fifty-two

percent of the teachers feel that the recent spate of reform on the state level, stricter school curricula, and higher grade standards has not improved the education students are receiving. Twenty percent of the teachers said that the higher standards have led to a higher student dropout rate in the schools.⁵

Summary

The research shows that teachers across the country are not satisfied. Teachers are leaving their jobs and the shortage of quality teachers is alarming. The public school system of Virginia Beach is a forerunner in quality education for the children and young adults. To stay in this position, the city must have teachers who are satisfied with their jobs and dedicated to the difficult task of preparing the youth of Virginia Beach for their future roles in our society.

CHAPTER III
METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were any major problems in relation to job satisfaction among the Industrial Arts teachers employed by the City of Virginia Beach. In this chapter the methods and procedures were reviewed. Sections were included on the population of the study, methods employed to collect data and a description of the instrument used to facilitate the collection of data.

Population

The population of the study was all Industrial Arts teachers employed by the City of Virginia Beach who were willing to participate in the study. The City of Virginia Beach employs 59 Industrial Arts teachers. This population is made up of male and female teachers of various ethnic backgrounds and range in age from 23 to 65 years of age.

Methods Employed to Collect Data

All teachers were mailed a 19-question questionnaire, with instructions for completing it, and a stamped, return address envelope for returning the questionnaire. The questions on the questionnaire were grouped into four major

categories consisting of questions relating to job satisfaction, laboratory loading, inputs to curriculum and policy making, and supervision. Additional information asked for was age, sex, race and years of teaching experience. Before the questionnaires were mailed, a high school was randomly picked and a pilot run of the questionnaire was given to the Industrial Arts teachers with this researcher present. This procedure was employed to validate the construction of the questions and determine if the questions were understood in the context asked. The responses were calculated in the overall data. All questionnaires were mailed on Feb. 17, 1987. A Likert scale was used with the following definitions:

- 5 Very dissatisfied
- 4 Dissatisfied
- 3 Uncertain
- 2 Satisfied
- 1 Very satisfied

Summary

Chapter III defined the methods and procedures for the collection of data. It defined the population to be polled and the type of questionnaire to be used. The results will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of job satisfaction among Industrial Arts teachers employed in Virginia Beach, Virginia Public Schools. Each teacher was mailed a package containing a cover letter and a survey consisting of 19 questions with instructions for filling out the survey. A self-addressed envelope was enclosed for the return of the survey. Before mailing out the survey, a high school was picked at random and the researcher went to the high school and asked the Industrial Arts teachers if they would participate in the survey with the researcher present to answer questions about the survey. Their surveys were included in the final results of the study.

After the surveys were mailed out, the researcher waited two weeks and then called teachers who had not returned the questionnaire. At the end of three weeks, the researcher had received 37 of 55 surveys mailed out. At this time, the researcher called once more and interviewed over the phone seven teachers who had not mailed back their questionnaires. The results of the phone interviews were added to the mailed-back questionnaires. Of the 59 Industrial Arts teachers in Virginia Beach, the researcher received surveys from 48 teachers or 81.35% of the popula-

tion polled.

The results of the surveys were tabulated by the researcher and the results appear in tabular form below.

The results were used to determine:

1. Are Industrial Arts teachers lacking in job satisfaction?
2. Are the laboratories over-crowded for the jobs being assigned to these facilities?
3. Do the teachers feel they have enough input into curricula and decision-making policies?
4. Do teachers lack supervision?

Explanation of Tables

The tables show each question as it appeared on the survey mailed to each Industrial Arts teacher. Below the question is a table breaking down the responses for that question. Because of space limitations, the following abbreviations were used for the headings:

VD = Very dissatisfied

D = Dissatisfied

U = Uncertain

S = Satisfied

VS = Very satisfied

Under each heading, the first number is the number of responses, the second number is the percentage that relates

to that number. The last two columns are the mean and the mode.

Tables

Question 1. How do you feel about the type of students that take your classes?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----|----|-----|------|-----|---|----|------|---|
| 1 | 1% | 8 | 13% | 10 | 16% | 28 | 47% | 1 | 1% | 3.41 | S |

A mean of 3.41 indicates the teachers are satisfied with the type of students in their classes.

Question 2. How do you feel about always teaching advanced students?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE | | | | | |
|----|----|---|---|----|-----|------|-----|----|-----|---|----|
| 2 | 3% | - | - | 10 | 16% | 15 | 25% | 16 | 27% | 4 | VS |

Teaching advanced students is satisfying, indicated by a mean of 4.

Question 3. How do you feel about always teaching beginning students?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE | | | | | |
|----|----|---|----|----|----|------|-----|---|----|------|---|
| 1 | 1% | 5 | 8% | 4 | 6% | 32 | 54% | 3 | 5% | 3.68 | S |

Teaching beginning students is also satisfying indicated by a mean of 3.68.

Question 4. How do you feel about teaching both beginning and advanced students?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE |
|------|------|------|--------|-------|------|------|
| 1 1% | 2 3% | 2 3% | 34 57% | 6 10% | 3.93 | S |

A mean of 3.93 indicates teachers are satisfied teaching both beginning and advanced students.

Question 5. How do you feel about your present job?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE |
|------|------|------|--------|-------|------|------|
| 2 3% | 2 3% | 2 3% | 34 57% | 8 13% | 3.91 | S |

A mean of 3.91 indicates teachers are satisfied with their present job.

Question 6. How do you feel about the size of your laboratory?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE |
|----|------|------|--------|--------|------|------|
| - | 4 6% | 4 6% | 25 42% | 15 25% | 4.06 | S |

Teachers were very satisfied with lab size indicated by a mean of 4.06.

Question 7. How do you feel about 24 students per class?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE |
|--------|--------|------|-------|------|-----|------|
| 10 16% | 19 40% | 3 5% | 6 10% | 3 5% | 2.2 | D |

A mean of 2.2 indicated teachers were dissatisfied with 24 students per class.

Question 8. How do you feel about 18 students per class?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE | | | |
|----|---|---|----|----|-----|------|-----|------|----|
| - | - | 2 | 3% | 16 | 27% | 30 | 50% | 4.58 | VS |

Teachers would be very satisfied with 18 students per class indicated by a mean of 4.58.

Question 9. How do you feel about the match-up between your lab and the tasks needed to be performed in the lab?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE | | | | | |
|----|----|---|----|----|-----|------|-----|---|-----|------|---|
| 2 | 3% | 4 | 6% | 6 | 10% | 29 | 49% | 6 | 10% | 3.62 | S |

A mean of 3.62 indicates teachers are satisfied with lab/tasks match-up.

Question 10. How do you feel about your input to curricula and curriculum development?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE | | | | | |
|----|----|---|----|----|-----|------|-----|---|-----|------|---|
| 2 | 3% | 4 | 6% | 11 | 18% | 23 | 38% | 8 | 13% | 3.64 | S |

Teachers are satisfied with their input to curricula and curriculum development indicated by a mean of 3.64.

Question 11. How do you feel about your input to policies concerning selection of students?

| VD | | D | | U | | S | | VS | | X | MODE |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|---|----|----|---|------|------|
| 15 | 27% | 21 | 35% | 10 | 16% | 1 | 1% | - | - | 1.93 | D |

A mean of 1.93 indicates teachers are dissatisfied with policies concerning selection of students.

Question 12. How do you feel about your input to policies concerning purchase of equipment?

| VD | | D | | U | | S | | VS | | X | MODE |
|----|----|---|-----|---|-----|----|-----|----|-----|------|------|
| 4 | 6% | 9 | 15% | 6 | 10% | 22 | 37% | 6 | 10% | 3.29 | S |

Policies concerning purchase of equipment was satisfactory indicated by a mean of 3.29.

Question 13. How do you feel about your input to policies concerning text book selection?

| VD | | D | | U | | S | | VS | | X | MODE |
|----|----|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|-----|------|------|
| 4 | 6% | 3 | 5% | 6 | 10% | 26 | 44% | 9 | 15% | 3.68 | S |

Teachers were satisfied with policies concerning text book selection indicated by a mean of 3.68.

Question 14. How do you feel about your input to policies concerning student retention?

| VD | | D | | U | | S | | VS | | X | MODE |
|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|----|------|------|
| 4 | 6% | 17 | 28% | 11 | 18% | 15 | 25% | 1 | 1% | 2.83 | D |

A mean of 2.83 indicates that teachers are uncertain about their inputs concerning student retention.

Question 15. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from the School Board?

| VD | | D | | U | | S | | VS | | X | MODE |
|----|----|---|-----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|------|------|
| 3 | 5% | 6 | 10% | 7 | 11% | 31 | 52% | 1 | 1% | 3.43 | S |

A mean of 3.34 indicates the teachers were satisfied with the amount of supervision from the School Board.

Question 16. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from your Ed. Specialist?

| VD | | D | | U | | S | | VS | | X | MODE |
|----|----|---|-----|---|----|----|-----|----|----|------|------|
| 4 | 6% | 9 | 15% | 4 | 6% | 29 | 49% | 2 | 3% | 3.33 | S |

The teachers were satisfied with the amount of supervision from the Ed. Specialist indicated by a mean of 3.33.

Question 17. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from your Principal?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE |
|----|----|----|-----|-----|------|------|
| 2 | 3 | 2 | 30 | 11 | 3.93 | S |
| 3% | 5% | 3% | 50% | 18% | | |

A mean of 3.93 indicated teachers were satisfied with supervision received from their principals.

Question 18. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from your Dept. Chair?

| VD | D | U | S | VS | X | MODE |
|----|---|----|-----|-----|------|------|
| - | - | 1 | 16 | 23 | 3.79 | VS |
| | | 1% | 27% | 38% | | |

Teachers were satisfied with the amount of supervision from their Dept. Chair indicated by a mean of 3.79.

Question 19. Do you plan to teach until retirement? This question was not on a Likert scale. Of the 47 teachers that answered this question, 33 or 70% indicated they would teach until retirement. 9 or 19% indicated they would not; and 5 or 10% indicated they were uncertain.

Summary

Chapter IV revealed the finding of the study. All responses to the questions have been indicated using percentages and numbers for each question and how they fell

on the Likert scale. A mean and a mode was also calculated for each question. Chapter V will discuss the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONSSummary

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of job satisfaction among Industrial Arts teachers employed in the public school system of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia. A review of the literature relevant to this study showed that teachers across the country are not satisfied and that they are leaving their jobs; and the shortage of quality teachers is alarming. The vehicle used to collect data was a nineteen-question questionnaire mailed to the population of this study made up of 59 Industrial Arts teachers. The finding of this study was that there were no major or minor problems regarding job satisfaction.

Conclusions

This study indicated there were no major or minor problems concerning job satisfaction among the Industrial Arts teachers employed in the public schools of Virginia Beach. Specifically there were no problems found in job satisfaction, laboratories were not overcrowded for the jobs being assigned to the facilities, teachers felt they have enough input into curricula and decision-making policies, and they did not lack supervision.

Recommendations

Based upon the findings, observations and conclusions of this study, this researcher suggests that the following recommendations might be of value:

1. The number of students in each class should be re-evaluated.
2. Policies concerning selection of students should be reviewed.
3. Policies concerning student retention should be re-evaluated.

ENDNOTES

1. "Teacher Opinion Poll - Job Satisfaction," NEA Research, Today's Education, Feb. 1984.

2. Ibid.

3. "Teachers' Satisfaction with Teaching," David Chapman & Malcolm Lowther, Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 75 No. 4, March/April '82.

4. "Professional Discretion & Teachers' Job Satisfaction," Jim Sweeney, Journal of Education Research, Vol. 47 No. 6, Feb. '82.

5. "How Teachers Grade Our Schools," Marguerite Michaels, Daily News Parade, Dec. 1, 1985.

APPENDIX

VOCATIONAL ED. TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE: READ EACH QUESTION AND CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER AFTER EACH QUESTION.

1 = Very Dissatisfied

2 = Dissatisfied

3 = Uncertain

4 = Satisfied

5 = Very Satisfied

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | How do you feel about the type of students that take your classes? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. | How do you feel about always teaching advanced students? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. | How do you feel about always teaching beginning students? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. | How do you feel about teaching both beginning and advanced students? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. | How do you feel about your present job? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. | How do you feel about the size of your laboratory? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. | How do you feel about 24 students per class? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. | How do you feel about 18 students per class? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. | How do you feel about the match-up between your lab and the tasks needed to be performed in the lab? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. | How do you feel about your input to curricula and curriculum development? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. | How do you feel about your input to policies concerning selection of students? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

12. How do you feel about your input to policies concerning purchase of equipment? 5 4 3 2 1
13. How do you feel about your input to policies concerning text book selection? 5 4 3 2 1
14. How do you feel about your input to policies concerning student retention? 5 4 3 2 1
15. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from the School Board? 5 4 3 2 1
16. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from your Ed. Specialist? 5 4 3 2 1
17. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from your Principal? 5 4 3 2 1
18. How do you feel about the amount of your supervision from your Dept. Chair? 5 4 3 2 1
19. Do you plan to teach until retirement? Yes_____ No_____

The following personal information is optional and will be kept confidential.

Age_____ Sex_____ No. of years teaching IA_____

Subjects presently teaching _____

Degrees Held: BS_____ MS_____ Other_____

If you would like to know the results of this questionnaire, please give your name and address below.

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Michaels, Marguerite. "How Teachers Grade Our Schools." Daily News Parade, Dec. 1, 1985.

Sweeney, Jim. "Profession Discretion & Teachers' Job Satisfaction." Journal of Education Research, Vol. 47 No. 6 Feb. 1982.

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