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**Guided Critique of Quantitative Research**

**EDRS 811 Fall 2016**

1. Cite the research article in APA format.

Landrum, R. E. (2009). Are there instructional differences between full-time and part-time faculty? *College Teaching,* *57*(1), 23-26. doi:10.3200/CTCH.57.1.23-26

1. (a) This study focused on examining the differences between full-time and part-time

faculty in the area of demographic characteristics, grade distribution, and student evaluation of instruction.

(b) The population is the evaluation data of faculty members in the College of Social

Sciences and Public Affairs at Boise State University.

(c) The research design used in this study is quantitative. Specifically, a chi square

and a t-test were used in this study

**Summary**

The purpose of this study was to examine the differences between full-time and part-time faculty in the area of demographic characteristic, grade distribution, and student evaluation of instruction. Evaluation data of faculty members in the College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs at Boise State University constituted the population for this study. A t-test and chi squares was the research design used in this study.

1. (a) The participants were full-time and part time faculty members who agreed to

provide evaluation data

(b) The sample size were 361 courses taught in eight departments.

(c) The important demographics mentioned are type of instruction, campus office,

campus e-mail address, teaching lower or upper-division courses, and teaching on

campus or not.

(d) The article did not clearly state whether there was a control or treatment groups.

However, we can infer from the study that the author wanted to compare data from

two groups of faculty members. Part time faculty members and full time faculty

member.

1. (a) The participants were asked to provide their departmental faculty evaluation data

(b) According to the article, the author at the beginning of the study formed a

hypothesis or belief before actually conducting the study. According to the

author, he expected that full time faculty will receive better ratings than part-time faculty. He also expected that part-time faculty will be more lenient in their grade distributions compared to full-time faculty because of the differences in poor teaching experience. The researcher attempted to eliminate bias by reevaluating impressions of respondents and challenging pre-existing assumptions and hypothesis.

(c) Fourteen items contained on the teaching evaluation form were administered once

during the study. The author did not state specifically whether these questions were administered at the beginning or at the end of the study.

**Summary**

Based on information provided in the study the participants in the study were asked to provide their departmental faculty evaluation data. Prior to the study, the researcher stated his hypothesis and his hypothesis stated that he expected that when there were teaching evaluation differences, full time faculty would perform better than part-time faculty. The researcher also expected that part-time faculty would be more lenient in their grade distribution. During the study, the researcher administered fourteen items contained on the teaching evaluation form.

1. (a) With respect to measures, the construct that was used for this study is a Likert Scale. A Likert scale is composed of multiple items that are designed to measure the same construct. Each of the items is rated by each respondent using a rating scale (e.g., a four or five point rating scale. Based on the information provided in the article, the author used a Likert scale that contained 14 items on the teaching evaluation form. The fourteen items included questions on whether the instructors’ presentation increased knowledge of subject matter, whether the instructor’s method of evaluation were fair, whether the instructor was available during office hours, whether the instructor should be recommended to another student, whether students felt free to participate and ask questions in class, whether the instructor was well prepared for class, whether the instructor expressed ideas clearly, whether the objectives of the course were met, whether assignments and exam results were returned in a timely manner, whether the assignments were of value to learning, the grade expected to receive, how they would rate the course, how much effort and work put into the class and how they would rate the instructor.

(b) According to the article this measure was a teaching evaluation form that examined the differences between full-time and Part-time faculty. In other words the name of the test was Differences between full-time and part-time faculty on teaching evaluation items. Fourteen items were asked and these items were rated on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In some cases, the measurement scale for data is ordinal, but the variable is treated as continuous. For example, a Likert scale that contains five values - strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree - is ordinal.

(c) According to the article, on page 26, the author did talk about validity, specifically external validity. The author mentioned that because there were over 350 different course sections, this variability in data helps the results of the study to become generalized to other situations. The author did not mention anything on reliability.

**Summary**

The instrument used for this study was a Likert scale which contained fourteen items. The Likert scale was an evaluation form used to measure the differences between full-time and part-time faculty. In terms of validity, the author focused on external validity in that this study was generalizable based on the more than 350 different course sections.

6 (a) Full-time verses part time comparisons on variables measured using a nominal scale were analyzed using chi-square for each variable. The chi-square was used more than once because the chi square was used for each of the following variables (type of instruction, campus office, campus email address, teaching lower- or upper-division courses, and teaching on campus or not). In this case the chi-square was used on five different occasions based on the five variables above.

For full time versus part-time comparisons on variables measured using the interval or ratio scale, these were analyzed using a t-test for each variable (number of course credits, start time, total course enrollment, years at the university, years teaching, and number of classes taught per semester). In this case the t-test was used on six different occasions based on the six variable above.

**T-Test**

(b) There was not significant difference between full-time faculty and part-time faculty in the number of credits per class. The null hypothesis was rejected.

There was not a significant difference between full-time faculty and part-time faculty in the average start time of class. The null hypothesis was rejected.

There was not a significant difference between full-time faculty and part-time faculty in the average number of students enrolled per class. The null hypothesis was rejected

There was a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average number of years at the university. The null hypothesis was retained

There was a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average number of total years of teaching experience. The null hypothesis was retained

There was a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average number of classes taught per semester. The null hypothesis was retained.

**Chi-Square**

There was not a significant association between faculty status and type of instruction. The null hypothesis was retained.

There was a significant association between faculty status and whether or not the instructor has an office on campus. The null hypothesis was retained.

There is an association between faculty status and whether or not an instructor has an email address. The null hypothesis was retained

Regarding the course level of classes taught, there was a significant association between faculty status and proportion of lower division or upper division classes taught. The null hypothesis was retained

There is not a significant association between faculty and whether or not the instruction was held on campus. The null hypothesis was rejected.

(c) The t-test was conducted to detect any overall differences between faculty status and grade allocation and to also make full-time versus part-time comparisons on variables measured using interval/ratio scale

The chi-square was used to make full time versus part-time comparisons on variable measured using the nominal scale.

(d) The author wanted to focus on three different aspects. First of all he wanted to examine the differences between full time and part time faculty with respect to the overall differences on general variables. Even though the author did not explicitly state research questions it can be implied that this is one area the author wanted to focus on and so he used a t-test to address this area. Another area that the author focused on was examination of grade distribution data for full time and part time instructor differences. The author used a t-test to address this area.

(e) The author did not specify the type of t-test used for this study and so it is unclear whether in computing the t-test whether he calculated using an independent t-test or whether it was a paired sample t-test. Providing more details with the t-test would have been helpful.

Based on the article, one of the questions that the author wanted to get responses dealt with the examination of the teaching evaluation questions for differences between full time and part time faculty. This information was gathered from the t-test.

**Summary**

The author wanted to focus on three different aspects. First of all he wanted to examine the differences between full time and part time faculty with respect to the overall differences on general variables (number of course credits, start time, total course enrollment, years at the university, years teaching, number of classes taught per semester. Even though the author did not explicitly state research questions it can be implied that this is one area the author wanted to focus on and so he used a t-test to address this area. There was not a significant difference between full time faculty and part-time faculty in the number of credits per class. There was not a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average start time of class. There was not a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average number of students enrolled per class. There was a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average number of years at the university. There was a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average number of total years of teaching experience. Finally, there was a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty in the average number of classes taught per semester.

Another area that the author focused on was examination of grade distribution data for full time and part time instructor differences. The author used a t-test to address this area. The results indicate that there was not a significant difference between full time faculty and part time faculty on course GPA. Although part-time faculty had a slightly higher course GPA, this difference was not significant.

7 The areas of strengths that the author included in his discussion are as follows. First of all the author notes that for advocates for student learning, it is a positive outcome that part-time faculty perform just as well as the full time faculty in regard to student evaluations of teaching and course grade distributions in this sample

According to the author, an area of weakness had to do with the fact that adjunct faculty persevere in the face of diminished resources and support and that in some instances, this may hasten an institution’s reliance or over-reliance on adjunct faculty.

(a) I agree with the author in that I think that part-time faculty can perform just as well as a full time faculty. So long as they all have the resources necessary to perform their duties part time faculty can contribute immensely to institutions of higher education.

I disagree with the author on the fact that adjunct faculty perseveres in the face of diminished resources and support. I think that full time faculty, part-time faculty and adjunct faculty with or without the needed resources can perform their duties and that each faculty have unique experiences that helps them to succeed in whatever they do.

(b) Yes, all the research questions were answered with conclusions that seemed appropriate based on their methods. The only recommendation that I have is that I would have preferred to get more details on the type of test that they used. It would have been great if they had provided detailed information on the Likert scale so that the reader can have a better understanding of the kind of questions that were asked.

(c) It is difficult to tell whether the conclusions are accurate because the information provided by the author was very limited in scope. However, the author did state whether there was a significant difference or not regarding each variable that was tested.

(d) One limitation or weakness that the author did not discuss concerns reliability. Based on the data collected how can the author ensure that there was reliability. Secondly there were so many variables.

(e) It was interesting to note that the author stated that care must be taken not to abuse part-time faculty and their remarkable ability to accomplish similar teaching and learning outcomes with reduced resources. I thought that the author was a bit harsh on using the word abuse in this statement.