

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Conflicting ideas and values are often associated with the concept of work. In the United States, the Protestant work ethic has emphasized work as the path to virtue, self-improvement, and social status (Ronen, 1984). Thus, during the 16th and 17th centuries, the average man worked from sunup to sundown, i.e. 14 to 16 hour days, six days per week. Although the worker continually pushed for a shorter workweek, the norm in the United States was 12-13 hour days, six days per week, well into the 19th century.

With the major expansion of national union membership during World War I, accompanied by the resulting demand for labor, unions bargained for a shorter work day. As a result, the eight hour work day gained acceptance during the 1920's. Several laws were also instrumental in implementing the 40 hour, five day work week as the standard. These included the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, the Public Contracts Act of 1936, and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

During the past 50 years, there has been little change in the number of hours worked by full-time employees. In fact, the pattern of work time has remained remarkably stable in the United States. What has changed, however, is the influx of alternative ways to schedule work. These alternatives now include flextime, telecommuting, job-sharing, and part-time employment.

My own interest in professional part-time employment was heightened in part due to the experiences I encountered as a professional part-timer during the years 1990-1992. During this time period, although my job responsibilities essentially remained unchanged, I began to perceive that I was somehow being treated "differently" as a result of my part-time status. During my tenure as a half-time school psychologist for a large suburban public school system, I was asked to share a desk and telephone in our central office with another part-time colleague.

Additionally, the workload given to me was proportionally more than what would have been expected given my half-time status. Furthermore, several of my colleagues complained when I was granted administrative leave and financial support to attend a conference where I was presenting a professional paper. Lastly, during a period of layoffs, I was shocked to learn that my seniority was no longer applicable as a part-time employee. I was informed that I would be first in the anticipated reduction-in-force (RIF), in spite of having worked 10 years for my employer. I later learned that full-time psychologists who had only worked several months for my employer were guaranteed protection from this reduction in force by virtue of their full-time employment status.

Following these incidents, my interest in the perceptions of others towards part-time professionals, as well as the experiences of professional part-timers themselves, was intensified. I was curious to learn whether other part-timers had shared similar experiences. As a result, I interviewed the Director of the Association of Part-Time Professionals (APTP), Mrs. Maria Laqueur (personal communication, October 1991) in part to obtain legal advice, but also to gain additional information about the organization. I was informed that considerable anecdotal information existed to support my experiences, i.e. that professional part-timers were discriminated against in the workplace. The director shared that many APTP members complained of being treated like second class citizens as a result of their part-time status. She noted that members complained of managers behaving as if part-time employees were inferior to full-time employees, and that many supervisors were reluctant to grant part-time status to their employees. Oftentimes,

the decision to offer part-time employment followed a period of intense negotiation between the employee and the supervisor, with the decision to offer part-time work made in order to keep the employee with the organization.

As background research for this paper, I also interviewed the directors of research for two organizations involved in studying flexible work options. Marcia Kropf at Catalyst (personal communication, March 4, 1996), an organization devoted to the study of women in business, and Arlene Johnson from the Families and Work Institute (personal communication, March 5, 1996), reported similar anecdotal information from their studies, i.e. that professional part-timers perceived that they were being treated "differently" by both their supervisors and colleagues. Thus, my own personal experiences appeared to be part of a larger pattern, and I became interested as to whether these experiences could be quantified in some way.

My own experiences and those of others suggested that organizations (through their policies), and supervisors (through their practices) were reluctant to grant professionals the choice of working part-time. Furthermore, after the professional negotiated and won this "right", the organization chose not to support this decision in a number of ways. This lack of support was seen in established organizational policies, including the lack of benefits for professional part-time employees, loss of seniority, etc., as well as the existence of a corporate culture which subtly discouraged professional part-time employment. I was anxious to explore which aspects of the employee/supervisor/organizational relationship existed which might help explain the differences between the positive and negative experiences of the professional part-time employee.

### **Background of the Problem**

Social and economic factors have driven employers to expand part-time work. Part-time employment is the choice or necessity of many of those currently employed. Nardone (1994) estimates that part-timers constitute nearly a fifth of the total at work in nonagricultural industries. Current Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data reveals that of the total number of employed persons, over 21 million are employed in part-time work (i.e., less than 35 hours per week) when compared to 101 million employed in full-time schedules (BLS, 1996). Furthermore, more than 50% of all workers in fields such as retail, service and healthcare work part-time (Feldman & Doeringhaus, 1992).

Two laws, both enacted in 1978, were passed in response to alternative work schedules for employees of the Federal government. The Federal Employees Part-Time Career Employment Act requires Federal agencies to establish part-time hiring programs, provide part-time employees with fringe benefits that are proportional to the hours worked, and specifies that part-time workers are to be counted by full-time equivalents, i.e. a fraction of a full-time slot, for purposes of the Office of Management and Budget's agency personnel ceilings. The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act established a precedent for agencies to establish flextime and compressed work week programs (Harriman, 1982). As labor shortages projected by the rising age of the labor force are realized, it is anticipated that part-time employment will increase even more in order to attract and retain the "nontraditional" worker.

Many organizations have responded to employee requests by allowing more flexibility in the workplace. In the past ten years, companies of all sizes have instituted formal work-family policies which promote alternative work schedules. A recent study by Hewitt Associates (1993) found that 60 percent of the 1,034 employers surveyed (all with 1,000 or more employees) offered flexible scheduling. Of those surveyed, 65% offered part-time work, and 30% offered job-sharing (Sladek & Lipari, 1993). The Society of Human Resource Management (1992) surveyed over

1,000 of its members and found that six of every ten organizations offered part-time options. Although most people associate part-time employment with lower paying jobs, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that at least 3.5 million part-timers are managers and professionals (BLS, 1996) The fastest growing fields of part-time work include careers in computer science, engineering, math, natural sciences, health care, and law (Bureau of National Affairs, 1991).

The study of part-time employment has been hampered by the variety of situations found in the workplace, and disagreement about what constitutes part-time employment. Furthermore, the types of part-time employment can vary tremendously. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) divides part-time workers into three subgroups: 1) those voluntarily at work part time; 2) employed persons working part time for economic reasons, and 3) those who usually work full time but worked less than 35 hours during the reference week because of holiday, illness, vacation, or similar reasons.

In contrast, Tilly (1991) has conceptualized a model whereby part-time work is broken into three broad categories which more accurately depict the types of part-time jobs: short-time, secondary, and retention quality. He describes short-time employment as a temporary reduction in a worker's hours. This type of employment is often used during a business downturn and is found in goods-producing industries, such as manufacturing, construction, and mining. Secondary part-time jobs are described as those jobs often found in the service industries, where low pay, lack of advancement opportunity, and high turnover are considered the norm. These jobs are often found in retail, healthcare, and seasonal industries. In contrast, retention quality jobs are described as those jobs created to retain or in some cases attract valued employees whose life circumstances prevent them from working full-time. Retention quality jobs are those held by professionals, such as managers, administrators, and persons with technical and advanced degrees. In this study, the retention quality part-time worker will be referred to as the professional part-time employee.

Tilly (1991) reports that up until 1970, the growth in part-time work was driven by expanding voluntary part-time employment, as women and young people desiring part-time hours streamed into the workforce. Most recently, expansion has been seen in involuntary part-time work with companies creating part-time jobs even though workers would prefer full-time employment.

The huge growth in part-time work has primarily been found in secondary part-time jobs fueled by the growth of industries in the areas of trades and services. These industries have adopted a low-wage, low-skill, high-turnover employment policy which has resulted in the growth of involuntary part-time employment (Tilly, 1990). Most of the recent growth of part-time work can be traced to sectoral shifts in the economy towards industries dominated by these low wage jobs. Between 1969 and 1988, part-time employment grew fastest in less-skilled white collar occupations such as clerical, sales, and service workers. However, a modest 7.5 percent increase from 1989 to 1992 was seen among managers and professionals (Catalyst, 1993).

Despite the fact that there are over 5 million part-time workers who would prefer a full-time job (Tilly, 1990), there are also substantial numbers of "involuntary full-time workers" --those persons working full-time who would prefer to work part-time. Although the government collects little data on this group, the most recent estimate is that nearly 3 million persons, seven percent of the full-time workers in nonagricultural industries, belong to this category (Shank, 1986). Another 1.5 million are unemployed workers seeking part-time jobs. The inability to find adequate part-time employment forces many persons to make difficult choices between family and school responsibilities or giving up needed income.

Why then are there so many involuntary full-time workers who are unable find suitable part-time employment? The majority of employers seeking part-timers want those willing to work low skill jobs in secondary labor markets. In contrast, the bulk of involuntary full-timers are employed in more skilled jobs, where professional part-time jobs appear rationed only to the most deserving employees (Tilly, 1990).

Interest in the part-time workforce has heightened as times have changed. Previously, managers held the assumption that the part-time worker was a "peripheral person", a "contingent worker", or "secondary labor." Additionally, Feldman (1994) highlights two implicit assumptions that many managers held: (1) there were insufficient numbers of part-time workers to merit serious attention; and (2) part-time workers held unimportant jobs that had little impact on organizational success.

Clearly, this scenario no longer fits the case in businesses today. Many service industries, including retailing and fast-food restaurants, have a labor pool that includes over 50 percent part-time workers. Other industries, among those medical care, tourism, and construction, have long been known for their reliance on part-time and seasonal employees. The demand for highly-skilled part-time workers in such critical fields as nursing has led many hospitals to encourage part-time work. Managers now realize that valued and highly trained employees leave when flexible work arrangements are not offered. Additionally, in highly competitive and technical occupations, managers acknowledge that part-time work is one way of attracting and maintaining a quality workforce.

While most researchers have discovered that part-time workers cannot and should not be compared to the full-time workforce, the bulk of the research on part-time work has focused on comparisons between different groups of part-time workers, i.e. comparisons between secondary and professional part-time workers. Little research has been published examining the similarities and differences within the field of professional part-time work. The research reported is often anecdotal, with studies frequently lacking sufficient numbers to make meaningful generalizations. Most studies have focused on the attitudes and behavior of managers towards the professional worker (Nollen, Eddy, & Martin, 1978), with little attention paid to the actual experiences of the professional part-time employee.

Ann Harriman (1982) was one of the first to study professional and managerial employees who voluntarily reduced their working hours and their salaries. Her study included 15 public-sector and 16 private-sector employees. From this study, she concluded that two categories exist that describe the short-hour career employee. The first group are those workers who have chosen to reduce their work time temporarily; in other words, their careers have been put on hold, but the expectation is that the employee will return to full-time work at some future point. The second group was made up of individuals for whom reduced work time is a way of life, and where the decision to work reduced hours was not temporary or related to other role demands.

Little information is available about the actual experiences of the professional part-time employee. Harriman (1992) discusses "the relationship of the worker to the informal organization" and notes that two processes appear to occur simultaneously in those managers and professionals who choose to work part-time:

1. The individual begins to experience incidents that suggest that he or she is being perceived differently.
2. The part-time professional begins to view the social structure of the organization differently (page 133).

Co-workers may tease and make comments to their part-time counterparts which reflect an underlying attitude that the part-time person is no longer carrying the full responsibility in the organization, or make comments about the individual's nonwork activities. The part-time worker may or may not be aware of the underlying feelings behind these comments, including those of admiration or perhaps envy.

Harriman (1992) also notes subtle differences in co-worker perceptions based on the reasons why the part-time worker has chosen reduced work hours. For those who have a socially acceptable reason for making the trade-off, i.e. spending time with their children or caring for an aging relative, the organization's members seem more able to understand and accept these choices. However, for those who choose reduced work time for reasons deemed less socially acceptable, such as the need for more leisure, an estrangement between full-time and part-time workers may be inevitable.

Managers seem particularly reluctant to grant part-time schedules for more highly-skilled workers. In Catalyst's 1989 study of flexible work arrangements at a managerial and professional level, human resource professionals at 41 percent of the participating companies reported that middle managers were resistant to flexible work arrangements (Catalyst, 1989). Some organizations feel obligated to offer part-time skilled workers a full benefits package, which increases their overall costs. Supervisors state their desire to use a trained employee a full 40 hours per week. Many managers complain about the difficulty in managing part-timers with flexible hours, particularly when the part-timer has information and knowledge which may be needed by others, but is not accessible during the hours they are absent.

However, some of the managers' resistance to allowing higher-level workers to work part-time may derive from prejudicial attitudes and fear of the unknown. In fact, in a survey of managers, Nollen, Eddy, and Martin (1978) found that non-users of part-time workers imagined numerous disadvantages that users rarely reported. These attitudes appear critical and impact the organization's willingness to offer and support professional part-time jobs. Furthermore, the attitude of the manager may influence the performance and job satisfaction of those employed in these highly desired positions.

Feldman and Doeringhaus (1992) suggest that there are pronounced differences among part-timers which carry important implications for managers who want to develop strategies for attracting and retaining the services of part-time employees. In their survey of over 700 part-time employees, including a group of nurses in professional part-time positions, they determined that nurses were concerned about the attitudes of both managers and colleagues towards them as a result of their part-time status. The nurses surveyed expressed concerns about the lack of respect and recognition from their managers and co-workers. In fact, on measures of satisfaction with supervision and satisfaction with co-workers, the nurses surveyed showed less satisfaction in these two areas than the comparison group of temporary workers and seasonal employees.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The large majority of research involving the part-time employee has examined and compared the similarities and differences between part-time and full-time employees. The previous research focusing solely on part-time employees has concentrated on those employees working in the service sector, such as retail and food service. Most recently, researchers have concentrated on the contingent worker.

The few studies of professional part-time employees have concentrated on part-timers within a professional category, i.e. nurses and government employees. Two studies by Catalyst, the national not-for-profit organization that works with business to effect change for women, have utilized very small numbers. Lastly, little information is available on those persons who previously worked in part-time positions, but no longer do so.

Holton (1991) notes that "the lifeblood of any organization is its ability to attract and retain good people" (page 1). Many organizations offer professional part-time employment, either as a means of keeping a valued employee, or to attract those in hard to fill positions. However, little is known about the characteristics of either the supervisor or organization which impact the satisfaction and commitment of the professional part-time employee.

The topic of professional part-time employment carries with it important implications for those who study the adult learner. Many theorists have examined the concepts of life stages among adults and the tasks which must be managed at each stage. Professional part-time employment is a viable option for adults at several stages, including the adult who is attempting to manage both family and career needs, the adult who wishes to update skills or retrain for a new career, and the adult who wants to ease into retirement.

Secondly, the entire concept of the career professional is being challenged due to societal needs and pressures. The male breadwinner working nine-to-five has become an anachronism. The realities of the workplace and what it means to be a career professional have resulted in the need for perspective transformations among managers and supervisors.

Thirdly, as adult educators, the need for continuing lifelong learning is strongly advocated. However, participation studies inform us that the issue of "time" is paramount among many of our stakeholders. Many adult learners lament the lack of time in their lives to pursue both formal and informal learning opportunities. Professional part-time work is a means to give these adults the window of opportunity needed to pursue both coursework and leisure activities.

As professionals trained in Human Resource Development, the topic of workplace flexibility is now an economic necessity. Human resource executives must work hard to limit turnover and retain valued employees in order to reduce expenditures and maintain a competent workforce. The family and personal needs of employees can no longer be ignored if organizations are to keep their most valued employees. Furthermore, customers are clamoring for better and more efficient service, which can often be met by scheduling workers at off-peak times.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study was an effort to investigate the perceptions of the professional part-time employee in organizations where both full-time and part-time work are offered. It was designed to focus on those employees who identified with the term "professional part-time employee" either in the present, or recent past.

This study examined the types of employees who currently work or recently worked in professional part-time positions, and was a descriptive one. The primary purpose was to investigate the levels of job satisfaction and commitment among professional part-timers, and the influence of specific factors, i.e. characteristics of the supervisor, whether the employee had worked full-time for the organization, reason for part-time employment, etc. on these levels of satisfaction and commitment. A secondary purpose was to examine whether important adult

education activities, such as training opportunities, and opportunities for professional development, were offered to the part-time professional.

Additionally, the study focused on the perceived impact of working part-time on job security and career advancement. Lastly, much research has been conducted on the relationship between known and perceived supervisor characteristics and the behavior and attitude of employees. An effort was made to examine the impact of work/family initiatives on changing corporate culture, specifically the attitudes of the supervisor towards the professional part-time employee. This study reexamined this relationship in the context of the perceptions of the professional part-time employee.

### **Research Questions**

The specific research questions that were addressed are:

1. What is the level of job satisfaction among part-time professionals? How do these levels differ by characteristics of part-time professionals?
2. What is the level of commitment of part-time professionals to the organizations in which they work? How do these levels differ by characteristics of the part-time professional?
3. What are the perceptions of part-time professionals concerning the way they are treated on the job with regard to resources provided, including workspace, equipment, technical support, facilities, etc.?
4. What are the perceptions of part-time professionals concerning treatment from their co-workers and supervisors? Specifically, to what extent do part-time professionals believe that they are discriminated against in terms of training, assignments, workload, advancement in the organization?
5. Are there differences in these perceptions based on characteristics of both the part-time professional and supervisor, i.e. occupation, sex, age, marital status, number of children, reason for part-time employment, region of the country, whether the part-time professional had previously worked for the organization in a full-time capacity?
6. Are there differences in the perceptions of professional part-time employees regarding their own commitment and value to the organization and the presence/absence of work-family programs within their employing organization?
7. Is there a relationship between the marital status of the supervisor and work status of the supervisor's spouse and the perceptions of the professional part-time employee regarding satisfaction with pay, fringe benefits, the work itself, scheduling flexibility, and supervisor support?

### **Significance of the Study**

Research on the attitudes and perceptions of the part-time employee has been contradictory and oftentimes, misleading. Research on the professional part-time employee has been minimal. More often than not, one specific segment of the professional workforce has been studied, i.e. nurses, government employees, with little attention given to the differences in experiences across

the career spectrum. This study examined the professional part-time employee across that spectrum through both descriptive and inferential means.

Adult educators often study participation rates among stakeholders. Furthermore, the different stages and phases of adult development and the way these stages/phases impact on learning is crucial to the field of adult education. The amount of time adults spend at work, and the experiences they have at work, can influence participation rates as well as impact the transition experience as adults move from one stage to another.

Furthermore, human resource specialists have learned that workplace flexibility is an important business decision. This flexibility is a critical factor in business success, particularly in light of retention and recruitment and the costs associated with each. This study examined the relationship between job experiences and the desire to remain or leave an organization.

On a larger scale, adult educators must concern themselves with "quality of life" issues if they are to be responsive to their audience and society as a whole. Family friendly policies, including professional part-time employment, allow adults additional time: time to retrain for new careers, update skills, ease into retirement, as well as improve their functioning as parents, spouses, and children of aging relatives.

### **Definition of Terms**

Flexible work options - term which encompasses flexible work arrangements which restructure employee's time and those that reduce their time. Includes such terms as permanent part-time employment, job sharing, telecommuting, flextime, compressed work weeks, etc.

Job sharing - a work arrangement whereby two people share one position, with prorated pay and benefits.

Part-time professional - a permanent member of an organization with a minimum of a college/technical degree who works in an administrative, managerial, or technical capacity. The part-time professional receives wages which are prorated to that of full-time equivalent work, and may or may not receive benefits paid by the organization. The part-time professional in this study may work a variable number of hours per week. Although most part-time professionals work no more than 35 hours per week, the maximum number of hours will not be defined in this study given the unique situation of many professional part-timers, including those in the medical and legal professions where the standard 40 hour work week is meaningless. In this study, the term permanent part-time employee will also include those persons who are self-employed, but who are engaged in a contractual arrangement with an organization.

Retention-quality jobs - the term coined by Chris Tilly (1991) to describe the professional part-time worker.

Work/family programs - formal programs adopted by organizations to breach the chasm of work and family responsibilities. These might include flexible work options, on-site daycare or eldercare, mentoring at educational and recreational institutions, extended leaves of absence with job security, etc. Other terms used interchangeably include "family-friendly" and "family-supportive."



## **Limitations of the Study**

There are a number of important limitations to this study. As a study which was exploratory in nature, the analysis of the data was limited to an examination of possible relationships; however, no attempt at causal connections was made. The participants in this study were members of one professional organization, which may not be representative of part-time professionals nationwide. In fact, many of those belonging to the association surveyed live in the metropolitan Washington, DC area. Those part-time professionals who are self-employed and who do not consider themselves members of an employing organization were not studied, as many of the research questions concern the relationships between the part-time professional and the employing organization. However, those professional part-timers who engage in a contractual arrangement with an employer, and who identify themselves as members of an organization, were included.

Lastly, the data collected was based on the individual employee's perceptions, which may indeed be different from actual reality. No attempt was made to interview or contact other members of the organization in order to verify the accuracy of these perceptions.

## **CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

When a group of Philadelphia carpenters pressed for a 12 hour workday in 1791, public opinion was firmly against them. The general public viewed a shorter workday as a move in the direction of moral decay and feared that idleness could affect the well-being of society (Pierce, Newstrom, Dunham, & Barber, (1989). Likewise, when a group of Boston carpenters struck for a ten hour workday in 1825, moral and economic arguments were made in an attempt to counter their demands.

With the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, the 40 hour, 5 day work week became the standard in the United States. However, the change in the number of hours one works has not been the only change in the labor market. The impact of unionization and the experiences during World War II dramatically changed who worked, with the workforce of today looking quite different from that of yesteryear.

Our present workforce is aging, more ethnically diverse and female. Not only are more women working, but more men are married to women who work. The current generation of workers has been dubbed "the sandwich generation", many of whom have responsibilities outside the workplace for children as well as aging relatives. The Hudson Institute's Workforce 2000 emphasizes that unless companies assist employees with the necessary balance in their work and family lives, the U.S. economy will lose the challenge of competing in a global economy (Johnston & Packer, 1987).

The literature reviewed in this chapter is from many different fields and sources. Business periodicals and journals were reviewed, as well as popular magazines which have focused on issues relating to part-time employment. Social work literature was reviewed as it pertained to the work/family conflict. Several different organizations provided internal documents, including the Work/Family Institute, Catalyst, and the Association of Part-Time Professionals (APTP). Lastly, memorandums and documents from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) were reviewed.

### **An Overview of Part-time Employment**

Social and economic factors have driven employers to expand part-time work. These factors include the need to cut labor costs, the increase in the number of women participating in the workforce, an interest in and adoption of new lifestyles, an increase in the number of single-parent and two-income households, new relationships between work and education, the aging of the workforce, the growth of the service sector of the economy, the pressures of unemployment and inflation, and a change in the way people perceive both work and leisure time (Pierce et al., 1989).

Part-time employment is the choice of nearly a fifth of the total at work in nonagricultural industries (Nardone, 1994). Current BLS data reveals that of the total number of employed persons, over 21 million are employed in part-time work (i.e., less than 35 hours per week), compared to 101 million employed in full-time schedules (BLS, 1996). Furthermore, more than 50% of all workers in fields such as retail, service, and healthcare work part-time (Feldman and Doerpinghaus, 1992).

The desire to reduce working hours has also been seen in other industrialized countries. A study of the Conference Board by Statistics Canada in June 1985 noted that 31 percent of those surveyed would be willing to take a pay cut or trade part of a pay increase for more time off (Kelly, 1986). The International Labor Office (ILO) surveyed its members in Great Britain and found that

53 percent of women and 14 percent of men said they would prefer to work part-time (Anonymous, 1995).

### **Motivations for Part-time Employment**

Felice Schwartz (1974), the founder of Catalyst, an organization devoted to the study and understanding of women in business, was instrumental in identifying and publicizing the desire that many working women have to work a reduced number of hours. She described significant numbers of administrative, managerial, technical and professional women as embracing the concept of permanent part-time employment. In fact, she noted that large numbers of women state that if they had a choice between a professional part-time position and a full-time position, they would choose the part-time job (Schwartz, 1974). In Catalyst's 1986 Report on a National Study of Parental Leaves, researchers conducting focus groups found that women mentioned a limited part-time return to work as one of the key components that would facilitate their return from maternity leave. The idea that women with high potential might want to work less than full time, or take extended leaves of absence for various reasons, was highlighted in Schwartz's (1989) controversial article in the Harvard Business Review. She identified professional women as falling into two categories. Women described as "career-primary women" were those for whom alternative work schedules held little interest. In contrast, the "career-and-family women" expressed a keen desire to spend more time at home at least for part of their career. The popular press later coined the term, "mommy track" to characterize this phenomenon.

Lee (1993) addresses the career pattern typologies of women with families. For those women identified as career pre-eminent sustained or career pre-eminent modified, their high career involvement necessitates full-time employment. In contrast, those women classified as simultaneously career and family involved, including those she labels as career-family-career sequenced, family-career sequenced, and family pre-eminent sustained, part-time work arrangements are often acceptable, and in many cases, preferable. However, professional part-time positions would be more acceptable for the career-family-career sequenced and family-career sequenced women, whereas a secondary part-time position may be satisfactory for the family pre-eminent woman. In some instances, professional part-time jobs are noted to be satisfactory arrangements for those women with high career involvement when working fewer hours may be needed for career advancement, such as attaining a more advanced degree, or when an unexpected family event occurs, such as caring for a sick child or parent.

At present, there are approximately 14 million women employed on a part-time basis (BLS, 1996), as contrasted to a total workforce of 58 million women. Various reasons are given for the attractiveness of part-time work for women, which include the desire or need to work part-time while raising children (Frease & Zawacki, 1977; Main, 1977, Nardone, 1994). Werther (1975) notes that many women desire to re-enter the labor force gradually after a prolonged absence, express the desire to utilize their professional training on a part-time basis; and feel increased social pressure to assume a role other than a homemaker.

A second burgeoning group seeking part-time positions are retired workers and the elderly. Of the 21.3 million retired workers, it is estimated that 17.3 million or 81% are capable of working (Werther, 1975). A 1982 poll of retired workers from the Travelers Insurance Company found that many would have preferred to continue working, but as part-time employees. The company subsequently redesigned its pension policy so that retirees could return to work part-time without the loss of benefits, and many did so, sharing their jobs with an employee in training (Bahls, 1989). Solomon (1995), in a study commissioned by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), found that more than 40 percent of the respondents would work past retirement

age if flexible schedules, including part-time and temporary employment, were available. Goddard (1995), in a recent editorial in the Personnel Journal, noted that an increasingly large portion of all new jobs are part-time. He describes "the growing complexity of international competition and the expanding service economy demand a work force of sheer wisdom rather than sheer energy, one with a high degree of accumulated judgment and experience and capable of coping with diversity and working harmoniously with others" (p. 34). As a result, more and more organizations are implementing flexible retirement programs which encourage older employees to remain on the job, often in a part-time capacity.

The need for senior dependent care is also an inducement for part-time work (Olmsted, 1987). A survey by the Travelers Insurance Company of its home office employees showed that approximately 20 percent of the respondents were providing an average of 10.5 hours per week of care for an older relative and needed flexible work scheduling in order to meet the commitments of both job and family (Work in America Institute, 1981). It is also estimated that one in ten women have responsibilities for older relatives (Soldo, 1980). In the National Study of the Changing Workforce (Families and Work Institute, 1994), 87 percent of those surveyed reported caring for either dependent children or adults.

A third group for whom part-time employment is ideally suited are those persons who experience the desire for additional leisure time. This group appears to be rapidly growing as our attitudes change towards work and leisure. Recent articles in both The Washington Post (Price, 1991) and Washingtonian magazine (Granat, 1995) suggest that many people wish to simplify their lives. As a result, they are either choosing to change jobs or work fewer hours in their current positions.

A fourth group for whom part-time employment is suitable are those who wish to train for a new job or profession without becoming unemployed. The need for flexibility in order to train for a new position reflects not only changes in life expectancy, but an economy which mandates career transitions. Employees have learned that retraining and upgrading skills are a necessity if they are to remain employable and competitive.

Birch (1990) notes some surprising trends which are already upon us. One in five persons now changes jobs every year and one in ten changes careers. For the next generation of college graduates, the typical employee will change careers three to five times and will hold 10 to 12 jobs before retiring from the labor market. Furthermore, organizations are relying more on a growing contractual fringe through the use of temporary and part-time employees (Watts, 1996). Thus, more persons are now operating a "portfolio" existence in which they work simultaneously in several different jobs (Handy, 1989).

Employers may also have a vested interest in allowing their employees to reduce their work hours. Additional training gives valued employees a chance to update and upgrade skills, and may ultimately help with retention of that employee (Olmsted, 1987). Secondly, many employers give employees time off for training in order to remain competitive in the international environment (Goldstein & Gilliam, 1990).

Other persons wishing to pursue part-time positions include the disabled, particularly those who cannot sustain the energy required for full-time work, those who no longer need full income because their children are grown, or those with sufficient outside interests and whose economic needs can be met without working full-time (Nardone, 1994). Lastly, some individuals may be amenable to challenging part-time work during a tight job market.

## **Advantages of Using Part-Time Employees**

Part-time employment offers many advantages for the employer. First and foremost is the reduction in labor costs, as many part-time employees receive few, if any, fringe benefits (Negrey, 1993). Turnover, now estimated to be the most significant hidden business expense, may also be reduced by using the part-time employee (Frease & Zawacki, 1979). This reduction in turnover is often seen since part-time employees may be allowed to work hours specifically tailored to their unique needs and as a result, are less likely to give up their jobs. The findings of several studies tend to support the fact that the turnover rate for part-time employees is lower than the turnover rate for the work force as a whole (Frease & Zawacki, 1979; Olmsted, 1987.) For the woman who wants to combine career and family, part-time employment is the single greatest inducement to getting back on the job expeditiously and the provision most women desire (Schwartz, 1989).

However, the turnover rate for part-time employees in certain professions is particularly high. In a Cornell University study of part-time turnover in the supermarket work force, researchers found a turnover rate of 100 percent. However, the reasons employees gave for leaving their employment were of particular interest. The majority of part-time supermarket employees surveyed did not desire higher salaries, more interesting work, or better hours. They simply wanted more attention and recognition from their managers and co-workers (Duff, 1989).

Proponents of part-time employment also cite the aspects of increased efficiency and flexibility. Part-time employees are noted to have more energy and enthusiasm than full-time workers, and can afford the extra effort needed to complete a specific task. This can be particularly crucial in monotonous and difficult to fill positions (McGinnis and Morrow, 1990). There is some evidence that part-time employees exhibit less tardiness and absenteeism than full-time workers (Frease & Zawacki, 1979). Because they have more free time, part-time employees are less likely to take time off for personal reasons (Clutterbuck, 1979). Some studies suggest that by using part-time employees, output is increased (Werther, 1975; Greenwald & Liss, 1973, Olmsted, 1987; Cohen, 1978).

Additionally, many part-time employees work longer than their contracted hours. Part-timers often claim they put more energy into their jobs and give their employees more "on" time than their full-time counterparts. Comments from the employee often include, "I work far more than 1/2 a job", with an employer countering with the statement, "Part-time workers means paying for 1/2 a position, but getting two-thirds time from each person" (Cohen, 1978). For the part-time professional, extra hours are an expectation just as for the full-time worker.

Part-time workers can also be scheduled so that more people work critical hours during periods of high demand. Also, in crisis situations, there are more people who can be called upon to work extra hours if need be. Other reasons given for increased part-time employment include greater scheduling flexibility in monotonous and difficult to fill positions, more efficient use of equipment (McGinnis and Morrow, 1990), and lower levels of training and recruitment costs (Leighton and Syrett, 1989).

Furthermore, part-time positions may be beneficial to the employer because it increases the opportunity to comply with affirmative action goals and related legislation. Because women, minorities, and disabled individuals may desire part-time work, the employer may more easily meet affirmative action goals and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines, which do not require full-time employment in estimating percentages of women and minorities at work (Cohen, 1978). Additional benefits to both the employer and employee include the use of part-time employment on a volunteer basis as an alternative to layoffs, and the ability to subdivide a

position which contains technical and nontechnical duties so that the more highly skilled worker handles the demanding activities, while the part-time employee performs the more commonplace chores. Not only does this more efficiently utilize personnel, the employer might also be able to save money by reclassifying the nonskilled part of the position to a lower paying job (Schwartz, 1974).

Reduced overtime can also be a money-saving aspect of part-time employment (Frease & Zawacki, 1979). Jobs can be redesigned from the traditional 40 hour work week, plus frequent overtime, to 45 hours per week shared by two persons, with the hours of employment adapted to the administrative needs of the organization. If each employee is paid regular rather than overtime wages, total wages decline.

### **Disadvantages of Using Part-Time Workers**

Nollen et al. (1978), lists several reasons managers give for nonuse of part-time workers. Many fear that using part-time employees will complicate the work organization and may disrupt production schedules due to increased absenteeism. The costs associated with record keeping, training, supervisory expenses, and social security payments may be greater. Production costs may increase if additional equipment or work stations are needed. Managers fear that part-timers lack commitment and are more likely to quit than full-timers. Some unions object to the use of part-time employees, and/or insist on a full benefits package when part-timers are utilized. Some employees in professional positions feel that the use of part-time professionals weakens their standing within the organization. Lastly, managers may fear that full-time workers who work side by side with part-time colleagues may wish to reduce their own work hours.

Numerous disadvantages exist for the individual part-time worker as well. There is little doubt that part-time employees advance more slowly than full-time employees. Although flexible work arrangements may provide women and others a means to remain attached to the labor force, Schwartz (1994) found that women perceive, and may also experience, career penalties as a result of using flexible work arrangements and leave policies. For some professional part-time positions, employees are asked to take pay reductions which exceed the actual reduction in work hours. Part-timers who work on a daily basis may have higher commuting expenses. However, the possibility of commuting during non-rush hours may actually make a commute less problematic (Cohen & Gadon, 1978).

### **Classifying Part-time Jobs**

Tilly (1990) reports that up until 1970, the growth in part-time work was driven by expanding voluntary part-time employment, as women and young people desiring part-time hours streamed into the workforce. However, since that time, the rate of voluntary part-time employment has stagnated. The growth of involuntary part-time work has been propelled by companies creating part-time jobs even though workers do not want them.

The huge expansion of part-time work has primarily been found in secondary part-time positions, fueled by the growth of organizations devoted to trades and services. These industries have adopted a low-wage, low-skill, high-turnover employment policy which has resulted in large numbers of involuntary part-time workers (Tilly, 1990). Much of the recent growth in part-time work can be traced to sectoral shifts in the economy towards industries dominated by these low wage jobs. Between 1969 and 1988, part-time employment grew fastest in less-skilled white collar occupations such as clerical, sales, and service workers (Tilly, 1990).

Despite the fact that there are over 5 million part-time workers who would prefer a full-time job, there are also substantial numbers of "involuntary full-time workers" --those persons working full-time who would prefer to work part-time. Although the government collects little data on this group, it is estimated that nearly 3 million persons belong in this category (Shank, 1986). Another 1.5 million are unemployed workers seeking part-time jobs. The inability to find adequate part-time employment forces many persons to make difficult choices between family, education, or giving up needed income.

Why are there so many involuntary full-time workers who are unable find suitable part-time employment? The majority of employers seeking part-timers want those willing to work low skilled jobs in secondary labor markets. In contrast, the bulk of involuntary full-timers are employed in more skilled jobs, where professional part-time jobs are often rationed only to the most deserving. This trend in rationing professional part-time jobs was noted by Rathky (1990) in his description of the labor market in Great Britain. He noted that only a limited number of professionals worked part-time, and those that did were almost exclusively women employed in the public sector of employment. Thus, voluntary reduced time was viewed as a luxury for professional, middle class women.

### **Contingent Work versus Professional Part-Time Work**

During the last 15 years, many firms have attempted to respond to labor costs by changing both the size and scope of their workforce. As a result, more and more firms have relied on temporary and part-time workers, or have contracted out for work that was previously performed in-house (Polivka & Nardone, 1989). Polivka and Nardone (1989) cite Audrey Freedman as the first to use the phrase "contingent employment arrangement" while speaking at a 1985 conference on employment security. They describe her as using this term to characterize those jobs where there was a lack of attachment between the worker and employer. Polivka and Nardone note that the most salient characteristic of contingent work is the low degree of job security. In other words, "any work arrangement which does not contain an explicit or implicit commitment between the employee and employer for long-term employment" should be considered contingent. These authors note two other aspects of contingent work. Most contingent jobs have variability in hours, but the numbers of hours worked can be changed in an unpredictable manner by the employer or employee. Furthermore, the large majority of contingent workers receive few or no benefits. Thus, by definition, contingent workers may work part-time, but they are not employed in permanent part-time work.

### **Who Decides About Part-time Work**

Who decides what jobs will be part-time? According to Nollen, Eddy, and Martin (1978), the decision not to use part-time employment is generally made by default. In most instances, the unit or departmental manager determines whether part-time employment is offered.

However, in labor areas where part-time employment is accepted as the norm, such as retail, trades, fast food, and supermarkets, top management is frequently involved in which and how many jobs will be part-time. Thus, top management sets the policy that establishes the tone for implementation by the unit manager or supervisor. In some cases, unions will influence the policy on part-time work, either as collective bargaining agents or as potential organizing threats (Tilly, 1989). Rathkey (1990) reports that British labor unions have begun to take a particular interest in part-time workers given their 25% decline in membership during the 1980's. This

interest is fueled by the fact that two-thirds of the growth in the service sector during the 1970's and 1980's was a result of part-time employment.

Management decisions regarding part-time employment appear to be driven by a host of factors. First and foremost are the actual costs of labor. Two part-time employees with full-time benefits cost more than one full time equivalent. In contrast, two part-time employees with no benefits costs less than a full-time counterpart. In some cases, management actually designates specific functions within an organization as exclusively or preferentially staffed as part-time jobs. For example, in some insurance companies and banks, part-time clerks and tellers are given preference in hiring due to lower hourly costs. The use of part-time employees is particularly enticing for those organizations who may be attempting to reduce overtime expenditures since increasing hours for a part-time employee will not increase hourly costs.

For most companies, however, the common attitude of top management toward part-time work is indifference (Tilly, 1989). Many human resource managers assume that the needs of the company can best be met with full-time employment. There is also the issue of "corporate culture." Many organizations share informal belief systems that a career professional is a full-time professional.

Oftentimes, the arrangement between a manager and a professional part-time employee has been individually negotiated. For example, an employee who returns to the same position but on a part-time basis following the birth of a child is considered to have been granted a privilege by his/her supervisor. Likewise, an employee who chooses to work part-time to care for an aging relative is expected to do so on a time limited basis with the expectation of a return to full-time work.

In today's workplace, the belief that a career professional is a full-time professional is increasingly being challenged. In a survey conducted by Eyde (1975) of 3500 people holding doctorates, she found that 11 percent of women with doctoral degrees and 8 percent of men currently working full-time would prefer part-time work if it were available. In spite of her findings over 20 years ago, the notion that a career professional would want, and more importantly choose to work part-time, has only gradually begun to creep into the awareness of employers.

### **Changing Corporate Culture**

Many organizations are moving, albeit slowly, to the realization that the workplace of today is far different than the workplace of yesteryear. The notion of the married male bread winner with a stay at home wife is no longer commonplace. It is no longer possible for workers, both males and females, to leave their personal problems at home (as some company cultures dictate), because there is rarely someone at home to solve them (Friedman, 1990). The demand for a more family-friendly workplace has become crucial given the concerns about labor shortages, productivity, and global competitiveness. As a result, the bottom line has become, "Business must be responsive to families."

Tichy and Ulrich (1984) report that organizations do not change unless there is a trigger which indicates change is needed. Naisbitt (1982), writing in *Megatrends*, noted that change occurs when there is a confluence of both changing values and economic necessity, not before. Solomon (1994) notes that "systemic change is as rare as an office without computers."



Over the past 20 years, corporate America has been able to absorb more than half of the women over age 18 with very few accommodations. However, economic necessity as evidenced by the declining labor force growth will mean that U.S. companies must get the most out of the people hired. Johnston and Packer (1987) estimate that two-thirds of all new entrants into the workforce will be women. Nearly three-quarters of these women will become pregnant at some point in their work careers (O'Connell & Bloom, 1987), and an estimated 20% will need to provide care to an aging relative while employed (Friedman, 1990).

The entrance and emergence of women as a primary labor factor has also affected men in the workforce. Nearly 60% of all men who work have working wives, and many of these men are taking on more family responsibilities (Pleck, 1989). Furthermore, a growing number of men are requesting and getting custody of their children after divorce (Baruch & Barnett, 1981; Pleck, Staines & Lang, 1980). These men often face similar work-family conflicts as working women.

Higgins, Duxbury, and Lee (1994) note that the problems of balancing work and family are major concerns not only for the employee, but for the employer as well. These problems may manifest themselves in absenteeism, lower job commitment, stress, and lower productivity. The potential loss of valued talent due to turnover as a result of work/family conflict is one many organizations cannot afford to have.

Elder care concerns can also lead to similar conflicts and work loss similar to those seen when taking care of a sick child. In a 1982 long-term care survey conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services (Stone, Cafferata, & Sangl, 1986), 12% of working women had resigned from their jobs to provide elder care support, 23% had reduced their work hours, 35% had rearranged their work schedules, and 25% had taken leave without pay. The emotional strain of caring for parents may also affect work performance. Caregivers are three times more likely to be depressed than the relatives for whom they are caring (Friedman, 1990).

Employees with dependent care responsibilities need flexibility for unavoidable emergencies and additional time to spend with their children and elderly relatives. In a review of eight company needs assessments where employees were asked to rank the company responses that would be most beneficial to them, the breakdown shows an overwhelming preference for increased flexibility in work hours (Friedman, 1989). These might involve flextime, sick leave for family members and part-time work with pro-rated benefits. In a study of General Mills employees conducted by Louis Harris and Associates in 1981 (Harris, Inc., 1981), 77% of the human resource executives thought on-site child care would be of the most help to employees and their families. Interestingly enough, only 38 percent of the employees agreed. Their preferred solution was part-time employment with full benefits. The Work/Family Advisory Board of the Personnel Journal rated flexible work arrangements as the most important option to help employees juggle work and family commitments (Solomon, 1994).

In this changing environment, which companies appear to be responding to family needs? Friedman (1983) describes these companies as large, female-intensive and non-unionized. However, with a decline in union membership in many organizations, some unions have adopted policies designed to attract members, including bargaining for flexible hours and part-time work with benefits.

Family-supportive policies are often found in family-owned businesses where family values are incorporated into corporate policy. Many of these companies produce family-related services and products, such as the Stride Rite Corporation and Johnson & Johnson (Friedman, 1990). Hi-tech companies have instituted a variety of work/family options as they deal with the

limited supply of technical/clerical workers, engineers, and scientists (Galinsky, Hughes, & David, 1990).

Friedman (1990) notes the importance of corporate culture in establishing family friendly policies, including professional part-time work. Friedman (1989) notes that since managers are the transmitters of culture, it is important that they understand the company's purpose in responding to family issues and develop a greater sensitivity to work-family problems. Harriman (1982) cautions organizations against giving special employment privileges to only women and mothers. Efforts must be made to avoid the stereotypes of working women as dual-career wives, while considering working men as single-career husbands. She notes that both men and women in families experience moderate or severe conflict between their jobs and family life, and contrary to expectations, employed women do not report significantly more work-family conflict than do employed men. Rather, organizations must respond to changing social patterns that affect both men and women by adopting flexible policies regarding time, a resource which has become increasingly limited in our changing economy.

The Federal government has taken a pro-active stance in encouraging the private sector to provide more family-supportive policies. Johnston & Packer (1987) in a report prepared by the Hudson Institute for the Department of Labor note:

What is needed is a thoroughgoing reform of the institutions and policies that govern the workplace to insure that women can participate fully in the economy, and that men and women have the time and resources needed to invest in their children. (p. 13)

A second Department of Labor publication, Child Care: A Workforce Issue (1988), strongly recommends that employers help employees balance work and family responsibilities.

The Department of Labor has initiated a work/family clearinghouse to provide information and technological assistance to all fifty states (Galinsky, Hughes, & David, 1990). A number of them, including Virginia, Minnesota, Oregon, Connecticut, Tennessee, Massachusetts, Indiana, and New York have created state task forces and convened state conferences to stimulate business interest. For example, New York has implemented a voluntary furlough program for its state employees whereby employees can reduce their work schedules with a corresponding reduction in salary for a maximum of two years, while retaining benefits in seniority.

Galinsky et al. (1990) report that exemplary companies who focus on work/family issues are characterized by having advocates within management who champion work/family programs. Additionally, there is an awareness by executives that a commitment to work/family issues is a business issue in light of the shrinking labor pool and increase in employee diversity. Some companies have assigned a professional to coordinate work/family concerns and have legitimized this individual by granting a title such as, "Director of Work/Family Programs". Oftentimes, this person functions at the level of Director, Manager, or Vice President. These companies have formal provisions for flexible work arrangements, including flextime and permanent part-time positions.

Galinsky et al. (1990) note that making the workplace more flexible is more difficult than fixing the child care problem, just as changing the company culture is more involved than merely changing the way managers manage. Friedman (1983) and Galinsky et al. (1990) report that the executives most likely to be responsible for the creation of work/family programs are young and

entrepreneurial. Key managers in these companies view their employees as people with family as well as work responsibilities. Their bottom line is that investment in human capital is part of strategic long-term planning and necessary for long-term profitability.

For those companies who choose not to institute formal work/family programs or policies, employees' work/family issues are typically handled by individual supervisors. However, oftentimes this approach is problematic.. First, research (Galinsky et al., 1990) suggests that supervisors may or may not be aware of the various work/family programs and practices within their organizations, and secondly, may use them unfairly. As a result, some supervisors may grant more flexibility to favored employees or employees with higher position or status while declining it for others. There are also those who favor a "status quo" approach, which only helps maintain and support a corporate culture which subtly discourages family supportive policies and practices.

### **Attitudes Toward Part-Time Employees**

One area where there appears to be a paucity of research concerns the attitudes of managers and colleagues towards the part-time worker, and the influence these attitudes might have on the experience of part-time work itself. Many managers seem particularly reluctant to grant part-time schedules for more highly-skilled workers. Solomon (1994) notes that most managers have not been trained to work within flexible arrangements. Some organizations may feel obligated to offer part-time skilled workers a full benefits package, which increases their overall costs. Supervisors may desire to use a trained employee a full 40 hours per week. Managers lament the difficulty in managing part-timers with flexible hours, particularly when the part-time employee has access to information that is unavailable during the hours they are absent.

However, a manager's resistance to allowing a higher-level worker to reduce working hours may also derive from prejudicial attitudes and fear of the unknown. In a survey of managers in 1978, Nollen, Eddy, and Martin found that non-users of part-time workers imagined numerous disadvantages that users rarely reported. These managerial attitudes are not only reflected in the ability of an organization to offer and support professional part-time jobs, but may also impact the performance and job satisfaction of those who choose to work in these positions.

### **Job Attitudes Among Part-time Employees**

Much of the research on the attitudes of part-time employees is contradictory. Hall and Gordon (1973) and Miller and Terborg (1979) found that part-time employees had lower overall job satisfaction than full-time employees. Other researchers, including Logan, O'Reilly, & Roberts (1973) found no significant differences between part-time and full-time workers on either facet or global measures of satisfaction. More recently, Eberhardt and Shani (1984) and Jackofsky and Peters (1987) found that overall satisfaction was higher for part-timers than for full-time employees.

The differences in these findings may be explained by a host of factors. Most previous research has compared part-time and full-time employees with little attention paid to the similarities or differences in the work performed by both groups. Secondly, the issue of employee benefits is often not asked (McGinnis & Morrow, 1990). In McGinnis and Morrow's (1990) study of 350 hospital workers, they concluded that with the exception of key demographic variables, part-time and full-time workers were more alike than different. Thus, they were led to conclude that operationalizing full-time versus part-time employment for purposes of comparison was overly simplistic and did not explain the differences in the two groups.

## SUMMARY

Although involuntary part-time employment has grown dramatically in the last 20 years, the bulk of that growth has been found in lower-level, low-pay positions. Employers seem particularly unwilling to create professional part-time positions, in spite of the fact that many groups, including women, retired persons, and those wishing to pursue additional training and education desire these part-time positions. It is estimated that over 4.5 million persons currently working full-time would prefer to work part-time if adequate part-time employment could be found (Shank, 1986; Schwartz, 1974). Although some organizations have begun to address this problem through adoption of formalized work/family initiatives, these organizations are the exception rather than the rule.

Managerial perceptions and attitudes influence not only the organization's decision to offer professional part-time positions, but ultimately may influence the job satisfaction and quality of work for those persons employed in these positions. The attitudes and perceptions of co-workers can also impact both job satisfaction and quality of work life for the part-time professional. The mere adoption of a formal work/family program does not imply acceptance of these policies. What is needed is a true change in corporate culture whereby a reduction in the hours worked is not viewed as a reduction in a professional's performance or value to the organization.

There has been little research regarding the perceptions and attitudes of professional part-time employees. What we do know is that these positions are highly desired, yet selectively given. Many questions remain regarding the objective and subjective experiences of the professional who decides to work less than full-time.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHOD**

This chapter includes a description of the participants, the instrumentation, procedures, and data analyses that were used to explore the experiences and perceptions of the professional part-time employee. The aspects of their experiences and perceptions which were addressed include the following: interactions with co-workers and supervisors, feelings of job satisfaction and commitment, and anticipated effects on career advancement. In addition, particular features of the individual's job were measured, such as access to training, level of office support (including space and equipment), and characteristics of the employee's supervisor. Lastly, the relationships between experiences and important individual and corporate characteristics were considered. These included such individual characteristics as age, occupation, sex, reason for part-time employment, number of children, geographic region, and previous work experience with the employer. The corporate characteristics included the sector of the economy, the presence or absence of formal work/family programs, and size and personnel practices of the organization.

#### **Participants**

The participants in this study were all of the current members of the Association of Part-Time Professionals (APTP). The APTP is the only national association in the United States devoted solely to the promotion of flexible work options, including professional part-time work. The association's goals include advocating for equitable compensation and benefits for part-time employees, assisting professionals in pursuing alternative work schedules, encouragement of communication and mutual support among part-time professionals, and the provision of information on current employment trends and practices as they relate to the interests of part-time employment. The association offers a job referral service, networking opportunities for members, and career counseling services.

At present, the organization has 805 individual members. Members include those currently working part-time, those who previously worked in professional part-time positions, persons seeking professional part-time employment, and others interested in flexible work opportunities. Many different occupations across industries are represented in this organization, with members distributed across the United States. The large majority of members are clustered in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

#### **Procedures**

A preliminary survey was constructed after reviewing the literature, and consulting with professionals involved in the study of part-time issues. The Director of the Association of Part-Time Professionals made suggestions about the various job categories, and recommended the inclusion of separate job categories for job-sharing and those self-employed. The directors of research at Catalyst and the Families and Work Institute offered guidance regarding areas and topics to be included. The proposed survey was also shared with doctoral students in the Adult Learning/Human Resource Development program at Virginia Tech, who assisted with the refinement of the wording of questions and gave suggestions about the types of benefits that should be addressed in the questionnaire.

A focus group composed of six persons outside APTP was conducted in August, 1996, in order to review and discuss the proposed questionnaire. The six individuals chosen to participate

were all presently working part-time or had worked part-time in the past year. Their reasons for working part-time varied, and included family responsibilities, health concerns, graduate work, and desire for more leisure time. Although an effort was made to include men in this group, the men who were invited to participate declined to do so. The purpose of this focus group was to explore the various dimensions of professional part-time employment, and to discuss any aspects of the proposed survey which needed to be changed and/or refined. The focus group made several suggestions related to the wording of questions, including the need to highlight most recent job experience as the focus of inquiry for the survey, and the need to incorporate more questions about job security.

A pilot test of 25 respondents drawn from outside APTP was conducted prior to sending out the mailing. Details of this pilot study appear in Appendix A. Questionnaires, along with a cover letter signed by Dr. Albert Wiswell and myself explained the purposes of the pilot study. This letter emphasized the importance of promptly responding and encouraged participants to write in comments and provide feedback about the clarity and readability of the survey. The questionnaires from the pilot were examined for omissions and inconsistencies in responses. The quality of the answers to open-ended questions was analyzed, with particular attention given to comments made at the end of the questionnaire.

The final questionnaire, with an accompanying cover letter signed by the Executive Director of APTP and the author, was mailed to the 805 current individual members of APTP on September 3, 1996. The cover letter was used to introduce the study, explain its purpose, and to gain cooperation by emphasizing the importance of responding. A separate stamped postcard was included with the survey instrument, and the participants were instructed to return this postcard to APTP after completion of the survey. A separate self-addressed stamped envelope was provided so that the completed questionnaires could be sent directly to the author. This procedure provided the author with information on who had completed the questionnaire while maintaining the respondent's anonymity. Three weeks after the first mailing (9/24/96), a second mailing was sent to the 535 members of APTP who had not returned their initial postcards. The questionnaire, cover letter, and the follow up letter appear in Appendix B.

### **Instrumentation**

A questionnaire was used for this study. It consisted of three parts: a section to gather background information on the part-time employee's current job situation (or recent part-time experience), a section devoted to assessing the on-the-job experiences and perceptions of the professional part-time employee, and a final section designed to obtain demographic information about the part-time employee. The questionnaire included questions developed by the author, questions used by other researchers, as well as questions requested by APTP.

### **Questionnaire Design and Development**

The instrument used in this study included questions previously used in other research, as well as questions uniquely designed to address the areas of research interest. A five-point Likert scale was used for many items. The questionnaire was professionally printed so that it could be easily answered, and attractive in design.

The items in this questionnaire were selected from a variety of sources. Included were items measuring a number of constructs which have been examined in existing literature. Additional items that were added include those which were suggested by earlier studies, but which

had not been extensively validated. Lastly, many items were included which were developed specifically for this study.

This study was designed to examine the perceptions and experiences of the professional part-time employee. It was not a study of business establishments. Thus, no attempt was made to validate the perceptions of the participants by contacting their places of employment. This study addressed the experiences of the professional part-time employee and not the stated policies of the organizations in which they were employed. In actuality, the official policies of an organization may not always be reflected in the practices of those employed by these organizations.

### Section I: Current Job Situation

Section I of the survey instrument contained a variety of questions designed to determine the current or past employment status of the participants. It also included questions designed to assess whether the respondent's employing organization had implemented policies which were deemed "family friendly". The last few questions in this section concerned characteristics of the employee's supervisor. The questions about the organization and supervisor were included to help with the analysis of the differences in perceptions among the part-time workers.

The first three questions in the survey were included to determine whether the survey participant was currently working or had worked in a part-time position in the last five years. For those receiving the survey who had not worked part-time during the last five years, instructions were given to return the survey unanswered in the enclosed envelope. Questions 4 and 5 were provided to ascertain reasons why persons who had worked part-time during the last five years, but no longer were doing so, had left their part-time positions.

Questions 6 through 10 provide information about the unique reasons for working part-time, as well as data concerning the type of job the part-time professional holds. Harriman (1982) noted that the treatment of part-time professionals from co-workers and supervisors varied significantly depending on the reasons given for working part-time. Questions 11-16 were included at the request of the Association of Part-Time Professionals.

A number of questions were asked (#17 - #19) to examine the existence of work/family programs and the types of benefits provided to the part-time employee. These questions were also included to determine whether organizations differed in their inclusion of benefits for part-time versus full-time employees. Question #19 was included based on the author's own experiences with a separate seniority list for part-time employees. The issue of vulnerability in the face of a reduction in force (RIF) (#21) was added at the request of the focus group based on their perception that increased vulnerability might influence both satisfaction and commitment.

The questions relating to the supervisor (#22-26) resulted from meetings with the research directors of Catalyst and the Families and Work Institute. It was their opinion that the experiences of part-time employees would largely reflect the attitudes of the employee's immediate supervisor. Furthermore, they expressed that it had been their experience that the attitudes of supervisors varied significantly based on their own unique demographic characteristics, i.e. age, sex, marital status, etc. (personal communications with Marcia Kropf, March 4, 1996, and Arlene Johnson, March 5, 1996).

## Section II: Job Experiences and Perceptions

### Job Satisfaction Questions

Job satisfaction was measured by a six-item scale (#27 - #32) developed by Hackman and Lawler (1971). In a study of 658 employees, Hackman and Lawler obtained an internal consistency reliability of .76. Although some thought was given to measurement of satisfaction with different aspects of the part-time position, a less detailed examination of this construct was chosen due to the length of the questionnaire.

### Organizational Commitment Questions

One of the most frequently used measures of organizational commitment is the 15 item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974). A nine item short form has reported reliabilities which have ranged from .84 to .91 (Howton, 1991; Mathieu & Farr, 1991; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979) This short form consists of only the positively worded items and is considered to be a good substitute when questionnaire length is a consideration (#33 - #41). Items 42 and 43 were added by the author to determine the participant's commitment to part-time employment versus the employee's commitment to the organization.

### Job Experiences Questions

The questions included in the section on job experiences (#44 - #62) were based on a review of the relevant literature, as well as the author's experiences when working part-time. Specifically, these questions addressed the topics of office equipment and clerical support, reactions of co-workers, access to training opportunities, questions about salary and benefits, and use of leave time. Questions #54 - #56 were drawn from the U.S. Department of Labor's Glass Ceiling Commission which explored the relationship between family-friendly policies and the glass ceiling (Schwartz, 1994).

### Supervisor Behavior Questions

The 17 questions relating to the behavior of supervisors were compiled from two sources: an evaluation report conducted by the Families and Work Institute (1993) for Johnson & Johnson (#63 - #69) and the Job Descriptive Index (#70 - #79). The Johnson & Johnson questions appeared on surveys which were given to 1,138 employees in 1990 and 1992. One of the purposes of these questions was to determine the impact of Johnson & Johnson's Balancing Work and Family Program. The opinions of the Johnson & Johnson employees are deemed important in light of the determination that Johnson & Johnson is one of the four most progressive and exemplary companies with respect to the adoption and implementation of family/work programs (Galinsky, Friedman, & Hernandez, 1991). The questions from the Job Descriptive Index were taken from the supervision subscale and were intended to measure additional aspects of supervisor behavior. Robinson et. al (1976) note that women, in particular, emphasize good and understanding supervision as one factor necessary for high levels of job satisfaction.

## Section III: Demographic Information

A variety of demographic questions were included in Section III. These questions had two purposes. Some of the questions, such as position, level of education, benefits, and method of compensation were used to verify that the respondent was truly a part-time professional. The



second purpose was to assist with the analysis of the differences in the perceptions of the professional part-time employees.

The survey concluded with one open ended question. Participants were asked to share any additional thoughts, concerns, or issues regarding their experiences as part-time professionals.

### **Data Preparation**

By the end of the time allowed for the return of questionnaires after the second mailing, 506 of the 805 APTP members had responded. The potential effects of nonresponse will be considered in the next chapter. Of the 506 respondents, 173 were not included in the analysis because they had not worked part time in the last five years.

The remaining 333 questionnaires were given to the firm of Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc. for data entry. Prior to submission, each questionnaire was reviewed to ensure that stray marks were removed so that only valid answers would be entered. A coding system for open-ended answers was devised, and the codes were assigned prior to keying. The data were keyed and verified, and the data format was checked by comparing the keyed data for an individual respondent to that respondent's survey form. The marginal distributions delivered by Greenwald and Associates were examined for reasonableness.

A SAS (Statistical Analysis System) data set was created from the data provided by the contractor. The contractor's marginals were compared to the SAS marginals to ensure the SAS data set had been created properly. All statistical analyses were performed using SAS 6.0.

### **Data Analysis**

#### Creation and Analysis of the Independent Variables: Demographic and Organizational Characteristics

Univariate analyses of demographic and organizational variables were produced using the Frequency and Univariate procedures in SAS. These included mean and variance for age and percentage distributions for the discrete variables. After an examination of these results, some of the items were recoded to enhance their use as independent variables in the later analysis. This usually meant values were collapsed to create larger categories. In the case of the items measuring employee benefits, however, the "DK" responses were set to missing; and weighted summary indexes for the different types of benefits were created.

#### Creation and Analysis of the Dependent Variables: Attitudes About Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

Although job satisfaction and organizational commitment were indexes used in previous studies, prior to using each index in this study, an evaluation of its validity and reliability was conducted. This evaluation included an inspection of the distribution of each item as well as the correlation matrix of these items with one another. An examination of a factor analysis of the items was used to confirm that, as expected, a single dimension was being tapped by each index. After the indexes were created, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each index.

The two items added in the organizational commitment section to measure the respondent's commitment to part time work as opposed to the organization were not expected to enter into the organizational commitment index. To confirm that they did not, but measured something else, the

correlations between these items and those in the previously validated organizational commitment measure were examined. Their loadings in a factor analysis with these other items also were evaluated.

#### Creation and Analysis of the Dependent Variables: Attitudes About Job Experiences and Supervisor Behavior

Because these items do not form previously validated measures of psychological constructs, the relationships between them were carefully examined. The distributions of the individual items were examined first. Using correlation and factor analysis, a general experience index was created along with several other indexes. These subindexes included treatment by coworkers, career development opportunities, and access to organizational resources. A single index of supervisor behavior also was created after examining a factor analysis. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each index and subindex.

#### Substantive Analysis

Univariate analyses were conducted on all the indexes of benefits and the indexes comprising the dependent measures of attitudes. Means and variances for these measures were examined. Correlations among the indexes were also examined.

After evaluating the bivariate relationships between the dependent measures and the demographic and organizational characteristics (including the indexes of benefits), more complicated models were created to evaluate the joint effects of the independent variables. These analyses used the General Linear Model (GLM) procedure in SAS. This statistical technique uses a least-squares method which allows for the evaluation of the importance of discrete (nominal or ordinal) independent variables as well as continuous independent variables in the prediction of continuous dependent variables, in this case employee attitudes. Thus, it combines both regression and analysis of variance in a single model.

The GLM procedure also was used, where appropriate, to analyze how the dependent variables are related to one another. That is, the relationships between employees' experiences and the measure of supervisor behavior were examined, and associations between both of these and job satisfaction and organizational commitment were considered. The results were incorporated into the models involving demographic and organizational characteristics to present a more complete picture of employee attitudes.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This study was an exploratory examination of the perceptions and attitudes of professional part-time employees. The results of the study are presented in this chapter, which includes sections addressing the demographic and organizational characteristics of participants, the recoding and construction of the indexes of benefits, the development and construction of the indexes of employee attitudes, and the relationships between and among the independent and dependent variables. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the attitudes of part-time professionals, and a qualitative analysis of open-ended responses to the survey questionnaire.

Because of the large volume of data collected in this study, only significant and noteworthy findings are included and discussed in this chapter. A complete reporting of the results can be found in Appendices C - E.

#### **Participant and Organizational Characteristics**

Questionnaires were mailed to members of the Association of Part-Time Professionals, with a total of 333 completed and returned. Fourteen of this number were removed from the data set prior to analysis as the participant had not completed college and therefore was not considered a "professional" for the purposes of this study. The percentage distributions for the remaining 319 eligible participants, including the demographic and substantive questionnaire items (with the exception of the participant's age), may be found in Appendix C. Accompanying the distribution for each question is the number of blanks or missing responses to that item.

The amount of missing data for the demographic characteristics (questions 80-90) was quite small, with the exception of family income, as might be expected. Even in that case, the level of missing data was less than five percent.

Almost all participants were female (96.9%), with approximately the same proportion being white (96.8%). Participants ranged in age from 23 to 68. The mean age was 40.5, with the median age being 39. A majority (56.5%) had a graduate or professional degree, with 40% reporting an annual family income exceeding one hundred thousand dollars. Over 70% of the participants reside in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Participants from the Northeast (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island) had the next largest representation, with the remainder scattered throughout the rest of the United States and one foreign country. The large majority of participants was married (92.8%), with almost 80% having one or more children under the age of 18.

#### **Employment Information**

Half of the participants were employed in the private sector (50.5%), with the next largest percentage (15.9%) employed by government. About eight percent were found in two other sectors of the economy, education (7.6%) and other non-profits (8.1%). Most of those who selected the "other" category could be classified as working in the private sector, but were often self-employed. A third were employed in organizations with fewer than 50 employees, and about the same number worked in places with more than 500 employees. Just over half (52.7%) of the participants were employed in regular part-time positions within an organization. Another 5% were either job-sharing or temping, with 20% reporting self-employment, either on their own or on contract for an organization. About 12% were not currently employed, but reported having held a

part-time position during the last five years. Seventy percent of the participants reported working less than thirty hours per week, with 20% reporting their hours of work to be 20 hours or less.<sup>1</sup> Of those 10% of participants now working full time, the majority did not give up their part-time position because their personal situation had changed. While some reported they no longer had child-care responsibilities, most former part-timers who had returned to full-time employment expressed dissatisfaction with some aspect of their part-time position. These included the need for more money, displeasure with the lack of benefits, or lack of job security. Those who were self-employed or unemployed left part-time work for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons given were child care issues, dissatisfaction with the job, the desire to pursue other interests, and loss of the job through downsizing or for some other reason.

Participants, answering about their current or most recent part-time position, reported considerable experience in that position. About a third had been employed or were employed in their part-time position for over three years, and another third for one to three years. Only 18% had less than six months experience. Eighty percent of the participants reported the need for a part-time position was necessitated by child-care responsibilities. The need for greater leisure time was the next most cited reason. Over 40% worked full-time for the organization prior to becoming a part-time employee, and two-thirds indicated that other part-time professionals worked for their organization. An indication that these participants were “professional” employees was that almost 80% reported that their positions were exempt from overtime pay.

Participants were asked to compare their pay and benefits to those for full-time employees. Most (71.8%) stated that their salary was equivalent to their full-time counterparts. A little over 20% reported it to be less, and about seven percent actually reported it as being greater. Of those who were originally employed full time, almost two-thirds (after excluding the missing and those marking NA) indicated they made the same hourly salary as they did when employed full time. Yet, a quarter reported making less. About 55% earn an hourly salary between sixteen and thirty dollars an hour, with the rest evenly divided below and above that range. Almost half of the participants reported accruing no seniority, and another quarter reported getting less than their full-time counterparts. While 49% said they were no more vulnerable than full-time employees to a reduction in force (RIF), 44% said they were.

Familiarity with particular benefits varied. Most participants knew whether they had sick leave, paid vacation and health insurance, but as many as 20% did not know whether their organization offered eldercare or dependent care assistance plans. Over 40% were unsure if phased retirement was available or not. Only eight percent reported being employed by an organization with a formal work/family program. About two-thirds indicated that their organizations did not provide any of the listed dependent care benefits for either part-time or full-time employees. However, 60% of those responding worked in organizations that provided both part-time and full-time workers with personal medical leave and paid vacations. Another 25% provided these benefits to only full-time employees.

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<sup>1</sup> Some inconsistencies exist in responses to the type of work and hours worked questions. Two participants reported they worked full time, but the hours a week for both was less than thirty. Four participants said they had not worked part time for an organization in the last five years, but two claimed to be working part time in an organization now and one was self-employed working less than twenty hours a week. The other, also self-employed, did not answer the hours worked question. There may be some confusion about the definition of full-time and part-time work as well as what it means to work for an organization.

Forty to fifty percent of the organizations granted both full-time and part-time employees leave for child-care, family illness, and training. In approximately 20% of the cases, these benefits were offered only to full-time workers. Flexible work arrangements were granted to both full-time and part-time employees, or no one received them. A flexible workday was by far the most common of these arrangements, with two-thirds of the organizations offering this benefit to part-time employees, and over 70% providing it for full-time employees.

In 75% to 85% of the cases, full-time workers received health and life insurance. However, less than half of the participants reported their organizations provided these benefits for their part-time workers. Sixty-five percent of those working full time had disability insurance, but only about a third of those working part-time had access to this type of insurance. Part-time employees had a retirement or pension plan in about 56% of the cases and full-time employees in over 70% of the cases.

Profit sharing and/or bonuses were available to part-time workers just over 30% of the time, with full-time workers faring slightly better, about 45% of the time. Training assistance was provided about 40% of the time to part-time workers and about 60% of the time to full-time workers. Thus, it would appear that the participants in this study received proportionally fewer benefits, felt less secure in their jobs, and were discriminated against in terms of staff development and training when compared to full-time employees within their employing organization.

### **Representativeness of the Participants**

Over 500 (506) of the 805 potential participants returned a usable questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 62.9%. This rate is quite remarkable for a mail survey, even one with two mailings. This high response rate is indicative of the interest in the topic on the part of the members of APTP and is not considered surprising in light of the objectives of the organization. However, it is unclear as to how representative the APTP membership is of all part-time professionals, since most members reside in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. On the other hand, this study was exploratory in nature, with the participants representing a wide variety of organizations and a number of different occupations (See Appendix D).

Unfortunately, in addition to the 14 removed for statistical purposes because they were not considered to be professionals, a relatively large number (173) of those returning questionnaires had not worked part-time during the last five years. It is possible that many people join the organization in order to obtain information about part-time positions and had not yet taken a part-time job. Another possible reason could be an aging membership which no longer had child-care responsibilities and were currently working full-time. One oversight in this study was a failure to request demographic data on those persons returning the questionnaire who were not presently employed in a part-time position and/or had not worked part-time during the last five years. Therefore, it is impossible to make generalizations about those participants who returned the questionnaires, but did not complete the large majority of items. As a result, the power of the analysis, if not its substance, may have suffered due to the reduced number of eligible participants.

Of greatest concern, however, is whether those responding were representative of the 37% who did not. What proportion would have been ineligible anyway? More importantly, did those who would have been eligible have the same experiences as the eligible members who did respond? There is little information available to answer these questions. While APTP collects some demographic information on its members, that data were not readily available for purposes of comparison between the two groups.

## **Recoding and Construction of the Indexes of Benefits**

Appendix E contains the information about the recoding of selected demographic and organizational characteristics, including some items not yet discussed describing the participant's supervisor. Only the recoded version of each of these variables was used in the analysis. A comparison of the results of the recoding with the original distributions reflected collapsing of similar or adjacent categories in order to create more stable cell sizes for analysis. The loss of information resulting from the use of the recoded variables was considered quite small. From this table one can see that about 60% of the participants were in the 35-49 age range.

The items measuring employee benefits were also recoded prior to the construction of indexes. The "Don't Know" ("DK") responses were set to missing, because they provided no information about benefits. Thus, the number of missing responses usually ranged between 50 and 80, but was as high as 150 in one case. The "Not Offered" ("NO") response was assigned a value of zero, indicating that this particular benefit was not offered to any employee. The "Full-Time" ("FT") and "Full-Time/Part-Time" ("FT/PT") responses remained 1 and 2, respectively. The index for a particular type of benefit was created by adding the values for all items included under the benefit heading or by combining specific benefits. Thus, the greater the value, the more generous the organization was with respect to that particular type of benefit. The range of values for a given type of benefit fell from zero (that specific benefit was not offered to any employee) to twice the number of items relating to that benefit (all forms of that benefit that were asked about were provided to both full-time and part-time employees).

Table 1 summarizes the results of this index construction process. The standard benefits package consisted of personal medical leave, paid vacation, health insurance, life insurance, and a retirement/pension plan. Benefits concerning dependent care were the five listed under dependent care benefits on the questionnaire—child care resource and referral, elder care resource and referral, on-site or near-site child care, vouchers for child care, and dependent care assistance plans. Flexible work benefits included flextime workday, telecommuting, flexible week, job-sharing, sabbatical, and phased retirement. Educational benefits included administrative leave for training and tuition assistance. Other leave benefits (excluding paid personal sick leave and vacation) included medical leave for family illness, parenting leave, and other personal leave. Disability insurance and profit sharing/bonuses comprised the other benefits category.

For 4 of the 5 benefit categories, about 70% to 75% of the participants obtained index scores. The flexible benefits index, however, was valid for less than half of the participants and was not used for analytical purposes. As might be expected, organizations performed well in providing the standard benefits package, with dependent care the benefit evidencing the least support among the organizations represented in this study. It is important to note that the dependent care index score may be somewhat misleading since leaves for parenting and family illness (in the other leave category) were often provided, but not reflected within the dependent care category. Educational benefits, including tuition assistance and leave for staff training and development, were usually available. However, in 20% of the cases, educational benefits were provided only to full-time professionals.

**Table 1**  
**Statistical Characteristics of Benefit Measures**

|                | Benefit Items | <u>N</u> | Mean  | Std. Dev. | Median | Inter-quartile Range |
|----------------|---------------|----------|-------|-----------|--------|----------------------|
| Standard       | 5             | 246      | 7.419 | 2.887     | 8.000  | 5.000                |
| Dependent Care | 5             | 219      | 1.146 | 1.976     | 0.000  | 2.000                |
| Flexible Work  | 6             | 140      | 3.643 | 3.035     | 3.000  | 4.000                |
| Educ. Benefits | 2             | 220      | 2.652 | 1.367     | 3.000  | 2.000                |
| Other Leave    | 3             | 220      | 3.918 | 2.125     | 4.000  | 4.000                |
| Other Benefits | 2             | 232      | 2.108 | 1.342     | 2.000  | 2.000                |

### Development of the Measures of Employee Attitudes

#### Overview of the Likert Items

Almost all participants answered the Likert items, with only one item reflecting a non-response of greater than 20 participants. A review of the percentage distributions for the questionnaire items contained in Appendix C revealed that the responses were, in general, moderately positive. This conclusion is also supported by an examination of the item means (Table 2). After recoding all items to conform to a scale ranging from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive), about 80% had a mean greater than 3.0, with thirty larger than 3.5. Among the items which produced the most positive responses were ones concerning feelings of self-worth, supervisor support, the nature of specific work assignments, and access to computer resources. Participants also indicated that they were quite committed to working part time.

**Table 2**  
**Means and Standard Deviations for Likert-type Items**

| Item# | N   | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|-------|-----|------|--------------------|
| 27    | 317 | 3.57 | 1.11               |
| 28    | 316 | 3.48 | 1.33               |
| 29    | 317 | 3.62 | 1.05               |
| 30    | 318 | 4.20 | 0.84               |
| 31    | 318 | 4.20 | 0.88               |
| 32    | 316 | 2.21 | 0.91               |
| 33    | 314 | 3.49 | 1.09               |
| 34    | 314 | 2.91 | 1.07               |
| 35    | 314 | 2.05 | 0.95               |
| 36    | 312 | 3.11 | 1.08               |
| 37    | 313 | 3.51 | 0.96               |
| 38    | 312 | 2.87 | 0.99               |
| 39    | 309 | 3.39 | 0.97               |
| 40    | 313 | 3.68 | 0.94               |
| 41    | 313 | 2.94 | 1.06               |
| 42    | 313 | 4.21 | 0.95               |
| 43    | 313 | 3.94 | 1.15               |
| 44    | 314 | 3.82 | 1.21               |
| 45    | 310 | 4.06 | 1.13               |
| 46    | 311 | 3.74 | 1.38               |
| 47    | 311 | 4.07 | 1.17               |
| 48    | 310 | 3.88 | 1.17               |
| 49    | 313 | 3.39 | 1.35               |
| 50    | 312 | 2.95 | 1.25               |
| 51    | 314 | 4.12 | 0.99               |
| 52    | 312 | 3.72 | 1.23               |
| 53    | 306 | 3.09 | 1.48               |
| 59    | 306 | 3.34 | 1.08               |
| 60    | 303 | 3.61 | 1.05               |
| 61    | 298 | 2.10 | 1.08               |
| 62    | 301 | 2.44 | 1.15               |
| 63    | 311 | 4.02 | 0.89               |
| 64    | 310 | 4.11 | 0.89               |
| 65    | 311 | 3.53 | 1.19               |
| 66    | 307 | 3.58 | 1.07               |
| 67    | 306 | 3.17 | 1.05               |
| 68    | 305 | 3.32 | 1.14               |
| 69    | 303 | 3.76 | 1.04               |
| 70    | 311 | 4.02 | 0.90               |
| 71    | 309 | 3.77 | 1.07               |
| 72    | 310 | 3.46 | 1.13               |
| 73    | 309 | 3.63 | 1.11               |
| 74    | 309 | 3.52 | 1.07               |
| 75    | 311 | 3.84 | 1.12               |
| 76    | 311 | 3.28 | 1.08               |
| 77    | 309 | 3.93 | 1.03               |
| 78    | 311 | 4.02 | 0.89               |
| 79    | 312 | 3.59 | 1.00               |



### Construction of the Indexes of Employee Attitudes

Although no item means fell below 2.0, there were a few that were less than 2.5. Participants appeared not to derive their greatest satisfaction from their jobs, nor would they have done anything to keep their jobs (items 32 and 35, respectively). They believed that working part time had hampered their career development (items 54, 55, and 56), and, to some extent, these participants might have felt they were obliged to take less leave than their full-time counterparts (items 61 and 62).

The Likert items were divided into four sets—the job satisfaction items (27-32), the organizational commitment items (33-43), the work experiences items (44-62), and the supervisor behavior items (63-79). Correlations among the items within each of these sets (not shown here) were carefully examined to evaluate the likelihood of forming indexes to measure different dimensions of the attitudes of these part-time employees. This examination indicated that many of the items within each set were correlated with one another, offering possibilities for index construction.

To identify these indexes and which items would enter each, factor analyses on the four sets were conducted. An initial unrotated, principal components analysis was done, followed, where required, by a varimax rotation and the best oblique rotation. The reader is referred to Appendix F for the technical details of the different types of factor analyses.

For the purposes of this study, in order to be associated with a particular factor and be included in the index defined by that factor, an item must have loaded greater than 0.4 on the factor. However, an item ultimately was assigned to an index based upon its highest loading above 0.4. Items that did not meet the 0.4 criterion on any factor were excluded from all indexes.

The results from the selected factor analyses for the four sets of items are presented in Tables 3 through Tables 6. The initial factor analysis of the job satisfaction items produced a single factor accounting for 53.0% of the variance in the items, so no additional analyses were possible. Every item in the set was included in the jobsatisfaction index, with only one item evidencing a loading of less than 0.6.

**Table 3**  
**Factor Analysis of Job Satisfaction Items**

| Item                                  | Satisfaction Factor Loadings |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 27                                    | 0.826                        |
| 28                                    | 0.604                        |
| 29                                    | 0.814                        |
| 30                                    | 0.766                        |
| 31                                    | 0.818                        |
| 32                                    | 0.458                        |
|                                       |                              |
| <b>% VARIANCE EXPLAINED BY FACTOR</b> | <b>53.0</b>                  |

**Table 4**  
**Factor Analysis of Organizational Commitment Items**

| Items                          | Organizational Commitment Factor Loadings | Commitment to Part-Time Factor Loadings |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| 33                             | 0.547                                     | -0.210                                  |
| 34                             | 0.833                                     | -0.047                                  |
| 35                             | 0.427                                     | -0.347                                  |
| 36                             | 0.802                                     | -0.059                                  |
| 37                             | 0.825                                     | 0.065                                   |
| 38                             | 0.820                                     | -0.018                                  |
| 39                             | 0.748                                     | 0.136                                   |
| 40                             | 0.744                                     | 0.042                                   |
| 41                             | 0.749                                     | 0.182                                   |
| 42                             | .242                                      | 0.764                                   |
| 43                             | -.242                                     | 0.593                                   |
|                                |   |   |
| % Variance Explained by Factor | 45.1                                      | 10.6                                    |

**Table 5**  
**Loadings from the Factor Analysis of Part-Time Experience Items**

| Item        | Accommodation | Non-Monetary Resource | Monetary Resource | Career Develop. | Co-workers | Leave |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------|-------|
| 44          | .713          | -.017                 | -.048             | .218            | .231       | -.058 |
| 45          | .740          | .029                  | .002              | .048            | .245       | -.035 |
| 46          | .003          | .838                  | .075              | .043            | .174       | .041  |
| 47          | .036          | .878                  | .114              | .047            | .084       | .012  |
| 48          | .015          | .793                  | .254              | .040            | .158       | -.062 |
| 49          | -.162         | .471                  | .406              | .336            | .205       | .087  |
| 50          | .718          | .022                  | .108              | .018            | .057       | .087  |
| 51          | .125          | .458                  | .307              | .367            | -.065      | -.054 |
| 52          | .130          | .305                  | .666              | .116            | -.060      | -.106 |
| 53          | -.054         | .285                  | .723              | .083            | .112       | .113  |
| 54          | .116          | .101                  | .072              | .875            | .094       | .028  |
| 55          | .088          | .100                  | .002              | .879            | .141       | -.004 |
| 56          | .243          | -.001                 | .430              | .509            | .072       | .024  |
| 57          | .254          | .134                  | .124              | .296            | .627       | .003  |
| 58          | -.043         | .048                  | .227              | .498            | .383       | .207  |
| 59          | .280          | .096                  | .246              | .299            | .575       | .030  |
| 60          | .078          | .207                  | .081              | -.003           | .674       | .005  |
| 61          | .164          | .114                  | -.291             | .193            | -.290      | .701  |
| 62          | -.078         | -.081                 | .209              | -.031           | .235       | .824  |
|             |               |                       |                   |                 |            |       |
| % explained | 10.0          | 14.8                  | 9.3               | 13.6            | 9.1        | 6.7   |

**Table 6**  
**Loadings from the Factor Analysis of Supervisor Behavior Items**

| Item                              | Satisfaction with Supervisor |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 63                                | 0.788                        |
| 64                                | 0.754                        |
| 65                                | 0.724                        |
| 66                                | 0.526                        |
| 67                                | 0.524                        |
| 68                                | 0.632                        |
| 69                                | 0.652                        |
| 70                                | 0.728                        |
| 71                                | 0.649                        |
| 72                                | 0.677                        |
| 73                                | 0.703                        |
| 74                                | 0.487                        |
| 75                                | 0.553                        |
| 76                                | 0.636                        |
| 77                                | 0.675                        |
| 78                                | 0.353                        |
| 79                                | 0.641                        |
| % Variance Explained<br>by Factor | 40.8                         |

The initial factor analysis of the organizational commitment items indicated two clear factors. The other rotations produced results that were practically identical to the unrotated solution; therefore, the results from the initial solution are presented. The first factor, explaining 45% of the variance, identified those items making up the organizational commitment index. They included all but the last two items, and were the ones used in previous studies of organizational commitment (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). The last two items, which loaded on a second factor accounting for 10.6% of the variance, were added for this study, and comprised an index of commitment to part-time work.

The initial factor analysis of the work experience items produced six factors. Both the varimax and oblique rotations were examined, and the results from the varimax, presented here, provided the most interpretable factors. These factors accounted for about 64% of the variance in the 19 items. The first factor identified the items measuring, at the most general level, the accommodation made by the organization for its part-time employees. The items loading on the second factor were ones which indicated whether or not a part-time employee received the same treatment as a full-time employee with respect to the distribution of the organization's non-monetary resources, such as office space. The third factor identified the items which measured the comparability between part-time and full-time employees in terms of monetary benefits. The fourth factor highlighted those items measuring how the part-time employee believed his or her part-time status affected career development. The fifth factor indicated which items measured the treatment of the part-time worker by co-workers. The last factor identified the two items reflecting the participant's concern about missing work or the use of leave.

The initial factor analysis of the items measuring supervisor behavior resulted in three factors; however, all but one item had high loadings on the first factor. The varimax and oblique rotations provided no more meaningful interpretations and only seemed to separate the items according to their location or their syntax. The item which did not load on the first factor in the original analysis, item 78, just confused the issue. Thus, the first factor from the unrotated version is presented as a comprehensive measure of supervisor behavior. The other two factors in that analysis were not useful, and item 78 was dropped from further consideration. Although it had a loading greater than 0.4 on one factor, it did not fit with any other items and could not be meaningfully interpreted by itself.

The items shaded for each factor were the ones selected to measure that attitude dimension. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure the internal consistency among these sets of items, and are reported in the survey questionnaire in Appendix C. To interpret the alpha values, rules provided by Guilford (1954) were used. The alphas for the job satisfaction items (0.80), the organizational commitment items (0.89), the non-compensation treatment items (0.82), the career development items (0.77), and the supervisor behavior items (0.90) indicated a high degree of internal consistency. The general accommodation items, monetary treatment items, and the coworker attitudes items demonstrated a substantial degree of internal consistency, with alphas of 0.65, 0.63, and 0.63, respectively. The two sets of items measuring commitment to part-time work and feelings about missing work showed a low degree of internal consistency, with alphas less than 0.40.

To form the indexes of employee attitudes, the values on the shaded items from each factor in the four factor analyses were summed and divided by the number of items. This returned each index to the original item scale--one (very negative) to five (very positive)--which allowed interpretation to be more straightforward. Table 7 gives the statistical characteristics of the ten resulting indexes. The number of participants receiving a score for a particular index never fell below 285, with 7 index scores based on 300 or more participants. As with the individual Likert items, most of the mean index scores were above 3.0. Only 2, the index for career development and the index measuring feelings about taking leave, were between 2.0 and 3.0. Given the similarity between the means and medians, there were few indications of skewed distributions, with tests for normality confirming this impression.

**Table 7**  
**Indexes of the Statistical Characteristics of Attitudes**

|                           | N   | Mean  | Std. Dev. | Median | Inter-Quartile Range |
|---------------------------|-----|-------|-----------|--------|----------------------|
| Job Satisfaction          | 312 | 3.546 | .736      | 3.667  | 1.167                |
| Org. Commitment           | 307 | 3.098 | .736      | 3.111  | .889                 |
| Commitment to Part-Time   | 312 | 4.075 | .788      | 4.500  | 1.000                |
| Overall Accommodation     | 309 | 3.605 | .921      | 3.667  | 1.333                |
| Satisfaction w/supervisor | 285 | 3.676 | .668      | 3.688  | 1.000                |
| Non-monetary Resources    | 307 | 3.849 | .925      | 4.000  | 1.200                |
| Career Development        | 298 | 2.714 | .921      | 2.750  | 1.250                |
| Monetary Resources        | 305 | 3.415 | 1.159     | 3.500  | 1.500                |
| Co-workers                | 300 | 3.521 | .824      | 3.667  | 1.000                |
| Leave                     | 296 | 2.275 | .882      | 2.000  | 1.500                |

## **Bivariate Relationships Among the Independent and Dependent Variables**

### Relationship with the Categorical Independent Variables

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were used to identify the important bivariate relationships between the categorical independent variables and the dependent variables, the measures of the attitudes of the part-time employees. This analysis was undertaken as a data-reduction technique. Except for a few instances where an independent variable was close to significant ( $0.10 < p < 0.15$ ) and the differences in cell means appeared interesting, only those variables that were significantly related to a given dependent variable at 0.10 or less, based on the p-values for the F-statistics, were retained as candidates for the multivariate models.

An examination of the results of the ANOVAs found in Table 8 through Table 11 reveals that a number of significant relationships exist. The ones of most interest were the job and organizational characteristics, and not those related to demographics. Initially, the participant's sex and race were not included in the analysis, because of the predominance of white women. The geographic variables, state and region, were included but were not powerful. These variables, like sex and race, tended to cluster participants within a single category. Even personal characteristics such as education, income, and marital status were not particularly revealing. The reason for taking leave was also excluded from the analyses because 80% of the respondents had selected child-care issues as the primary reason they were working part-time. The remainder of the participants chose a variety of categories which offered little opportunity for analysis.

However, organizational characteristics, including industry and number of employees, appeared somewhat more important although not as important as job characteristics. Those job characteristics that were important included the following: whether or not an employee had worked first as a full-time employee of the organization before becoming part-time; his or her level of pay as it related to full-time pay; the number of hours worked per week; eligibility to accrue seniority; receiving a salary versus being paid by the hour; and the vulnerability to downsizing. Each of these variables was found to be highly related to an employee's attitudes.

The characteristics of the supervisor had some influence on employee attitudes, including a variable created from several others. This measure, designed to summarize the supervisor's family situation, had a code of "1" if the supervisor had a working spouse and children, and a code of "0" otherwise.

The details of the relationships between the categorical dependent variables and employee attitudes will be left to the section in which the research questions are answered. However, some general characterizations of these relationships can be made with

**Table 8**  
**F-Values for ANOVAS for Job and Organizational Characteristics**

|                                | Time on Job | Began as FT | Other PT Emp. | Hourly Rate | Work/Family Program | Size of Org. |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Job Satis-faction              | 2.67*       | 4.59**      | 0.51          | 3.91**      | 0.03                | 0.24         |
| Organi-zational Commitment.    | 1.44        | 6.09**      | 1.83          | 2.45**      | 0.31                | 2.08         |
| PT. Commitment.                | 3.05**      | 1.59        | 4.52**        | 2.36**      | 1.08                | 0.34         |
| Overall Accommo-dation.        | 1.34        | 19.67**     | 0.11          | 1.68        | 0.26                | 8.41**       |
| Satisfac-tion with Supervisor. | 0.01        | 7.74**      | 1.63          | 0.70        | 1.54                | 2.91*        |
| Non-monetary resources         | 1.72        | 5.42**      | 3.68**        | 3.11**      | 2.17                | 5.00**       |
| Career Development             | 0.63        | 5.04**      | 2.28*         | 0.30        | 2.60                | 6.74         |
| Monetary resources             | 0.13        | 5.31**      | 2.80**        | 7.08**      | 2.34*               | 1.77         |
| Co-workers                     | 4.95**      | 1.23        | 3.19**        | 1.05        | 1.14                | 2.56*        |
| Leave                          | 1.34        | 0.18        | 2.06          | 1.20        | 0.67                | 0.49         |

\* p. < .10  
 \*\*p. < .05

**Table 9**  
**F-Values for ANOVAS for Supervisor and Participant Characteristics**

|                | Sup Sex | Sup Age | Sup Mar. Status | Sup w/ Child | Sup w/ Spouse Working | Educ   | Family Income | Marital Status |
|----------------|---------|---------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------|---------------|----------------|
| Job Sat.       | 3.96**  | 1.00    | 0.04            | 2.91*        | 4.58**                | 1.19   | 0.87          | 0.65           |
| Org. Comm.     | 0.00    | 1.77    | 2.11            | 1.86         | 0.31                  | 1.42   | 0.91          | 0.12           |
| PT Comm.       | 0.04    | 0.18    | 1.21            | 0.00         | 5.37**                | 1.05   | 4.28**        | 16.59**        |
| Over-all Accom | 0.37    | 0.28    | 0.37            | 4.48**       | 0.20                  | 2.54*  | 0.08          | 3.74**         |
| Sat. w/Sup     | 1.55    | 0.01    | 2.26            | 8.14**       | 1.55                  | 0.13   | 1.07          | 0.50           |
| Non-mon. res.  | 1.15    | 1.15    | 0.27            | 0.14         | 1.01                  | 0.70   | 3.14**        | 0.15           |
| Car. Dev.      | 0.04    | 2.33    | 0.45            | 0.00         | 0.38                  | 0.77   | 0.00          | 1.56           |
| Monetary res.  | 0.09    | 0.16    | 0.35            | 0.29         | 0.40                  | 1.87   | 2.89*         | 0.96           |
| Co-workers     | 0.39    | 0.00    | 0.06            | 0.26         | 0.75                  | 0.05   | 0.02          | 0.00           |
| Leave          | 0.02    | 0.07    | 0.58            | 0.03         | 1.43                  | 3.15** | 0.06          | 0.68           |

\* p < .10

\*\* p < .05

**Table 10**  
**F-Values for ANOVAS for Characteristics of Participant's Job**

|                              | Salary vs. Hourly | Indus-try | Receive Over-time | Salary compared to FT | Salary compared to prev. FT rate | Hours per week |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Job Satisfac-tion            | 4.27**            | 1.83      | 3.44**            | 5.11**                | 2.70**                           | 3.33**         |
| Organization Commit.         | 1.58              | 3.28**    | 0.63              | 2.43*                 | 1.06                             | 0.10           |
| Part-time Commit.            | 0.15              | 1.72      | 0.33              | 2.43*                 | 2.29*                            | 19.37**        |
| Age                          | 3.59**            | 3.12**    | 0.89              | 1.19                  | 4.93**                           | 10.10**        |
| Satisfac-tion w/ Super-visor | 0.29              | 1.14      | 2.04              | 0.80                  | 0.75                             | 0.62           |
| Non-Monetary Resources       | 12.48**           | 2.72**    | 4.19**            | 13.80**               | 3.96**                           | 8.36**         |
| Career                       | 1.23              | 1.15      | 0.26              | 1.25                  | 1.03                             | 3.15           |
| Monetary Resources           | 23.34**           | 5.51**    | 3.91**            | 75.42**               | 8.42**                           | 7.57**         |
| Co-workers                   | 0.33              | 1.72      | 2.91*             | 0.34                  | 0.42                             | 0.65           |
| Leave                        | 0.01              | 0.36      | 0.20              | 0.65                  | 0.58                             | 1.90           |

\* p < .10

\*\* p < .05



**Table 11**  
**F-Values for ANOVAS for Characteristics and Demographic Variables**

|                         | Seniority | Vul. to RIF | Region | State | Work arrangement | Sup Family Sit. |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|--------|-------|------------------|-----------------|
| Job Satisfaction        | 2.84*     | 0.76        | 0.42   | 1.12  | 4.76**           | 0.35            |
| Organization Commitment | 1.63      | 2.20        | 1.07   | 1.51  | 2.86**           | 1.86            |
| Part-time Commitment    | 3.38**    | 3.07*       | 0.84   | 0.73  | 9.00**           | 2.23            |
| Accommodations          | 2.77*     | 3.60*       | 1.11   | 0.71  | 1.98*            | 2.95*           |
| Satisfaction w/Super.   | 4.28**    | 13.59**     | 1.56   | 2.69* | 2.07&            | 8.04**          |
| Non-mon Treatment       | 16.08**   | 9.94**      | 0.48   | 0.69  | 6.01**           | 1.21            |
| Career                  | 7.98**    | 92.70**     | 0.41   | 0.83  | 2.85**           | 0.26            |
| Mon-treatment           | 32.51**   | 4.92**      | 1.10   | 1.29  | 3.39**           | 0.82            |
| Co-workers              | 3.30**    | 16.84**     | 1.42   | 2.78* | 0.56             | 0.95            |
| Leave                   | 2.84*     | 4.84**      | 1.49   | 0.59  | 0.65             | 0.71            |

\* p < .10

\*\* p < .05

reference to the bivariate results. As one might expect, those part-time employees who believed they had the same job security, pay, and seniority rights as their full-time counterparts had more positive attitudes in almost all respects. They reported better relationships with supervisors, more positive work experiences, and greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Furthermore, the greater the hourly wage rate, the more positive the employee's attitudes.

Other findings were more interesting, however, because they provided a contrast between social and emotional treatment versus economic treatment. It appeared that the more an employee "looked" like a full-time employee, the more equitable the benefits in terms of the distribution of the company's resources (pay or otherwise). For example, if the employee had previously worked full time for the organization, worked more than half-time, was salaried (especially at a higher level), then that employee received more of the company's resources or attention. On the other hand, if the employee was not salaried, had not worked full time for his or her present organization, and was employed 20 hours per week or less, that employee was more likely to be viewed as a true part-time worker.

In a similar vein, government workers and those in large firms tended to be treated more equitably, possibly because of the adoption of policies that promote and advocate professional part-time work. In contrast, those in education and small firms seemed to feel they were viewed more positively by their organization and coworkers. Those who were temporary and worked fewer hours may have received less attention by the organization, but they appeared to have greater job satisfaction.

### Relationships with the Benefits Measures

Correlations among the continuous variables also were used only as a data reduction tool. Continuous independent variables were retained for further analysis if they had a correlation with an attitude that was significant at the 0.10 level. Table 12 contains the correlations between the attitude measures and the benefit indexes. Again, the flexible work benefits index was not included because of the relatively small number of cases with an index score. With respect to the other benefits measures, the index most often significantly correlated with attitudes was the one measuring educational benefits, and not the standard benefits index. The correlation between

**Table 12**  
**Correlations of Attitudes with Benefits**

|                              | Standard | Dependent Care | Educa-tional Benefits | Other Leave | Other Bene-fits |
|------------------------------|----------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Job Satisfaction             | -.005    | -.092          | .181**                | .060        | .108            |
| Organiza-tional Commitment   | .006     | -.077          | .243**                | .049        | .005            |
| Part-time Commitment         | .127**   | .093           | .089                  | .055        | .081            |
| Overall Accommoda-tions      | -.130**  | -.095          | -.006                 | -.013       | -.084           |
| Satisfaction with Supervisor | .041     | -.040          | .256**                | .127*       | .035            |
| Non-monetary Resources       | .308**   | .150           | .253**                | .245**      | .262**          |
| Career Dev.                  | .020     | -.076          | .129*                 | -.025       | -.026           |
| Monetary Resources           | .489**   | .210**         | .297**                | .408**      | .275**          |
| Co-workers                   | .023     | -.064          | .127*                 | .078        | -.086           |
| Leave                        | .054     | -.085          | .058                  | .085        | .077            |

\*p < .10

\*\*p < .05

overall accommodation and the standard benefits index was actually negative. All of the benefits indexes were significantly associated with both the non-monetary and monetary resources distribution measures. Otherwise, few other significant correlations appeared in the table, and most of these involved the educational benefits measure.

### Relationships Among the Dependent Measures

Some of the attitude indexes can be used as independent variables to help explain other attitudes. This assumes that the independent ones are actually antecedents of the dependent ones and that the two are significantly related. The indexes measuring work experiences and supervisor behavior were seen clearly as antecedents of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. While some of the attitudes about specific work experiences could be related to one another, no causal relationships were hypothesized. Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and commitment to part-time work were not considered antecedents of one another. Attitudes about the general accommodation of the organization to the part-time worker could be influenced by the more specific experiences, including satisfaction with the supervisor. As for this latter measure, it also

is likely to be affected by attitudes about specific work experiences. The other work experience indexes were not hypothesized to have antecedents among the attitude measures.

Table 13 displays the correlations among the attitude indexes, but the only ones of interest are those identified above. The job satisfaction and organizational commitment indexes

were related to all of the antecedent attitudes except the one concerning making up lost time or leave. The general measure of organizational accommodation had significant positive associations with attitudes toward the supervisor, career development opportunities, and treatment by coworkers. Satisfaction with the supervisor was significantly related in a positive way to all of the work experience measures except, once again, the one measuring feelings about making up lost time.

## **The Research Questions: Explaining the Attitudes of Part-Time Professionals**

### Overview

The research questions posed in Chapter 1 will be answered through the use of multivariate models in conjunction with the univariate and bivariate data already presented. The answers to these questions will not only describe the current attitudes of part-time professionals, but will also help explain these attitudes using the most powerful of the hypothesized causal variables. The multivariate models can be found in Tables 14 through Tables 22. They are presented in the order in which they will be used to answer the research questions. The information from the models is divided into three parts: (1) the statistics concerning the overall fit of the model, (2) the solution or parameter estimates for the explanatory equation, and (3) the least-squares means for the categorical independent variables in the model. The latter is given both to provide the reader with a better feel for the model's results, and to show the means as they appear in the balanced design reflected by the model.

The models were estimated using the cases having values for all variables included in the model. Thus, the number of cases varied from one model to the next, ranging between 183 for attitudes about the supervisor to 277 for attitudes about coworkers and the use of leave or missing work. However, the dependent variable means for the subsets of respondents in the models were almost identical to the overall ones given in Table 2. The parameter estimates for a model consist of an intercept, adjustments to that intercept for each category of the discrete variables included in the model, and regression coefficients for the continuous variables in the model. The adjustment for one of the categories in a discrete variable is arbitrarily set to zero, and the adjustments for the other categories of that variable are relative to that zero category. Each of these estimates is biased (reflected by the "B" next to the coefficient) because they have been arbitrarily chosen, but they are meant to reflect the relative magnitude of the differences between the categories of a variable. These same differences also are seen in the context of the least-squares means for each category of the variable, and the differences between the means were tested for significance at the 0.10 level using a test taking into account the multiple comparisons being made.

1. What is the level of job satisfaction among part-time professionals? How do these levels differ by characteristics of part-time professionals?

**Table 13**  
**Correlations among Employee Attitudes**

|                           | Job Satisfaction | Organizational Commitment | Part-time Commitment | Overall Accommodation | Satisfaction w/Supervisor |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Job Satisfaction          |                  |                           |                      |                       |                           |
| Organizational Commitment | .671**           |                           |                      |                       |                           |
| Commitment to Part-time   | .027             | -.033                     |                      |                       |                           |
| Overall Accommodations    | .208**           | .282**                    | .032                 |                       |                           |
| Satisfaction w/Supervisor | .342**           | .418**                    | .060                 | .513                  |                           |
| Non-monetary Resources    | .215**           | .179**                    | .130**               | .085                  | .273**                    |
| Career Dev.               | .218**           | .287**                    | -.121**              | .265**                | .281**                    |
| Monetary Resources        | .158**           | .137**                    | .145**               | .031                  | .125**                    |
| Co-workers                | .170**           | .288**                    | -.005                | .375**                | .441**                    |
| Leave                     | -.015            | -.079                     | -.182**              | .008                  | -.053                     |

|                           | Non-monetary Resources | Career Dev. | Monetary Resources | Co-workers |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|------------|
| Job Satisfaction          |                        |             |                    |            |
| Organization Commitment   |                        |             |                    |            |
| Part-time Commitment      |                        |             |                    |            |
| Overall Accommodation     |                        |             |                    |            |
| Satisfaction w/Supervisor |                        |             |                    |            |
| Non-monetary Resources    |                        |             |                    |            |
| Career Development        | .352**                 |             |                    |            |
| Monetary Resources        | .524**                 | .297**      |                    |            |
| Co-workers                | .351**                 | .437**      | .185**             |            |
| Leave                     | .042                   | .124**      | .040               | .085       |

\* p < .10

\*\* p < .05

As already discussed, the mean for job satisfaction shown in Table 7 (3.546), is almost identical to the one for the subset of participants included in the multivariate model for job satisfaction. This model, which explained 32% of the variance in job satisfaction (Table 14), suggests that the participants in this study had a somewhat positive level of job satisfaction. The multivariate model reveals, however, that regular part-time and full-time workers were the ones least satisfied (between 3.55 and 3.60).

**Table 14**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Job Satisfaction**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | <u>DF</u> | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | <u>F</u> | <u>Pr &gt; F</u> |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------------|
| Model           | 13        | 43.30          | 3.32        | 8.39     | 0.0001           |
| Error           | 233       | 92.29          | 0.40        |          |                  |
| Corrected Total | 246       | 135.49         |             |          |                  |

Percent Variance Explained: 31.9

Mean of Job Satisfaction: 3.56

B. Estimate of the Model

| Parameter                          | Estimate | <u>T</u> | Prob. | Std. Error |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                          | 2.74B    | 5.19     | 0.00  | 0.53       |
| Work Arrangement                   |          |          |       |            |
| Not Employed                       | -1.09B   | -2.32    | 0.02  | 0.47       |
| Part-time                          | -1.09B   | -2.37    | 0.02  | 0.46       |
| Reg. FT                            | -1.05B   | -2.21    | 0.03  | 0.48       |
| Self-employed                      | -0.72B   | -1.54    | 0.13  | 0.47       |
| Temporary                          | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Industry                           |          |          |       |            |
| business/service                   | -0.07B   | -0.46    | 0.65  | 0.16       |
| education                          | 0.38B    | 1.70     | 0.09  | 0.22       |
| government                         | -0.31B   | -1.65    | 0.10  | 0.19       |
| other non-profit                   | -0.22B   | -1.25    | 0.21  | 0.18       |
| other                              | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Spouse Working                     |          |          |       |            |
| No                                 | 0.25B    | 3.00     | 0.00  | 0.08       |
| Yes                                | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Time on Job                        |          |          |       |            |
| less than 1 year                   | -0.25B   | -2.47    | 0.01  | 0.10       |
| 1 to 3 years                       | -0.26B   | -2.59    | 0.01  | 0.10       |
| more than 3 years                  | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Satisfaction w/Supervisor          | 0.42     | 6.75     | 0.00  | 0.06       |
| Attitudes about Monetary Resources | 0.13     | 3.62     | 0.00  | 0.04       |

**Table 14 - cont.**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Job Satisfaction**

C. Least Squares Means

|                   | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|-------------------|---------|------------|
| Work Arrangement  |         |            |
| not employed      | 3.55    | 0.12       |
| part-time         | 3.56    | 0.06       |
| regular full-time | 3.59    | 0.14       |
| self-employed     | 3.93    | 0.11       |
| temporary         | 4.64    | 0.45       |
| Industry          |         |            |
| business/services | 3.83    | 0.11       |
| education         | 4.28    | 0.19       |
| government        | 3.59    | 0.14       |
| other non-profit  | 3.68    | 0.13       |
| other             | 3.90    | 0.17       |
| Spouse working    |         |            |
| No                | 3.98    | 0.11       |
| Yes               | 3.73    | 0.11       |
| Time on job       |         |            |
| Less than 1 year  | 3.78    | 0.12       |
| 1 to 3 years      | 3.76    | 0.11       |
| more than 3 years | 4.02    | 0.12       |

Although the number of temporary employees was too small to reach any firm conclusions, they appeared to have been more satisfied than their regular part-time or full-time counterparts. Those with more than three years of time on the job were more satisfied than workers with less time (4.02 compared to 3.77), as might be expected. Part-time education professionals, with a mean satisfaction score of 4.28, were clearly more satisfied with their jobs than those working for government and other non-profits, who had mean satisfaction scores of 3.59 and 3.68 respectively. Workers whose supervisor either did not have a spouse or the spouse was not employed had more positive feelings about their jobs (3.98) than respondents who had supervisors with employed spouses (3.73). Finally, the more that the part-time professional was satisfied with his or her supervisor and economic compensation (regression coefficients of 0.42 and 0.13, respectively), the higher the job satisfaction.

2. What is the level of commitment of part-time professionals to the organizations in which they work? How do these levels differ by characteristics of the part-time professionals?

In terms of organizational commitment, these respondents were relatively neutral, as noted by their mean score of about 3.1 in both the table of means, Table 7, and Table 15, the multivariate model of organizational commitment. This model explains 31% of the variance in the participants' levels of organizational commitment. The respondents in the model who had less or the same vulnerability to a reduction in force (RIF) as full-time professionals expressed less commitment (3.03) than those more vulnerable (3.24). One possible explanation for this seemingly contradictory finding is that those part-time professionals in high demand, such as computer professionals, frequently change jobs and might therefore be less committed than those with fewer career opportunities.

**Table 15**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Organizational Commitment**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | DF  | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F    | Pr > F |
|-----------------|-----|----------------|-------------|------|--------|
| Model           | 8   | 32.27          | 4.03        | 9.68 | 0.0001 |
| Error           | 173 | 72.08          | 0.42        |      |        |
| Corrected Total | 181 | 104.36         |             |      |        |

Percent Variance Explained: 30.9  
Mean of Organizational Commitment: 3.11

B. Estimate of the Model

| Parameter                     | Estimate | T     | Prob. | Std. Error |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                     | 0.978B*  | 3.22  | 0.00  | 0.30       |
| Vulnerability to RIF          |          |       |       |            |
| less or same as full-time     | -0.22B   | -1.85 | 0.07  | 0.12       |
| more than full-time           | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| Industry                      |          |       |       |            |
| business/service              | 0.10B    | 0.57  | 0.57  | 0.18       |
| education                     | 0.30B    | 1.27  | 0.21  | 0.24       |
| government                    | -0.28B   | -1.38 | 0.17  | 0.20       |
| other non-profit              | -0.02B   | -0.09 | 0.93  | 0.20       |
| other                         | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| Attitude on Career Dev.       | 0.17     | 2.84  | 0.01  | 0.06       |
| Satisfaction w/Supervisor     | 0.40     | 5.26  | 0.00  | 0.08       |
| Level of Educational Benefits | 0.10     | 2.59  | 0.01  | 0.04       |

C. Least Squares Means

|                           | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|---------------------------|---------|------------|
| Vulnerable to RIF         |         |            |
| less or same as full-time | 3.03    | 0.08       |
| more than full-time       | 3.24    | 0.09       |
| Industry                  |         |            |
| business/services         | 3.21    | 0.07       |
| education                 | 3.41    | 0.17       |
| government                | 2.83    | 0.12       |
| other non-profit          | 3.09    | 0.11       |
| other                     | 3.11    | 0.16       |

Industry entered the model explaining organizational commitment, but the various sectors of the economy did not differ significantly from one another. As indicated by the regression coefficients, the more the respondent was positive about his or her career development and his or her supervisor, the greater the level of job satisfaction. Part-time professionals in organizations with good educational benefits also expressed greater organizational commitment. Table 16 gives the results of the multivariate model explaining the respondent's commitment to remaining part time as opposed to commitment to the organization. This model accounts for 30% of the variance in the commitment to part-time work.

First of all, the respondents were in general quite committed to remaining part-time, with a mean score of about 4.1. Those working 30 or more hours a week were, as might be expected, the ones least committed to part-time work. The part-time employees receiving no seniority were less positively committed to remaining part-time than the ones receiving at least some seniority. If there were other part-time professionals in the organization, the respondent was more committed to remaining part time, (4.17 for those who said yes compared to 3.93 for those who said no). The regression coefficient for attitudes toward the distribution of non-monetary resources indicates the better the employee felt about this distribution, the more committed he or she was to remaining part time.

3. What are the perceptions of part-time professionals concerning the way they are treated on the job with regard to resources provided, including workspace, equipment, technical support, facilities, etc.?

Two of the measures of employee attitudes are relevant here--feelings about both the monetary and non-monetary resources provided by the organization. Table 7 of the univariate distributions of the attitude measures shows that part-time professionals are positive about the non-monetary resources they receive, i.e. office space, clerical assistance, training, and equipment, relative to their full-time counterparts. The mean score on this attitude dimension was 3.85. Earlier analysis of the individual item means indicated that they were particularly satisfied with the equipment they received. In terms of economic compensation, the respondents were somewhat less positive, with a mean score between 3.4 and 3.5.

4. What are the perceptions of part-time professionals concerning treatment from their co-workers and supervisors? Specifically, to what extent do part-time professionals believe that they are discriminated against in terms of training, assignments, workload, and advancement in the organization?

The table of the attitude means clearly shows that the respondents had their most negative attitudes about career development. The index had a mean of 2.7, and none of the means for the four items making up the index was greater than 3.0 (See Table 2.). The individual item means also indicate that they may have believed the workload to be a bit unfair (mean for item 50 was 2.95). Furthermore, the attitude about taking leave had a mean of only 2.28 (Table 7). On the other hand, these part-time professionals said they were happy with the tasks they received (mean for item 51 was 4.12), and the means for satisfaction with supervisor and treatment by coworkers were fairly positive, 3.68 and 3.52, respectively. Finally, the measure of overall satisfaction with work experiences (accommodation), which combines items 44, 45, and 50, had a mean of 3.61.



**Table 16**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Commitment to Part-Time Work**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | <u>DF</u> | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | <u>F</u> | <u>Pr &gt; F</u> |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------------|
| Model           | 11        | 38.87          | 3.53        | 7.92     | 0.0001           |
| Error           | 197       | 87.92          | 0.45        |          |                  |
| Corrected Total | 208       | 126.78         |             |          |                  |

Percent Variance Explained: 30.1

Mean of Commitment to Part-Time : 4.08

B. Estimate of the Model

| Parameter                              | Estimate | <u>T</u> | Prob. | Std. Error |
|--|----------|----------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                              | 4.01B    | 15.07    | 0.00  | 0.27       |
| Hours a Week                           |          |          |       |            |
| less than 20                           | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| 20 - 30                                | -0.15B   | -1.12    | 0.26  | 0.13       |
| 30 or more                             | -0.99B   | -6.70    | 0.00  | 0.15       |
| Amount of Seniority                    |          |          |       |            |
| no seniority                           | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| less than full-time                    | 0.30B    | 2.36     | 0.02  | 0.13       |
| same as FT                             | 0.19B    | 1.62     | 0.11  | 0.12       |
| Family Income                          |          |          |       |            |
| less than 60K                          | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| 60 - 100K                              | -0.26B   | -1.70    | 0.09  | 0.15       |
| > 100K                                 | 0.01B    | 0.04     | 0.97  | 0.15       |
| Other PT Workers                       |          |          |       |            |
| Dk                                     | 0.22B    | 1.04     | 0.30  | 0.21       |
| No                                     | -0.24B   | -2.07    | 0.04  | 0.12       |
| Yes                                    | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Time on Job                            |          |          |       |            |
| less than year                         | 0.02B    | 0.20     | 0.84  | 0.12       |
| 1 - 3 years                            | 0.23B    | 2.00     | 0.05  | 0.12       |
| more than 3 years                      | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Distribution of Non-Monetary Resources | 0.10     | 1.76     | 0.08  | 0.54       |

**Table 16- cont.**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Commitment to Part-Time Work**  
**C. Least Squares Means**

|                     | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|---------------------|---------|------------|
| Hours Per Week      |         |            |
| less than 20        | 4.55    | 0.14       |
| 20 - 30             | 4.40    | 0.10       |
| 30 or more          | 3.56    | 0.10       |
| Amount of Seniority |         |            |
| no seniority        | 4.00    | 0.09       |
| less than full-time | 4.30    | 0.13       |
| same as full-time   | 4.19    | 0.12       |
| Family Income       |         |            |
| less than 60K       | 4.25    | 0.15       |
| 60 - 100K           | 3.99    | 0.10       |
| Greater than 100K   | 4.26    | 0.10       |
| Other PT Workers    |         |            |
| Dk                  | 4.39    | 0.21       |
| No                  | 3.93    | 0.11       |
| Yes                 | 4.17    | 0.07       |
| Time on Job         |         |            |
| less than a year    | 4.10    | 0.11       |
| 1 - 3 years         | 4.31    | 0.12       |
| more than 3 years   | 4.08    | 0.11       |

5. Are there differences in these perceptions based on characteristics of both the part-time professional and supervisor, i.e., occupation, sex, age, marital status, number of children, reason for part-time employment, region of the country, whether the part-time professional had previously worked for the organization in a full-time capacity?

The one-way analyses of variance discussed earlier indicated that, in general, personal characteristics were less important than job and organizational characteristics for explaining the attitudes about specific types of experiences. The multivariate models for explaining the attitudes about the distribution of non-monetary and monetary resources, while not equally powerful, provide two cases in point (see Table 17 and Table 18). Employees more vulnerable to a reduction in force (RIF) than full-time workers were less positive about the non-monetary resources they received (3.51) than those without this greater vulnerability (3.90). The apparent higher level of satisfaction for participants who received seniority like full-time workers compared to those who did not was not statistically significant, but in the expected direction. The same was true for those employed by large firms relative to those in smaller ones. The attitude about non-monetary resources for those who made the same salary as their full-time coworkers was significantly greater than those who made less (3.96 versus 3.44). The better the educational benefits, the more positive employees felt about the distribution of non-monetary resources.

Although only 22% of the variance was explained by the model for attitudes on non-monetary resources, 50% was explained for attitudes about monetary resources. Those who received no seniority had significantly less positive attitudes than either of the other two seniority categories (3.07 compared to 3.46 and 3.74). Respondents whose salaries were less than their full-time counterparts had negative attitudes (2.50) compared to the positive ones of those earning as much or more than full-time workers (3.68 and 4.08, respectively). While none of the differences in cell means were significant for hourly wage, the trend was certainly suggestive of a

positive effect with increases in pay. When the standard benefits package was made available to part-time workers, receipt of those benefits impacted positively on their attitudes. The regression coefficient for other benefits indicated a negative relationship between benefits and attitude. However, this coefficient was the opposite of the simple correlation between the two variables given in Table 12, and thus may be the result of a complex interaction.

**Table 17**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes**  
**About the Distribution of Non-Monetary Resources**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | DF  | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F    | Pr > F |
|-----------------|-----|----------------|-------------|------|--------|
| Model           | 8   | 38.99          | 4.87        | 6.64 | 0.0001 |
| Error           | 184 | 135.08         | 0.73        |      |        |
| Corrected Total | 192 | 174.06         |             |      |        |

Percent Variance Explained: 22.4

Mean of Attitudes About Non-Monetary Resources: 3.89

B. Estimate of the Model

| Parameter                     | Estimate | T     | Prob. | Std. Error |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                     | 3.30B    | 18.05 | 0.00  | 0.18       |
| Vulnerability to RIF          |          |       |       |            |
| less or same as full-time     | 0.40B    | 2.95  | 0.00  | 0.13       |
| more than FT                  | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| Seniority                     |          |       |       |            |
| no seniority                  | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| less than full-time           | -0.19B   | -1.15 | 0.25  | 0.17       |
| same as FT                    | 0.21B    | 1.26  | 0.21  | 0.17       |
| Size of Organization          |          |       |       |            |
| less than 50                  | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| 50 - 499                      | 0.11B    | 0.67  | 0.51  | 0.16       |
| 500 +                         | 0.38B    | 2.35  | 0.02  | 0.16       |
| Salary Compared to Full-Time  |          |       |       |            |
| less than FT                  | -0.52B   | -3.29 | 0.00  | 0.16       |
| same as FT                    | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| more than FT                  | -0.25B   | -0.72 | 0.47  | 0.34       |
| Level of Educational Benefits | 0.11     | 2.24  | -0.03 | 0.05       |

**Table 17 -cont.**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes**  
**About the Distribution of Non-Monetary Resources**

C. Least Squares Means

|                       | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|-----------------------|---------|------------|
| Vulnerability to RIF  |         |            |
| less or same as full  | 3.90    | 0.14       |
| more than full        | 3.51    | 0.15       |
| Amount of Seniority   |         |            |
| no seniority          | 3.70    | 0.13       |
| less than full-time   | 3.51    | 0.17       |
| same as full-time     | 3.91    | 0.17       |
| Size of Organization  |         |            |
| less than 50          | 3.53    | 0.16       |
| 50 - 499              | 3.65    | 0.17       |
| 500 +                 | 3.92    | 0.15       |
| Salary Compared to FT |         |            |
| less than FT          | 3.44    | 0.14       |
| same as FT            | 3.96    | 0.07       |
| more than FT          | 3.71    | 0.34       |

In the case of attitudes towards career development, job and organizational characteristics were the most important variables in the model, explaining 30% of the variance in these attitudes (see Table 19). Those part-time professionals working at least 30 hours per week had the most positive feelings about their own career development opportunities. Participants with the same or less vulnerability to downsizing than full-time workers evidenced a better attitude towards career development than those who felt more vulnerable. Part-time professionals employed by the smallest firms demonstrated the most positive attitudes about career opportunities. It is possible that smaller firms compensate their part-time workers in a non-monetary manner to “make up” for smaller salaries.

Only 14% of the variance in attitudes about coworkers was explained by the multivariate model presented in Table 20. Respondents living in the Washington metropolitan area were more positive about their coworkers than those in the New York metropolitan area. Part-time professionals with less or the same vulnerability to a reduction in force (RIF) as full-time employees were happier with coworkers than those with greater vulnerability. Participants who started as part-time workers had more positive attitudes towards their coworkers than those who began as full-time workers, 3.32 compared to 3.12. The length of time on the job displayed a curvilinear relationship with attitudes toward coworkers, with those having one to three years of service demonstrating the most positive feelings.

**Table 18**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes About**  
**the Distribution of Monetary Resources**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | DF  | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F     | Pr > F |
|-----------------|-----|----------------|-------------|-------|--------|
| Model           | 12  | 131.95         | 11.00       | 15.46 | 0.0001 |
| Error           | 182 | 129.42         | 0.71        |       |        |
| Corrected Total | 194 | 261.37         |             |       |        |

Percent Variance Explained: 50.5

Mean of Attitudes About Monetary Resources: 3.47

B. Estimate of the Model

| Parameter                    | Estimate | T     | Prob. | Std.Err. |
|------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|----------|
| Intercept                    | 2.20B    | 5.98  | 0.00  | 0.37     |
| Seniority                    |          |       |       |          |
| no seniority                 | 0.00B    |       |       |          |
| less than FT                 | 0.39B    | 2.22  | 0.03  | 0.17     |
| same as FT                   | 0.67B    | 4.05  | 0.00  | 0.17     |
| Salary Compared to Full-Time |          |       |       |          |
| less than FT                 | -1.18B   | -6.98 | 0.00  | 0.17     |
| same as FT                   | 0.00B    |       |       |          |
| more than FT                 | 0.40B    | 1.30  | 0.20  | 0.31     |
| Hourly Wage                  |          |       |       |          |
| less than \$10               | 0.00B    |       |       |          |
| \$11 - \$15                  | 0.52B    | 1.46  | 0.15  | 0.36     |
| \$16 - \$20                  | 0.45B    | 1.26  | 0.21  | 0.35     |
| \$21 - \$25                  | 0.45B    | 1.27  | 0.21  | 0.36     |
| \$26 - \$30                  | 0.33B    | 0.92  | 0.36  | 0.36     |
| \$31 - \$35                  | 0.81B    | 2.14  | 0.04  | 0.38     |
| \$36+                        | 0.94B    | 2.49  | 0.01  | 0.38     |
| Level of Std. Benefits       | 0.12     | 4.22  | 0.00  | 0.03     |
| Level of Other Benefits      | -0.12    | -2.10 | 0.04  | 0.06     |

**Table 18 - cont.**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes About  
the Distribution of Monetary Resources**

C. Least Squares Means

|                       | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|-----------------------|---------|------------|
| Amount of Seniority   |         |            |
| no seniority          | 3.07    | 0.13       |
| less than full-time   | 3.46    | 0.17       |
| same as full-time     | 3.74    | 0.16       |
| Salary Compared to FT |         |            |
| less than FT          | 2.50    | 0.15       |
| same as FT            | 3.68    | 0.08       |
| more than FT          | 4.08    | 0.30       |
| Hourly Wage           |         |            |
| less than \$10        | 2.92    | 0.34       |
| \$11 - \$15           | 3.44    | 0.20       |
| \$16 - \$20           | 3.37    | 0.17       |
| \$21 - \$25           | 3.37    | 0.17       |
| \$26 - \$30           | 3.25    | 0.18       |
| \$31 - \$35           | 3.73    | 0.21       |
| \$36+                 | 3.86    | 0.19       |

**Table 19**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining  
Attitudes About Career Opportunities**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | <u>DF</u> | Sum of<br>Squares | Mean<br>Square | <u>F</u> | <u>Pr &gt; F</u> |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------|----------|------------------|
| Model           | 5         | 58.57             | 11.71          | 18.89    | 0.0001           |
| Error           | 218       | 135.15            | 0.62           |          |                  |
| Corrected Total | 223       | 193.72            |                |          |                  |

Percent Variance Explained: 30.2

Mean of Attitudes About Career Opportunities: 2.80

**Table 19 - cont.**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining**  
**Attitudes About Career Opportunities**

**B. Estimate of the Model**

| Parameter                 | Estimate | T     | Prob. | Std. Error |
|---------------------------|----------|-------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                 | 2.54B    | 16.31 | 0.00  | 0.16       |
| Hours per week            |          |       |       |            |
| Less than 20              | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| 20 to 30                  | -0.14B   | -0.95 | 0.34  | 0.14       |
| 30 or more                | 0.26B    | 1.66  | 0.10  | 0.16       |
| Vulnerability to RIF      |          |       |       |            |
| less or same as Full-time | 0.85B    | 7.86  | 0.01  | 0.11       |
| more than FT              | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| Size of Organization      |          |       |       |            |
| Less than 50              | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| 50 to 499                 | -0.40B   | -2.90 | 0.00  | 0.14       |
| 500+                      | -0.32B   | -2.46 | 0.01  | 0.13       |

**C. Least Squares Means**

|                      | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|----------------------|---------|------------|
| Hours per Week       |         |            |
| less than 20         | 2.73    | 0.12       |
| 20 - 30              | 2.59    | 0.75       |
| 30 or more           | 2.99    | 0.10       |
| Vulnerability to RIF |         |            |
| less of same as FT   | 3.19    | 0.07       |
| more than FT         | 2.34    | 0.08       |
| Size of Organization |         |            |
| less than 50         | 3.01    | 0.10       |
| 50 - 499             | 2.61    | 0.10       |
| 500 +                | 2.69    | 0.09       |

**Table 20**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes About Co-Workers**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | <u>DF</u> | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | <u>F</u> | <u>Pr &gt; F</u> |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------------|
| Model           | 8         | 27.42          | 3.43        | 5.60     | 0.0001           |
| Error           | 269       | 164.62         | 0.61        |          |                  |
| Corrected Total | 277       | 192.04         |             |          |                  |

Percent Variance Explained: 14.3

Mean of Attitudes About Co - Workers: 3.52

B. Estimate of the Model

| Parameter                 | Estimate | <u>T</u> | Prob. | Std. Error |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                 | 3.11B    | 22.21    | 0.00  | 0.14       |
| State                     |          |          |       |            |
| Washington Metropolitan   | 0.10B    | 0.87     | 0.39  | 0.12       |
| NY Metro                  | -0.32B   | -1.52    | 0.13  | 0.21       |
| Other                     | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Vulnerability to RIF      |          |          |       |            |
| less or same as Full-time | 0.37B    | 3.82     | 0.00  | 0.10       |
| more than FT              | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Overtime Pay              |          |          |       |            |
| Dk                        | -0.29B   | -2.06    | 0.04  | 0.14       |
| No                        | -0.31B   | -1.77    | 0.08  | 0.18       |
| Yes                       | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Whether FT First          |          |          |       |            |
| No                        | 0.21B    | 2.13     | 0.03  | 0.10       |
| Yes                       | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Time on Job               |          |          |       |            |
| less than 1 year          | -0.05B   | -0.39    | 0.70  | 0.12       |
| 1 to 3 years              | 0.33B    | 2.81     | 0.01  | 0.12       |
| 3 or more years           | 0.00B    |          |       |            |



**Table 20- cont.**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes About Co-Workers**

| C. Least Squares Means  |         |            |
|-------------------------|---------|------------|
|                         | LS Mean | Std. Error |
| State                   |         |            |
| Washington Metropolitan | 3.40    | 0.08       |
| New York Metropolitan   | 2.97    | 0.19       |
| Other                   | 3.29    | 0.12       |
| Overtime Pay            |         |            |
| Dk                      | 3.13    | 0.14       |
| No                      | 3.11    | 0.18       |
| Yes                     | 3.42    | 0.08       |
| Whether FT First        |         |            |
| No                      | 3.32    | 0.10       |
| Yes                     | 3.12    | 0.11       |
| Time on Job             |         |            |
| Less than 1 year        | 3.08    | 0.11       |
| 1 to 3 years            | 3.45    | 0.11       |
| 3 or more years         | 3.13    | 0.12       |
| Vulnerability to RIF    |         |            |
| Less or same as FT      | 3.40    | 0.10       |
| More than FT            | 3.04    | 0.10       |

Two of the variables in the multivariate model, shown in Table 21, most important for explaining satisfaction with the supervisor were whether the supervisor had a child and sex of the supervisor. Supervisors with a child were viewed more positively than ones without children (3.77 vs. 3.54).

Those participants with male supervisors were actually more satisfied (3.74) than their counterparts with female supervisors (3.57). Perhaps, as the qualitative evidence suggests, female supervisors working full-time may feel both envious and resentful of the female part-time professional they supervise. Part-time professionals with the same or less vulnerability to downsizing as full-time employees were more satisfied with their supervisors (3.76) than those who were more vulnerable to downsizing (3.55). Interestingly enough, participants who had previously worked full-time for the organization were less positive about their supervisor's behavior than those who began as part-time employees. Again, the more respondents believed they had received equitable treatment in terms of nonmonetary resources and career opportunities, the more positive were their evaluations of their supervisor.

**Table 21****Multivariate Model for Explaining Level of Satisfaction with Supervisor****A. Goodness of Fit**

| Source          | <u>DF</u> | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | <u>F</u> | <u>Pr &gt; F</u> |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------------|
| Model           | 7         | 22.54          | 3.22        | 8.42     | 0.0001           |
| Error           | 174       | 66.54          | 0.38        |          |                  |
| Corrected Total | 181       | 89.08          |             |          |                  |

Percent Variance Explained: 25.3

Mean for Satisfaction with Supervisor: 3.71

**B. Estimate of the Model**

| Parameter                                     | Estimate | <u>T</u> | Prob. | Std. Error |
|---|----------|----------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                                     | 2.62     | 11.72    | 0.00  | 0.22       |
| Supervisor with Child                         |          |          |       |            |
| No  | -0.23B   | -2.35    | 0.02  | 0.10       |
| Yes   | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Vulnerability to RIF                          |          |          |       |            |
| less than or same as FT                       | 0.21B    | 1.94     | 0.05  | 0.11       |
| more than FT                                  | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Whether FT First                              |          |          |       |            |
| no  | 0.22B    | 2.34     | 0.02  | 0.10       |
| yes   | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Sex of Supervisor                             |          |          |       |            |
| Female  | -0.17    | -1.76    | 0.08  | 0.10       |
| Male  | 0.00B    |          |       |            |
| Attitudes About Non-Monetary Resources        | 0.12     | 2.19     | 0.03  | 0.06       |
| Level of Attitudes about Career Opportunities | 0.10     | 1.67     | 0.10  | 0.06       |
| Level of Educational Benefits                 | 0.10     | 2.58     | 0.01  | 0.04       |

**Table 21 - cont.**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Level of Satisfaction with Supervisor**

C. Least Squares Means

|                       | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|-----------------------|---------|------------|
| Vulnerability to RIF  |         |            |
| less or same as FT    | 3.76    | 0.05       |
| more than FT          | 3.54    | 0.06       |
| Supervisor with Child |         |            |
| No                    | 3.53    | 0.07       |
| Yes                   | 3.77    | 0.05       |
| Whether FT First      |         |            |
| no                    | 3.76    | 0.07       |
| yes                   | 3.54    | 0.06       |
| Sex of Supervisor     |         |            |
| Female                | 3.57    | 0.06       |
| Male                  | 3.74    | 0.05       |

The multivariate model in Table 22 provides an explanation for almost 40% of the variance in the feelings of part-time professionals about the overall accommodation of the organization to their needs. When part-timers were happy with the way they were treated by their supervisor and coworkers, the positive regression coefficients reflect that they were also positive about the accommodation they had received. Respondents who worked 30 or more hours per week (3.61) clearly had less positive attitudes than those who worked less (means well over 4.0). Married employees were less positive than unmarried ones (3.70 versus 4.35).

**Table 22**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes About Overall Accommodation**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | DF  | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F     | Pr > F |
|-----------------|-----|----------------|-------------|-------|--------|
| Model           | 5   | 66.12          | 13.22       | 27.17 | 0.0001 |
| Error           | 211 | 102.70         | 0.49        |       |        |
| Corrected Total | 216 | 168.82         |             |       |        |

Percent Variance Explained: 39.2

Mean of Attitudes About Accommodations: 3.72

**Table 5.22 - cont.**

**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes About Overall Accommodation**

**B. Estimate of the Model**

| Parameter                           | Estimate | T     | Prob. | Std. Error |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|------------|
| Intercept                           | 1.86B    | 4.66  | 0.00  | 0.40       |
| Hours Per Week                      |          |       |       |            |
| less than 20                        | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| 20 - 30                             | -0.20B   | -1.59 | 0.11  | 0.13       |
| 30 or more                          | -0.72B   | -5.07 | 0.00  | 0.14       |
| Marital Status                      |          |       |       |            |
| married                             | -0.66B   | -3.03 | 0.00  | 0.22       |
| not married                         | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| Level of Satisfaction w/Supervisor  | 0.52     | 6.42  | 0.00  | 0.08       |
| Level of Attitudes about Co-workers | 0.24     | 3.63  | 0.00  | 0.07       |

**C. Least Squares Means**

|                | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|----------------|---------|------------|
| Hours per Week |         |            |
| Less than 20   | 4.33    | 0.15       |
| 20 - 30        | 4.13    | 0.12       |
| 30 or more     | 3.61    | 0.11       |
| Marital Status |         |            |
| Married        | 3.70    | 0.05       |
| Not Married    | 4.35    | 0.21       |

7. Is there a relationship between the marital status of the supervisor and work status of the supervisor's spouse and the perceptions of the professional part-time employee regarding satisfaction with pay, fringe benefits, the work itself, scheduling flexibility, and supervisor support?

The multivariate analysis suggests that job satisfaction was greater when the supervisor had no spouse or the spouse was not employed as opposed to when the supervisor's spouse was employed. With respect to satisfaction with the supervisor, employees were happier with a supervisor who had a child.

Additional supervisor characteristics did not enter into the models explaining employee attitudes. This was true even for attitudes about the receipt of organizational resources and opportunities for career development. The multivariate model of attitudes concerning the use of leave, presented in Table 23, explains only 3% of the variance and suggests that characteristics of the supervisor had no influence. One factor that did influence attitude was the vulnerability to a reduction in force (RIF), with those experiencing the same of less vulnerability evidencing more positive attitudes.

The one-way analyses of variance that were discussed earlier (Tables 8 - 11) reveal that the supervisor's age did not appear to affect any of the attitudes of the part-time professionals. The

details of the bivariate relationships that were significant may be found in Table 24. Those part-timers whose supervisor had a child displayed higher job satisfaction (3.60) than those working for supervisors without children. The part-time professionals with either an unmarried supervisor or one with an unemployed spouse were more committed to remaining part-time than those who had supervisors with employed spouses. As already mentioned, employees were happier with supervisors who had a child, but they were particularly pleased with the supervisor (a score on the supervisor satisfaction index of 3.81) when the supervisor had both a child and a working spouse. Part-time professionals also reported more positive attitudes about the organization's accommodation to their needs when working for a married supervisor with children and working spouse.

**Table 23**  
**Multivariate Model for Explaining Attitudes About Taking Leave**

A. Goodness of Fit

| Source          | DF  | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F    | Pr > F |
|-----------------|-----|----------------|-------------|------|--------|
| Model           | 3   | 7.29           | 2.43        | 3.20 | 0.0240 |
| Error           | 274 | 208.26         | 0.76        |      |        |
| Corrected Total | 277 | 215.55         |             |      |        |

Percent Variance Explained: 3.41  
Mean for Attitude About Taking Leave: 2.28

B. Estimate of the Model

| Parameter  | Estimate | T     | Prob. | Std. Error |
|--|----------|-------|-------|------------|
| Intercept  | 2.40B    | 13.78 | 0.00  | 0.17       |
| Vulnerability to RIF<br>less than or same as<br>FT | 0.22B    | 2.07  | 0.04  | 0.11       |
| more than FT                                       | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| Education<br>college degree                        | -0.16B   | -0.84 | 0.40  | 0.19       |
| some graduate school                               | 0.00B    |       |       |            |
| grad. degree                                       | -0.33B   | -1.86 | 0.06  | 0.18       |

C. Least Squares Means

|                      | LS Mean | Std. Error |
|----------------------|---------|------------|
| Education            |         |            |
| college degree       | 2.35    | 0.09       |
| some graduate school | 2.51    | 0.16       |
| graduate degree      | 2.18    | 0.07       |
| Vulnerability to RIF |         |            |
| less or same as FT   | 2.46    | 0.08       |
| more than FT         | 2.24    | 0.09       |

**Table 24**  
**Attitude Means for Significant Effects of Specific Supervisor Characteristics**

| Characteristic                | Attitude Means                      |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Supervisor with Child         | Job Satisfaction Means              |
| yes                           | 3.60                                |
| no                            | 3.45                                |
| Supervisor Spouse Working     | Commitment to Part-Time Means       |
| no or not married             | 4.19                                |
| yes                           | 3.98                                |
| Supervisor's Family Situation | Satisfaction with Supervisor Means  |
| Has child and working spouse  | 3.81                                |
| All others                    | 3.59                                |
| Supervisor's Family Situation | Attitudes about Accommodation Means |
| Has child and working spouse  | 3.72                                |
| All others                    | 3.53                                |

### Qualitative Analysis of Participant's Responses

Participants were given space at the end of the questionnaire to comment on any issues, concerns, or thoughts that they wished to share. Of the 319 respondents, 130 survey participants chose to add their thoughts. Only 42 of those who made comments had positive remarks about their experiences. Most of the positive comments revolved around the balance that part-time work had given to the often competing demands of work and family. Some participants shared experiences about supportive supervisors and the differences it had made in their work lives.

However, for the most part, comments concerned some of the more negative aspects of working part-time, most of which were covered in the survey instrument itself. Participants lamented the lack of promotion opportunities and the need to "prove" oneself. A consumer research specialist shared that she was told she must work full-time in order to be promoted. "Although I know this, it has caused real emotional pain to see people I think are less qualified get promoted when I do not, particularly when I work close to full-time, and have chosen to work reduced hours to care for my mildly disabled child."

Others spoke of the need to "cover up" their part-time status in order to maintain goodwill within the workplace. One married woman with young children spoke of resentment from female colleagues with children who felt "trapped" in full-time jobs and were envious of her "free time." Comments were made about the need to prove oneself in order to justify that a job could be performed satisfactorily by a part-time employee. Still others complained about the lack of benefits and feelings of being undervalued by both supervisors and the organization. A public affairs specialist writes: "I was forced to give up my management role and drop a pay grade in order to become part-time". Another participant wrote, "People tend to view part-time as something you do if you're not good enough to work full-time." Another spoke of the time, effort, and sacrifices that were necessary to obtain a part-time position: "It took eight months of negotiation and special customer approval, but all my raises were canceled (even cost of living) and I lost all chance of promotions or awards. I was also a prime candidate for a layoff, which did happen."

Perhaps this 42 year old manager sums it up best, when she writes:

“I know of countless, capable, well-educated men and women who cannot juggle full-time, high-powered careers and the demands of family who eventually dropped out of the workforce. What a waste! There should be some way to accommodate a desire to work part-time. Yet, it seems as though each of us has to work very hard at making it happen and feel as though it worked out (if in fact it did) thanks to unique circumstances, be it luck, connections, etc., so that it’s no easier for the next person who comes along.”

### **Summary of Results**

Almost all participants in this study were female, caucasian, and were working part-time for childcare reasons. All of the respondents had at least a college degree, with many holding a graduate degree. Few worked for organizations with formal work/family programs, with many others unaware if their organization even had such a program. Most participants reported high levels of job satisfaction, and neutral levels of commitment. However, many were extremely committed to part-time work itself.

Access to benefits was variable, with receipt of training and educational benefits closely related to levels of job satisfaction. Although most part-time professionals reported making salaries comparable to their full-time counterparts, they believed that their career mobility had been hampered by the decision to work part-time, and felt less secure within their organizations as a result of their part-time status.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The workforce of today is a far cry from the workforce of yesteryear. Not only has the makeup of the workforce changed, but also the way in which people work. Words which were not in our vocabulary 20 years ago, such as flextime and telecommuting, are now commonplace. The traditional nine-to-five, 40-hour work week which used to be the standard for the large majority of professional employees has been augmented by a plethora of flexible work options.

Interest in professional part-time employment is a relatively new phenomenon, in large part due to the fact that most professional employees until recently were required to work in a full-time capacity. However, with the influx of women into the workforce, along with an aging workforce and workers pressed with continuing and lifelong training needs, the desire for flexible work options has increased. The standard 40 hour work week has been replaced in many places with flextime, telecommuting, job sharing, and part-time employment.

#### Summary of the Study

Although research exists comparing part-time workers to full-time workers, little is known about the characteristics of the professional part-time employee and the organizations in which they are employed. This study was an examination of professional part-timers across the career spectrum and the factors which influence their job satisfaction, levels of commitment to an organization, as well as factors influencing their attitudes about specific work experiences.

A questionnaire was mailed to 805 members of the Association of Part-Time Professionals, with a follow-up mailing to those persons who did not respond. After eliminating unusable responses, the final number of respondents included 319 professional part-time employees, all whom had at least a college degree and many others with advanced degrees. Almost all of the participants were female and white (96.9% and 96.8%, respectively), with the mean age being 40.5 years. Over 70% resided in the Washington metropolitan area, and 80% had chosen to work part-time for child-care reasons.

Half of the sample was employed in the private sector, with almost 16% employed by government. Just over 50% held regular part-time positions within an organization with 20% reporting self-employment. Seventy percent reported working 30 hours per week or less, with 20% reporting working 20 hours a week or less.

A survey instrument was developed to assess the experiences, attitudes and perceptions of the professional part-time employee. Areas addressed included interactions with coworkers and supervisors, feelings of job satisfaction and commitment, and anticipated effects on career advancement. In addition, unique aspects of the individual's job were measured, which included the space and equipment provided (compared to full-time employees), access to training/staff development, and benefits provided.

The survey instrument was composed of items from a number of sources. Items measuring job satisfaction and commitment were taken from previously published scales, with many items developed by the researcher following a review of the relevant literature. Lastly, several items were requested by the Association of Part-Time Professionals.



The relationships among organizational and supervisor characteristics and the individual characteristics of the participants were examined using a variety of statistical techniques. Factor analyses were employed to identify the different participant attitudes. The bivariate relationships between these measures and respondent and organizational characteristics were examined to determine the most important independent variables to be included in multivariate models. The multivariate modeling of the attitudes was carried out using the GLM procedures in SAS.

## **Discussion**

### Job Satisfaction

Participants in this study had relatively high levels of job satisfaction overall. The level of satisfaction was significantly impacted by the relationship with the supervisor as well as the economic compensation received. Both regular full-time and part-time workers were less satisfied than other workers. Perhaps the higher levels of job satisfaction experienced by temporary workers and those self-employed reflects the sense of control one has when choosing these career options.

Of interest are the reasons many full-time participants gave for leaving their previous part-time positions. Dissatisfaction with aspects of the part-time job, such as lack of benefits or loss of seniority, were frequently cited reasons for leaving part-time employment. Just as child-care issues appear to be a primary force in the desire to work part-time, they also influenced the decision to become self-employed.

### Organizational Commitment

The relatively neutral level of commitment experienced by participants was not surprising, given both the reasons subjects had for working part-time, as well as the experiences they had incurred on the job. Most participants were women with children who may have felt torn between responsibilities at home and those at work. Part-time employees who had positive feelings about their supervisors and their opportunities for career development were the most committed. One surprising finding was that those with less vulnerability or the same vulnerability to a reduction in force (RIF) as full-time workers were the least committed. It would be of interest to perform a job analysis of participants in order to determine why this is so. One hypothesis is that technical and skilled workers in high demand, and who frequently change jobs, may experience less commitment to their employer. Another surprising finding was that those working for the government were less committed than those working for other sectors of the economy. In light of the recent government shutdown and the efforts to streamline government functions, this may be a natural reaction.

Overall, participants were extremely committed to remaining part-time, with those working more hours being less so. Given that all respondents were members of an organization which promotes and advocates professional part-time employment, this finding was anticipated.

### Accommodations, Treatment, and Attitudes of Co-Workers

Part-time professionals felt positive about their access to equipment, clerical assistance, and office space but less so about their economic compensation. They also felt generally satisfied with the tasks they were assigned and their treatment by supervisors and co-workers. The qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses substantiated the importance of a supportive supervisor. A 34-year-old project manager writes: "The success of part-time options is largely dependent on the support of the individual manager who can make or break these arrangements." As the literature suggests (Cohen, 1978; Parkinson, 1996), professional part-timers believed their workload had

not been proportionally reduced. Because of this, many part-time professionals are incredulous about the lack of organizational support. One 35-year-old social worker notes, “Why on earth do companies not encourage part-time work when it is well known that two part-time professionals making up one full-time position give the organization more bang for the buck?”

### Career Mobility

Some of the most negative attitudes concerned the effect that working part-time had on career mobility and promotion opportunities. Between half to two-thirds of the participants indicated that their choice of working part-time had impacted their promotion opportunities. Schwartz (1994) notes that although the use of leaves and flexible work arrangements is believed to pose the greatest threat to career advancement (for both those who have, as well as those who have not used them), the research results are mixed in this regard. At this time, no longitudinal studies of the actual career paths of those who have availed themselves of these policies have been conducted. Nonetheless, this belief may be rooted in reality. A 38-year-old contracting officer writes, “I took a downgrade six years ago to work part-time and have found opportunities for re-promotion and advancement severely limited by my part-time status.”

### Demographic Variables

The demographic variables of the supervisor and part-time professional were far less important than anticipated for explaining the attitudes about specific experiences of respondents. Job satisfaction was greater when the supervisor had no spouse or the spouse was not employed compared to a supervisor with an employed spouse. One possible explanation is that supervisors with working spouses are more stressed than those who are not, which could impact the job satisfaction of the employees they supervise. Supervisors with children typically had happier employees than those without. As most participants had children under 18 and were working part-time to spend more time with their children, supervisors with their own children could perhaps relate more easily to the competing demands of their part-time employees.

### Salary and Seniority

The amount the part-time professional was paid was not equivalent to a full-time employee in over 20% of all cases. For those who had moved from a full-time position to a part-time position, 25% reported making a lower hourly salary. In some cases, the opposite was true, particularly among those self-employed. One 32-year-old computer specialist notes that “the best of all possible worlds is being an hourly consultant; the rates are high and the job well defined.”

Almost 75% of the respondents reported receiving either no seniority or less seniority than their full-time counterparts, with 44% reporting they were more vulnerable to a reduction in force (RIF). In one case, a participant reported being told by a Human Resources Specialist that part-timers should be laid off before full-timers because their jobs were not as important to the organization or to their own families.

### Benefits

Access to benefits was variable, with the most common benefits granted to part-timers being personal medical leave, paid vacation, and a flexible work day. The disparity between benefits for full-time versus part-time employees was particularly dramatic in the areas of health, disability, and life insurance, and pension plans. The concern over fixed costs is one many employers use in their rationale against hiring professional part-time employees. This is

unfortunate as many part-time professionals are willing to work without benefits or do not need employee provided benefits. A senior software engineer writes, “The biggest obstacle to part-time employment is the company’s desire to provide healthcare to the part-time employee. Because they like to state this as policy, it becomes too expensive to hire part-time employees, so they simply don’t have any part-timers.”

### Work/Family Programs

The number of employees working for organizations with formal work/family programs was minimal. Many others were not even familiar with whether their organizations had such a program or not. Thus, even though the presence of professional part-timers within the organization is suggestive of an enlightened approach in respect to the use of flexible work options, few of these organizations had carried this further through the adoption of policies promoting work/family concerns. As companies face shortages of skilled workers in the future, it will be of interest to see whether work/family programs increase as a means to recruit and retain valuable workers. The increased presence of women in positions of power may also serve to facilitate the adoption of work/family policies.

### A Perceptual Dichotomy

What was striking, even within this group of part-time professionals, were the differences in attitudes concerning co-workers and employers. Part-time workers who resembled full-time workers in terms of hours worked and pay were the ones most pleased with the organizational resources they received and their career opportunities. In contrast, they did not necessarily express the most job satisfaction nor were they the happiest in terms of the way they were treated by co-workers and the organization, in general.

Those persons who worked the fewest hours had the greatest job satisfaction. These workers were also the ones most likely to say that their organization accommodated their needs. Workers who never held a full-time position for the organization, in contrast to those who had previously been full-time, had greater job satisfaction, were more positive about career opportunities, and felt the organization treated them better. While government workers felt that they were treated equitably in terms of resources from the organization, those employed in the education field were more committed to their organizations, felt that their organization was more accommodating, and had the greatest job satisfaction.

## **Conclusions**

The findings of this study support the beliefs of many part-time professionals that they face discrimination in the workplace in terms of job security, amount of work expected, benefits provided, and career advancement opportunities compared to their full-time counterparts. In spite of this, they are, for the most part, satisfied with their jobs and extremely committed to part-time work itself. Although personal characteristics of the supervisor and the employee’s attitudes appeared to bear little relationship to one another, the way the professional part-time employee was treated by the supervisor was crucial.

Flexible work options are not only desirable, they have become necessary in today’s workplace. Employees cannot and should not have to be forced to choose between their families or their careers. The worlds of family and business have become so intertwined, that to ignore an employee’s needs either at home or in the workplace is a poor business and personal decision.

Few families have someone at home to manage family responsibilities, yet families continue to bear the brunt of stress related to the demands faced by two career couples. In addition, most employers continue to expect long hours from most professional employees. The consequences have been an ever increasing divorce rate, high rates of alcoholism and drug dependency for both employees and their children, and a myriad of other problems brought on by too little time and too much stress. It becomes the Adult Educator to advocate for flexible work options not only in light of the ongoing need for continuing education and training, but to address the larger societal implications faced by professional employees and their families.

### **Implications for the Adult Educator/ Human Resource Specialist**

In spite of the changing workforce and the changing needs of today's businesses, few organizations have implemented work/family policies which address the needs of their employees. Allowing a professional the "privilege" of working part-time is not enough without a cultural change which embraces the idea that flexibility is valuable to the organization.

The outmoded thinking in organizations needs to be changed in order to implement a flexible work environment. The belief in the 40-hour work week as five, 8-hour days is a thing of the past. Likewise, the notion that people must be seen to be managed discourages telecommuting and alternative work schedules. An organizational culture which supports late night meetings, and grants alternative work schedules for only those who have earned the right, is not good for business, and is terrible for families.

The human resource specialist is the ideal person to serve as a catalyst to educate senior management in order to facilitate the adoption of flexible work options. He/she is most knowledgeable about the benefits of flexible work options, and can make a business case that flexible staffing enhances recruitment and retention of employees, allows businesses to serve people in different time zones, reduces turnover, and is a response to the changing demographic trends in the workforce.

In addition, the human resource specialist should consider becoming an interventionist for both the supervisor and employee on the subject of workplace flexibility. The mere offering of alternative work options is not enough. Both the organization and supervisor need to embrace the belief that the use of these options serves to enhance the productivity of the worker, improve morale, and reduce turnover. Almost 70% of the membership in The Work/Family Research and Advisory Panel, a select group of individuals throughout the United States, Australia, Canada and Europe with extensive experience in implementing work/family programs, reported that employees were inhibited from using flexible work alternatives due to the employees' beliefs that "they will be overlooked for promotion or that supervisors will perceive them as less committed to their work if they take an opportunity to work less than full time or alter their arrangements" (The Conference Board, 1991). It is the responsibility of the human resource specialist to spearhead discussion and encourage policy changes to ensure that employees are not penalized for choosing what is good for them and their families.

As adult educators, it is our mandate to concern ourselves with the changing needs of employees as they move through various stages in their lives. Flexible work options are not only for women with children. They are needed and desired for a multitude of reasons, including the need to care for an aging relative and as a way to transition into retirement. Although the need for lifelong learning is embraced by many adult educators as a way to continually upgrade skills and

knowledge, the issue of time is one which impacts the choice of whether to engage in training and educational activities.

Although most participants in this study had access to training and staff development activities, as well as tuition assistance, it is important to note that over 20% of those surveyed reported that only full-time employees had access to these benefits. Thus, although these part-time professionals may have had more time to pursue these activities on their own, they were denied employer sponsored opportunities solely because they had chosen to work a reduced number of hours.

### **Areas for Future Research**

Although the large majority of organizations do not have formal work/family programs, there are indications that businesses have begun to respond to the needs of their workers and families. Towards that end, additional research about the part-time worker will be needed in order to determine what factors make professional part-time employment a satisfactory option for both the employer and employee.

There is a need to know much more about those who desire as well as choose professional part-time employment. This study was composed of largely white, female, middle aged women living in the Washington metropolitan area. Additional studies should look at the full range of part-time professionals, with a wider variety of geographical regions surveyed, and an emphasis made to include more men. As this study was exploratory in nature, additional research should be conducted on professional part-timers who are not all members of an association advocating part-time employment.

In addition, little effort was made to separate and distinguish the types of professional part-time experiences in terms of the work performed. It would be interesting to note the similarities and differences between part-timers working in a managerial/supervisory capacity versus those employed in technical positions.

The large majority of those employed in professional part-time positions, as well as those who are only considering such an option, believe that working part-time hurts both career mobility as well as promotion opportunities. It will be important to undertake longitudinal studies of professional part-time employees across the career spectrum in order to determine if this fear is indeed realized.

Finally, is there a difference between the attitudes and perceptions of those who reduce their hours and do not identify themselves as part-time compared to those who truly view themselves as part-time? It would be interesting to study a larger sample in order to make meaningful comparisons between these two groups in order to determine what factors most influence these attitudes.

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