
RELATIONSHIP OF RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT TO CHARACTERISTICS OF PART-TIME, ONLINE INSTRUCTORS

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ABSTRACT: Part-time, online instructors are a diverse group. Some are employed full time outside of higher education. Some string together several part-time teaching positions from multiple institutions in an attempt to generate a full-time income. Some are full-time faculty who also teach part-time "on the side." It is important for administrators within higher learning institutions to more fully understand variables that may impact the personal and work characteristics of this diverse group. The variable of interest in this paper is religious commitment. The degree of religious commitment has been identified in the literature as one factor that predicts a faculty member's organizational commitment. A recent Pew Research Center study concludes that those in the millennial generation have lower religious commitment than the average American. The same research determined that the millennials (adults ages 18 to 34) are now the largest share (33%) of the American workforce. Thus, we would expect to find some millennials with a lower religious commitment working as part-time, online instructors. This paper presents the results from an online survey (n=1054) regarding the relationship between religious commitment and certain characteristics of part-time, online instructors. Results suggest that part-time, online instructors with low religious commitment differ from those with high religious commitment in regards to characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, religious affiliation, level of education, instructional environment, motivation, instructor behaviors, instructor concerns, job satisfaction, and employer loyalty. These differences have implications for administrators of faith-based institutions who wish to attract, support and retain instructors that are mission fit (based on religious commitment).

ONLINE EDUCATION AND PART-TIME INSTRUCTORS

Online education and the number of part-time, online instructors are growing. According to the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), in 2012, 5.5 million students (26% of all college students) took at least one online course and 2.6 million students studied fully online. Of those who studied fully online, approximately 2 million were undergraduates while 600,000 were graduate students (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Allen and Seaman (2014) reported that in 2013, 33.5 percent of higher education students

took at least one online course. The share of bachelor's degrees awarded by "online only" institutions grew from 0.5 percent in 2000 to over 6 percent in 2012 (Deming, Katz, & Yuchtman, 2014). More than 80 percent of public universities and 50% of private colleges offer at least one fully online program (Clinefelter and Aslanian, 2014).

Based on the trend in part-time faculty appointments (Curtis & Thornton, 2013), many of these online courses are being taught by part-time instructors. The U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences [IES] (2015) states that in 2012-2013, postsecondary faculty were made up of 791,400 full-time faculty and 752,700 part-time faculty.

There is a growing need for and interest in teaching online classes part-time (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). For example, from 1975 to 2011, part-time faculty appointments grew more than 300 percent while the number of full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty positions grew by only 26 percent (Curtis & Thornton, 2013). Hall (2014) evaluated 51,850 student survey results from adult programs at the school of business and leadership of a private, Christian university and found that 2,923 (5.6 percent) of the students had been taught by full-time faculty while 48,927 (94.4 percent) had been taught by part-time instructors. Lundquist & Misra (2015) report that two out of every three hires today is a contract faculty member—a non-tenure-line, contingent employee.

Even as overall higher education enrollments declined from 2010 through 2014, the number of online adjunct faculty members has increased (Magda, Poulin, & Clinefelter, 2015). This growth trend appears universal at all institution types. Although there are several reasons for the growth in the number of part-time faculty (critical expertise, evenings and weekend availability, and real-world perspectives), a key factor has been the growth in online education (Lyons, 2007; Allen & Seaman, 2014).

PROFILES OF PART-TIME, ONLINE INSTRUCTORS

Part-time, online instructors are not a uniform group. Some are employed full time outside of higher education. Some string together several part-time teaching positions from multiple institutions in an attempt to generate a full-time income. Some are full-time faculty who also teach part-time "on the side" (Bedford and Miller, 2013, Babb, D. 2014). "Specialists" are content experts, usually employed full-time who teach online in their area of expertise, while "aspiring academics" work part-time but desire full-time employment in academia (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Some adjuncts are retired or are transitioning to a retirement that includes part-time teaching. Lyons, Kysilka, & Pawlas (1999) designated this group as "career enders" while those who teach for a variety of reasons were termed "freelancers."

RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT

Research suggests that religious commitment can impact an individual's behavior. Rokeach (1973)

provided evidence that values influence behavior and noted that values that are important to a person predict behavior better than values that are not important to a person. The importance of religion to a person is called his or her religious commitment. Gorsuch (1984) concluded that for people highly committed to religious beliefs and behaviors, their religious values account for measureable variation in their behavior. Ghazzawi, Smith and Cao (2012) tested the link between degree of religious commitment and job satisfaction and found positive but weak links between intensity of religious faith and job satisfaction. The findings by Mokhlis (2009) regarding consumer behavior revealed that quality consciousness, impulsive shopping and price consciousness were related to religious commitment. Schroder (2008) determined that there were five factors that predicted a faculty member's organizational commitment: job security, responsibility, growth, relations with students, and religious commitment. A recent Pew Research Center report ("America's Changing Religious Landscape," 2015 par. 2) states that there is a "decrease in religious beliefs and behaviors, largely attributable to the 'nones' – the growing minority of Americans, particularly in the millennial generation, who say they do not belong to any organized faith." For an administrator of a faith-based institution of higher learning, there may be a question as to whether part-time, online instructors with low religious commitment can be successful in transmitting the institution's mission to students (Burns, Smith & Starcher, 2015). In this study, the author investigates the relationship of the degree of religious commitment of part-time, online instructors to certain characteristics of these instructors. This research compared the characteristics of part-time, online instructors who exhibit low religious commitment (n=104) to the characteristics of part-time, online instructors who exhibit high religious commitment (n=940) as measured by the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 instrument.

MEASURING RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT

Religious commitment is a key variable in Worthington's (1988) model. Here Worthington defines religious commitment as "the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and uses them in daily living" (p. 168). Worthington, Hsu, Gowda, and Bleach (1988) developed the 20-item Religious Commitment

Inventory (RCI) instrument to measure religious commitment. Worthington, et al. (2003) reduced the instrument to ten items with the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10), an instrument designed to distinguish people with high religious commitment from those who are not as highly committed. The RCI-10 is a 10-item nonsectarian measure of an individual's values as they relate to the individual's commitment to religiosity. Construct and criterion validity were established against a variety of criteria and the instrument has been shown to be robust (Hall, Fujikawa, Halcrow, Hill & Delaney, 2009). The RCI-10 contains a 10-question scale measuring general level of religious commitment based on a Likert-type scale anchored at "1 = Not true" to "5 = Totally true." In this study, all statements from the RCI-10 were used with their original words (e.g. "My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life"). Worthington (1988) and Worthington, Kurusu, McCullough, & Sandage (1996) stated that people scoring greater than one standard deviation higher than the overall mean should be considered highly religious. Thus, based on a general sample of United States adults with a mean of 26 and a standard deviation of 12, those with a full-scale RCI-10 score of 38 or higher (26+12) would be classified as having high religious commitment. The author of this study decided that those with a full-scale RCI-10 score of 14 or lower (26-12) would be classified as having low religious commitment.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study's research design was exploratory with the goal of gaining insights for future investigation (Neuman & Neuman, 2006). The study used the survey research method to collect the data and IBM SPSS Statistics 22 to analyze the data. This study employed a convenience sample and thus does not allow for calculation of sampling error estimates. The use of a convenience sample suggests the possibility of unknown forms of bias. Also, the respondents to this survey do not constitute a strictly representative sample of part-time, online instructors. Nonetheless, the survey data provide insight into the certain characteristics of part-time, online instructors at institutions of higher learning based on degree of religious commitment.

Participants

One thousand four hundred and seventy-seven (1477) part-time, online instructors completed the anonymous, online survey. Of those, 1,393 answered all ten of the RCI-10 items. This study (n=1054) evaluates the data from 114 respondents whose total RCI-10 score was 14 or lower (low religious commitment) and 940 respondents whose total RCI-10 score was 38 or higher (high religious commitment).

The resultant sample size of 1054 part-time, online instructors (43.7% male, 56.3% female) was distributed evenly between 35-44 years (23.5%), 45-54 years (27.3%), and 55-64 years (27.9%), with a minority in the 25-34 years (8.1%) or 65 or older (13.1%) age categories. The majority of respondents reported White ethnicity (78.5%) with a small minority identifying with Hispanic or Latino (2.3%), Black or African American (12.6%), Native American (0.8%), Asian (0.8%), and Other (1.7%). Approximately 3.3% preferred not to answer.

Most respondents teach at 4-year private schools (67.5%) with significantly fewer at 4-year public (15%) or 2-year (5.4%) institutions. In addition, 12.1% of the respondents reported teaching simultaneously for both 2-year and 4-year institutions. Reflecting on institutional type, 60% of the part-time, online instructors teach at a non-profit college or university compared with 40% teaching at a for-profit postsecondary institution.

Materials

The online survey included 50 questions (4 of which offered the opportunity for open-ended responses) and took about 20 minutes to complete. In addition to demographic questions, participants were asked to rate (1-5; 1 = Not at all; 2 = Somewhat; 3 = Moderately; 4 = Mostly; 5 = Total) the extent to which they perceived that statements (such as "I enjoy teaching college classes") applied to them. Respondents were also asked to select the response that best describes how true each statement (such as "I am satisfied in my role as a part-time instructor") was for them (1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree).

Procedures

Because there was no single, readily available database to form a proper population from which to sample part-time, online instructors, an online survey was developed and distributed via email, listservs and

social media. A request to participate and a survey link were emailed to part-time, online instructors at participating institutions (20 institutions were invited to participate in the research, six elected to send out the survey request and link to their adjunct faculty). In addition, a link inviting participation in the survey was posted to social media by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Furthermore, the survey link and invitation to participate was distributed via the following listservs: Minnesota Writing and English, Christian Adult Higher Education, Christian Business Faculty Association, Retention Discussion Group, and Tomorrow's Professor eNewsletter. The survey link was active and available for approximately 3 months.

RESULTS

To examine potential differences in part-time, online instructor characteristics (including motivations and interests) as a function of religious commitment, a crosstabs analysis (see Appendix 1 for explanation) was

conducted between 114 respondents whose total RCI-10 score was 14 or lower (low religious commitment) and 940 respondents whose total RCI-10 score was 38 or higher (high religious commitment). The level of significance for this study was set at .05.

Part-time, Online Instructor Characteristics

An analysis of demographic information revealed statistically significant differences ($\alpha=.05$) between the gender [χ^2 (1, N=1031) = 4.39, $p=.036$] [Cramer's V=.065], age [χ^2 (4, N=1050) = 24.22, $p<.001$] [Cramer's V=.152], ethnicity [χ^2 (6, N=1044) = 24.18, $p<.001$] [Cramer's V=.152], and religious affiliation (e.g. Catholic, Methodist, Muslim, etc.). [χ^2 20, N=1050) = 739.76, $p<.001$] [Cramer's V=.839] of part-time, online instructors based on their degree of religious commitment. Effect sizes for Cramer's V are listed as small (0.1), medium (0.3), and large (0.5). Table 1 provides the percentage of respondents in each dimension. There was no statistically significant difference based on household income [χ^2 (10, N=1045) = 10.59, $p=.390$].

Table 1: Instructor Demographics by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
Gender	Male	34.5%	44.9%
	Female	65.5%	55.1%
Age	25-34	19.3%	6.7%
	35-44	22.8%	23.6%
	45-54	25.4%	27.6%
	55-64	18.4%	29.1%
	65 or older	14.0%	13.0%
Ethnicity	White	89.5%	77.2%
	Hispanic or Latino	0.9%	2.5%
	Black or African American	0.9%	14.1%
	Native American	0.0%	0.9%
	Asian	0.9%	0.8%
No Religious affiliation (e.g. Catholic, Methodist, Muslim, etc.)			
	Agnostic	23.9%	0.0%
	Atheist	17.7%	0.0%
	None	28.3%	0.2%

These results suggest that a typical part-time, online instructor with low religious commitment is younger, less diverse, more likely to be female, and more likely

to have no religious affiliation than one with a high religious commitment.

Level of Education

An analysis of academic credentials found statistically significant differences ($\alpha=.05$) between the level of education [χ^2 (7, N=1049) = 16.43, $p=.021$] [Cramer's V = .125] of part-time, online instructors based on their degree of religious commitment. Table

2 provides the percentage of respondents in each dimension. An examination of the number of years of academic experience of part-time, online instructors based on religious commitment revealed no statistically significant difference [χ^2 (4, N=1044) = 5.44, $p=.245$].

Table 2: Instructor Level of Education by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
Level of Education	Associates	0.9%	0.0%
	Bachelors	0.9%	0.1%
	One Masters	45.6%	39.5%
	Two (or more) Masters	7.0%	8.9%
	Juris Doctorate	0.0%	1.3%
	Juris Doctorate plus 1 or more Masters	0.0%	1.1%
	Doctorate	45.6%	48.4%
	Doctorate and Juris Doctorate	0.0%	0.7%

A larger percentage of part-time, online instructors with low religious commitment have one master's degree as compared to those with high religious commitment. Those with high religious commitment are more likely to have a doctorate.

Type of Institution

Although there was no statistically significant difference in whether the instructor taught for a for-profit or not-for-profit school based on religious commitment [χ^2 (1, N=1039) = .584, $p=.445$], there

was a statistically significant difference in regards to type of school (2 year, 4-year public, 4-year private or both) [χ^2 (3, N=1045) = 49.24, $p<.001$] [Cramer's V = .217]. Table 3 provides the percentage of instructors in each dimension. A statistically significant difference was also found when comparing employment at faith-based versus non-faith-based schools [χ^2 (1, N=1050) = 149.21, $p<.001$] [Cramer's V = .377].

Table 3: Type of Institution by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
Type of Institution	2 year	13.2%	4.4%
	4-year public	31.6%	13.0%
	4-year private	43.0%	70.5%
	Both 2-year & 4-year	12.3%	12.1%
	Faith-based	35.1%	84.4%
	Not faith-based	64.9%	15.6%

As would be expected, those with high religious commitment tend to teach at faith-based institutions. It is interesting to note that part-time, online instructors with high religious commitment are more likely to teach

at a 4-year private school, while those with low religious commitment are more likely to teach at either 4-year public or 2-year schools.

Differentiation of Instructor Role

An examination of the differentiation of the role of part-time, online instructors found some statistically significant differences based on degree of religious

commitment [χ^2 (8, N=1049) = 26.80, $p=.001$] [Cramer's V=.160]; see Table 4.

Table 4: Instructor Role by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
Instructor Role	Hope to obtain FT in higher education	21.9%	16.7%
	Retired from higher education	6.1%	5.2%
	Retired from another field	6.1%	6.8%
	Several part-time jobs including one teaching position	7.9%	7.8%
	Several part-time teaching jobs	3.5%	7.7%
	Fulltime employment outside of higher education*	23.7%	30.1%
	Teach fulltime in higher education	7.0%	13.2%
	Maintains household	0.9%	3.0%
	Other*	22.8%	9.5%

* Statistically significant $\alpha=.05$

A higher percentage of those with low religious commitment hope to obtain a full-time position in higher education. Those who have high religious commitment are more likely to have full-time employment outside of higher education or teach full-time in higher education. Note as well that a large percentage (22.8%) of those with low religious commitment selected "Other" as a response.

Instructional Environment

There were no statistically significant differences based on degree of religious commitment for number of online classes taught at the same time [χ^2 (3, N=1049) = 3.82, $p=.281$] or portion of classes that are online classes [χ^2 (3, N=1050) = 1.73, $p=.631$]. An examination of the instructional environment found statistically significant differences in class level (undergraduate or graduate) [χ^2 (2, N=1049) = 9.54, $p=.008$] [Cramer's V=.095] and typical class size [χ^2 (5, N=1049) = 73.61, $p<.001$] [Cramer's V=.265]. A Cramer's V of 0.095 for class level indicates a small size effect with undergraduate courses overrepresented

with instructors with low religious commitment and underrepresented with instructors with high religious commitment; conversely, graduate courses are underrepresented with instructors with low religious commitment and overrepresented with instructors with high religious commitment. This was noted in an earlier table since faculty with high religious commitment were more likely to have a doctorate which is normally required to teach graduate courses. Examination of typical class size finds that class sizes 11-20 are underrepresented with instructors with low religious commitment and overrepresented with instructors with high religious commitment. Larger class sizes (e.g. 21-30, 31-50) are overrepresented with instructors with low religious commitment and underrepresented with instructors with high religious commitment. This would be expected since graduate classes tend to be smaller than undergraduate classes. High-religious commitment instructors in this dataset tended to experience course durations of 5 or 6 weeks and not semester-length compared to instructors from the low religious commitment group; see Table 5.

Table 5: Class Characteristics by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
Class Level	Undergraduate	64.0%	49.3%
	Graduate	14.9%	25.0%
	Both	21.1%	25.7%
Class Size	Less than 10	7.9%	9.6%
	11-20	40.4%	67.6%
	21-30	36.8%	20.4%
	31-50	10.5%	1.7%
	51-100	0.9%	0.4%
	More than 100	3.5%	0.2%
Course Duration	5 weeks	18.4%	40.0%
	6 weeks	12.3%	31.1%
	8 weeks	50.0%	48.2%
	Semester long	47.4%	20.5%

Instructor Description

Participants were asked to rate (1-5; 1 = Not at all; 2 = Somewhat; 3 = Moderately; 4 = Mostly; 5 = Totally) the extent to which they perceived that statements (such as "I enjoy teaching college classes") applied to them. Respondents were also asked to select the response that best describes how true each statement (such as "I am satisfied in my role as a part-time instructor") was for them (1 = Strongly Disagree;

2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree).

There was no statistically significant difference in responses to statements such as "I prefer to work on a part-time basis" [χ^2 (4, N=1032) = 9.15, $p=.058$], "It is my primary source of income" [χ^2 (4, N=1038) = 3.00, $p=.558$], and "I want to obtain credentials to apply for another job" [χ^2 (4, N=1032) = 3.00, $p=.558$]. Statistically significant differences were found for the statements listed in Table 6.

Table 6: Instructor Description by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
I enjoy teaching college classes	χ^2 (4, N=1052) = 24.02, $p<.001$ Cramer's V=.151	Totally = 65.8%	Totally = 84.1%
It is my secondary source of income	χ^2 (4, N=1052) = 12.00, $p=.017$ Cramer's V=.107	Totally = 34.2%	Totally = 48.4%
It allows me flexibility to pursue other interests	χ^2 (4, N=1052) = 11.46, $p=.022$ Cramer's V=.105	Totally = 38.4%	Totally = 51.5%
I have financially dependent children	χ^2 (1, N=1040) = 6.00, $p=.014$ Cramer's V=.076	Yes = 38.6%	Yes = 50.8%

Those with high religious commitment were more likely to enjoy teaching college classes, see part-time teaching as a secondary source of income, and agree that part-time teaching provides flexibility to pursue

other interests. As has been noted previously, those with low religious commitment tend to be younger. This may explain the difference in percentages for "I have financially dependent children."

Instructor Motivation

An analysis of instructor motivation for online teaching revealed no statistically significant differences in the instructor’s desire to earn extra income [χ^2 (4,

N=1051) = 2.91, p=.573] or financial security (“It is essential to my total annual income”) [χ^2 (4, N=1047) = 4.69, p=.321]. Statistically significant differences were found for the statements listed in Table 7.

Table 7: Instructor Motivation by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
To remain active	χ^2 (4, N=1046) = 15.23, p=.004 Cramer’s V=.121	Strongly Agree = 10.6%	Strongly Agree = 20.6%
To give back to the community	χ^2 (4, N=1049) = 56.60, p<.001 Cramer’s V=.232	Strongly Agree = 19.3%	Strongly Agree = 38.1%
To remain intellectually stimulated	χ^2 (4, N=1049) = 27.85, p<.001 Cramer’s V=.163	Strongly Agree = 29.2%	Strongly Agree = 48.1%

Respondents with high religious commitment were more likely to see remaining active, giving back to the community, and remaining intellectually stimulated as motivation to become part-time, online instructors.

Instructor Impact on Student Persistence

Table 8 shows the response based on the instructors’ degree of religious commitment in regards to student persistence.

Table 8: Instructor Impact on Student Persistence by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
I believe that there are students who just need to withdraw from the course.	χ^2 (4, N=1044) = 9.17, p=.057 Cramer’s V=.094	Agree = 45.1% Strongly Agree = 27.4%	Agree = 37.3% Strongly Agree = 20.9%
I feel responsible to do what I can to help a student stay in a course and not withdraw.	χ^2 (4, N=1045) = 39.16, p<.001 Cramer’s V=.194	Agree = 40.4% Strongly Agree = 41.2%	Agree = 29.2% Strongly Agree = 65.3%

Those with low religious commitment were more likely to agree that “there are students who just need to withdraw from the course” while respondents with high religious commitment were more likely to with “I feel responsible to do what I can to help a student stay in a course and not withdraw.”

Instructor Concerns

Table 9 shows instructor concerns based on the instructors’ degree of religious commitment.

Table 9: Instructor Concerns by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
I have a concern about workload/time involved in online instruction.	$\chi^2 (4, N=1048) = 31.45$, $p < .001$ Cramer's $V = .173$	Strongly Disagree = 5.3% Strongly Agree = 26.3%	Strongly Disagree = 15.3% Strongly Agree = 11.8%
Most of the online courses I facilitate contain "busy work" which adds to my workload.	$\chi^2 (4, N=1041) = 11.69$, $p = .020$ Cramer's $V = .106$	Strongly Agree = 18.6%	Strongly Agree = 10.2%

Part-time, online instructors with low religious commitment would more likely have concerns about workload and "busy work" in their courses than those with high religious commitment.

Instructor Behaviors

An analysis of instructor behaviors based on degree of religious commitment revealed no statistically significant differences in the instructor incorporating resources into the course [$\chi^2 (4, N=1042) = 6.45$, $p = .168$], providing faculty-initiated contact [$\chi^2 (1, N=1054) = .62$, $p = .431$], response times [$\chi^2 (1, N=1054) = 1.41$, $p = .236$], or providing supplemental tutoring [$\chi^2 (1, N=1054) = 1.63$, $p = .202$].

Instructor Workload

There were no statistically significant differences in the number of classes taught at the same time [$\chi^2 (6, N=1048) = 8.16$, $p = .227$], the number of institutions

worked for simultaneously [$\chi^2 (4, N=1048) = 6.14$, $p = .189$], or the number of hours worked per week outside of part-time, online teaching [$\chi^2 (5, N=1047) = 4.17$, $p = .525$]; see Table 10. A majority of part-time, online instructors (both those with low religious commitment and those with high religious commitment) do not teach more than two classes at a time nor work with more than two institutions at a time. However, there are many instructors (36% of low-religious commitment respondents, 38% of high-religious respondents) who teach three or more classes at the same time while 16.7% (low religious commitment) and 19.2% (high religious commitment) work for three or more institutions at the same time. It is also noteworthy that 35.4% of instructors with low-religious commitment and 42.2% of those with high religious commitment work 40 hours or more outside of the time they spend in part-time teaching.

Table 10: Hours worked Outside of PT Teaching by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
# of Classes			
	1	25.4	20.7
	2	38.6	41.0
	3	17.5	18.3
	4	7.9	10.1
	5	4.4	3.3
	6 or more	6.2	6.6
# of Schools			
	1	59.6	51.8
	2	23.7	29.0
	3	6.2	11.4
	4 or more	10.5	7.8
Hours	0	23.9%	21.3%
	1-10	7.1%	5.9%
	11-20	9.7%	7.3%
	21-30	3.5%	6.1%
	31-40	20.4%	17.2%
	More than 40	35.4%	42.2%

A statistically significant difference was found in response to this question, “What is the ideal number of classes for you to teach at the same time as a part-time, online instructor?” [$\chi^2(16, N=1045) = 44.14, p < .001$] [Cramer’s V = .206]. Figure 1 shows the frequency

distribution of the responses to this question. The highest frequency for both groups is the 9-10 hour response (see Table 11).

Figure 1: Frequency Distribution

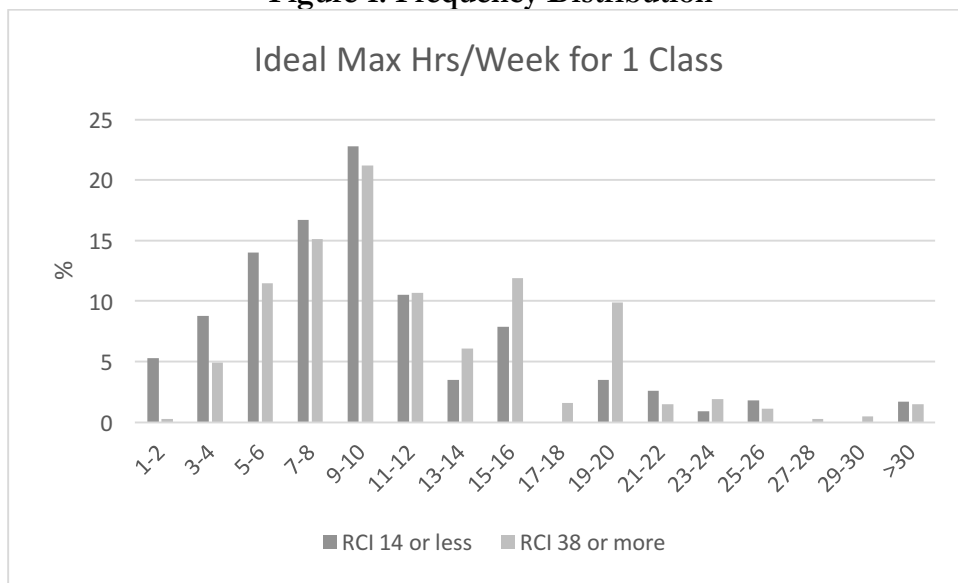


Table 11: Ideal Maximum Hours each Week for One Class

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
# of Hours			
	1-2	5.3	0.3
	3-4	8.8	4.9
	5-6	14.0	11.5
	7-8	16.7	15.7
	9-10	22.8	21.2
	11-12	10.5	10.7

Part-time, Online Instructor Satisfaction

An analysis of part-time, online instructor

satisfaction as a function of institution type found statistically significant differences as shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Instructor Satisfaction by Degree of Religious Commitment

		Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
I am satisfied in my role as a part-time online instructor.	$\chi^2 (4, N=1051) = 30.84$, $p < .001$ Cramer's V .171	Strongly Agree = 24.8%	Strongly Agree = 41.4%
I would consider myself to be loyal to the institution that employs me as a part-time instructor.	$\chi^2 (4, N=1048) = 73.43$, $p < .001$ Cramer's V .265	Strongly Agree = 31.0%	Strongly Agree = 68.2%
I would recommend PT online instructor position	$\chi^2 (4, N=1051) = 84.33$, $p < .001$ Cramer's V .283	Strongly Agree = 17.5%	Strongly Agree = 51.7%

Respondents with high religious commitment were more likely to be satisfied as part-time, online instructors, be loyal to the institutions that employ them, and be willing to recommend to academically qualified family and friends the position of part-time, online instructor.

Instructor Compensation

Respondents were asked to type in a number in response to this question, "What is the minimum pay you would consider for teaching a 3-credit hour online class in U.S. dollars?"

Results are summarized in Table 13 as well as Figures 2 and 3.

Table 13: Minimum Pay for a 3-credit Class by Degree of Religious Commitment

Minimum Pay for a 3-credit hour class.	Low Religious Commitment	High Religious Commitment
Minimum	\$20	\$50
First Quartile	\$1600	\$1200
Median	\$2206	\$1600
Third Quartile	\$3300	\$2300
Maximum	\$6500	\$5000

Figure 2: Minimum Pay for a 3-credit Class

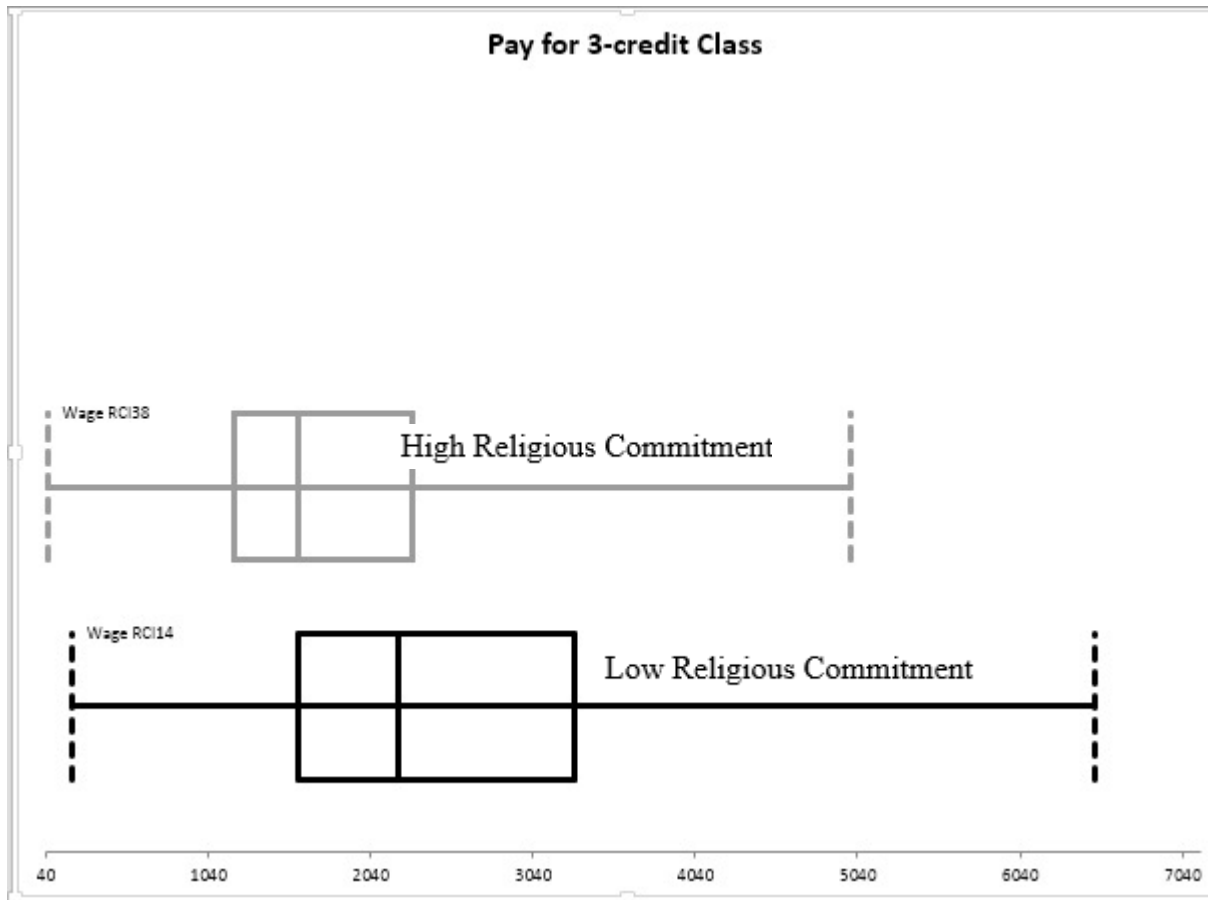
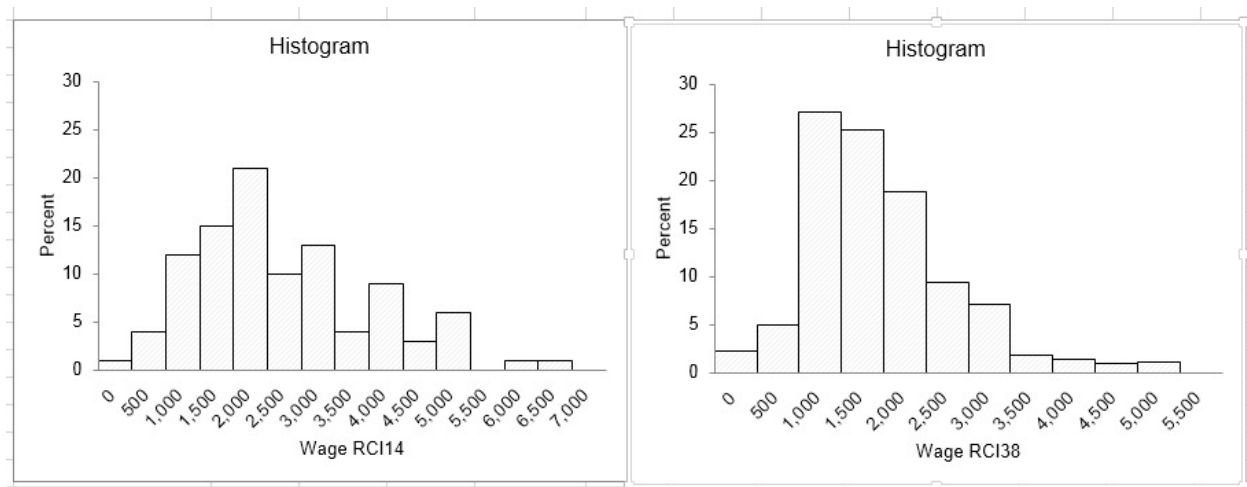


Figure 3: Minimum Pay for a 3-credit Class

Low Religious Commitment

High Religious Commitment



Note that 32% of instructors with low religious commitment would accept a class paying \$2,000 or less

compared to 60% of instructors with high religious commitment.

DISCUSSION

No Statistically Significant Differences

Although the degree of religious commitment may affect behavior, findings from this research revealed no statistically significant differences between the part-time, online instructors with low or high religious commitment with regards to the following:

- Household income (median range: \$90,000 - \$119,999)
- Years of academic experience (median range: 6-10 years)
- Whether working for a for-profit or not-for-profit school (40% for-profit, 60% not-for-profit)
- Number of classes taught at the same time (45% one class; 30% two classes)
- Number of institutions of higher learning employed by at the same time (55% one; 25% two)
- Wanting to earn extra income teaching part-time, online (70% either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)
- Response time to students (emails, posts) (90% clarify issues within 24 hours)
- Number of hours worked outside of part-time, online teaching (38% more than 40 hours per week; 18% 31-40 hours per week)

Statistically Significant Differences

Although these findings demonstrate that part-time, online instructors are similar with regards to several personal and academic characteristics, there are significant differences as well.

Demographics

The data showed that males were more likely in the high religious commitment group (RCI 38 or more) and females in the low religious commitment group (RCI 14 or less). This is contrary to research such as that from Mahlamäki (2012 p. 60) who stated “Statistics conducted in countries all over the world, for as long as statistics on religion have been collected, confirm that women are more religious than men.” In regards to age, those 25-34 were overrepresented in the low religious commitment group while those 55-64 were overrepresented in the high religious commitment group. This agrees with research that there is a decrease

in religious commitment, particularly in the millennial generation. This may pose a challenge to administrators at faith-based institutions who will be faced with hiring younger part-time, online instructors as the older instructors retire. Interestingly, white instructors were overrepresented in the low religious commitment group while Black or African Americans were overrepresented in the high religious commitment group. As one might expect, atheists and agnostics were more likely to be found in the low religious commitment group.

Academic Environment

Instructors with one master’s degree were overrepresented in the low religious commitment group. Instructors with low religious commitment were more likely to teach in both 2-year and 4-year public schools rather than in 4-year private schools and less likely to teach in faith-based schools. In regards to instructor role, 21.9% of instructors with low religious commitment “hoped to obtain a full-time position in higher education” versus 16.7% of instructors with high religious commitment. Thus, administrators need to be aware that a portion of those applying for part-time, online instructor positions are seeking full-time employment. Approximately 23.7% of instructors with low religious commitment were employed full-time outside of higher education compared to 30.1% of instructors with high religious commitment. Instructors with low religious commitment tend to teach undergraduate students while instructors with high religious commitment tend to teach graduate students. While 77.2% of instructors with high religious commitment teach classes with less than 20 students, only 48.3% of instructors with low religious commitment see classes that small. This result, along with others dealing with the educational environment, may be due to the fact that instructors with low religious commitment were more likely to teach in both 2-year and 4-year public schools and high religious commitment instructors are more likely to have a doctorate which could make them more inclined to teach smaller, graduate classes.

Instructor Motivation and Workload

It would appear that instructors with high religious commitment enjoy teaching more than those with low religious commitment (approximately 84% versus 66%) responded “Totally” to the statement “I enjoy teaching college classes.” Equally important, twice as

many (38% versus 19%) instructors with high religious commitment responded "Totally" to the statement "My motivation for teaching part-time, online as a postsecondary instructor is the satisfaction in giving back to the community." These results may be of interest to administrators at faith-based institutions of higher learning.

Approximately 65% of instructors with high religious commitment responded "Strongly agree" to the statement "I feel responsible to do what I can to help a student stay in a course and not withdraw" while only 41.2% of instructors with low religious commitment responded "Strongly agree." This could be interpreted as evidence that the degree of religious commitment may influence an instructor's attitude toward students struggling with a course. About 68% of instructors with low religious commitment list 10 hours or less as the ideal maximum number of hours per week for one online class. This compares to 53% of instructors with high religious commitment. In both cases, the majority of respondents would like to spend 10 hours or less per week facilitating an online course. The amount of "busy work" and the overall "workload" are of concern to the respondents. For example, 42% of instructors with low religious commitment and 31% of instructors with high religious commitment agreed or strongly agreed to the statement that "most classes that I facilitate contain 'busy work' which adds to my workload." Both groups (59% versus 37%) also agreed or strongly agreed that there was a concern about the workload and the amount of time involved in facilitating their online classes. These results have course design implications such as eliminating "busy work."

Instructor Satisfaction and Loyalty

Instructors with high religious commitment were more likely to be satisfied in the role of a part-time, online instructor and more likely to recommend a part-time, online instructor position to friends and family who are academically qualified. This information agrees favorably with the results of Ghazzawi, Smith and Cao (2012) who found positive but weak links between intensity of religious faith and job satisfaction. Administrators at faith-based schools may be encouraged by these results since instructors with high religious commitment were more likely to see themselves as being loyal to the institution that employs them as part-time instructors compared to instructors with low

religious commitment (68% versus 31% "Strongly Agree").

Instructor pay

Only 32% of instructors with low religious commitment would accept a class paying \$2,000 or less compared to 60% of instructors with high religious commitment. This result may be related to the fact that twice as many (38% versus 19%) instructors with high religious commitment responded "Totally" to the statement "My motivation for teaching part-time, online as a postsecondary instructor is the satisfaction in giving back to the community." It is interesting to note that 35.4% of instructors with low religious commitment and 42.2% of instructors with high religious commitment work more than 40 hours outside of their time spent in part-time, online teaching. In fact, the majority (55.8% of low, 59.4% of high) work 31 or more hours per week outside of their part-time, online teaching. This may explain why the majority of respondents from both groups would like to spend 10 hours or less per week facilitating an online course. The median response to "the minimum pay you would accept for a 3-credit hour course" was \$2200 for the low religious commitment group compared to \$1600 for the high religious commitment group. This result may be impacted by the fact that 47% of the low religious group checked "semester length" for course duration compared to 20% of those in the high religious group with the assumption that pay is higher for semester-long courses.

CONCLUSIONS

Administrators of faith-based institutions of higher learning may find it more difficult to find young, part-time, online instructors who are "mission fit" (based on religious commitment). Administrators of institutions of higher learning that are not faith based may benefit from the fact that part-time, online instructors with high religious commitment are more likely to:

- Be diverse
- Have full-time employment
- Enjoy teaching college classes
- Teach to give back to the community
- Feel responsible to help a student stay in a course
- Be willing to work for less money

...than part-time, online instructors with low religious commitment.

Recommendations for Future Work

Future research should expand this work to explore potential differences within part-time, online instructors who exhibit high religious commitment but teach in faith-based, for-profit institutions versus faith-based, not-for-profit institutions. An understanding of how the degree of religious commitment impacts the characteristics of part-time, online instructors who elect to teach at each type of school may help institutions to attract, support and retain these instructors.

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APPENDIX 1

Cross Tabulation

Cross tabulation is a statistical tool that is used to analyze categorical data. Categorical data can only be separated into different categories that are mutually exclusive from one another (e.g., gender). Cross tabulations are simply data tables that present the results of the entire group of respondents as well as results from sub-groups of survey respondents. Cross tabulations allow the researcher to examine relationships within the data that might not be readily apparent when analyzing total survey responses as well as understanding how two different variables are related to each other. In this study, the author wanted to see if there is a relationship between degree of religious commitment (low, high) and characteristics of part-time, online instructors.

In a cross tabulation, the chi-square test is used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the expected frequencies and the observed frequencies in one or more categories. Do the number of individuals or objects that fall in each category differ significantly from the number you would expect? Is this difference between the expected and observed due to sampling error, or is it a real difference? The chi-square test for independence, also called Pearson's chi-square test or the chi-square test of association, is used to discover if there is a relationship

(a real difference) between two categorical variables. As an example, in this study, there is a relationship between degree of religious commitment and the gender of part-time, online instructors since the probability of the observed difference ($p=.036$) is less than the stated level of significance (.05). Males are underrepresented in the “low religious commitment” group and overrepresented in the “high religious commitment” group. Females are overrepresented in the “low religious commitment” group and underrepresented in the “high religious commitment” group.

Assumptions for the Chi-Square Test

It is only appropriate to use a chi-square test for independence if the data meets two assumptions:

- Assumption #1: The two variables should be measured at an ordinal or nominal level (i.e., categorical data).
- Assumption #2: The two variables should consist of two or more categorical, independent groups. Examples of independent variables that meet this criterion include gender (2 groups: Males and Females) and ethnicity (e.g., 3 groups: Caucasian, African American and Hispanic).

Both assumptions were met in this study.