
NLSY79 APPENDIX 4:
JOB CHARACTERISTIC INDEX 1979-1982

JOB CHARACTERISTICS INDEX

Included in the 1979 and 1982 surveys is a measure of perceived job characteristics developed by Sims, Szilagyi, and Keller.¹ This scale, the Job Characteristics Index (JCI), is an extension of the work first begun by Turner and Lawrence in 1965.² The JCI was preceded by an instrument developed by Hackman and Oldham known as the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS),³ whose dimensions are also incorporated in the JCI, but in a simpler format.

Comparisons of the JCI and JDS by Dunham et al.⁴ have shown that both scales tend to collapse to a one-dimensional scale measuring job-complexity. Therefore, the JCI was shortened by selecting one scale item which loaded strongly on each of the dimensions of job complexity shown to be important in earlier research. In their 1976 article, Sims et al. reported the necessary factor analysis scores used to obtain the abbreviated scale. The seven questionnaire items that comprise the shortened JCI scale are in Section 8, question 23, sub-questions 1-5, and questions 24A and C (Reference #'s R00481.-R00486. and R00488.) for 1979; for 1982, the items are in Section 5, question 36, sub-questions 1-5, and questions 36B and 36D (Reference #'s R07054.-R07059. and R07061.).

NOTES

- ¹ Sims, Henry R., Szilagyi, Andrew, And Keller, Robert. "The Measurement of Job Characteristics," Academy of Management Journal 26, 2 (June, 1976): 195-212.
- ² Turner, A.N. and Lawrence, P.R. Industrial Jobs and the Workers: An Investigation of Responses to Task Attributes. Boston: Harvard University Press, 1965.
- ³ Hackman, J.R. and Oldham, J.R. "Development of the Job Diagnostic Survey," Journal of Applied Psychology 60 (1975): 159-170.
- ⁴ Dunham, Randall, B., Aldag, Ramon, and Brief, Arthur P. "Dimensionality of Task Design as Measured by the Job Diagnostic Survey," Academy of Management Journal 20, 2 (June, 1977): 209-223.
- ⁵ Pierce, Jon L. and Dunham, Randall B. "The Measurement of Perceived Job Characteristics: The Job Diagnostic Survey vs. the Job Characteristics Inventory,": Academy of Management Journal 21, 1 (March, 1978): 123-128.

