

What makes work enjoyable and motivating for Learning Advisors in Aotearoa-New Zealand?

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Abstract

Job satisfaction, motivation and employee engagement are of vital importance to productivity, efficiency and business success. As part of enhancing student success in a fast changing world it is necessary for Tertiary Learning Advisors (TLAs) to be engaged, motivated and enjoy their work. This paper draws on Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory of worker motivation to explore factors contributing to dissatisfaction and motivation for TLAs in Aotearoa-New Zealand. In Herzberg's model, the absence of "hygiene" factors leads to dissatisfaction for workers, whereas the presence of "satisfiers" results in satisfaction or motivation. We conducted a textual analysis of three volumes of ATLAANZ conference proceedings in order to identify the main hygiene and motivation factors experienced by TLAs in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Hygiene factors included the lack of *security* and *status* stemming from the "neo-liberal" reforms taking place in learning institutions. Satisfiers included opportunity for *growth*, *relationships with peers* and aspects of the *work itself*. Findings should assist management in seeking to maximise opportunities for TLA satisfaction, while aiming to moderate the strain of institutional change. Individual TLAs may also find it useful to know what others find motivating and fun, and incorporate these strategies into their own work-life.

Introduction

Motivation and engagement are crucial factors in promoting workplace productivity and business success (Department of Labour, 2007; Ernst and Young, 2010; Robertson, 2007). In order to enhance student success in today's fast changing world, it is necessary for Tertiary Learning Advisors (TLAs) to be happy and motivated in their work. We utilise Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory of worker motivation to investigate what factors contribute to both the dissatisfaction and motivation of TLAs in Aotearoa-New Zealand. In Herzberg's model, the absence of "hygiene" factors leads to dissatisfaction for workers, whereas the presence of "satisfiers" results in satisfaction or motivation. We begin with a discussion of Herzberg's theory which, despite being developed in the late 1960s, is still widely used and relevant. We then present a textual analysis of three volumes of ATLAANZ conference proceedings in order to identify the main hygiene and motivation factors mentioned by TLAs in Aotearoa-New Zealand. It is our intention that these findings contribute to TLA teams and individuals finding ways to have as much enjoyment at work as possible.

Herzberg's two-factor theory: Still in vogue!

Review of previous research

In *The Motivation to Work*, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) described how employee satisfaction stems from factors such as achievement, recognition of accomplishment, challenging work, increased responsibility and opportunities for growth and development. Herzberg (1966) subsequently went on to develop a two-factor theory of job satisfaction that also explored job dissatisfaction. This two-factor theory was influential in the development of many subsequent measurement tools (Tovey & Adams, 1999), particularly those which seek to measure worker's satisfaction with both intrinsic factors (job content) and extrinsic factors (job context) (See for instance: Hackman & Oldham, 1975; Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969; Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). Although Herzberg's theory was developed over 60 years ago, it still remains influential; studies indicate that it is broadly applicable across a range of professions, including the field of education. This includes previous research conducted by the authors.

Herzberg and his colleagues (Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) postulated that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two separate phenomena. Intrinsic factors (job content) are factors intrinsic to the nature and experience of doing work and include achievement, recognition, the work itself, and responsibility. They named these factors "motivators". Extrinsic factors (job context, rather than content) included company policy and administration, supervision, base salary, interpersonal relationships, and working conditions; these factors were found to lead to job dissatisfaction when not present. They were named "hygiene" factors. Herzberg maintained that hygiene factors counteract physical needs and help workers avoid discomfort, but they seldom produce pleasure. On the other hand, when psychological needs are met, this can produce enjoyment; but their absence does not necessarily produce discomfort. Herzberg viewed the two dimensions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction as being independent. In other words *satisfaction* is not the opposite of *dissatisfaction* but, instead, of *no satisfaction*. When hygiene factors such as salary, working conditions, collegial relationships and fairness are evaluated by an employee, they range from inadequate (dissatisfying) to adequate (not dissatisfying). For example '*I hate working here*' vs. '*it is fine*'. Motivation or satisfaction, on the other hand is determined by a set of intrinsic, work related factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement and personal growth. When these intrinsic factors are absent, the work provides no satisfaction (though it may not be aversive); but when they are present, the work itself is a source of satisfaction. For example '*This work is OK*' vs. '*I love my job*' (McLean, Smits, & Tanner, 1996; Smits, 1995).

There has been historical criticism of the Herzberg approach, primarily for overgeneralizing beyond its very limited sample of occupational groups (accountants and engineers); yet the two-factor theory has never really fallen out of favour. Herzberg's theory was (and still is) often used to provide a framework within which to interpret job satisfaction research. Late last century for example, Adigun and Stephenson (1992) found support for it with British employees, while Knoop (1994) found support for Herzberg's theory with Canadian teachers. Furnham, Forde, and Ferrari (1999) used the two-factors to provide a framework within which to examine personality and work performance. Gable and Haidt (2005) found further support for Herzberg, with the dissatisfaction of Japanese nurses being related to extrinsic (hygiene) aspects of work, such as having few opportunities for promotion or less favourable working conditions. Just in the past year there has been research published using the two factor theory in sectors as diverse as a nursing faculty (Derby-Davis, 2014), nurse

practitioners (Shea, 2014) and sports employees (Ross, Young, Sturts, & Kim, 2014) in the United States, and middle managers in the Mediterranean (Jansen & Samuel, 2014).

Turning our attention specifically to the field of education, several studies utilising Herzberg's framework have been conducted recently including studies of faculty staff in North America (Francoisa, 2012), medical lecturers in Iran (Hoseyni et al., 2014) and business studies school teachers in Botswana (Sithole & Solomon, 2014).

Herzberg's framework has important implications for management and human resource practice. Employees will seldom focus on motivators or intrinsic satisfiers such as growth and learning opportunities, if their basic needs and requirements in the workplace are perceived to be lacking. Issues such as safety, unmet living expenses, and lack of time and support need to be taken 'off the table' first. As a consequence, an employer who aims to have a truly motivated workforce must not only provide psychological growth factors but must first to attend to hygiene factors (Katt & Condly, 2009).

Background to current study

Over 2013-2014 we conducted an international survey, across a range of professions, to ascertain those factors that make workers either "love" or "hate" their jobs. Qualitative data was collected from 146 work experienced adults who either "loved" or "hated" their job. Overall the responses were consistent with Herzberg's two factor theory. Data from our survey of workers indicated that adult educators value those factors identified by Herzberg as motivators (i.e. achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth) and began to dislike their jobs when hygiene factors are lacking (e.g. management, work-conditions, company policy and administration). Our findings are outlined below in Table 1.

Table 1. *Factors adult educators* identified when asked why they loved or hated their jobs*

Group	Why do you love/hate job?
Love group (What the job 'has')	stimulation e.g. intellectual, working with students, interesting colleagues; autonomy; freedom; flexibility; positive feed-back from students; inspiring, motivating and helping students; creativity; diversity; making a positive difference
Hate group (What the job 'lacks')	poor management; labour practices that created a hostile environment; lack of freedom e.g. not being able to teach preferred subjects; large admin load; lack of variety, no creativity; efforts not appreciated

* includes university lecturers, academic directors, clinical educators and ESOL teachers

In general, our findings of adult educators, support the notion that most workers have both the desire to grow psychologically, and the desire to avoid pain or unpleasantness. In line with Herzberg's theory, adult educators valued opportunities for personal stimulation and growth, autonomy and making a difference to students. On the other hand, they began to dislike their jobs when they encountered poor working conditions, a lack of freedom, little space for creativity and no appreciation for their efforts.

Current study: Learning Advisors in New Zealand: A textual analysis

After conducting our previous study, we realised that it was possible that factors identified by adult educators (who include university lecturers, academic directors, clinical educators and ESOL teachers) may be very similar to TLAs. We also realised that there may be some distinctive features of TLA work in Aotearoa-New Zealand that contribute to workers enjoying or disliking their jobs. We were interested to investigate if this was the case.

We decided to conduct a textual analysis of three ATLAANZ conference proceedings, in order to gain a more thorough picture of hygiene and motivation factors specific to the role of TLA in Aotearoa-New Zealand. We begin this part of the paper by outlining the methodology and procedure that we used, before discussing the broad themes that emerged in our findings section.

Methodology and procedure

In order to gather information on the hygiene and motivation factors for TLAs in Aotearoa-New Zealand, we needed to find a way to collect data from a range of workers. A textual analysis of emotion in ATLAANZ proceedings, would allow us access to a variety of views (McKee, 2003).

Analysis of emotion or sentiment in a text “can help determine the opinions and affective intent of writers, as well as their attitudes, evaluations and inclinations with respect to various topics” (Aman & Szpakowicz, 2007, p. 196). Previous sentiment analysis has been conducted on a large variety of different text types including television or news stories, film or product reviews and blogs (Aman & Szpakowicz, 2007). A wide range of tools, models and methods have also been used for the analysis of sentiment in text (Balahur, Hermida, & Montoyo, 2012; Rubin, Stanton, & Liddy, 2004).

We conducted a manual method of textual analysis (Alm, Roth, & Sproat, 2005; Aman & Szpakowicz, 2007; Read, 2004; Wiebe, Wilson, & Cardie, 2005), adapting a method utilised by Aman and Szpakowicz (2007) in their sentiment analysis of blog posts. Aman and Szpakowicz (2007) utilised Ekman’s six basic emotion categories - happiness, sadness, anger, disgust, surprise, and fear – as a guide to identifying sentiment in the blogs (Ekman, 1992, as cited in Aman and Szpakowicz, 2007). This allowed them to calculate the dominant emotions expressed. The broad emotion categories we used in our analysis were dissatisfaction and motivation.

The textual analysis was conducted on three volumes of ATLAANZ proceedings spanning five years: 2009, 2012 and 2014. Each of the volumes was read by one of the authors of this article, who noted any reference (direct or indirect) to dissatisfaction or motivation. Aman and Szpakowicz (2007) used seed words to help them categorise any text into their six emotion categories. While the researcher did not use seed words, as analysis progressed she found that reference to sentiment tended to occur in three ways. The first and most common was the use of words or phrases referring to a particular context, which were used to infer either a positive or negative experience for TLA workers e.g. “collaboration” or “neo-liberalism” respectively. Balahur et al. (2012) explained that “in many cases, emotions are not expressed [in texts] by using words with an affective meaning (e.g. happy), but by describing real-life situations, which readers (based on their common-sense knowledge)

detect as being related to a specific emotion” (p. 742). The second reference to sentiment was the use of obviously emotion laden words or phrases e.g. “enjoyably stimulating”. Finally, metaphor was sometimes used to infer sentiment e.g. “the side of an active volcano”.

Twenty papers were found to have useful data; that is, they referred to situations that created frustration and dissatisfaction for TLAs or alternatively, were pleasurable and motivating. Extracts from the papers were coded by the researcher in a table according to whether they broadly reflected either Herzberg’s hygiene or motivation categories. They were then analysed and grouped thematically, under one of the factors identified by Herzberg (2003): company policy, supervision, relationship with supervisor, work conditions, salary, relationship with peers, relationship with subordinates (students), status, security (generally hygiene factors); and achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, growth (generally motivators). Analysis and coding was then discussed with the second author, who has a greater familiarity with Herzberg’s theory. Certain themes recurred, which have been identified below.

Findings

Hygiene factors

We identified six themes from an analysis of **hygiene factors**: security, status, company policy, work conditions, relationship with peers and relationship with subordinates. The hygiene factors that emerged most frequently in our analysis were (lack of) *security* and *status*; these were also generally a result of (deficient) *company policy*.

Company policy

It is useful to start with a discussion of company policy, as it provides the context for security, status and work conditions. A number of authors expressed frustration and dissatisfaction at some of the changes heralded by neo-liberalism that were often accompanied by restructuring in their institution (Cage, 2013; Cameron, 2009; Cameron, 2013; Carter, 2009; Dofs & Hobbs, 2009; Harris, 2009; Laurs & Carter, 2013; van der Ham, Sevillano, & Gable, 2009). Writing in the 2009 proceedings entitled *Shifting Sands, Firm Foundations*, Cameron (2009) epitomised this position:

Over the past two decades there has been considerable change in New Zealand universities and polytechnics – in the student cohort, in the structure of the institutions and, as a result, in the role and practice of TLAs. Often these changes have a negative impact on our profession. Many TLAs are in a marginal position within their institution and thus, in an era characterised by restricted funding and continual restructuring, are particularly vulnerable. (p. iv)

Many of the issues raised by restructuring have created some dissatisfaction or frustration for teams or individual TLAs. Several units and/or staff members have been placed in a position of needing to prove their worth. Three aspects of work that were impacted on because of restructuring came through as clear themes. These were: security, status and working conditions. Each is discussed below.

Security

Institutional restructuring has placed TLAs and the profession in a vulnerable and tenuous state. Carter (2009) explained this state:

TLAs are vulnerable to institutional change, a vulnerability that makes us a little like canaries at the mine face...The area of expertise of TLAs is the facilitation of learning. Yet arguably our place within the university is trivialised...our discipline almost non-existent ... and our sense of identity uncertain...Homi Bhabha's 'cultural displacement' theory and the term 'refugee' have been applied to academic developer identity...Our very existence at times seems predicated on shifting institutional values...We may feel subject to institutional scrutiny...Within the restrictions of what at times feels like a Foucaultian panopticon, that sense of being constantly audited. (p. 72-73)

Dofs and Hobbs (2009) implied an anxiety on the part of TLAs along with the resulting need to change as professionals and institutions in order to adapt to restructuring and new funding regimes:

Like many other academic learning support providers across a range of Universities, Polytechnics and Private Training Enterprise institutions in New Zealand, the authors have experienced 2009 as a year of uncertainty and shifting sands according to the winds of change, with regard to the nature of the tertiary education sector landscape, its changing funding mechanisms and the restructuring of many organisations (p. 84-85).

Restructuring and loss of jobs can take their toll. Cage (2013) explained that Learning Centres have experienced "turbulence" in the last few of years (p. iii). "Organisational restructuring and the continued erosion of budgets continued to plague the tertiary sector and there were unfortunately more redundancies, which is evidenced in the number of members who are no longer with us" (p. ii). Harris (2009) argued, in relation to TLA mathematics support, that "politics and money dictate resourcing and support centres are seen as a low priority because they do not generate an income" (p. 111).

There was anxiety expressed in the 2009 ATLAANZ proceedings about the need for TLAs to prove they are doing a good job and the difficulty around doing that. Carter (2009) referred to this issue:

Another concern that remains unanswered is that we have little beyond student thanks to demonstrate the effectiveness of our work in individual consultations. Sometimes student acknowledgement that they have had threshold learning moments as a result of being personally shown something assures TLAs that the work is valuable, but how can we show this with more rigour? Measurement of teaching and learning is not easy (p. 79).

Burns (2012) also discussed the difficulty in proving the usefulness of interventions and suggests that "exactly how the usefulness of such items can be gauged in a meaningful way is a further point of reflection and possible research" (p. 38).

Referring to a "darker" dimension of the current TLA experience, Laurs and Carter (2013) explained that "Learning Advisors [currently] work on the side of an active volcano" (p. 135). They suggested that there is an "on-going need to justify our position within the academy" (p.135). It was necessary to do this "in order to satisfy those in senior management who may be tempted to see our work as expendable in tighter times, seeking to restructure our working environment far too recurrently to enable us to work to maximum capacity" (p. 135).

In their analysis of survey data gathered from TLAs in New Zealand, Cameron and Catt (2013) found that one of the key changes reported since 2008 was “institutional restructuring” (p. 14). They explained that:

changes that have occurred in the last five years have implications for TLA identity and status, issues which loom large in the relatively new profession of tertiary learning advising. In a high proportion of institutions, Learning Centres have been merged with other services and there appear to be fewer Centre managers with learning advising experience. At the same time, Learning Centres have been subject to funding constraints (reflecting financial pressures on tertiary institutions as a whole), with a resulting drive for “efficiencies”. These changes reinforce the need for TLAs to be able to clearly articulate their role, how their skills might differ from – and complement – the role of colleagues in newly merged groups, and the particular value TLAs provide to their institutions. (p. 13)

Status

Cameron and Catt (2013) stated that “as members of an emerging profession, TLAs face a number of challenges, including a precarious status within many – if not all – institutions” (p. 2). That said, they found some evidence in their 2013 survey that:

TLAs might be “moving in from the margins” of their institutions and increasing in influence; they are more likely to be involved in institutional committees than they were five years ago, and managers were generally positive about the influence of the Learning Centre on improving teaching and learning in their institution (p. 17).

The data analysed by Cameron and Catt, “particularly regarding research and institutional influence, provide a different perspective to the common perception in the literature that TLAs have a low status in their institutions. However, this is but one perspective” (p.17).

Cameron (2013) found that only 17% (or 10) TLAs felt there were career opportunities as a TLA. In contrast, 82% (or 47) said there were no opportunities. Of those, 19 said they would need to move to management or a different role if they wanted to progress.

Working conditions

Working conditions are referred to, usually in the context of needing to do more with less. van der Ham et al. (2009) referred to “ever dwindling funding and increasing demand for tangible results” (p. v).

Cage (2012) referred to a busy work-load, describing TLAs as “time-poor” (p. 62). He assumed that, “like me, other TLAs find it difficult in the course of their working lives to consistently and thoroughly reflect on their one-to-one teaching practice...[as they are] time-poor” (p. 62). Huyton claimed that “the contemporary climate of work intensification has had implications for the emotional well-being of higher education practitioners which are, in part, explained by the lack of discursive space available for collective reflection on practice issues” (cited in Malthus, 2012, p. 14).

Cameron and Catt (2013) found in their survey of TLAs, that a key change reported since 2008 was “the increased need for ‘efficiency’ in providing services” (p. 14). For instance, while they found that 80% of institutions in 2013 reported their staff were research active (as opposed to 55% in 2008) of the 28% of institutions that required staff to be research active, only 24% provided time allowance for research.

Cameron’s (2013) survey of TLAs found lowest satisfaction was reported amongst those in the early stages of their TLA career. Honeyfield, Fraser, and Peterson (2013) argued that

early career tertiary teachers, including TLAs are often expected to hit the ground running, beginning their roles without adequate (or any) training.

Relationship with peers

Pocock (2009) refers indirectly to some of the dissatisfaction that can arise within a team: “developing a coordinated effort to work together requires effort, time and hard work...it has taken time to build trust and respect within our working environment” (p. 3).

Relationship with students

Cage (2012) referred to the relationship with students in TLA work and the ways it can impact on a TLA emotionally. As evidence he cites an electronic survey of members of the Association of Learning Developers in Higher Education produced by Huyton in 2009, that found that “almost three-quarters of ... [learning developers] could identify times when, after challenging encounters with students, they needed to ‘debrief’ or ‘offload’” (p. 63).

While a number of factors were mentioned in the proceedings, it was clear that the most common causes of dissatisfaction for TLAs related to institutional restructuring, a factor outside the immediate control of individual TLAs and, to a certain extent, their managers. The perception of uncertainty around their roles and a lack of security in times of organisational change were clear factors creating dissatisfaction and anxiety for the authors. It was not possible to ascertain the degree to which this led to dissatisfaction however.

Motivator Factors

There were three main themes that were identified from an analysis of **motivator factors**: *personal growth*, *relationship with peers*, and the *work itself*. We found that the positive aspects of relationship with peers were generally linked to personal growth.

Personal growth

Growth was mentioned in regard to the professional development of TLAs as teachers, writers and researchers.

In regard to developing teaching skills, Cooper and Maxwell (2009) explained that “the mix of teaching skills and styles [involved in team teaching] can...provide learning opportunities for the tutors” (p.10).

The opportunity to develop writing skills was seen to result in personal and professional growth. Fraser, Manalo, and Marshall (2009) praised writing retreats as a mechanism for TLAs to build confidence and motivation:

writing retreats offer participants the time and space not easily found in day to day job performance...to focus on writing and overcome a raft of challenges: lack of momentum, self-censorship, low confidence, lack of external motivation, and a lack of specific writing-related skills ... This last issue is particularly relevant to TLS's, whose profiles and backgrounds can be extremely diverse, since there is no formal qualifications or pathway into the profession of learning advising. Yet, as academics, we are automatically assumed to be able to write at a scholarly level, although there may have been no previous requirement or opportunity to develop these skills. (p.36)

Sturm (2012) explained that the opportunity to develop through writing, presented an opportunity for personal development: “freeing myself to write: what might be called a positive freedom” (p.71). This involved “two tasks: to learn to manage my time better and to learn not to be too careful too early in the writing process. To do so is to exercise my positive freedom” (p. 77).

Cameron and Catt (2013) explained that “there has been a marked increase in the number of institutions reporting that their Learning Advisors are involved in research” (p. 16). They acknowledged that this may relate to the growing need over the last decade for TLAs to become research active (p. 17). Cameron, Allan, Gera, and McMorrow (2013) link this trend to the opportunity for growth because TLAs have the chance to pursue their own interests, examining particular “issues or problems” (p. 39) relevant to their own work.

Relationship with peers

A positive relationship with peers was discussed by several authors and was often linked to positive personal and professional growth.

Pocock (2009) discussed the positive experience of good team work when it occurred effectively in her organisation:

This closer ‘family’ group [student support, aligned to health, counselling, disability] is helpful for providing effective support for making the student learning experience positive ... Collaboration, while not without its problems, has benefits for the SLSS...there is more knowledge sharing, a broader representation of ideas from more diverse groups...and ...there is satisfaction in knowing that multiple perspectives have been listened to and considered. (pp. 2 - 5)

A good relationship with peers was viewed as resulting in not only a better student experience, but knowledge sharing and the feeling amongst members of being listened to and valued.

Pocock (2009) explained that, when working well, each SLSS staff member plays an active role in helping the unit achieve its strategic goals. This process was made easier if it is linked to opportunities for autonomy and personal and professional growth:

Within our support service, staff have some autonomy to manage responsibilities to negotiate, plan, prepare and facilitate workshops...During this process they often work with their immediate colleagues and academic staff. Over time as their confidence grows, they develop wider relationships throughout the University with people who share a common goal. (p. 3)

Fraser et al. (2009) discussed the value to individuals of a structured inter-institutional writing retreat for TLAs that they ran (that required people to write up and compare programmes), or communities that develop at ATLAANZ conferences. They referred to the “social learning that occurs when practitioners with a common interest or domain meet and collaborate regularly to share ideas, resources, solutions and support” (p. 37). These forums were particularly valuable for newer members of the profession, to assist them to improve their skills and abilities in order to move from “legitimate peripheral participation...into full participation” (Smith 2009, cited in Fraser et al., 2009, p. 38). Cage (2012) explained that the “newly initiated regional hui...gave learning advisors the opportunity to get together during the year to learn from and lean on each other for support in these challenging times” (p. iii).

Allen (2013) referred to the enjoyment that arose for him from the process of producing a grammar course with peers: “The materials development phase proved to be an enjoyably stimulating experience, characterised by collegiality and little nuggets of new information gleaned from colleagues’ presentations” (p. 26). Osborne (2012) was similarly enthusiastic about the benefits of “reviewing material with colleagues” (p. 45).

Work itself

Several authors referred to the work of the TLA as being enjoyable. This included classroom (team) teaching and individual consultations. Cooper and Maxwell (2009) referred to the benefits of team-teaching, explaining that the “synergy” produced in a classroom can make “the teaching more enjoyable, as well as beneficial for students” (p. 10).

Carter (2009) referred to the “exciting task” TLAs have of “teaching learning” (p. 73). She went on to discuss the satisfaction that can be had during individual consultations with students when they make a leap in understanding: “while individual consultation means we sometimes have to fend off expectations of such services [as editing and proof reading students work], some rich ‘eureka’ moments occur in individuals consultations” (p.74). Carter seems to be suggesting that while navigating student expectations can sometimes be frustrating; there are moments of satisfaction and excitement that can occur for a TLA when a student makes progress with their writing skills.

Cameron and Catt (2013) published survey data of TLA’s experiences in the ATLAANZ conference proceedings. Cameron’s presentation at the conference (Cameron, 2013) presented additional statistics. The survey of TLAs found that 32% were very satisfied in their role, 41% were satisfied, 16% somewhat satisfied, 2% neutral and only 7% were dissatisfied with 1% very dissatisfied.¹ Lowest satisfaction was reported amongst those in the early stages of their TLA career. The reasons behind satisfaction or otherwise, were not explored. However, we can assume from these statistics, that the majority of TLAs in New Zealand enjoy their jobs, most of the time.

Discussion

This research project applied Herzberg’s two-factor theory to a specific context and profession. While we had previously collected international data on adult educators, the objective of this piece of research was to identify whether there were any elements specific to being a TLA in Aotearoa-New Zealand. In the following discussion we review our findings in relation to Herzberg’s theory. We also explore the wider implications of our study in terms of what it reveals about the current condition of the ATLAANZ community.

Hygiene factors

In general our data on TLAs supports Herzberg’s claim that dissatisfaction can emerge when “hygiene” factors are absent. For Herzberg (2003), hygiene factors generally included company policy, supervision, relationship with supervisor, work conditions, salary, relationship with peers, relationship with subordinates, status and security. However, on occasion, these factors could also serve as motivators.

The findings of our research indicate that hygiene factors influenced by institutional change have had a crucial impact on TLAs in Aotearoa-New Zealand over the last five years and can lead to work dissatisfaction. Of the factors that Herzberg (2003) identified, company policy, security and status were the most commonly discussed. These were generally related to neo-liberal policies in education and restructuring in TLAs institutions.

The impact of neo-liberal restructuring on academic staff is certainly not restricted to learning advisors in New Zealand (Shore & Davidson, 2014). However, our study suggests that it has impacted TLA satisfaction in specific ways. In particular, it has had the effect of marginalising them as an emerging profession, with an already uncertain identity. This has

¹ This data was extrapolated visually from a graph and so percentages will not be exact.

created a degree of anxiety on the part of many TLAs. The additional need to evaluate their work and to publish, has provided further pressure.

In Herzberg's (2003) research, relationship with peers was generally found to be a hygiene factor. However, in our analysis of conference proceedings, relationship with peers, particularly as it related to growth, was mentioned as an aspect that helped TLAs enjoy their work more. This is discussed further below.

Motivator factors

Our findings generally support Herzberg's claim that certain factors contribute to motivation when present. For Herzberg (2003) these included achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, growth. Of Herzberg's motivator factors, the two that were identified in our textual analysis were *growth* and the *work itself*. The other dominant motivation factor we identified was *relationship with peers*; as mentioned above, this factor is generally considered to be hygiene factor in Herzberg's framework.

The opportunity for growth was often mentioned in positive terms. Key activities leading to growth also often involved relationships with peers. These included team teaching, developing resources collaboratively and forums such as hui and conferences. These activities and forums helped TLAs to feel more equipped and competent in their work with students.

The need to provide evidence for their practice, including research, has also led for some TLAs to an opportunity for growth. In this case, increased job 'security' (one of Herzberg's hygiene factors), is viewed as something that one might gain through effort. There may be some personal satisfaction in knowing that one is meeting institutional objectives through publishing and, contributing to one's employability in the tertiary sector. In their research on the PBRF Grant and Elizabeth (2015) found that some academics "found aspects of the [audit] process affirming and satisfying and, in a context of labour 'precariousness' ... reassuring" (p. 298).

On the other hand, a large percentage of TLAs felt there was little room for career opportunities. The long term impact of, not only lower status, but no real expectations that this could change is clearly a factor that would negatively impact the experience of work for this group. These ideas relate to Herzberg's (1966) notion of "opportunity for advancement". The opportunity to advance in one's career (or personally) is an important source of motivation for many workers. The perception of stagnation, of being at a 'dead end', would certainly preclude the feeling of being motivated and engaged in work for those who believe this is the case.

TLAs generally found their specific role satisfying, including assisting students develop their writing skills. In addition, they liked the autonomy of the role.

Implications for the future of the ATLAANZ community

We hope that our findings might be of interest to the ATLAANZ executive, managers and individuals TLAs. Our research suggests that Herzberg's framework, fits, in general, the experience of TLAs in Aotearoa/New Zealand. However, it does highlight the importance of good *relationships with peers* for growth, worker motivation and enjoyment.

Our results should be encouraging to the ATLAANZ executive. TLAs experience dissatisfaction when they feel marginalised. The existence of ATLAANZ as a professional

body (and its related activities) appears to help to work against a tenuous sense of identity. Maintaining the ATLAANZ community, including hui and conferences, is also crucial to maintaining TLA motivation in Aotearoa-New Zealand, which is strongly linked to growth.

We hope that our findings might also be of interest to management, who might seek to maximise opportunities for satisfaction and enjoyment, including positive collaboration, team and personal growth, while aiming to mitigate the worst excesses of institutional change.

On an individual level, we hope that individual TLAs may feel encouraged to know what other TLAs find motivating; this includes continual professional development, team teaching and collaborative resource development. TLAs may choose to consciously institute some of these practices in their own work-life.

Study limitations

Findings are limited by the nature of the source texts. These, with the exception of Cameron and Catt (2013) were not focused specifically on questions of job satisfaction. While we were able to identify some factors that led to job dissatisfaction and motivation for TLAs in New Zealand, there may be others that were not mentioned.

The dominant hygiene themes (policy, security and status) that are common to many TLAs in New Zealand may be accompanied by others that reflect the circumstances of particular centres or individuals. For instance, *supervision* and *relationship with supervisor* are key hygiene factors identified in Herzberg's study but not mentioned in our data; it would presumably be difficult for TLAs to specifically write about these in a public forum. It is possible that the one of the dominant motivation themes - relationship with peers (linked to personal growth) - occurred very frequently because the papers were a written version of conference presentations. One could argue that conferences are set up specifically to facilitate this kind of connection and learning. That said, several papers did mention the enjoyment of collaborative learning in contexts unrelated to the conference.

Conclusion

This paper sought to highlight the factors that lead TLAs in Aotearoa-New Zealand to be either dissatisfied or motivated at work. It utilised Herzberg's two-factor theory in order to do so. Previous research suggests that Herzberg's two-factor theory fits with the experience of those involved in higher education. A textual analysis of three ATLAANZ conference proceedings was conducted, in order to ascertain the hygiene and motivation factors unique to the work of TLAs. Hygiene factors for this group included *company policy*, *security* and *status*. Key motivation themes included *personal growth*, *relationship with peers* and the *work itself*. Findings should be of use to the ATLAANZ executive, managers of TLA teams as well as individual TLAs themselves. The executive and team leaders can maximise opportunities for growth, including collaborative learning. Individual TLAs may find it inspiring to know what other TLAs find motivating and fun at work; they can then put some of these practices in place in their own working lives.

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