



More Time, More Stuff?: Hours at Work & Office Clutter Sources

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Introduction

Most Americans dwell in the workplace upwards of 40 hours a week. It's the place we come in, dump our stuff, and make strides to create a better world. But what happens with the level of things we leave in the office? The negative effects of clutter has been a hot topic lately, notably with the rise of minimalism and Marie Kondo's "sparkling joy"—but what does it mean in the workplace? We were curious to explore the different forms of clutter one might have in the workplace, and if people who spent more time in the workplace had more different kinds of clutter. We hypothesized that the more hours a worker spent at their job, the more different forms of clutter they'd have lying around. Particularly, we hypothesized that there would be significant category differences between part-time and overtime workers.

Methods

Our data was collected from surveys of adults in the United States from the survey program, Prolific. Each participant was compensated monetarily for their response. We then separated the responses into 8 categories for the clutter source they initially described. Categories were coded by two individuals independently to establish interrater reliability. Disagreements between coders were identified and brought to consensus. The categories are as follows: paper, technology, decorations, furniture, food/beverage, organization, office supplies, and miscellaneous. We coded another variable hours spent at job into three categories: part-time, full-time, overtime.

Participants

n= 300	
Gender	Male = 61% Female = 37.6% Prefer not to answer = 1.4%
Age Group:	Range: 18-65 18-35: 63.3% 35-55: 31.9% 55-65: 4.8%
Hours Spent at Job	
Part-Time (20-35 hours)	22.1%
Full-Time (36-40 Hours)	40.3%
Overtime (41+ hours)	37.6%
Clutter Categories	
Paper	48.3%
Office Supplies	16%
Technology	10.8%
Furniture	9.7%
Food and Beverage	4.2%
Decorations	2.4%
Organization	3.5%
Miscellaneous	4.2%

Results

We ran a chi-square test with two variables on the initial clutter source categories ($p = .015$).

- Times spent at job (part-time, full-time, and over-time)

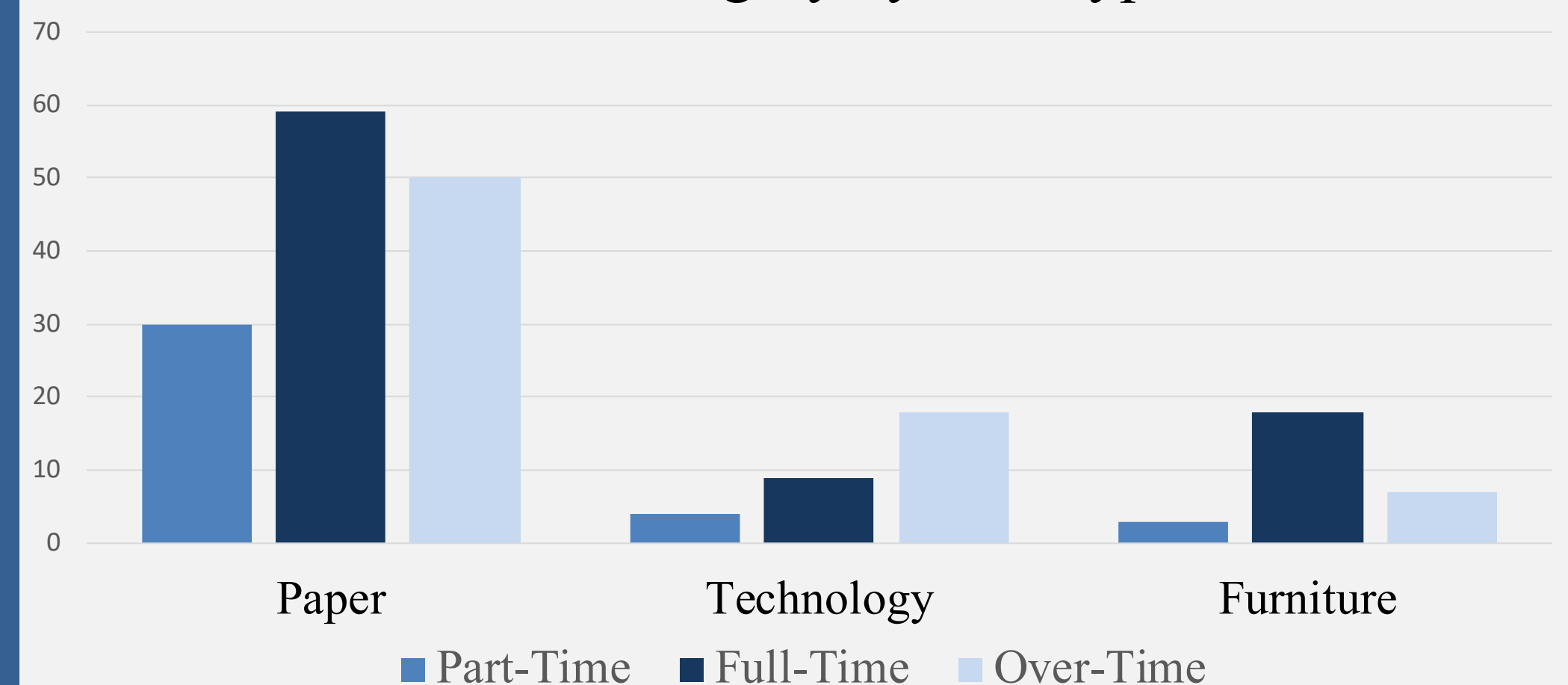
The test suggests that there are three clutter source categories that display differences between the groups.

- Paper, technology, and furniture

Results

Clutter Category	Hours at Job			Total
	Part-Time	Full-Time	Over-time	
Paper	30	59	50	139
Technology	4	9	18	31
Furniture	3	18	7	28

Clutter Category by Job Type



Limitations & Discussion

Limitations

- Cannot claim causality
- We only coded the first clutter source (out of five) that participants listed in the study
- The data was not collected for the purpose of these analyses

Discussion

- Individuals who spend more time at work are more likely to have paper, technology, and furniture as clutter

Further questions:

- Could this be due to attempting to make the workspace feel more personalized and comfortable?
- Is this true for all types of jobs?

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