

Validity Study

Criterion-Validity Evidence for Time Urgency: Associations with Burnout, Organizational Commitment, and Job involvement in Travel Agents

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This study presents criterion-related validity evidence for time urgency as it relates to burnout, organizational commitment, and job involvement in the travel industry. The sample consisted of 393 travel agents who were employed in various agencies across the United States. Results indicated that time urgency subcomponents (eating behavior, competitiveness, speech patterns, task-related hurry, and general hurry) were significantly associated with burnout, organizational commitment, and job involvement. A complete PDF version of this article can be obtained at www.radford.edu/~applyhrm.

Sample

The sample consisted of 393 travel agents who were employed in various agencies across the United States. Three hundred and thirty (84%) were female and 63 (16%) were male. The ages of the travel agents ranged from 20 to 82, with a mean age of 43. The range of years worked in the travel industry was from 1 to 60, with a mean of 12.91. The mean number of years for individuals working in their current agency was 6.39. The greatest number of people reported working in a full service agency (88.5%) with 1 to 10 agents. Most reported working in either a suburban or urban area. Respondents were also asked to indicate the specialty areas in which they worked (they could select more than one area): 41.2% reported doing corporate travel, 33.3% domestic travel, 34.3% international travel, 23% administration work, 23% tour groups, and 16.4% general work.

Predictor Information (Time Urgency)

Individuals characterized by time urgency are frequently concerned with the passage of time as well as how they can most efficiently fill that time with productive activity (Price, 1982). Although previous research on time urgency has treated it as unidimensional, Landy, Rastegary, Thayer, and Colvin (1991) provided evidence that time urgency is a multidimensional construct. Subsequent research has indicated that time urgency subcomponents demonstrate relationships with both health and performance outcomes (e.g., Conte, Landy, & Mathieu, 1995; Conte, Mathieu, & Landy, 1998; Conte, Schwenneker, Dew, & Romano, 2001; Menon, Narayanan, & Spector, 1996).

Time urgency was measured with 33 five-point Likert items (Landy et al., 1991). A principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation was conducted to examine the factor structure of the time urgency items, which were retained if they loaded above .40 on a particular factor and if they did not have any cross-loadings that were above .35 on other factors. Using these criteria resulted in dropping nine items, all of which had similar problems with low factor loadings or cross-loadings in Landy et al. (1991). Table 1 presents the results of the final factor analysis, which resulted in the same five time urgency dimensions that were identified by Landy et al.: *eating behavior* (5 items, internal consistency reliability = .91), *competitiveness* (6 items, internal consistency reliability = .81), *speech patterns* (5 items, internal consistency reliability = .71), *task-related hurry* (5 items, internal consistency reliability = .77), and *general hurry* (3 items, internal consistency reliability = .70). Scale scores for these dimensions were computed by summing the participants' responses to items on each time urgency component. In all cases, greater scores indicate more of each time urgency dimension.

Criterion Information

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) was used to assess burnout. This measure has three subscales: (1) Personal Accomplishment (8 items, internal consistency reliability = .74), (2) Emotional Exhaustion (9 items, internal consistency reliability = .89), and (3) Depersonalization (5 items, internal consistency reliability = .69). A higher score on the Personal Accomplishment Scale indicates less burnout, whereas a higher score on the other two subscales indicates higher burnout. Organizational commitment was measured with a 9-item, 5-point Likert scale (internal consistency reliability = .92) developed by Blau and Boal (1989). Job involvement was measured with a 10-item scale (internal consistency reliability = .88) developed by Kanungo (1982). High scores on these scales indicate higher organizational commitment and job involvement.

Table 1
Principal Components Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation (N = 393)

Time urgency Item	Factor				
	Eating Behavior	Competitiveness	Speech Patterns	General Hurry	Task Hurry
Eat too quickly	.90				
Eat rapidly	.88				
Others say I eat too fast	.84				
Eat more slowly than most (R)	.79				
Prefer to linger over meal (R)	.78				
Hard driving and competitive		.77			
Hard driving		.75			
Ambitious		.73			
Strong need to excel		.72			
Go “all out”		.69			
Set deadlines		.44			
Bossy or dominating			.77		
Put words in person’s mouth			.64		
Speak louder than most people			.62		
Talk rapidly			.58		
Try to persuade others			.56		
Slow doing things (R)				.74	
Work is slow and deliberate (R)				.69	
Usually work fast				.67	
Often work slowly (R)				.62	
Others rate me as easygoing (R)				.47	
Often feel very pressed for time					.88
Usually pressed for time					.83
Often in a hurry					.58

Note: (R) indicates reverse-scored item

Validity Information

Table 2 presents the correlations among the time urgency subcomponents, burnout, organizational commitment, and job involvement. The correlations among the time urgency subcomponents were positive and significant, but none of the correlations was above .40. In assessing the criterion validity of the time urgency subcomponents, several significant correlations were obtained.

- Eating behavior was positively related to job involvement ($r = .15, p < .01$).
- Competitiveness was positively related to personal accomplishment ($r = .19, p < .01$), organizational commitment ($r = .11, p < .05$), and job involvement ($r = .24, p < .01$).
- Speech patterns were positively related to job involvement ($r = .17, p < .01$) as well as to burnout due to emotional exhaustion ($r = .14, p < .01$) and depersonalization ($r = .22, p < .01$).

- General hurry was positively related to job involvement ($r = .16, p < .01$), burnout due to emotional exhaustion ($r = .29, p < .01$), and depersonalization ($r = .16, p < .01$).
- Task-hurry was positively related to personal accomplishment ($r = .13, p < .01$).

These results indicate that individuals who were high in time-urgent speech patterns and general hurry were most likely to report burnout due to both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Second, individuals high in task hurry and competitiveness were more likely to report low burnout as a result of feelings of high personal accomplishment in their jobs. Finally, individuals high in eating behavior, speech patterns, general hurry, and competitiveness tended to report high levels of job involvement. Overall, the results indicated that no one time urgency scale is predictive of all criteria, which provides further support for the notion that time urgency is multidimensional in nature.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all variables (N = 393)

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Eating Behavior	14.89	5.08	(91)									
2. Competitiveness	22.62	3.81	.13*	(81)								
3. Speech Patterns	14.56	3.46	.34**	.34**	(71)							
4. General Hurry	10.27	2.40	.26**	.33**	.39**	(77)						
5. Task Hurry	15.41	2.52	.34**	.38**	.26**	.22**	(70)					
6. Emotional Exhaustion	18.97	10.11	.03	.06	.14**	.29**	-.05	(89)				
7. Depersonalization	6.33	4.92	.02	-.01	.22**	.16**	-.03	.54**	(69)			
8. Personal Accomplishment	7.65	6.12	-.02	.19**	-.03	-.05	.13**	-.38**	-.31**	(74)		
9. Organizational Commitment	3.87	0.77	.05	.11*	.05	.07	.02	-.25**	-.14**	.32**	(92)	
10. Job Involvement	3.11	0.73	.15**	.24**	.17**	.16**	.05	-.14**	-.07	.25**	.41**	(88)

Note. All correlations and reliability coefficients (values in diagonal) are reported with the decimals omitted.

Exploratory Analyses of Gender and Age Differences in Time Urgency

Analyses were conducted to determine if there were gender or age differences across the time urgency subcomponents. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 3. In terms of the gender breakdown, there were 330 females and 63 males in the sample. Because the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 protects workers 40 and above against workplace discrimination (Cascio, 1998), the sample was separated into an under 40 group ($n = 151$) and a 40 and over group ($n = 234$). There were 151 travel agents under 40 years old, 234 who were 40 and over, and 8 travel

agents who did not report their age. As shown in Table 3, the results indicated females were significantly higher than males on the general hurry time urgency dimension ($t(391) = 2.14, p < .05$). However, there were no other significant differences on any of the time urgency dimensions for either age or gender.

Conclusion

A limitation to note in this study is the use of self-reported work criteria, which may lead to higher correlations with the self-reported time urgency scales. However, the fact that not all of the time urgency subcomponents were significantly correlated with the work criteria provides evidence that common method bias did not systematically inflate the observed correlations. Nevertheless, future research should examine relationships between the time urgency subcomponents and objective measures of health and performance outcomes. Overall, identifying differential relationships between the time urgency subcomponents and the work criteria in this large field sample of travel agents provides important validity evidence for the time urgency scales.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for Time Urgency Factors by Gender and Age

Demographic	N	Eating Behavior		Competitiveness		Speech Patterns		General Hurry		Task Hurry	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Gender											
Female	330	14.69	4.97	22.67	3.75	14.60	2.80	10.39 ^a	2.40	15.40	2.47
Male	63	15.95	5.53	22.32	4.17	14.37	3.48	9.68 ^b	2.38	14.92	2.80
Age											
Under 40	151	14.78	4.92	22.57	3.64	14.96	3.49	10.27	2.40	15.38	2.53
40 +	234	15.04	5.17	22.63	3.92	14.38	3.42	10.32	2.41	15.44	2.56

Note. Means with different superscripts are significantly different at $p < .05$.

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