

## **Overall and by Factor Level of Job Satisfaction Among the Faculty of an Online University in Pakistan**

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Job satisfaction of the employees is the key for higher productivity and quality of the output of an organization. It is a virtuous cycle between the employee and the organization. Same is true about the educational institutions. This study is the first of its kind exploring the job satisfaction of faculty of a fully ICT based online university. The Job Satisfaction Scale was developed using the data received by the Virtual University of Pakistan (VUP) through a Faculty Feedback Survey conducted at the end of year 2017 from 201 faculty members who had completed one full year of service. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was applied to extract the principal components or the factors underlying the 23 items of the Feedback Survey. To ascertain the level of job satisfaction, percentage, Mean and SD were used. The results yielded that the faculty of the VUP was satisfied slightly above the moderate level. The major source of satisfaction was the Mentoring and Collegiality followed by the Physical Environment and Clarity of Service Rules. Their level of satisfaction was slightly below the median on Financial Benefits and Job Security. Within this Factor the major contributory elements of dissatisfaction were the Lack of Job Security and financial benefits other than the salary.

**Keywords:** *Online Faculty, Job Satisfaction, Mentoring and Collegiality, Clarity of Service Rules, Financial Benefits and Job Security, Physical Environment*

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### **Introduction**

Job satisfaction is the way people feel about their job. It is the degree of liking their jobs (Spector, 1997). Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as an emotional state of pleasure resulting from the appraisal or experiences of one's job. Other factors contributing to job satisfaction are recognition, working conditions, status of the company and the management. In addition, pay, promotions, coworkers, supervision, and the work itself are the sources of job satisfaction (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969)

Job satisfaction of the teachers is a key factor in the quality of teaching-learning process. Only the competent, motivated and committed teachers can ensure effective quality education. Many research studies show that teachers who are satisfied with their job are more likely to be creative, innovative, motivated that leads to their better performance and those who are dissatisfied with their job may become

demotivated, irritated, and frustrated which may affect their performance negatively. (Usop, Akshandar, and Langguyuan-Kadtong, 2013). Therefore, teachers need to be motivated, and creative for effective teaching and dedication to their job.

A plenty of research has been conducted on the job satisfaction of conventional university teachers over the last about twenty years. Some to mention are Kishor and Suryawanshi (2015) in India, Pan, Shen, Liu et.al. (2015) in China, Khan and Jan (2009) in Pakistan and Al-Smadi & Qblan (2015) in Saudi Arabia. They conducted studies on the job satisfaction of conventional public sector universities' teachers and found them as moderately satisfied. But a very thin research is found on the job satisfaction of online higher education teachers primarily due the recency of the phenomenon. The findings of the studies in the conventional teaching learning mode are not quite relevant to the online teachers as their role and activities

are significantly different from the face-to-face teaching particularly in the asynchronous mode. Huang (2019) identified that face-to-face teachers have higher cognitive role whereas online teachers have more of managerial role. The role of instructors and teachers further varies in different forms of online teaching. In the synchronous mode the teacher has to perform the role of face-to-face teaching as well as to manage the communication processes using ICT. In the asynchronous mode the instructor is relieved from the higher cognitive task of preparing lectures etc. (Shaban and Ramzan, 2013) and takes the responsibility more of a manager and facilitator than a teacher. Hogan & McKnight (2007) summarized the role of asynchronous instructor into five categories i.e. providing infrastructure for learning; facilitating students' participation; monitoring and assessing learning and providing feedback, remediation, and grades; troubleshooting and resolving instructional and technical problems; and creating a well-connected learning community of students.

Shaban and Ramzan (2013) found that the instructors of an online university in Pakistan were satisfied with their nature of work but had feeling of isolation. Similarly, Hogan and McKnight (2007) found online instructors in university settings experiencing average emotional burnout levels, high levels of depersonalization, and low levels of personal accomplishment. Virtual University is the only fully ICT based institution of higher education in Pakistan. It conducts its degree programs through asynchronous mode using video recorded lectures by the experts which are managed by the full-time faculty of the VUP. Thus, the functions and activities of the full-time faculty of the VUP are different from any conventional university. Moreover, due to the increasing popularity of the online education, the number of faculty is also increasing with the passage of time. Knowledge about the job satisfaction of online faculty is the

foundation not only for the faculty retention but for quality education and successful progression of the University.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study is an effort to develop a valid and reliable scale for measuring the job satisfaction of the online teachers in the higher education institutions and measure their level of job satisfaction along with its contributing factors. The objectives of the study were to:

1. develop a Job Satisfaction Scale for asynchronous online teachers.
2. determine the level of Job Satisfaction among online teachers.
3. explore the factors contributing to the job satisfaction of online teachers.

### **Research Questions**

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. Are online teachers satisfied with their jobs?
2. What are the factors contributing to the job satisfaction of online faculty members?

### **Review of the Related Literature**

#### **Job Satisfaction**

It is universally accepted that employees having a high level of job satisfaction have positive attitude towards their job (Ali and Akhtar, 2009). Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a state of pleasure resulting from the appraisal or experiences of one's job. Spector (1997) stated it as what people like or dislike about their jobs.

Similar to other organizations job satisfaction enhances the quality of educational institutions. Syed et. al (2012) state that the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation influences the job satisfaction of teachers. Extrinsic factors include salary, working environment, supervisor's behavior, peer relationship, job security and similar other factors. Smith, Kendall, & Hulin (1969) and Khalid (2012) also enlisted the similar factors to measure the level of job satisfaction of the academic staff. Locke (1976) had earlier mentioned another some factors such as recognition,

working conditions, the type of company and the management.

### **Motivation and Job Satisfaction**

The theories of motivation are also considered at least in part explaining the sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Maslow states that the factors of job satisfaction are linked to job motivation. He believes that the five levels of individual needs must be met for motivation and satisfaction of employees in an organization i.e., physiological, safety, social, self-esteem and achievement. Alderfer divided Maslow's needs into three groups- existence, relatedness and growth (ERG). Existence consists of physiological and safety needs while relatedness involves social needs and growth as sources of self-actualization. However, Alderfer unlike Maslow does not consider the satisfaction of lower level needs as necessary before the upper level needs. According to the Two Factor Theory of Motivation by Herzberg, the motivators for job are, good physical conditions, recognition, responsibility and achievement that lead to the high level of job satisfaction (Tirmizi & Malik, 2007).

### **Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction**

The theories and researches converge on some indicators of job satisfaction i.e., working conditions, pay, promotion, reward and recognition, and interpersonal relationships. Some detail of each of the indicator in the educational institutions is given in this section.

**Working Conditions.** Working conditions include the condition of the workplace of teachers i.e., school, office, classroom, support facilities to work together and refreshments (Javed, Balouch, Hassan, 2014). Teachers feel comfortable and relaxed in proper work environment which in return enhances their level of job satisfaction. Poor structural design and bad working environment may affect negatively on teachers' performance and contribute to dissatisfaction (Syed et. al, 2012).

**Promotions.** Promotion is a person's vertical movement in the hierarchy of service ladder within an organization. It

may bring an employee a better status or prestige, higher compensation and more responsibility (Lazaer, 1986 & 2000). Promotion is one of the best form of incentives for recognizing the abilities and performance of the individuals in an organization.

Many research studies have found positive correlation between promotion and job satisfaction. Mustapha and Zakaria (2013) observed positive correlation between promotion opportunities and job satisfaction in Malaysian higher education institutions and recommended that all organizations especially the educational institutions should provide opportunities to the teachers to move to higher position with a higher remuneration package at fulfilling the specified criteria. Szromek and Wolniak (2020) on the basis of literature review reported that promotion was one of the factors affecting job satisfaction among the researchers at the Chinese HEIs.

**Recognition and Reward.** Recognition is a public expression of appreciation by a group to the individuals who exhibit desired behaviors (Fisher, & Ackerman, 1998). Ali and Ahmed (2009) and Shah et al, (2012) observed a strong positive effect of rewards and recognition on job motivation and satisfaction. Fisher, & Ackerman (1998) state that although the strength of recognition may give a social boost to an employee but its effects are measurable only with monetary benefits.

**Pay.** One of the major indicators of job satisfaction is the salary. Baken and Buyukbese (2013) reported that employees with higher income levels have significantly higher levels of job satisfaction as compared with those having low-income levels.

**Interpersonal and Social Relationships.** A number of studies have found that good relationships with the coworkers contribute positively towards job satisfaction. Lodisso (2019) concluded that education personnel value friendly relationships with their

colleagues and it elevates their level of job satisfaction.

### **Job Satisfaction of Teachers in Higher Education**

Studies conducted in India (Kishor and Suryawanshi, 2015), China (Pan, Shen, Liu et.al. ,2015), Pakistan (Khan and Jan, 2009) and Saudi Arabia (Al-Smadi & Qblan, 2015) have found that teachers of conventional public sector universities are moderately satisfied. Kumar (2013) found three fourths of an Indian university teachers satisfied with their jobs.

Ali and Akhtar (2009) found the teachers of private universities in Bangladesh satisfied with their jobs. But, a comparative study of the job satisfaction of public and private universities found the teachers of the former type of universities more satisfied about salary and fringe benefits as compared with their counterparts in the later type of universities (Chuang, 2014). Findings of the studies regarding job satisfaction of men and women faculty members are in diverse, some found women as more satisfied (Kumar, 2013; Kishor & Suryawanshi, 2015); Ali and Akhtar (2009) found no gender difference in the job satisfaction, while Al-Smadi & Qblan (2015) found men as more satisfied in a Saudi university. These variations may be attributed to the overall and academic culture of different countries.

The sources of satisfaction among university teachers also varied. Some studies identified the nature of work as the topmost satisfying factor. Such as Kishor and Suryawanshi (2015) concluded that the nature of work was the top-ranking factor followed by pay, promotion opportunities, communication, contingent rewards, interpersonal relations with the colleagues with operating procedures and fringe benefits at the last. Al-Smadi & Qblan (2015) found psycho-social and interpersonal factors as the top and salaries and financial benefits as the last factor with a moderate order. Sharma & Jyoti (2010) concluded that for university teachers, autonomy and flexibility are the

major sources of job satisfaction contributing about 63% of the total. The faculty of Chinese universities consider the perceived organizational support (POS) and psychological capital as the two top most factors contributing positively to job satisfaction (Pan, Shen, Liu et.al. ,2015). Szromek and Wolniak (2020) also synthesized that prestige and respect brings more satisfaction than the remuneration and promotion for the researchers in universities. They found that the Polish teachers of HEIs consider social significance of their research as more gratifying.

All the researches cited above have been conducted in the conventional or face-to-face mode universities. Research on the job satisfaction of teachers in the online educational institutions is very meagre. Borup and Stevens (2016) concluded that factors affecting job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in online synchronous environment in USA were the flexibility of time, place and way of teaching, personal communication with students, and receiving adequate administrative support and appreciation for their work. Shaban and Ramzan (2013) conducted research on job satisfaction of instructors of the only online university in Pakistan. The research was a kind of preliminary exploration with a sample of 50 instructors out of 150 on rolls of the university. The study discovered that the staff of the university was satisfied with the salaries and the ease of work as it does not require any preparatory work at home but they had feeling of isolation. Hogan and McKnight (2007) found online instructors in university settings experiencing average emotional burnout levels, high levels of depersonalization, and low levels of personal accomplishment.

### **Methodology**

**Population and Sample.** Pakistan has only one fully ICT based online university, the Virtual University of Pakistan (VUP) established in 2002. The VUP offers a large

number of degree programs. Jurisdiction of the VUP is all over Pakistan and the Pakistani nationals living anywhere in the world. The University offers most of its courses in the asynchronous mode using a sophisticated Learning Management System (LMS). A total number of 201 faculty members who worked for the full academic year 2016-2017 and had submitted their Feedback Survey Form were the population of the study. All of them were selected as sample using census sampling method. The census sampling was used to arrive at valid results in spite of a small size population. Moreover, the researchers had access to the data required for the study.

**Data for the Study.** Data from the Faculty Feedback Survey Form of the whole faculty (201) was obtained from the University. The job satisfaction was measured by the Job Satisfaction Scale for Online Teachers constructed after conducting Principal Component Analysis (PCA) of the data. Analysis of the level of job satisfaction was

**Table 1:**

*Result of KMO and Bartlett's Test*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.902
Bartlett's Test of	Approx. Chi-Square	1848.128
Sphericity	df	253
	Sig.	.000

Table 2 shows that four components having eigenvalue of 1 or more were extracted as principal components (factors).

made using statistics such as percentages, arithmetic mean and SD.

**Instrument.** The data from the Faculty Feedback Survey Form was used for developing the Job Satisfaction Scale for online Teachers. This Form has three sections- section one requires demographic information of the respondent; section two has 23 questions about job satisfaction requiring response on a five-point Likert Scale and Section three has 12 questions about turnover intentions. For this study data was used from the 2<sup>nd</sup> section of the Form.

**Data Analysis.** For development of the Job Satisfaction Scale, the data was analyzed using PCA. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were computed to determine the suitability of this data for PCA. The results indicate that the value of KMO was .902 against the minimum required of 0.5 to perform PCA.

**Table: 2**  
*Total Variance Explained*

Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared			Rotation Sums of Squared		
Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
8.227	35.770	35.770	8.227	35.770	35.770	3.894	16.930	16.930
		70						
1.562	6.790	42.560	1.562	6.790	42.560	3.013	13.099	30.029
		60						
1.299	5.649	48.209	1.299	5.649	48.209	2.921	12.701	42.730
		09						
1.157	5.029	53.238	1.157	5.029	53.238	2.417	10.508	53.238
		38						
.986	4.286	57.525						
		25						
.950	4.132	61.657						
		57						
.866	3.765	65.422						
		22						
Next values not given here. Only the last is given below.								
.239	1.039	100.000						
		000						

Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation and Kaiser Normalization was conducted to assess the underlying structures for the 23 items of job

satisfaction. Four principal components were extracted after running the PCA. All the items were grouped under these four principal components or factors with

indicators having correlation  $\geq .5$  with any of the four factors. In this manner five items were excluded from the Scale. Table 3

indicates how each item correlates with each factor.

**Table: 3**  
*Rotated Component Matrix Variables*

Indicator	Principal Component/ Factor			
	1	2	3	4
Salary	.064	<b>.674</b>	.053	.084
Benefits other than Salary	.069	<b>.621</b>	.240	.316
Financial Support of Scholarly Work	.192	<b>.608</b>	.184	.118
Teaching Responsibilities	.174	.159	<b>.734</b>	.049
Mentoring available to you	.489	-.013	<b>.584</b>	.107
Time available for scholarly work	.378	.344	.261	.287
Prospects for Advancement & Progress	.433	.484	.206	.317
Way, VU utilize your experience & knowledge	<b>.514</b>	.310	.402	.132
Cooperation you receive from colleagues	.132	.215	<b>.665</b>	.000
The intellectual stimulation of your work	.430	.174	<b>.654</b>	.134
Level of interaction with students	.082	.199	<b>.551</b>	.198
Physical Environment for faculty members	.137	.088	.297	<b>.796</b>
Space for collaborative activities	.198	.205	.140	<b>.724</b>
Availability of Parking	.137	.157	-.109	<b>.735</b>
Library Resources (Physical and/or Digital)	.339	.275	.196	.296
Clarity of goals, policies & promotion process	<b>.611</b>	.356	.143	.184
Job security	.193	<b>.625</b>	.054	.061
Transparency in procedures	<b>.777</b>	.183	.095	.067

Time you have for yourself and family	.183	.441	.215	.043
Feedback Mechanism	<b>.704</b>	.118	.226	.253
Teacher's Perform. Evaluation Mechanism	<b>.620</b>	.004	.261	.291
Equal Opportunity	<b>.683</b>	.313	.144	-.028
My overall value as a faculty member at VU,	.437	.454	.354	.214

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Factor 1 'Clarity of Rules and Valuing Employee' includes six indicators; Factor 2 represents Benefits and Salary having 4 indicators; Factor 3 is Mentoring and Collegiality with 5 indicators; and Factor 4

'Physical Environment' is exhibited by three indicators. The results show that these four factors contribute to the job satisfaction of faculty members of VUP.

**Table: 4**

*Extracted Principal Components/ factors with their indicators*

<i>Indicator</i>	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Way VU utilizes your experience & Know.	.514			
Clarity of goals, policies & promo. process	.611			
Transparency in procedures	.777			
Feedback Mechanism	.704			
Teachers' Perform. Eval. Mechanism	.620			
Equal Opportunity	.683			
Salary		.674		
Benefits other than Salary		.621		
Financial Support of Scholarly Work		.608		
Job security		.625		
Teaching Responsibilities			.734	
Mentoring available to you			.584	
Cooperation from colleagues			.665	



The intellect. stimulation of work.	.654
Level of interaction with students	.551
Physical Environment	.796
Space for collaborative activities	.724
Availability of Parking	.735

**Job Satisfaction of the Faculty**

The overall job satisfaction of the faculty members was slightly above the Median with a narrow SD. They were most satisfied with the Mentoring and Collegiality at the University with a Mean = 3.74 followed by

the Physical Facilities with Financial Benefits showing the lowest level of satisfaction with a Mean = 2.99.

**Table: 5**

*Overall and by factor level of job satisfaction of VUP Faculty, N=201*

Factor	Mean	SD
Overall	3.20	0.571
Clarity of Rules and Valuing Employees	3.11	1.004
Financial Benefits and Job Security	2.99	1.032
Mentoring and Collegiality	3.74	0.081
Physical Environment	3.15	1.13

**Factor 1: Clarity of Rules and Valuing Employees.** This Factor was represented by six indicators. Within this Factor the faculty rated the VUP atop on recognition and utilization of their expertise followed very

closely by the transparency of procedures and equal opportunity. They were sort of dissatisfied with the policies and process of promotion with Mean = 2.41, only 19% (17%+2%) expressing satisfaction.

**Table: 6**

*Factor 1: Clarity of Rules and Valuing Employees - by indicator Mean, SD and % distribution of faculty over the rating scale, N=201*

Indicator	Mean	SD	V.D	D	U	S	V.S
Utilization of your experience. & knowledge by VUP	3.36	1.03	7	14	21	51	7
Clarity of goals, policies, promotion	2.41	1.06	22	33	26	17	2
Transparency in procedures	3.30	.97	6	12	33	43	6

Feedback Mechanism	3.17	.92	5	16	36	40	3
Teacher's Performance Eval. Mechanism	3.12	.994	8	17	31	43	2
Equal Opportunity	3.26	1.05	8	15	24	46	7

**Factor 2: Financial Benefits and Job Security.** Overall, the faculty was least satisfied with this factor. Within this factor the faculty was quite satisfied with the salary, but the major source of dis-

satisfaction was coming from the job security. They were also dis-satisfied with the financial support provided for scholarly work and financial benefits other than salary.

**Table: 7**

*Factor 2: Financial Benefits and Job Security- by indicator Mean, SD and % distribution of faculty over the rating scale, N=201*

Indicator	Mean	SD	V.D	D	U	S	V.S
Salary	3.95	.826	1	6	10	62	21
Benefits other than salary	2.77	1.18	16	29	23	26	6
Financial support of scholarly work	2.74	1.03	14	24	37	22	2
Job security	2.49	1.09	23	27	28	20	1

**Factor 3: Mentoring and Collegiality.** This Factor was rated atop by the faculty as the source of satisfaction. Contributing to this factor was the feeling of cooperation among the faculty with a Mean= 4.28. They were also happy about their teaching

responsibilities (Mean= 4.03) with 90% of them rating it as satisfied or above. The lowest Mean = 3.04 was on the interaction with the students and that too shows a moderate level of satisfaction.

**Table: 8**

*Factor 3: Mentoring and Collegiality-by indicator Mean, SD and % distribution of faculty over the rating scale, N=201*

Indicator	Mean	SD	V.D	D	U	S	V.S
Teaching Responsibilities	4.03	.603	.	4	6	74	16
Mentoring available to you	3.68	.927	3	11	15	58	13
Cooperation from colleagues	4.28	.635	.	2	4	58	36
Intellectual stimulation of work.	3.67	.808	2	9	19	63	8
Level of interaction with students	3.04	1.08	8	30	18	41	4

**Factor 4: Physical Environment.** The faculty was moderately satisfied with the physical facilities and infrastructure. Their

level of satisfaction with each of the three components was almost the same, slightly above the median.

**Table: 9**

*Factor 4: Physical Environment- by indicator Mean, SD and % distribution of faculty over the rating scale, N=201*

Indicator	Mean	SD	V.D	D	U	S	V.S
Physical Environment	3.14	1.23	11	25	10	43	10
Space for collaborative activities	3.12	1.10	7	29	17	40	7
Availability of Parking	3.19	1.06	8	20	22	44	6

**Conclusions and Discussion**

The Job Satisfaction Scale for Faculty of Online HEIs is a statistically valid tool for this purpose. We believe that this instrument can also be used in the conventional universities and other educational institutions.

The results show that the overall job satisfaction of the faculty was slightly above the moderate level/ the median on the scale. The finding is similar to the moderate level of job satisfaction found among the conventional public sector universities by Kishor and Suryawanshi (2015) in India; Pan, Shen, Liu et.al. (2015) in China; Khan and Jan (2009) in Pakistan and Al-Smadi & Qblan (2015) in Saudi Arabia.

Mentoring and Collegiality emerged as the major factor contributing to the job satisfaction of the VUP faculty followed by Clarity of Rules and Valuing Employees. Pan, Shen, Liu et.al. (2015) also found that faculty of Chinese conventional universities perceived organizational support and psychological capital as the two top most factors contributing positively to job satisfaction. Kishor and Suryawanshi (2015) also concluded that the nature of work was the top-ranking factor in the satisfaction of teachers of HEIs. Similarly, Sharma & Jyoti (2010) concluded that for university teachers, autonomy and flexibility are the major sources of job

satisfaction contributing about 63% of the total satisfaction.

Collegiality, mentoring and interaction has emerged as strengths of the VUP for developing job satisfaction among its faculty. These indicators certainly contribute towards reducing the feelings of isolation, a general shortcoming of the virtual teaching-learning environment. It can be assumed that the opportunities of collegiality and mentoring save them from the work burn-out as well. Within this factor the second most contributing indicator was the Teaching Responsibilities. As mentioned by Shaban and Ramzan (2013) the reason of this high level of satisfaction can be attributed to the nature of teaching responsibilities at VUP that do not include preparation of lectures as the pre-recorded lectures are the major source of content delivery.

The teachers of the VUP were not satisfied with the overall financial benefits. Within this factor they were happy with the salary but had concerns about job security and financial benefits other than the salary such as social security and funding for scholarly work. The reason for this concern is the fact that the VUP, unlike all other public sector universities employs faculty and all other staff on time-fixed contract basis with no permanent positions. It does not have even a policy of open contract. Moreover, the VUP has no pension policy and no other

social security benefits. In the Pakistani context where all other public sector universities have service structure with permanent employment status, the contract system creates the threat of insecurity among the employees. Due to this reason, most of the faculty members do not foresee their permanent or long-term future with the VUP. This dissatisfaction cannot be attributed to the mode of teaching and learning, it is sheerly because of the service structure and service rules.

### **Recommendations**

On the basis of findings of the study it is recommended that:

1. It is a positive sign that an atmosphere of interaction and collegiality exists at the VUP. Even interaction with the student is at the median level. VUP should not only maintain it, rather it should take further ICT measures to enhance interaction with the students in this technologically enriched environment. It will be beneficial not only for the faculty but for the students as well.
2. VUP should look into its service structure to enhance the job satisfaction of faculty and other employees which may result in strong association, commitment and dedication with the University. It should also introduce some social security benefits for its employees.
3. Researchers may use this Job Satisfaction Scale for Online Higher Education Teachers to compare the job satisfaction of teachers in conventional HEIs and other educational institutions.
4. To study trends in the job satisfaction of VUP faculty, longitudinal studies may be conducted using the data for the subsequent years.

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