

Job Analysis of Chiropractic 2005

*A project report, survey analysis,
and summary of the practice of chiropractic
within the United States*



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James J. Badge, D.C., President
National Board of Chiropractic Examiners

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Preface

This book contains data collected in 1991, 1998 and 2003 by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE). Contained herein are statistics about demographics, patient ailments, and treatment procedures common to the chiropractic profession nationwide. Also, this book contains recent studies about chiropractic's efficacy as well as explanations of how the large-scale survey of U.S. chiropractors was conducted.

To ensure that national testing procedures for doctors of chiropractic accurately represent what chiropractors do on the job, it is necessary to conduct a survey (a job analysis) of chiropractors around the nation and to validly analyze the responses. The survey also provides legislators, insurance representatives, and the general public with an overview of chiropractors' growing importance and effectiveness in treating patients' ailments.

Like the previous two job analyses in 1991 and 1998, this most recent analysis meets the above objectives and presents its finding in a clear, organized format. Such quality can only be achieved by the outstanding efforts of many people: the NBCE Job Analysis Steering Committee, private chiropractic practitioners, statisticians, editors, and NBCE staff members. Thanks must also go to the great number of chiropractors who responded to the survey so that an accurate and representative picture of the profession might emerge.

A commitment to excellence by our nation's chiropractors and by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners is a distinguishing mark of our profession and expands public awareness of the importance of chiropractic to this nation's health care system.



Mark G. Christensen, Ph.D.
Director of Testing
National Board of Chiropractic Examiners

Introduction

The chronology of tests and measurements can be traced to the beginning of recorded history. Early writings describe processes including rituals that gauged the knowledge, wisdom, physical endurance, or bravery of ancient peoples.

At one time or another, through one form or another, mankind has always devised a means of assessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of those seeking to meet recognized standards. As society has become more complex and specialized, and as the consequences of assessment decisions have become more weighty with procedures and results increasingly scrutinized, strict guidelines for obtaining reliable and valid test results have emerged. Today, these guidelines are established and refined by individuals, testing organizations, and the United States government.

In its role as the national and international testing agency for the chiropractic profession, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners adheres to recognized guidelines, which facilitate the preparation and administration of fair, uniform, and valid tests. Specifically, testing guidelines clearly state that, “Some form of job or practice analysis provides the primary factor for defining the content domain” (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council in Measurement in Education 1999, p. 161).

Organization of the Report

While compiling data from the NBCE *Survey of Chiropractic Practice*, the authors were committed to providing comprehensive and accurate documentation of every aspect of the job analysis project. Repeatedly surfacing during the compilation process was the reminder that the readership of the report might well include individuals with a wide range of backgrounds and purposes, and with varying degrees of familiarity with the fields of chiropractic and/or testing. This prevailing awareness affected the construction of the report in both content and format.

At every step, the authors presented the relevant data, then stepped back to assess whether the body of information offered previously in the text was sufficient to afford and facilitate comprehension by a full range of readers. In many cases, the authors resolved this question by including clarifying background information that had been presumed unnecessary at the outset of the project.

Additionally entering into the decision to include some passages of text was the need to acquaint readers with licensed practitioners of chiropractic,

since it was these individuals who collectively provided the data upon which the job analysis report is based. Thus, the authors have attempted to present an objective and well-rounded picture of present-day chiropractors and their practices. Also addressed is the historical background of the profession and current information including educational requirements for becoming a chiropractor.

The information is often presented as a general overview, followed by a more detailed topical discussion presented chronologically. The editors have attempted to convey information through visual means where appropriate. A glossary of terms can be found at the end of this report.

The first two chapters serve to familiarize the reader with chiropractic* and its practitioners, including the personal, educational, and professional criteria these individuals met in becoming *licensed practitioners of chiropractic*. Also presented is a description of major government inquiries and legal action conducted relative to chiropractic.

Chapter 3 provides background information relative to the regulation of occupational licensing. Here, readers are acquainted with licensure and certification testing, as well as the legal aspects that shape regulatory agency requirements.

In Chapter 4, we present the procedures necessary to reap maximum project validity. This chapter discusses organization, development, and the research protocols observed in the job analysis project, from committees to field tests to the gathering of statistics and the design of the final survey.

Chapter 5 describes the method and factors utilized in compiling the survey mailing list, tracking all components, tabulating the data, etc. A number of steps were taken to encourage a high rate of response. These are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 6 provides an overview of the respondent chiropractors and patient demographics. Included is a summary of conditions, treatments, and professional activities within chiropractic practice. The subsequent chapters provide a detailed breakdown of the characteristics of the “typical” chiropractic practitioner (Chapter 7) and the “typical” chiropractic patient (Chapter 8) as indicated by the survey response data. Chapter 9 presents data concerning patient conditions and chiropractic management of those conditions.

The final chapter of the *Job Analysis of Chiropractic 2005* report (Chapter 10) summarizes the response data relative to professional functions, knowledge, and treatment procedures performed by the practitioners participating in the survey.

The appendices include the relevant forms and correspondence, the *Survey of Chiropractic Practice*, and a listing of survey participants. Also included in the appendices is the American Chiropractic College Chiropractic Paradigm and Chiropractic Scope and Practice. The appendices are followed by a bibliography, a glossary of terms and an index.

* “Chiropractic” is generally used as a noun, although it may appear to be an adjective in many contexts.