

Perceptions of Tenured and Adjunct Faculty Regarding the Role of the Adjunct at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

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Abstract: This study purpose was to explore the perceptions of adjuncts and tenured faculty about the role of the adjunct in higher education. Through purposeful sampling, the lived experiences of nine adjuncts and nine tenured faculty members were considered from three historically black colleges and universities in the southeastern United States. The Critical Social Theory guided this qualitative phenomenological study as it relates to organizational culture. The Critical Social Theory framework illuminates the perceptions of the more powerful players in an organization and the impact of these perceptions on the workplace culture. Six themes that emerged from the analysis of the data: (a) Professional Development and Support, (b) Increased Collaboration, (c) Standard Recruiting and Retention Practices, (d) Shared Responsibilities, (e) Their Perceived Student Perceptions of Adjuncts and Tenured Faculty in the Classroom, and (f) The Relationship between Adjuncts and their University. These themes gave rise to a general description of the perceptions and the workplace culture. The findings from the study yielded several unexpected outcomes.

Keywords: Adjunct, Perception, Receptivity, and Specialists

I. INTRODUCTION

Adjunct faculty has been a part of the faculty structure of higher education for more than three centuries. However, the increased number of adjuncts in higher education reveals the need for research on the specific role and purpose of adjunct faculty at institutions of higher learning as it relates to the instructional process in academia. This research will capture the perceptions of adjunct and tenured faculty about the role of the adjunct in academia. Consistent with the data for the Delphi project as reported by Maxey, D. (2014), the nature of the American academic workforce has fundamentally shifted over the past several decades. The organizational problem in this research centers around the notion that the organization is not as welcoming or receptive as it should be for faculty from a traditionally underrepresented group, the adjunct faculty.

Whereas full-time tenured and tenured-track faculty were once the norm, more than two-thirds of the professoriate in non-profit postsecondary education is now comprised of adjunct faculty, many who encounter working conditions that constrain their capacity to provide the highest quality instruction and educational experience for their students. New hires across all institutional types are now largely contingent, and this number will continue to grow unless trends change.

Although the number of full time tenured faculty has risen 26% since 1975, the percentage of adjunct faculty has exploded by 300% (Lifting, 2014; Langen, 2011). As indicated by Gappa (2008), a total of 60% of faculty members were full and part-time appointments outside of the tenured system in 2008. With a half million strong, a show of continuous growth in the number of adjuncts in institutions of higher education in the nation shows their importance in the process of maintaining educational institutions and a collegiate atmosphere.

The national environment in which concepts about work and life are formed, including gender roles, the place of work, and the importance of balance, is changing. Therefore, the workplace concerns and interests of faculty members are valid and are not developed in a vacuum (Heldref, 2005; Bennett, 2006). Kezar and Maxey (2013), suggest that adjuncts continue to experience the appalling despairs of past decades in the workplace. It is a problem that is noted by most in higher education and ignored by many of the same when it comes to taking action.

Many speculations have been proposed on how to remedy or take care of this prevailing problem. Efforts to effectively utilize adjuncts in higher education have not been successful partially due to the lack of addressing all issues related to adjuncts and the workplace. Some researchers advocate that the adjuncts' perceptions of their effectiveness may be connected to their concept of value derived from factors provided or not provided in the workplace (Howard, 2007).

Consequently, the extensive use or misuse of adjuncts in higher education has to be dealt with in order to effectively utilize adjuncts in higher education, recalling that most of the classes taught at institutions of higher learning are by adjuncts. Hence, the issues of utilization are constantly justified by statements and

efforts regarding cost-containment and tuition strains. This also includes supply and demand issues (Warren, 2010). Therefore, the main issue becomes that of prioritizing. If institutions of higher learning value their students' educational experiences, then they must value and embrace their adjunct faculty (Sweeney, 2009). Therein, the magnitude of this problem encompasses the ability to gain an understanding of the role of the adjunct in institutions of higher education through the perceptions given by tenured faculty and adjunct faculty and how these perceptions are impacted by organizational culture.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of tenured faculty and adjunct faculty regarding the role of the adjunct in the instructional process at institutions of higher education. Moreover, it was designed to capture the lived experiences of adjuncts and tenured faculty about their perceived role of the adjunct in the academic environment. The researchers further examined how the organization's culture impacts these perceptions.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of regular, tenured faculty about the role of the adjunct?
2. What are the perceptions of adjunct faculty about the role of the adjunct?
3. How do the tenured faculty's perceptions about the role of the adjunct contribute to the work environment for the adjunct faculty?
4. How do the adjunct faculty's perceptions about the role of the adjunct contribute to the work environment for the adjunct faculty?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This population explosion and increased student enrollment continue to demand the attention of institutions of American higher education. The Mass American Higher Education Era was the beginning of a trend that continues to thrive for part-time faculty. In today's educational arena, part-time faculty members have received the title of the new majority. Kezar and Maxey (2013) noted that college and university boards are faced with many challenges and demands that are related to faculty. Among these are policies, issues, and practices that involved the adjunct faculty. This leads to an overwhelming number of adjunct faculty and their vital role in ensuring student and institution goals. The data also indicate that there is approximately 70 percent of adjunct faculty at nonprofit institutions nationwide. The authors further noted the continuous tendency to ignore their needs and even more importantly, their working conditions. Kezar and Maxey(2013) worked with the Delphi Project, Association of Governing Boards, and other national organizations in an effort to address issues and concerns in higher education. Clayton (1997) asserts that the Delphi Project serves to support a better understanding of phenomenon such as factors that led to the hiring of majority adjuncts; how this action impacted the circumstances surrounding teaching and learning. Delphi is a technique to harness expert opinion for critical decision-making task in education. This technique has been involved in higher education including utilization from improving curriculum to the evolution of online learning. The project committee consists of experts in the field of education and has conducted original research on adjunct faculty, as well as produced important resources to aide campus leaders. The committee has also made an effort to create a better understanding of adjunct faculty working conditions and the implications for student learning toward promoting change within higher education organizations. This research not only contributes to a better understanding of factors influencing change in higher education it also highlights the need to focus on the current practices involving adjunct faculty members. This is continuous research that is addressed at annual conferences such as the American Association of University Professors on the state of higher education. The project, an initiative of the Pullias Center for Higher Education at the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education, is a partnership with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (Kezar& Maxey, 2013; Clayton, 1997).

Utilization of Adjuncts in Higher Education

It is apparent among scholars that the real reason for hiring faculty may be more economically based over availability (Kuchera & Miller, 1988). American higher education has always balanced its ledger on the backs of the faculty. Among the key reasons for increased use of adjuncts in higher education are student enrollment and financial consideration. Another important use of adjuncts was due to low salaries and classes with full loads during the Great Depression when colleges and universities were able to survive by cutting faculty salaries (Finkelstein, 2003).

Institutions of higher learning have undergone so many trends and shifts in its traditional landscape that has caused it to appear and operate differently in today's society. Finkelstein (2003) referred to it as a new academic, silent-revolution. This is a silent, part-time faculty revolution that has caused a real organizational

and fiscal disruption or restructuring in American higher education (Finkelstein, 2003). This is an indication that American higher education has always balanced its accounting records on the backs of the faculty. Finkelstein further stated that the kind of balancing done in order to deal with issues in the past couldn't compare to the new issues presented by the new, for-profit institutions and new technology demands (Weisbrod & Asch, 2010).

The role of the adjunct has changed forever as it relates to increased visibility at most institutions. These adjuncts now fill many classrooms where tenured faculty once taught. Langen (2011) shared data from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) contingent faculty index of 2006. The data indicated that the number of full-time tenured faculty positions declined by more than 2000 from 1995 to 2003. He further noted that from 1976 to 1995 the number of part-time faculty increased 91%; however, the number of full-time faculty increased only 27% (Langen, 2011). The importance and impact of adjunct faculty on the quality of education provided by institutions of higher education is substantial (Langen, 2011). Faculty tenured has been a hot topic for higher education almost as far back as its inception. However, tenure has changed over the years and so has the need for adjustments in the workplace.

Lifting (2014) indicated that there are 1.7 million college professors in the United States, of which the number of full-timers had increased to 26% since 1975. Even greater is the fact that the number of part-timers has exploded by 300%. At the public 4-year colleges, 36% of faculty is part-timers, private 4-year schools 51%, and at the American community colleges 70% of the faculty members are neither on tenure nor teaching in tenured positions. Popularity is not the plus for adjuncts. The only group that may express a true connection will be the students. This is basically because they do not have a clue about the working condition of their adjunct faculty members. Even though the administrators can't wait to get them hired, they are among the first to issue the list of expectations and commitment to the institution (Lifting, 2014).

Bradley (2013) listed the median pay per three-credit course was \$2,700; the low is \$2,235 at two-year colleges and \$3,400 at four-year colleges. There was little or no wage differential for credentials. During the great depression when colleges and universities had to survive, they elected to increase classloads and decrease faculty salaries (Finkelstein, 2003).

The greater concern, in line with Carroll (2001), is the alternative means of power to work more hours to increase their pay. However, most adjuncts only teach one or two classes per semester. The adjuncts search for schools that need them to teach a class or two and work for two or more schools. Using their ability to work for more than one institution in order to increase their wages as a way to either teach more classes at a particular school or venture out to other schools outweighs the pros and cons (Carroll, 2001). This is occurring at a time when all institutions of higher learning are paying closer attention to the amount of hours part-time faculty are putting in per week. On the one hand, the adjunct is trying to factor in hours in the actual classroom, plus the conference hours, plus the amount of time to grade papers and prepare for class. With every hour, the adjunct is paving the way to be considered eligible for health benefits. On the other hand, the more time spent preparing for class decreases the amount of time made per hour for that class. So, the adjunct is advised to effectively manage his or her time.

The Professoriate and Adjuncts

The challenges for today's institutions continue to undergo the impact of the shifts in higher education. The issue of how to effectively utilize adjuncts in higher education is now coupled with competition from for-profit institutions. Consequently, the major focus on the professoriate and contingent faculty has been impacted by the shift to that of the for-profit institutions. For-profit institutions are targeting good adjuncts. However, many seem to interpret this as a problem for higher education by viewing the competition as providing an unstable, poorly paid professoriate. There is a concern that this faculty population poses a more severe problem because they are hired mostly on a per hour basis (Stromquist, 2007).

The authors, Wulff and Austin (2004), predicted the urgency and need for not only focus on the increased retirement of higher education faculty, but also the need to institute a plan to them with highly qualified faculty members. As supported by Sweeney (2009), how an institution values its students should be evident in its value for the adjuncts that represent the institution and provide the instructions that enable students to become successful and productive. Colleges must reevaluate the value of the students they serve in order to fully appreciate and cultivate the needed professional relationship with adjunct faculty. The numbers are important as they relate to degrees and publications as they represent the faculty. The number that is most important connects to the high number of students being taught consistently by adjuncts (Sweeney, 2009).

In accordance with Maxey, D (2014), faculty members both tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty is needed to play the central role in reshaping and creating a new profession. Contrary to the belief that tenure-track faculty members are too influenced by the traditional system to support change, tenured faculty have the necessary expertise about what faculty roles involve and how they support the satisfaction of institutional goals. Those campus leaders that really want change must understand the need for collaboration with the

faculty. This report utilized the limited existing research and points out that there is a dearth of research on faculty roles. Further notation is made about the need for more research to inform ongoing experimentation and the faculty models and roles for the future. This report is an urgent situation with national consequences (Kezar& Maxey, 2014). The professoriate and new faculty models will remain the focus for future research in higher education. These discussions will involve all stakeholders. Delphi work includes state policymakers, national groups representing academic leaders such as deans and provosts, accreditation leaders, national higher education associations representing presidents and other constituent groups such as business officers, faculty unions, disciplinary societies, and emerging faculty groups such as The New Faculty Majority.

Kuchera and Miller (1988) supported an identity theory that there are variables such as adjuncts' satisfaction, the importance of the adjunct role, and the number and intensity of the adjuncts' relationship. Perception is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting sensory data in a way that enables us to make sense of our world. Kuchera and Miller (1988) detail how as people, we selectively allow different stimuli through our perceptual screen. What one allows is determined by one's culture and learned perceptual patterns. Gappa (2008) states that it is imperative for all faculty members to be treated respectfully and equitably and are given access to appropriate opportunities for professional development. They are included in decision-making about work as members of a community of scholars, and have the capacity to arrange for flexibility for their academic careers so as to meet their personal responsibilities.

Only about half of part-time faculty reports to have another job that is full time. While some part-time faculties teach at multiple institutions, this is not the norm: 79 % of part-time faculty report that they do not have another teaching job, while 17% report teaching at one other institution, and 4% report teaching at two or more other jobs. Monks (2009) states that many adjuncts have the same credentials as tenured faculty members. However, because of various other life circumstances, they did not claim equity, as they're due. Nevertheless, when part-timers were asked whether they would have preferred a full-time position at their current institution, only 35 % reported that they would have preferred such a position. It seems that a majority of part-time faculty are not seeking full-time employment at their institution. Some adjuncts commented that their class loads may have put them closer to the full-time position, but that, in fact, was not the desired goal (Monks, 2009).

Critical Social Theory

Levinson, B., Gross, J., Hanks, C., Dadds, J., Kumasi, K., Link, J., and Metro-Roland, D. (2011) describe the means by which social theory is used to identify social problems and how this is used to change or enhance the workplace culture. As stated by Bess and Dee (2012) critical theorists raise the concern that the perspectives and values of top management may become the voice of the organization. This is because of the belief that the more powerful players in the organization shape how the power, values and priorities of its organizational members are observed, which in this case or the tenured faculty members. While alternative employees or the adjuncts, have very little say in how priorities are organized. Gappa (2008) discussed the right of every faculty member regardless of appointment type or time-base to be treated fairly in regard to all aspects of his or her employment by the institution and its departments, to have access to the tools necessary to do his or her job, and to have status as a fully-fledged, albeit necessarily different, member of the faculty.

Therefore, it was the intent of the researchers to explore the perceptions of the tenured and adjunct faculty about the role of the adjunct in the instructional process in institutions of higher learning. The Critical Social Theory as it relates to organizational culture served as the lens for this research in order to understand how social structures within the organization impacts the workforce as it serves to coerce and oppress its members. The utilization of the Critical Social Theory will be to examine the three level model of organizational culture by Schein (1996) (See Figure 1).Schein (1996) contends that the missing concept during studies on organization is culture. Schein's model gives a multilevel perspective of culture that illustrates three levels of culture. The assumptions level consists of basic assumptions that represent the essence of culture. The values level consists of the basis for operating together with a sense of what ought to be and the reality of what really exists. The artifacts level consists of things in the environment that are tangible or observable by the senses.

III. METHOD

The methodology of this phenomenological study employed a qualitative research method. This approach was designed to examine the perceptions of the role of the adjunct at institutions of higher learning by tenured and adjunct faculty. Qualitative data collection procedures were used by the researchers to examine and analyze the data attained from the participants (Creswell, 2012). This study was also used to provide an understanding of how these perceptions are influenced by the organizational culture. The two types of phenomenology approaches are hermeneutic phenomenology and empirical, transcendental, or psychological

phenomenology. The researchers selected the hermeneutic phenomenology approach because of its focus on lived experiences (phenomenology) and interpreting the “texts” of life (hermeneutics) (Creswell, 2013).

Site Selection

The colleges and universities that participated in this study were selected applying the standards used in selecting sites on the basis of whether they were “information rich” (Creswell, 2013). The researchers used the maximal variation sampling strategy. This is a purposeful sampling strategy wherein the researchers sampled sites that differ on some characteristic or trait (Creswell, 2013). The focus was on adjuncts at four-year historically black colleges and universities in the southeastern United States.

Sample Selection

The researchers used the purposeful sampling approach to select the participants for this study. Creswell (2013) states qualitative sampling is referred to as purposeful sampling. This type of sampling involves the intentional selection of participants and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon. The adjuncts participating in this study were selected through references or by the academic deans at selected colleges and universities. Participants were selected based on their experience as an adjunct. The researchers used Creswell’s maximal variation sampling strategy (2013). This purposeful sampling strategy allowed the researchers to sample individuals that differ on some characteristic or trait. The focus was on adjunct faculty members that are presently working at four-year colleges and universities.

Data Collection Procedures

The researchers completed all necessary forms and procedures to gain permission to conduct this study. The phenomenological approach to this qualitative method involved three Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the Southeast Region: one urban, metropolitan HBCU, one rural HBCU in the central part of the state, and the last, also a rural HBCU, but in the northern part of the state. Six faculty members (three tenured faculty, and three adjunct faculty) were interviewed from the selected institutions.

Numbers were used to identify each participant. An oral pre-conference, in person or via telephone, was held with each prospective participant. This conference was vital to establishing rapport, reviewing the consent forms, and gaining access as needed to sites and participants. The researchers made every effort to accommodate the adjunct when scheduling the pre-conference and actual interview process. Participants shared their narratives of the phenomenon of interest in working as adjuncts in colleges and universities through a qualitative interview. The interview process required less than one hour of the participant’s time. The purpose for selecting the interview process was because of the researchers’ interest in understanding the lived experiences of the participants involved and the meaning they make of those experiences in their perceptions (Seidman, 2013). This process involved the researchers asking the interviewee the planned open-ended interview questions. The researchers recorded participants’ responses and took notes to ensure accuracy.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis in qualitative research involves the process of collecting and analyzing the responses of the participants. It is a very vital step in the study. The analysis method was a constant comparative method with interviews filtered through the lenses of narrative learning and of the Critical Social Theory as it relates to the organization’s culture. The researchers’ goal was to employ the methodological traditions of using open-ended semi structured questions to guide the participants during the interview process. The responses generated from the interview questions were coded by the researchers using the coding methods described by Saldana (2013). The researchers began with open coding of the data for major themes or categories. Descriptive coding was used to assign labels to the responses to summarize words and statements or short phrases; structural coding was used for more detailed coding to relate specific research question; an excel program was utilized to record and group responses for coding, analyzing, applying, and reapplying coding to the data to produce the emerging themes (Saldana, 2013; Creswell, 2013). The themes that emerged were noted, compared, and further analyzed for a greater understanding of the lived experiences of the adjunct faculty and the actions or factors that influenced these perceptions at the workplace (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013).

FINDINGS

Interview data were organized based on the research questions and information provided by the participants’ responses. As provided by the participant demographic data, the participants had a combined total of over 200 years of experience; tenured experience totaled 123 years, and adjunct experiences totaled 79 years. The purpose of this phenomenological approach was to explore the perceptions of adjunct and tenured faculty and their role in colleges and universities. It was also important to determine how this knowledge can be used to improve the organizational culture that serves as the foundation for these perceptions. The

participating adjuncts and tenured faculty were interviewed in the same order to allow the researchers to analyze the interview data obtained from the 18 faculty members (9 tenure faculty and 9 adjuncts) in a similar fashion. Adjunct and tenured faculty participants in this study shared stories about their experiences on their campuses as it relates to their perceived role of the adjunct at their university. These stories gave vivid and emotional accounts of lived experiences at the workplace. During the analysis of the data, using the constant comparative method, the researchers detected that many of their perceptions were very similar in content. This similarity was the foundation for the emerging themes. There were six themes that emerged from the participants' responses.

Description of Sites

The selected sites for this research study were three historically black colleges and universities in the southeastern United States. The selected sites have been assigned pseudonyms and are referred to as Institution 1-Whispering Wind University, Institution 2-Collins State University, and Institution 3-Trio State University. The researcher considered the selected sites to be "information rich" for this study. All three institutions were four-year public universities and provided a mixture of two rural campuses and one urban campus. The enrollment size for the universities ranges between 3,000 and 9,000 students. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms were used to identify the sites. No references to the universities' actual name were used, and there were no connections made between universities and participants.

Description of Participants

Eighteen volunteer tenured and adjunct faculty members participated in this study. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants. Nine were tenured faculty members. The length of work experience of the tenured faculty members ranged from 1 to 40 years. There were five tenured male faculty members and four tenured female faculty members. Nine of the participants were adjunct faculty members. The length of work experience for adjuncts ranged from 1 to 30 years. There were four male adjunct faculty members and five female adjunct faculty members. The number of classes taught during a semester ranged from one night class to over five day and night classes. Their highest academic degree was recorded ranged from doctorate degrees to masters. To ensure anonymity, no reference to the universities or specific participant demographic information will be used. The universities will be referred to as a historically black university or institution (See Table 1).

Table 1. Demographics of Participants

Participants	Gender	Highest Degree	Years of Experience	Site	Instructional Area
Adjunct 1	Male	Doctorate	30	Whisp. Wind	STEM
Adjunct 2	Female	Doctorate	12	Whisp. Wind	Business
Adjunct 3	Female	Doctorate	3	Whisp. Wind	Language Arts
Adjunct 4	Male	Specialist	1	Collins State	Ed. Leadership
Adjunct 5	Male	Doctorate	2	Collins State	Psychology
Adjunct 6	Female	Doctorate	12	Collins State	Criminal Justice
Adjunct 7	Female	Master	5	Trio State	Sociology
Adjunct 8	Male	Master	7	Trio State	Criminal Justice
Adjunct 9	Male	Doctorate	7	Trio State	English & Law
Tenured 1	Female	Doctorate	26	Whisp. Wind	Language Arts
Tenured 2	Female	Doctorate	19	Whisp. Wind	Sociology
Tenured 3	Female	Doctorate	5	Whisp. Wind	Econ & STEM
Tenured 4	Male	Doctorate	19	Collins State	Economics
Tenured 5	Female	Doctorate	40	Collins State	Education
Tenured 6	Female	Doctorate	17	Collins State	STEM
Tenured 7	Male	Doctorate	6	Trio State	STEM
Tenured 8	Male	Doctorate	35	Trio State	Business
Tenured 9	Male	Doctorate	9	Trio State	STEM

Theme 1: Professional Development and Support

Professional development and support was one of the leading common themes among the participants. When participants were asked to describe any changes or recommendations that would improve the job of adjunct faculty or interaction/ relationships with other non-adjuncts at the work place, there were 13 out of 18 responses that listed the need for professional development. A preponderance amount of the data shared expressed how specific training would help them better understand the university's goals, policies, and procedures. This could possibly alleviate the enormous amount of stress that was expressed in not knowing what to do or where to go when dealing with certain issues. Professional development would also help

with classroom instruction as it relates to trends and strategies. The examples illustrate the significance of this theme among the adjuncts and tenured faculty.

Tenure 1 Stated: Before the semester starts, you need to get your adjuncts together and meet with them to let them know what their roles are and what is expected of them. Adjuncts come into a position, and they just start teaching. I think that you need to meet with the adjuncts. They need to know what their role is and what their place is as an adjunct. You can't just hand them a syllabus; they need directions and support. A lot of them probably feel like they are out on an island, by themselves. I think that this research can be very important, if you can get faculty and administrators to read it, especially since we use so many adjuncts in our program. A lot of time we don't know what kind of job they are doing until the end of the semester when you give out the teacher evaluations and you say maybe they are not the one.

Tenure 6 Also Replied: There should be special training after 5:00 p.m. [to accommodate everyone's schedule]. Because adjuncts are not a part of the regular faculty and they are not on campus, there are time constraints that hinder them from attending. The only professional development that I have been in that included adjuncts was during convocation. The tenured faculty had sentiments that were shared by adjunct faculty as well. Adjunct responses included:

Adjunct 3 Explained: I would like to suggest two things that would be really good for improvement. First, some type of training for adjuncts is needed. Secondly, some type of orientation that has a team-building component so that everyone could have a level of mutual respect is needed. At the beginning of the semester, there was no professional development offered for adjuncts. I just took what I had in a prior class and planned my class. I did not have my syllabus. I got it three days before the class started. Everything I did was self-taught until I was able to perfect my own teaching style.

Adjunct 6 Added: I think there should be a more formal program. I have not attended any faculty meetings. I was not even invited to attend. However, I think we should be invited to faculty meetings to stay up on policies and procedures and the direction of the school. If we had the same information that the tenured faculty has then we could answer the students' questions about issues and/or concerns. I have not participated in professional development even though I have been invited. However, I have gotten a lot of material from a friend at another institution.

Theme 2: Increased Collaboration The majority of the participants also echoed the need for increased collaboration; 12 out of 18 noted the importance of collaboration. The workplace is where there is a required level of interactions and relationships to create an effective working environment. These interactions and relationships create a workplace culture of inclusion and cooperation. Perceptions of one's role or value to the organization grow out of the day-to-day interactions and collaboration with others. When asked to describe their relationships with adjuncts, tenured faculty showed the need for increased collaboration; thus, this emerged as a theme, signifying the deficiency and need for collaboration. This was also noted as participants described changes or recommendations that they felt would improve the job of adjunct faculty or their interaction/relationships with other non-adjuncts at the work place. The participants indicated through their stories that there was little or no interaction between the tenured and adjunct faculty members, encouraging more the need for increased collaboration.

The majority of the participants stated that this would have an impact on confidence in instructions, help better serve students in the classroom and during office hours. Adjuncts and tenured faculty noted how vital this process is to building relationships. Increasing interactions across the board will ultimately enhance performance for tenured faculty, students, adjuncts, and new faculty members. To further illustrate the significance of this theme, tenured responses included the following:

Tenure 1 Conveyed: Well, at this university but not at another university where I worked, I think the adjuncts had a rich relationship with me. I met with them and I told them about their course and procedures because you could have adjuncts out there just floating around on their own without understanding what they are really supposed to be doing. Teaching a class is only a part of the job. I think adjuncts need to be mentored, and I think that you need to meet with your adjuncts to make sure they are a good fit for your vision for the program.

Likewise, Tenure 5 Noted: More gatherings with both tenured faculty and adjuncts present are needed. They need to offer professional development for them. The faculty meeting and planning time should be adjusted. It would be good to have their voices too. They need to adjust the time of the meetings and planning time. I think that faculty meetings and planning time should be at a time when tenured and adjuncts can be present.

Tenure 8 Replied: I have not had any interaction with [adjunct faculty]. I can give you my perception on why not. Adjunct faculty members are retired or they have full time jobs elsewhere. It's very difficult for them. Workshops are scheduled during the day and the adjunct teaches at night or online and that's a shortcoming. They are welcome to attend but they are not required. I would like to see them participate in faculty meetings and professional development. This will help them form a relationship with the department.

Tenure 9 Stated: I do not have much interaction/relationships with adjuncts. I have not had any professional development with them because they have a schedule problem and very few of them attend the faculty

meetings. They have other jobs and are not able to be here. However, I think adjuncts need to be more involved. It's just a job; they are not a part of the team and I don't think they have the same compassion. Adjuncts need to be more involved. We have a location problem, and we don't have many adjuncts that are retired. Like the tenured faculty, adjunct faculty shared the sentiment of the need for more collaboration among the different instructors.

Adjunct 2 Stated With Concern: I think I would like to have more interaction with everyone. There are so many of us, and we never see each other. I would like to have more interaction with all faculty members. There is one thing that I applaud the online institution for is that they had meetings with all of us, and we introduced ourselves as online or on ground. There were about fifty of us. We need to get together and have unity. There is no difference between my relationship with adjuncts and tenured. I have a good relationship with them.

Adjunct 5 Commented: I help adjuncts if they need it. I have no interactions or relationships with tenured faculty. I have not been invited to professional development and faculty meetings. Therefore, I have not attended any of them. It would be nice to meet the rest of the faculty for collaboration. We need an orientation that involves all faculties in order to establish relationships. If adjuncts don't get together and create a sense of community among them then I don't know. I have very limited interaction with tenured faculty. I help them with student outcome forms and I assist as much as I can.

Adjunct 9 Resonated: I think adjuncts should be invited to the faculty meetings. They should also be allowed to serve as mentors and counsel students. Adjuncts should be allowed to participate with student clubs and activities. This would serve to increase interaction with students and tenured faculty.

Theme 3: Standard Recruiting and Retention Practices Standard recruiting and retention practices were resonated as basic concerns for both adjuncts and tenured faculty. This theme developed throughout the interviews. There was an overwhelming concern about the credentials of the adjuncts by the tenured faculty. Likewise, there was just as much concern about the needed support to be observed as a standard for incoming new faculty and adjuncts. However, both the adjuncts and the tenured echoed the need for consistent implementation of the standard process. A prevalent amount of the data shared expressed how a standard process would help them with practices and procedures. This would not only alleviate the enormous amount of stress but also possibly increase the retention rate.

Tenure 1 Went On To Say: Some students view adjuncts just as a body that is teaching the class, and then there are students that view them as a critical part of the department. So I guess it depends on how it is presented and how much the students understand; some see them as facilitators and some as placeholders.

Tenure 3 Also Said: Many times they really don't see the difference; they don't see the difference between the adjunct and the full time professor until they need to find that person outside of the classroom; that sometimes can be a challenge for students; we try to make sure that our adjuncts are assessable to our students. My suggestion is for them to show up an hour before hand so students can meet with them; and sometimes it is frustrating.

Tenure 4 Articulated: Our adjuncts usually have a master's degree not a doctorate degree. The doctorate degree adjuncts are very strong researchers. Adjuncts are strong. What start softening the perception are those that have the master's level. While they teach the introductory classes well, when they get to the advanced courses it is not rigorous enough. The doctorate degree is stronger, and if I had a choice I would more likely to go with the doctorate degree. It's a bias that I share.

Tenure 5 Conveyed: I think a lot of the professors want the best instructions for their students. Therefore, they want them to do their best job; the goal is to provide the best service of educating the students; we are more of a teaching rather than a research school; the ultimate goal is educating the students. When you are recruiting adjunct faculty, they should have the same credentials; they should be practitioners, like teachers coming from K-12.

Tenure 8 Conveyed: It's a mix; the perception is mixed. There are some that see them as based on performance and credentials; we see them as positive in our department. We get a lot of professionals to teach the students. The credentials are important and influence the perceptions. It is also important to all if the adjuncts have intent to further their education to PhD.

Adjunct 6 Responded: I know we have a high turnover. A lot is put on you as an adjunct. We don't have office hours; you don't counsel or advise students. However, you always find yourself engrossed in those activities. Sometimes, it is a hard position because you are treated like an outsider and when you are there you are putting in a lot of hours as much as some full time professors. And you are getting more positive response. The doctorate degreed feels like we don't have the educational foundation that they have.

Adjunct 8 Stated: There is a need; an adjunct costs you a little less. The adjunct is an asset to the university. They bring practical experience to the classroom that can enhance the student's learning. You can apply what you have learned.

Theme 4: Shared Responsibilities The theme of Shared Responsibility came from the responses of the tenured and adjunct faculty. This means that both parties feel that the same obligations should be given to both tenured and adjunct faculty. The tenured faculty felt like the bond between the adjuncts and tenured faculty would be enhanced if they share more of the same duties. These duties included conferencing students, planning, faculty meetings, and professional development. Adjunct faculty also expressed a desire to be invited to faculty meetings and professional development. They wanted to stay abreast of policies, procedures, and issues relevant to the students and university. They also expressed a desire to serve on committees and to have more time for collaboration between the faculties as a whole.

Tenure 3 Stated: I think that shared responsibility would be a good thing. As you know full time faculty members are expected to serve on committees and as advisors adjuncts are not expected to do these tasks. I think they may look at each other differently if they were both participating. However, that's not really the nature of an adjunct. I think it is an interesting study and I would be interested in seeing what you found out as a result.

Tenure 8 Resonated: What I would like to see is for adjuncts to hold office hours to serve the students. I also would like for them to participate in professional development. This will help them form a relationship with the department. This will also allow administrators in the department to find out the intent of the adjunct as far as acquiring PhD degrees and tenure.

Adjunct 9 Stated: Administrators in the department should invite adjuncts to the meetings. They should allow them to mentor and counsel students. Also, adjuncts should be allowed to participate with student clubs and activities. Adjuncts take the load off of the tenured. They are very easy to work with and they do not refuse to teach classes.

Theme 5: Perceived Student Perception of Adjuncts and Tenured Faculty

The fifth theme emerged out of the question posed to the adjunct and tenured faculty was about the students' perceptions of adjuncts. The faculty accounts of the students' perceptions were very interesting and varied. The role of the adjunct and the perception of that role by students engaged in the learning process are very vital to the university and student success. The very essence of the rationale for hiring adjuncts is to alleviate class overloads or to provide instructions for a program or unit that does not have enough tenured faculty. The whole idea is to provide seamless instruction across the campus with academic excellence as the driving force behind classroom instructions. This is a common theme and the researchers have provided responses from tenured and adjunct faculty to the question: Do the students even know the difference?

Tenure 1 Suggested: Some students view them just as a body that is teaching the class. Then, there are students that view them as a critical part of the department. So, I guess it depends on how it's presented and how much the students understand. Some see them as facilitators and some as placeholders.

Tenure 3 Replied: Many times they really don't see the difference between the adjunct and the full time professor until they need to find that person outside of the classroom. That sometimes can be a challenge for students. We try to make sure that our adjuncts are accessible to our students. My suggestion is for them to show up an hour before hand so students can meet with them. Sometimes it is frustrating.

Tenure 4 Stated: Well, I am going to do a little guess work. I will say the students' perception is positive. The adjuncts may have a little more patience. The students might be more comfortable with the adjuncts. They are younger and more relatable.

Tenure 9 Disclosed: A lot of the time the students don't like adjunct faculty. It's because they are not professional, not a good teacher, or not easily accessible. However, it's ok with other.

The adjunct professors had much to say about their students and their perceptions about them.

Adjunct 4 Echoed: The students just see us as a teacher. I have worked as a teacher. After retiring, I wanted to continue to teach and work so I decided to accept this position. I think my role is received quite well by the tenured and adjunct faculty members. We are all here for the same reason.

Adjunct 5 Explained: For the most part, I don't think that adjuncts tell the students that they are adjuncts. So, the students just think that *this is my teacher*. The perception is positive depending upon the person's skill set, pedagogy, and judgment of performance in class – no difference.

Adjunct 6 Stated: The students regard me the same or more; they appreciate that things are somewhat different in my room. There is more application instead of what is lectured out of a book. Well, I am a "hands on learner" and I take the opportunity to give the students practical experience based upon my experiences on the job. I think that my background gives the course a different flare. I allow them an opportunity to see how things actually apply. I allow them to put the book aside and experience what is written.

Adjunct 9 Responded: I think the role of the adjunct has mixed perceptions from students . . . some love it, and some don't. Adjuncts typically don't have office hours and are not around from 8-5:00 p.m. This may cause a problem for some students. However, adjuncts are usually pleasant and helpful.

Theme 6: The Relationship between Adjuncts and their University

The role of the adjunct and the university played an important role as the landscape for the data gathered. How tenured and adjuncts viewed that piece of the landscape was essential. Fifteen out of 18 participants responded with one of these combinations of words: “vital,” “important,” “valuable,” “needed,” or “useful.” The understanding of that role is important to students and the university as a whole. The workplace, as stated earlier in this chapter, is where the members of the organization form their perceptions of value for their positions, and ultimately, themselves. The culture that is unconsciously formed by these perceptions can sink or catapult the organization. This theme was also a commonality theme. The tenured and adjunct faculties were asked about their perceptions of the role of the adjunct. This question was designed to explore the perceptions and the changes or recommendations that they felt would improve the job of adjunct faculty or their interaction/relationships with other non-adjuncts at the work place. The participants indicated through their stories the meaning of the adjunct to the organization. The examples below will help to further illustrate the significance of this theme.

Tenure 1 Stated: Adjuncts are vital to the department. When you don't have enough teachers for the number of students, you can fill those positions with qualified adjuncts. Having served as an administrator, I know how critical adjuncts are to the organization; some adjuncts don't understand how critical they are to the organization. However, I know that other tenured faculty may have different or diverse feelings about this issue. There are some administrators and tenured faculty that understand the critical need for adjuncts. Then, there are some that just see them as someone assigned to teach a class. So, the perceptions can be very varied.

Tenure 3 Then Responded: They play a vital part in what we do here; we do not have a full faculty; we need the flexibility to serve our students, and we use adjuncts to help us meet the needs of the students. I think that they are used as a necessity and I think that's how it's perceived. It should not be our main course of action to first look to adjuncts. As many classes that can be taught by full time faculty, should be. I think there are SACS implications for the percentage of your courses that are taught by full-time faculty, as well as the percentage taught by adjuncts.

Tenure 7 Responded: I think they are very vital in a sense. They may not carry rank; however, they are very vital to the university. They serve an important role just as a full-time faculty, especially the adjuncts that teach night classes. They deal with non-traditional students and some of those students may need a little push because they may have a lot going on in their lives.

In Like Fashion, Adjunct 1 Answered: Well I do pretty much everything a tenured faculty would do, help or advise students. I think they see me as capable of teaching the students. However, I think that they see a part-time person as someone to teach the class.

Adjunct 3 Communicated: The perception I feel is twofold. At the online school, there are about 80 percent of adjuncts, and they see us as fillers, having enough people to cover enrollment. My students appreciate the insight because I am still in the classroom. But for a very long time an adjunct was seen and still can be seen as fillers. They would not get classes that are senior level. They would get classes that are freshmen level because they think that it would take too much effort for the adjunct. The perception at other schools is that the adjunct is an integral part. We get last minute class assignments that they would not give to a professor or associate professor. It's almost like they know we are going to be there and that we won't complain.

Adjunct 5 Added: Adjuncts bring real experiences to the classroom. They have been out in the field. It depends on how they carry themselves. How they learn the policies and procedures. They must get to know the culture. They must get to know the students, administration, and faculty. They must keep up with data and produce data. They must follow the chain of command. If they have an issue with a student, they may go back and forth with the student instead of following the chain of command.

Adjunct 8 Responded: There is a need for adjuncts. An adjunct costs you a little less. However, the adjunct is an asset to the university. The adjunct brings practical experience to the classrooms that enhance the student's learning. They can apply what they have learned. They respect you when you have experience. However, if their class does not make and the adjunct's class does, they think that it is ok to bump the adjunct and take that class.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The researchers observed several similarities in comments by the adjuncts and tenured faculty. The adjuncts voiced the influence of the workplace culture on the perceptions of the role of the adjunct by their responses. The adjuncts were excited about the opportunity to share their comments about increased interactions, shared responsibilities, and collaborations with other members of the faculty in professional training, faculty meetings, or aiding students. There were many commonalities in the responses from tenured and adjuncts.

Questions 1 and 2 were focused on the perceptions of adjuncts and tenured faculty about the role of the adjunct in institutions of higher education. The majority of the participants acknowledged the importance of

the role of the adjunct in institutions of higher education in their responses as documented in theme six, the relationship between adjuncts and their university. This acknowledgement of the role and its importance included many responses during the interviews to also express concerns and issues. Sweeney (2009) noted that an institution that values its students should be evident in its value for the adjuncts that represent the institution and provide the instructions that enable students to become successful and productive.

Professional development and support were the leading common themes among the participants. Both the tenured and the adjunct voiced the need for the adjunct to take part in the offered professional development and training and to provide specific training for the adjuncts. The participants were asked to describe any changes or recommendations that would improve the job of adjunct faculty or interaction/ relationships with other non-adjuncts at the work place. There were 13 out of 18 responses that listed the need for professional development. The participants expressed how specific training would help adjuncts better understand the university's goals, policies, and procedures. Many responses suggested how this could possibly alleviate the enormous amount of stress that was expressed by the adjuncts in not knowing what to do or where to go when dealing with certain concerns and issues. Professional development would also play a vital role in classroom instructional process issues such as depth and rigor of delivery, grading procedures, strategies and trends in higher education (Johnston, 1998).

Questions 3 and 4 were focused on how the perceptions of the tenured and adjunct faculty about the role of the adjunct contributed to the work environment for the adjunct faculty according to the Critical Social Theory as it relates to organizational culture?

The need for increased collaboration and interactions between both groups was the real concern for both groups. The need for increased collaboration was highlighted in Chapter 4 as one of the six themes. The majority of the participants, 12 out of 18, noted the importance of collaboration. The workplace is where there is a required level of interaction and relationships to create an effective working environment. These interactions and relationships create a workplace culture. Perceptions of one's role or value to the organizations grow out of the day-to-day interactions and collaborations. When asked to describe their relationships with adjuncts, tenured faculty, and administrators in the department, the theme increased collaboration emerged. This indicated a deficiency or lack of needed collaboration and interaction between the tenured and adjunct faculty. This was also noted as they described any changes or recommendations that they felt would improve the job of adjunct faculty or their interaction/relationships with other non-adjuncts at the work place. The participants indicated through their stories that there was little or no interaction between the tenured and adjunct faculty members.

Most colleges and universities are enduring the recurrent experience of extreme growth in adjunct faculty members. This is a trend in higher education that is projected to remain intact in the decades to come (Lifting, 2014; Langen, 2011). Consequently, this major shift in the majority faculty to adjuncts at colleges and universities has demanded that the primary focus in higher education should be the instructional process.

To understand the role of the adjunct faculty at institutions of higher learning, it is necessary that further research be structured. The findings from the 18 participants will serve as a guide for future research to expand current knowledge and advance insight into this phenomenon. Future studies should explore the implementation of standard recruitment and retention procedures for adjuncts at institutions of higher learning; and examine the perceptions of the role of the adjunct at predominantly white institutions in higher education.

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