United States of State Universities Share Leadership Theory and the Strategies Engaging Online Accounting Faculties During Cov19 in Higher Education

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Contingent workforce, such as online adjunct faculty, is a crucial component interwoven in the fabric of higher education. The accessibility of technology has assisted in the expansion of online learning education in higher institutions. To support the expansion of the online platform, academic leadership hires remote, part-time faculty to fill instructional positions. Comprehending the critical role online adjunct faculty play in higher education, academic leaders must embrace the changes occurring in higher education and learn how to support online, part-time faculty. There appears to be a particular gap in the literature that rests on not knowing specific leadership strategies to aid with the participation of online adjunct faculty.

Keywords: online accounting teaching, teaching strategies, leadership, emerging technologies, higher education

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Online adjunct faculty are pertinent to higher education. Technology has impacted the structure of higher education, aiding the shift of more classes being offered in online platforms (Barnett, 2018). The expansion of online courses within the higher education platform aids in providing an influx of positions for online, part-time adjunct faculty to fill in the instructional gap (Barnett, 2018).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study descriptive phenomenological qualitative was to discover leadership strategies to increase inclusion and engagement amongst online, part-time faculty at public colleges in Central Florida. This descriptive qualitative phenomenological research was selected to understand what makes a successful online adjunct faculty feel included and engaged in the institution. To achieve the research purpose, the goal within this phenomenological study was to capture the lived experiences of strategies academic leaders use in leadership to aid online, part-time instructors with a sense of inclusion and engagement.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The main research question (RQ1) for this study is, what are the lived experiences of academic leaders in exploring the effect of adjunct faculties increasing engagement for online, part-time instructors at colleges in Central Florida? The foundation of the RQ1 derived from my research presented in the problem statement. The problem statement of this study was to discover leadership strategies to increase inclusion and engagement amongst online, part-time faculty at public colleges in Central Florida. The problem statement surfaces from four themes found within the conceptual framework of shared leadership theory, servant leadership theory, relationship leadership theory, and LMX theory.

The theories selected for this study incorporate academic leadership in sharing, serving, connecting, and respect. Hoch (2014) expressed shared leadership theory is an interactive approach to leadership. Flynn, Smither, and Walker (2016) enforced positive factors implemented in servant leadership consist of increasing communication, aiding in understanding the goals and specific tasks set before the company, and focusing on the strength of the employees. Uhl-Bien (2006) focused on relationship leadership theory presents a more human aspect surrounded by the connection for members within the organization. Erdogan and Bauer (2015) provided characteristics of trust, mutual respect, and loyalty within the LMX theory.

Caruth and Caruth (2013) mentioned adjunct faculty are part of the contingent workforce, which brings forth experience and diversified expertise to academia. Barnett (2017) said the expansion of online education had increased the need to hire online adjunct faculty. Thirolf (2017) mentioned there is a lack of engagement within adjunct faculty positions bringing forth the feeling of disconnectedness in their workplace. With the number of online adjunct faculty increasing instruction in colleges, the challenges arise in increasing the inclusion and engagement amongst online adjunct faculty with their institutions (Billot et al., 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research derived from the use of leadership theories: (a) servant leadership theory, (b) shared leadership theory, (c) relationship leadership theory, and (d) LMX theory. The four theories embody particular concepts that relate to the current study because these theories embody effective leadership to promote engagement and supportive measures through a relationship. The four concepts found within the four theories are serving ethically, sharing responsibility, connection, and shared respect. The leadership theories within this section revolve around building a connection in hopes of increasing online adjunct faculty sense of inclusion and engagement.

Servant Leadership Theory

Peterlin, Pearse, and DimovskWe (2015) described servant leadership theory as a theory that promotes the leader wanting to serve first. Peterlin et al. affirmed servant leaders impact the well[-]being of others and serve the common good. Parris and Peachey (2013) wrote the concepts within servant leadership revolve around ethics, virtues, and morality. These three concepts relayed on my phenomenological qualitative study due to the presence of ethics, virtue, and morality, which embody effective leadership. Pearce et al. referred to shared leadership as an essential interactive process among individuals to achieve particular organizational goals. According to Pearce et al., visions created by the leader utilizing shared leadership become powerful and encouraging amongst the team members if implemented effectively. Pearce et al. applied servant leadership theory as a foundation to present an in depth understanding of the study for responsible leadership.

Shared Leadership Theory

Small and Rentsch (2010) confirmed that the use of shared leadership becomes a distribution of leadership where individuals distribute the performance of leadership functions. Small and Rentsch added shared leadership theory towards research aids in team performance. The academic leader using shared

leadership theory does obtain an influential component and can assist in making the appropriate changes to possibly increase the sense of inclusion and increase engagement and support. When academic leadership within higher education incorporates specific leadership traits demonstrating their assistance, online, adjunct faculty can feel a sense of community despite working remotely.

Relationship Leadership Theory

The concept in the relationship leadership theory revolves around building a connection. The academic leader, which incorporates relationship leadership theory, emanates a contact with the remote, part-time faculty within the institution (Uhl-Bien, 2006). The challenge presents itself for the leader to attempt to increase inclusion, part-time engagement, and support for the remote, part-time faculty is to know the remote employee. Hanan (2017) found past studies have demonstrated supportive relationships between employees and administrators aid in support measures to increase inclusion within the remote working environment. Uhl-Bien noted the benefits for academic leaders to incorporate relationship leadership theory are having employees that are more considerate, supportive, high quality, and building of working relationship with the employee. Academic leaders knowing their remote employees present a better understanding of what the employee needs can aid in increasing support and engagement.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

Uhl-Bien (2006) referred to the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory as a relationship-based approach. According to Liden, Sparrowe, and Wayne (1997), the LMX theory focuses on the various types of relationships between the leader and the subordinate in the working environment. Liden et al. described leaders that go above and beyond their job description as operating in a high LMX relationship. When an LMX relationship is high, then the leader in supporting the remote, adjunct faculty with material and non-material goods that extend further than the job descriptions. Incorporating the LMX theory for a leader presents benefits in the online working environment. Erdogan & Bauer (2015) declared characteristics embodied by leadership practicing the LMX theory consists of trust, fondness, and shared respect. Characteristics of trust, fondness, and shared respect are all essential elements for the leader to view in a remote, part-time employee, so the leader can further work on aiding the remote worker on other avenues.

These theories embrace individual leadership and attribute the influential component the leader has a working environment. The concepts within these theories can support the study to understand further how academic leadership can assist in supporting online, adjunct faculty in diminishing the feeling of disconnect, increasing engagement, and support between academic leadership and their virtual, adjunct faculty.

NATURE OF THE STUDY

The preferred approach for this study was descriptive phenomenological qualitative research. This descriptive phenomenological qualitative study could assist in understanding the lived experiences of leaders to retrieve the academic leaders' actions and descriptive data within higher education (Hein & Austin, 2001). Selecting a phenomenological research design aided in focusing on the language within the research question about lived experiences to justify this qualitative research. Embracing a phenomenological qualitative approach further helped in obtaining a comprehensive description of the essence of the experience of the academic leader (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Within this phenomenological study, the primary form of data collection was face-to-face interviews. Conducting open-ended interviews with academic leaders (deans and program managers) overseeing the different departments and subdepartments retrieved the data results to answer the research question.

The primary form of data collection for this qualitative research were semi-structured interviews (Angel & Stephens, 2018; Martins, 2008; Ristino & Michalak, 2018). To assisting in finding specific academic leaders within public local colleges, we utilized LinkedIn. The number of academic leaders selected to interview is 15-20 or until saturation (Ristino & Michalak, 2018). The expectations in conducting this study were to provide new knowledge that can assist management in supporting online adjunct faculty in higher educational institutions. The academic leadership interviews in this study may aid in achieving a deeper

understanding of those specific strategies that occur on behalf of the academic leader to promote inclusion and engagement on behalf of their online, part-time employees.

This study's four-step conceptual framework incorporates concepts derived from four leadership theories: servant leadership theory, shared leadership theory, relationship leadership theory, and Leader-member exchange theory (LMX Theory). The study's findings are consistent with my conceptual framework's findings based on concepts of ethically serving, sharing responsibility, connection, and shared respect.

Serving Ethically

Ethically serving could have different components. Transparent communication is one of the elements presented in the data relevant to ethically serving. Gardner et al. (2011) mentioned that authentic leadership develops from ethical values, incorporating the leader providing personal experiences, thoughts, emotions, needs, and desires. The academic leader wants to be accessible through email and text. Some leaders wanted to focus on communicating with the online adjunct faculty on specific events that the college was hosting and wanted to reach out to the online adjunct faculty to diminish the sense of isolation. Various participants expressed a sense of time to make improvements in communication to aid in engagement. Deans wanted to engage more with their online adjunct faculty while directors engaged with their online adjunct faculty but wanted more time. All the academic leaders were very humble in answering this question and understood that change needed to occur because of the value that the online adjunct faculty presented to their college.

Sharing Responsibility

Some academic leaders expressed the shared responsibility of leadership with their online adjunct faculty. Under PT4's leadership, he asks adjunct faculty what they would like to teach and how many classes they could train for that semester to accommodate their requests. When asked: "what leadership strategies have you implemented that have provided a positive outcome for online adjunct faculty engagement," Participant 5 asks the online adjunct faculty's input when the department makes a programmatic change. Mirroring that same leadership strategy of empowerment, Participant 6 expressed to faculty, "You deliver the course, here are the learning outcomes you need to meet." The shared responsibility aspect gives the adjunct faculty ability to make decisions catered around their expertise.

Connection

Another category that emerged from the data was a relationship that presents a connection between the academic leader and the online adjunct faculty. One of the suggestions presented by Stoker (2018) to successfully manage the remote employee, distinguish the goals of the company, present the milestones of accomplishments, implement an open relationship with the remote employee. Having an open relationship can lead to a connection between the academic leader and the online adjunct faculty. According to Uhl-Bien (2006), connection for members within the organization presents a human aspect within relationship leadership theory. The lack of a standardized measure makes it difficult to interpret these results with confidence without data from the academic leaders' online adjunct faculty. Most Deans that participated in the study expressed they were available if the online adjunct faculty needed assistance, but the relationship was not present because the online adjunct faculties primary contact was other personnel. The adjunct coordinator, chairs, and directors felt they had a closer relationship that was more of a friend.

Participant 6 mentioned, "I try to develop those relationships on a very personal level." The results do not rule out the influence of college responsibilities on direct contact personnel with academic leaders. The academic leaders might have more of a connection because they have more contact with online adjunct faculty and provide a resource to online adjunct faculty. Having that connection presents a stronger relationship with the online adjunct faculty. It is essential to keep in mind job descriptions within the college setting. Some deans might feel that the online adjunct faculty's primary contact is another personnel.

Shared Respect

The academic leaders participating in this study highly respected their online adjunct faculty. The academic leaders see the expertise and want to make decisions around them and be flexible. One department chair mentioned that he gives an outcome and allows the adjunct faculty to make the decisions. Academic leaders expressed that they are an advocate for their online adjunct faculty. The academic leader wants to be responsive to their faculty's needs by providing them resources during the welcome back meetings and a mentoring program. During the interviews with the academic leaders, the elements shared reflect Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX theory). According to Erdogan and Bauer (2015), LMX theory includes components of trust, mutual respect, and loyalty. The participants believed that if there are department improvements, the academic leaders will receive feedback from the online adjunct faculty. A leadership strategy implemented by some academic leaders is listening, which is a critical component expressed by participants one and two.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Rationale

Moran (2002) referred to phenomenology as a collection of information gathered in an attempt to retrieve a specific phenomenon. The particular phenomenon within this descriptive phenomenological research is inclusion and engagement. Moran states that phenomenology "describes things as they appear to consciousness" (p. 6). The phenomenological approach captures the individuals' sense of belief, attitude, and feeling towards the phenomenon from several individuals, this approach became more prevalent to utilize for my study (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). The phenomenology method allows the researcher to capture how the participant relates to the phenomenon (Dawidowicz, 2016).

Role of the Researcher

Van Manen (2016) referred to the role of the phenomenological researcher as an individual "standing in the fullness of life, in the middle of the world of relations and situations" (p. 32). Rager (2005) mentioned the role of the researcher in a qualitative study is like an instrument from which the information collected becomes analyzed. Rager also suggested the researcher presents the element of sensitivity in the detail factors of a participant's experience.

Instrumentation

According to Englander (2012) and Moustakas (1994), many phenomenological researchers select interviews as a form of data collection to find the meaning of the phenomenon. The type of interviews we planned to conduct were semi-structured interviews. Englander mentioned that semi-structured interviews allow the participant to be lead and not directed within the interviewing process. The semi-structured interviews conducted towards the academic leader lets me ask questions conveniently to retract the appropriate information (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). These semi-structured interviews vary from each participant due to the use of probing questions, although the interview questions were the same for all participants.

Data Collection

Within this qualitative research, we used the descriptive phenomenological approach to explore the employees' lived experiences of leadership strategies they utilize to aid online, part-time instructors with a sense of inclusion and engagement at public colleges in Central Florida. We conducted Face-to-face interviews using the video conferencing of Zoom to collect the data. Upon their consent, participants were sent the interview questions before the Zoom interview session for review. Each interview lasted between 30 to 65 minutes, although we informed the participants that the interviews might last 60 to 90 minutes. Although there were probing questions to gather further detail in the interview questions, some participants were brief with their responses making particular interviews 30-minute increments. The participants that elaborated and gave various examples made the interviews last 65 minutes. The interviewees' participated

in the Zoom interviews at a convenient location of their choice. The second data collection method was to have my participants conduct their interviews face-to-face, although the pandemic was no longer an option. My location for these Zoom meetings was in my household due to the pandemic occurring; various places were closed and limited indoor seating. I conducted Zoom interviews from the end of June until the beginning of August. During the interview Zoom session, some participants paused to think about the differences of leadership strategies they implemented to aid in engagement and inclusion amongst their online adjunct faculty and what the institution does for their online adjunct faculty. I utilized probing questions to retrieve specific answers to the participants' questions to gather an in-depth understanding of the strategies used by those academic leaders towards their online adjunct faculty.

Each interview was recorded upon the participant's consent by Apple's Voice Memos application, transcribed using Zoom conferencing, and notated using Microsoft Word. The Zoom transcription occurs with a paid subscription. The Zoom conference host sets the option to transcribe the interview, and roughly within the hour of the end of the Zoom conference, the transcription is available for review. I reviewed all the transcriptions to make sure the document was understandable to the participant. I was proactive in making the initial review and correction to make for a faster member check process.

My initial plan was to use a recording device that can transcribe the interview. My plans changed because I became comfortable using Zoom to transcribe the interview conversations. After each interview, I reviewed the transcript to remove all the interview aspects to practice confidentiality. The transcript was sent to the participant to review the interview transcript for the member check portion of the data collection process. The goal for the member check was to make sure that the transcript captured the lived experiences accurately. Some participants made corrections to the transcripts to provide further detail to their lived experiences. Other participants provided an unusual circumstance encountered in data collection when they went off-topic from the questions provided. Although I did capture the entire interview and found an exciting read of the transcript.

Coding

We used Microsoft Word, QDA Miner Lite, and Microsoft Excel to code and analyzed the data collection. We used Microsoft Word to make notes during the interview process to take notes, find patterns, and write any surprises. QDA Miner Lite was used to organize and store the data for coding. Microsoft Excel spreadsheets were used primarily to better understand the variables collected from the participants, presented in Table 1.

Saldaña (2016) suggested focusing on your research question to influence the selected coding method. The first cycle of coding method selected to assist in analyzing the data was Descriptive Coding, although halfway through the coding method, we switched to NVivo Coding. NVivo coding is best used for interview transcripts to capture the individual's viewpoint (Saldaña, 2016). Saldaña (2016) further expressed that in NVivo Coding, the researcher gathers the code from the participant's actual language. Throughout the lengthy interview process, I selected specific data from the participant's actual language that was relevant to answer RQ1. During the notations process, I typed notes using Microsoft Word, and downloaded the transcript into QDA Miner Lite. Using QDA Miner Lite allowed me to review the entire transcript and code information relevant to answering the RQ1. After the data collection, the participant reviewed the transcript. I organized to find a connection and new knowledge. In going through and analyzing the data, I used the QDA Miner Lite to combine the codes similar in interpretation from the data.

Leadership strategy became one of my categories. Within the leadership strategy category, a code that was relative and received a higher percentage was engagement following communication. QDA Miner Lite allowed me to retrieve the percentage of words from the codes selected from the transcripts. The codes were arranged from highest to lowest, making engagement the highest percentage. I noticed surprising patterns, such as empowerment in the leadership strategies, were pertinent in answering RQ1. The patterns presented the codes of the data. I focused on the question while exploring the data to assist in analyzing the answers. The question that I wanted answered was trying to understand leadership strategies used for engagement. I identified patterns in the responses of the academic leaders.

Data Analysis

Within this study, I used an NVivo approach to assist in data analysis, gathering from academic leaders' experiences throughout the interview process. Giorgi's (2012) five-step method was applied to explore and reflect the data towards answering the research question. A full immersion of the data assisted in the data analysis process. The data analysis process was continuous to help find the codes, themes, and categories within the data.

During the semi-structured interviews, I listened intensively to detailed descriptions provided by the participants. Vilakati (2009) expressed the importance of phenomenological research to implement a conceptual task. Further, Vilakati (2009) suggested incorporating the conceptual task; the researcher must immerse themselves in the data by reading the data several times. Once the interviews' completion occurred, I sent the transcript for review to the participants for accuracy. Out of the 15 participants, 14 confirmed the accuracy of the data. Upon receiving the approved transcript from the participant, I then proceeded to immerse myself in the data. In data immersion, I collected the transcript and started the comparison process between the transcript and the recording. Zoom Conferencing platform completed the transcription, and then I compared the transcription with the audio recording. Each interview took roughly about an hour to review the transcript and compare the recording to the transcript. During this conceptual stage, I found data relative to the research question. The data discovered was placed into categories and sent out to the participants for member checks.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What are the lived experiences of academic leaders in exploring the effect of adjunct faculties increasing engagement for online, part-time instructors at colleges in Central Florida?

Listed below are the findings for RQ1:
1. Being transparent and informing the online adjunct faculty when good things occur in the department or bad things in the department.
2. Providing with the materials for specific courses to aid in support.
3. Getting to know the other online adjuncts in the department.
4. Having an open discussion about the discipline and the industry through meetings.
5. Presenting contact information so that the online adjunct faculty know how to get ahold of the academic leader.
6. Provide contact information so that the online adjunct faculty learn how to get ahold of each other.
7. Engaging through Zoom, through email, and text.
8. Incorporating weekly or bi-weekly meetings.
9. Adjunct faculty become leaders within the group when they share their knowledge with other faculty.
10. Provide equal opportunity for professional development.

This study has identified one code leading the other codes within the category of leadership strategy. The data was interpreted to provide a more substantial answer to the RQ1 by conducting the NVivo coding. We gathered and reviewed the data through transcripts, recordings, and note-taking. To capture the essence of the responses, we utilized probable consideration from the data with the participant's answers. The participants were elaborate in their responses, which helped me capture the responses to create the code and then categorize the codes.

Saldaña (2016) mentioned the process of coding helps to classify and categorize the data. The category of leadership strategy was applied to gather specific leadership strategies implemented by the participants. Figure 1 demonstrates the different leadership strategies presented by academic leaders. Other academic leaders' possible interference of smaller leadership strategies might get utilized, but the open-ended interview questions did not provide leadership strategy suggestions.

FIGURE 1
ACADEMIC LEADERS' LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES
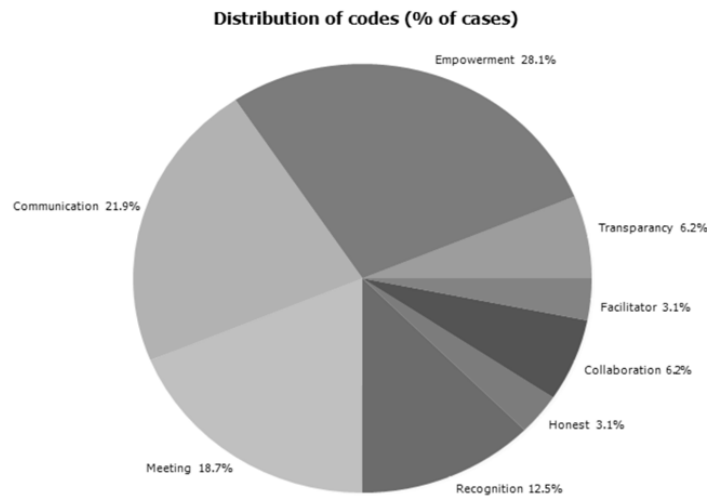
Source: Compiled by Author

The leading code of empowerment was present amongst academic leaders' responses in the category of leadership strategy. Among the cases, 28.1% (9 cases) of academic leaders mentioned implementing activities understood as the element of empowerment as their leadership strategy. There were nine counts of this code assigned to the cases. A possible explanation of why the results turned out this way is that academic leaders might want their online adjunct faculty to feel self-sufficient while working remotely. The academic leaders' empowerment activities incorporated professional development and resources to ensure that the faculty had access to the materials they needed to be successful in their positions. The open-ended interview questions allowed the participant to elaborate on the response, and thoughtfully provide examples of how they implemented leadership strategies that positively impacted online adjunct faculty engagement.

In returning to the data, we noticed a connection in academic leaders' responses, making the second-highest code communication. A possible explanation for this might be two interview questions: How has communication influenced engagement with your online adjunct faculty and What is your perception of managerial communication and its influence on the remote, adjunct faculty engagement, both referring to communication. There were seven counts of this code assigned to the cases. Amongst the cases, 21.9% of the academic leaders provided data regarding the code of communication eminent in their leadership strategy. The communication code's specific strategies provided faculty feedback and weekly meetings to keep the online adjunct faculty informed. Other descriptions of lived experiences from the academic leadership surrounding communication with online adjunct faculty were from social media, zoom, email, and text.

Other codes presented in the category of leadership strategy shown in Figure 1. Coding the data collection results presented codes of transparency at 6.2%, facilitator at 3.1%, collaboration at 6.2%, honest at 3.1%, recognition at 12.5%, and having meetings at 18.7%. Appendix D presents the codebook describing the categories, codes, and definitions of the codes. During the interview process, each participant answered eight questions with probing questions to understand their responses further. The questions demonstrated in the Interview Protocol in Appendix C were essential to gather the study's whole essence. Due to the detailed description of the responses, we retrieved various codes from the data collection. Appendix E presents the number of participants which selected a specific code, theme, and the number of words presented in the data.

We reviewed the transcripts individually for codes and noticed overlapping categories that emerged on academic leaders' leadership strategies to aid in engagement. It seems possible the closeness of the empowerment and communication results compared to the other leadership strategies due to communication steaming from the academic leaders' perception of making the online adjunct faculty more aware to assist in aiding their students'. Participants 2, 8, and 14 chose to implement leadership strategies placed in the code of empowerment and communication, although the words' frequency measured higher in empowerment than communication. A possible explanation for this might be that academic leaders utilize several leadership strategies towards different individuals. There might be an overload of communication coming from various individuals within the college, and Participant 8 aids in providing the essential aspects of the information to online adjunct faculty. Participant 8 mentioned how she sends weekly emails that are summarized. Participant 8 further explained:

> correspondence from the President or from Vice President sometimes is hard to digest, so WEdo a weekly email and WEtry to just summarize developments, check in. WEput my home phone number every single time and remind everyone that they should call me.

Taking the extra measure from this participant possibly presents a deeper connection with her online adjunct faculty.

Various academic leaders stressed how they wanted to be the resource and provide the flexibility that the online adjunct faculty needed. PT8 expressed, "WEcreated a Canvas page for our part-timers that has all the resources on it." Another participant, PT6, mentioned, "WEtry to be very flexible." This data must receive interpretation with caution because of what resources and flexibility the online adjunct faculty needs differ from other adjuncts. The leadership strategies implemented by the academic leadership are embedded around aiding the online adjunct faculty. The academic leaders see the expertise and want to make decisions around them and be flexible. The leadership strategies applied by the academic leader surrounds itself with empowering the online adjunct faculty to feel inclusion amongst the institution. The qualities presented in listening is a critical component expressed by participants one and two. Professional development was another essential component of empowerment expressed by various academic leaders.

ANALYSIS STUDY AND DISCUSSION

Assumptions

Creswell and Miller (2000) referred to assumptions as an element that shapes the various procedures of the researchers' qualitative study. The first assumption within this study was to have transparency from the academic leaders. The second assumption was familiarity with leadership strategies within their daily functions.

The aspects of the study that are believed but cannot be demonstrated to be true were that the participants of this study will be transparent within the interviewing process about their lived experiences of implemented leadership strategies. To aid in this assumption, we tried to incorporate an atmosphere of trust by providing the candidates with a brief introduction of myself, which did, in return, foster an atmosphere of trust. The reasoning why this assumption was necessary for this study was to assist in trying to capture the academic leaders' lived experiences of particular leadership strategies used to increase inclusion and engagement among online adjunct faculty. Transparency of those experiences was vital to capture the true essence of the study.

Significance to Theory and Practice

The data collected from the in-depth individual interviews of academic leaders in public colleges may assist leaders in incorporating practices in their leadership roles to increase inclusion and engagement. Online adjunct faculty disengagement in higher education can become a ripple effect affecting the lack of connection and commitment on the part of the employee. Raina and KhatrWe(2015) declared that employees are engaged to demonstrate characteristics of loyalty, present a transformation element that

alters the organization, accomplish better results, and are more productive. Thirolf (2017) agreed with Raina and KhatrWeon expressing the advantages of adjunct faculty engagement resulting in a passionate and dedicated professional. Visibly demonstrating the results of this study to leaders in colleges could allow leaders to reflect within their daily practices and change the strategies that they use to increase loyal and productive employees.

During the interview process, the qualities of discrepant cases utilized were taken, having the interview transcribed. To understand the topic's lens, I used the Zoom transcription service and the audio recording of Voice Memos to capture the entire interview. Saldaña (2016) suggested that using multiple sources validates the coding and trustworthiness of the study. While both services were working in capturing the interviews, I was able to listen and connect to the participant while taking minimum notes. To improve the study's rigor, I was conscious of my facial expressions during the response session. During the interview process, taking minimum notes allowed me to probe questions where I saw fit to grasp an excellent response to the interview question.

Incorporating a descriptive phenomenological study helped investigate the phenomenon of inclusion and engagement through the academic leader's view. The use of this methodology allowed me to capture an individual's experience and expertise. With each question presented to the participant, I listened tentatively, and upon receiving the transcript, I segmented the data by the question. I sought out the best methodology for my research and sought out sources like Jones (2011), who conducted a study with adjunct faculty and academic leaders. Jones selected eight adjunct faculty, and I decided to choose a more significant number to receive the topic's saturation.

To help capture experience better to select the correct discrepant cases, I chose to choose individuals in LinkedIn with the title of an individual in higher education with surrounding academic leadership. This aspect focused on the analysis to help answer the research question with the expertise the academic leaders bestow. Individuals that did not communicate with online adjunct faculty were not involved in the interview process. The negative case sampling in this data collection was the individuals who received an invitation and did not serve as academic leaders in higher education or did not communicate with online adjunct faculty.

Participant PT1, Program Chair

This participant was a female with 18 years of experience working at a community college. PT1 expressed that "she is careful of how engaged she wanted online adjunct faculty to be." She understood that online adjunct faculty had other jobs along with this higher educational position. Her method of implemented leadership strategy was communication. She stated that the use of the platform, Slack, allowed her to communicate with the masses. This participant stated, "mentorship team or their program chair should regularly reach out, and ask them how they're doing, ask them what questions they have for us, ask them if they are encountering anything that they could use our help and support with." The categories that emerged within the coding of the data was communication. The codes which emerged from the data were electronic communication, influence engagement, perception, mentor, support, recognition, and resource. The main theme that emerged from the data collection was being there for the student.

Participant PT2, Adjunct Coordinator

PT2 has seven years of experience in her position and expressed, "We engage through Zoom, we engage through email, we engage through personal observation, texting, they come to my office, and we do meetings." Pt2 emphasized the value online faculty bring to their department. She noted that during the welcome back week, she rewards her adjunct faculty with gifts of appreciation. She stated she puts forth the effort to do what is needed to perform the job adequately or above an acceptable way. PT2 loves to share her expertise to aid in engagement through observations, text, and weekly meetings. Although an adjunct coordinator, this participant has served various roles, and she shares her knowledge from different viewpoints to the online adjunct faculty. She stated," So as lead instructor some things I share. Some things I share more as an adjunct coordinator." The categories that emerged within the coding of the data was communication, leadership strategy, and relationship. The codes which emerged from the data were

observations and evaluations, expectations, share expertise, support, empowerment, and recognition. The theme that emerged from the data collection was engaged in the whole program and support by different programs.

Participant PT3, Dean

PT3 is a dean with 20 years' experience in higher education. He focuses on supporting his online adjunct faculty. As soon as they enter the department, the online adjunct faculty connects to a mentor that will aid them. Pt3 stated, "developed this mentoring program very intentionally with our full-time and part-time faculty." He mentioned, "the mentorship program is in place to support and empower the online adjunct faculty to aid in engagement within their position. This participant emphasized he wants to lead by experience, so he is also a part-time faculty member and has a mentor. Pt3 stated regarding the online education platform, "we've gotten a lot better at this collaboration." Categories that emerged within the coding of the data was the relationship, communication, and engagement. The codes that emerged within the data was support, hiring, inclusion, and ability to listen. The themes which emerged from the data collection was mentoring program for part time faculty, weekly or bi-weekly meetings through Zoom, and department chairs.

CONCLUSION

Trustworthiness is a vital component incorporated within the research. To receive the participant's trust, I sent out a detailed letter of participation to the potential candidate electronically. The participation letter consisted of information about myself, why the study is getting conducted, what I desired to retrieve from the research and the consent agreement. Once the potential participant responded to the email with the consent of participating, I sent a list of the interview questions and asked for the best time to conduct the interview. I followed up with the email with detailed information on the Zoom meeting. During the interview, I was actively engaged with the participant and asked several times if there were any questions. I built a relationship and trust with the participant and assured them that their information is confidential.

Credibility

Ravitch and Carl (2016) defined credibility as the researcher's ability to take the complications within the study and find patterns. I created credibility by implementing triangulation with every semi-structured interview. Ravitch and Carl (2016) further suggested that the researcher implement triangulation to establish credibility. The set of processes used were interview transcripts and audio recordings. I incorporated the different sources used to collect data to review the information for accurate interpretations of the academic leaders' interviews.

The purpose of this study descriptive phenomenological qualitative was to discover leadership strategies to increase inclusion and engagement amongst online, part-time faculty at public colleges in Central Florida. The intention of conducting this descriptive phenomenological qualitative study was to improve the body of knowledge regarding academic leaders' leadership strategies, which increased the lack of inclusion and engagement amongst online adjunct faculty. The results of this study showed new insights from academic leaders to assist leaders in higher education institutions in increasing online faculty inclusion and engagement in public colleges. The strategies obtained from conducting this study may assist virtual, part-time instructors with a sense of inclusion and engagement.

To summarize the key findings of this study, 28.1% (9 cases) of academic leadership used the leadership strategy of empowerment to aid in engagement. Empowerment activities ranged from providing the online adjunct faculty with the resources to make them self-sufficient by incorporating workshops, seminars, and presentations as forms of professional development. Six academic leaders had online adjunct faculty connected to mentors for the first point of contact for resources. The second leadership strategy applied by academic leadership was communication with 21.9%. Specific activities used amongst academic leaders regarding communication strategies were providing phone numbers, communicating feedback and recognition, or having weekly or bi-weekly meetings.

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