

APPLYING POSITIVE CHANGE EFFORTS WITH ADJUNCT FACULTY

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ABSTRACT:

This research study's main goal was to determine the impact of an observation/evaluation process on adjunct faculty when analyzing student success, retention, and persistence. This research project analyzes adjunct faculty when they receive a structured process of development. The change process of pre-observation and post-observation analysis will also be examined in roles of faculty gender, race, age, number of sections taught per semester, number of years working with the institution, course category, and course day/time offer. This quantitative study examines existing data at a higher education institution. The goal is to understand the needs of their adjunct faculty members as it relates to student success. This study may help to further expand concerns involving Organization Development that researchers may explore in higher education.

Key Words: Adjunct faculty, organizational culture, strategic change, attachment theory, community college. Higher Education, Adjunct Faculty: Applying Positive Change Efforts

INTRODUCTION

In an era of financial strain, colleges and universities are faced with many challenges. One such challenge is financial due to the recent pandemic forcing colleges and universities to implement many financial cutbacks. Nevertheless, higher education needs to invest in quality teaching to uphold the business plan of providing quality education to students. One possible consideration many colleges and universities employ is the utilization of adjunct professors. While adjunct faculty bring many benefits, including real-world connections to industries, they are often not trained in teaching techniques. Most adjunct faculty teach the way they were taught -- with a heavy lecture presence

in the classroom. An investment in adjunct faculty proves necessary when they make up such a large population within higher education.

Education has reached a point that to ensure student success, institutions can no longer ignore the benefits of good teaching. Effective instruction has a direct impact on student success. “Educational research conducted over the last 40 years has established that instructors are the most crucial variable affecting student outcomes” (Gyrko et al., 2016). Students learn more from improved pedagogy, and often adjunct faculty receive little support or resources for their teaching, which is to the student’s detriment. Adjunct faculty have a strong commitment to their work and want to improve their practices to support their students. What they do not always know is *how*, and that is part of the problem. Effective college teaching techniques are known and play a vital role in student achievement and retention. Student outcomes and faculty professional development are also directly related. Professional development has connections to improving teaching techniques, job satisfaction, course instruction, and student success. However, at many higher education institutions, this has remained a low priority.

Reduced full-time faculty positions are often replaced with part-time or temporary adjunct faculty positions. This increased reliance on adjunct instructors has led to a growing debate on student success outcomes. The ratio between full-time and part-time faculty at many institutions has drastically changed. Some institutions have an equal percentage to others, having a more significant percentage of adjunct faculty. “With the dramatic increase in the use of adjunct faculty in higher education classrooms, we must understand how these faculty are being evaluated, and how these evaluation results are utilized” (Langen, 2011, p. 1). Understanding this shift in higher education leads us to consider potential problems resulting from the changes and plausible solutions. We must understand how adjunct faculty are being observed, evaluated and how the results are being used to ensure that quality-learning opportunities are being afforded in the classrooms.

At many institutions, full-time faculty have a more significant advantage when it comes to support. Full-time faculty are paid to attend meetings that part-time adjunct faculty are often neither invited nor paid to attend. Full-time faculty also have professional development funds to use and are consistently supported by their division, while adjuncts do not always have the same support. Over time, adjuncts have described their experiences and issues they face. The most common needs include better communication, recognition, a sense of affiliation, and professional development. A lack of communication has led to a lack of interaction and feeling like an invisible faculty member. With a lack of recognition, adjuncts feel that their opinions do not matter and lack support from the institution. Some have described feeling connected only to a limited number of other adjuncts and not to the institution. Others have described their sense of isolation, feeling invisible not only to administration but also to their full-time counterparts. They have felt a lack of professional development opportunities, many explaining the desire to be compensated during non-working hours. This was tied to training and orientation. They felt that a lack of training or receiving a proper new hire orientation was detrimental to getting a positive start to the semester (Pyram & Roth, 2018). Adjunct faculty are treated much

differently than full-time faculty and are sometimes viewed as less capable than their full-time counterparts. At the same time, they are expected to teach students at a high-quality level.

Literature Review:

This action-research study examines the impact of a support process for adjunct faculty regarding student success. By applying a theoretical perspective, higher education managers create energy for action through an observation evaluation process. Combined efforts from a division, discipline, and support office, help shift conversations about teaching toward a positive change process. While the pandemic is intensifying, new challenges are arising; however, one thing remains the same – the mission of higher education and instruction for student success. Action Research (AR) is the process in which research is conducted to achieve change that fosters an experience that can elicit the understanding with collected knowledge. AR is learned by doing, not by merely listening to a lecture (Greenwood, 2012).

Historically, in higher education institutions, specifically two-year community colleges, there is an emphasis placed on hiring adjunct faculty positions that make up, on average, two-thirds of the teaching positions. Adjunct faculty are expected to be as highly effective as their full-time faculty counterparts. With such a large population of a contingent workforce, administrators and leaders at community colleges should be accountable for providing the means and support to help adjuncts genuinely meet the expectations placed upon them. It is essential to understand the impact that results and redirect toward a positive focus on what needs to happen in terms of support if these opportunities do not exist. This review includes information in the following areas: (a) organization climate, (b) strategic OD and AR, (c) Higher education and strategic change, (d) Higher education and learning tools, and (e) Attachment Theory and meaning of work.

Organization Climate

It has been of great interest to organizations in understanding why some initiatives work where others fail. Change that has been successful at some organizations and unsuccessful at others varied as much as the leaders with different goals and processes ending in mixed results that often do not promote positive change. A mission and vision statement guide many leaders, including leaders in higher education yet, many often are redirected due to an unforeseen event, including a pandemic. Organizational climate is defined as “the collective current impressions, expectations, and feelings that members of local work units have that, in turn, affect their relations with their boss, with one another, and with other units” (Burke & Litwin, 1992, p. 532). The climate is affected by culture; it is also a component of changing an institution’s culture. It requires an in-depth understanding of what currently exists in the environment as potential barriers that may delay progress. “Understanding the environment allows opportunities for OD professionals to utilize their behavioral science background and work efficiently in the realm of group dynamics” (McCusker, 2018, p. 89).

Using data to focus on improvement areas will require a significant investment in the employees, impacting performance. In order for institutions to remain competitive, they must first be able to “recognize that their ability to

innovate is inextricably linked to the manner in which their leaders, people, climate, culture as well as structures support innovation and creativity” (Shanker et al., 2017, p. 67). Current issues in the climate must be addressed and maintain consistency to create a shift in the culture. “Higher education institutions must be willing to invest, continue practicing, and move forward with respect to the OD initiatives they used if there is to be a sustainable and positive outcome” (Overstreet, 2017, p. 88).

Strategic Organization Development and Action Research

An organization’s design executed with direction, conviction, and consistency can pave the way for a strategic change process to help with a positive forward movement. It can play a vital role in decision-making to alter strategies, structures, and processes to help higher education institutions achieve their mission and vision. Strategic design is often missing an OD perspective. This may include a long-term approach to organizational evolution. It could also look at the roles that administration, adjunct faculty, and the institution can design and serve as competitive advantages. One might consider the involvement of “processes that produce effective problem solving and decision making, align individual and organizational goals, and result in high levels of motivation, commitment, and accountability for outcomes” (Worley et al., 1995, p. 9). The importance is placed on a strategy to provide groups and individuals an opportunity to be involved in a meaningful way in “the analysis, planning, and implementation process in order to create a more achievable strategy, maintain the firm’s strategic focus, improve coordination and integration within the organization, and create higher levels of shared ownership and commitment” (Worley et al., 1995, p. 12).

The process involves understanding that planning is about *analysis* and thinking strategically is about *synthesis*. This is where intuition combined with creativity comes into play, setting the pace for understanding exactly why OD must be strategic in higher education design. Formal planning has its place, but to be strategic, it needs to allow creativity to thrive at any time. Not all planning and thinking needs to be formal, rather it also needs to be organically conceived in continuous or messy processes. There are promising opportunities for OD to be more innovative and support professionals to do more inspired work (Meyer, 2018).

Higher Education and Strategic Change

Higher education institutions need to be strategic, or it will not allow innovation to exist, leading them to falter while trying to remain competitive. When an organization fails to be creative, it is also failing in agility to keep up with an ever-changing world (Jelinek & Litterer, 1988). This is reminiscent of how students learn today. Listening to lectures hour upon hour is considered an outdated technique for the traditional age student. Lecturing has its place; however, students benefit more from thinking about what was presented, asking questions, and giving feedback on what was learned. Successful techniques include engagement along with formative and summative assessments. Checking for understanding, identifying learning gaps, and allowing students to be creative in the method they produce or showcase what they have learned are all methods

proven to show learning gains. Jelinek and Litterer (1988) identify that interactive trends are what is creating the new world.

Adjunct faculty are often hired based on their content expertise and real-world experience, but they are not always up to date on the latest teaching techniques. A consistent challenge for faculty is student engagement. There is a need to revisit the process of reintegrating the planning and execution of student work production. In planning, adjunct faculty may consider Fredrick Taylor's management theory that suggests separating planning from execution. Employees, staff, and students may feel distant or disconnected from work that is always planned for them. New teaching techniques, technologies, and the different approaches to assess student learning are aligned with the need to revise our organizational assumptions. This includes having clear job descriptions, expectations, support, and assessment. OD's skills are increasingly important, but effective engagement requires connecting to the organizations' needs and their employees (Jelinek & Litterer, 1988).

Higher education institutions that foster an environment of support for their adjunct faculty live by their mission and vision as an institution. A starting point of looking at what worked well in the past and what is currently effective can positively steer the strategic development process. The next steps include a plan to identify or align strategic planning processes based on success. Before the pandemic, identify successful processes that existed, what did not work, and what is still needed. Listening and identifying trends as voiced by adjunct faculty and taking a step back to identify what processes have and have not worked will help prepare for the current and future semesters. Constant chaos with no alignment or direction can lead to a spiraling of events, including a reduction in staff, low morale, conflict, and a lack of confidence and trust. There is a need for invention in response to the institution's needs, including listening and experimentation, which have successfully responded to customers' needs, including adjunct faculty and students (Beer, 1997). Understanding the past and the present can lead the way toward perspective and identifying strategies.

As higher education leaders and adjunct faculty become more aware and comfortable with the structure of planned change, they can also take on more active roles. "Indeed, more and more managers have become skilled at reacting to external forces, conceptualizing a preferred future state, and implementing the subsequent plan for achieving that well-defined end" (Buono & Kerber, 2010, p. 4). Strategic processes require allowing employees to seek different approaches. This builds motivation, and the strategic change then comes from the organization and its employees. This shows trust, honesty, and transparency. There is also a need for strategic planning and thinking to respond in anticipation of changes. This is where OD thrives in higher education and promotes and helps sustain the change (Buono & Subbiah, 2014).

Higher Education and Teaching Tools

Faculty learning to support one another, enhance their techniques and advance their professional development, including learner-centered approaches to engage students in activities based on the content covered, benefit their students. An institution's support can vary but include teaching materials, concrete examples with scenarios, simulations, videos, and still allowing for autonomy for adjunct faculty to include their own real-world experiences and

drive learning. It leads to connections made when an institution includes its adjunct faculty's voices in the process, the decisions, and their support. Inclusion involves making connections, linking goals with processes, systems, and structures. The strategic planning and thinking should meet the goal of a unified approach to supporting adjunct faculty, students and fostering ethical and responsible behavior by all parties.

“By addressing pedagogical tactics and approaches to incorporating ethical and social responsibility issues into different courses, such workshops can stimulate a greater comfort level across the faculty – to the point where a growing number of faculty report capturing ‘teachable moments’ to bring these ideas to life” (Buono, 2018, p. 139).

Not all faculty are versed in the useful tools for teaching. Pratt states, “Effective teachers are expected to know how to develop goals or objectives, give lectures, ask questions, provide feedback, conduct discussions, provide examples, use audiovisual materials, set reasonable exams and assignments, and so forth” (Pratt, 1997, p. 26). While the expectation is there, it is often not coupled with means of support. Lofty expectations in today's college classrooms amidst a pandemic produces further challenges, as the standard expectations are multiplied with a remote setting. Adjuncts may already be uncertain about their teaching in a face-to-face class, let alone learning technology to facilitate synchronous teaching. Expectations in a new type of environment can be complicated but not impossible. It starts with understanding the teaching style that supports student success, the teaching tools available, and the evaluation process. Ultimately, an evaluation process that involves engagement with the faculty is essential. An evaluation process designed with feedback and discussion of teaching strengths and needs and how learning happens is ideal. Development opportunities are more receptive when they strategies that are encouraging and focus on improving learning.

Attachment Theory and Meaning of Work

The study of attachment theory “has become one of the most important conceptual frameworks for understanding the process of affect regulation” (Mikulincer et al., 2003, p. 77). It looks at attachment-seeking behaviors, which for Bowlby, “the point of human attachment is safety” (Schwartz, 2015, p. 258). Safety and workplace stress can connect to attachment theory as work relationships and employee-to-organization relationships are identified. Understanding attachment theory can explain why some employees may or may not feel safe or connected to their workplace. “Individual attachment has the potential to explain individual functioning at work because it reflects how individuals view themselves and others, which in turn influences how they think about and behave toward others at work” (Richards & Schat, 2011, p. 170). Attachment theory connects to trust and perceptions of trustworthiness.

Understanding the meaning of work is part of the fundamental change that transforms the climate and an institution's culture. “Perhaps it is now timely to combine learning from studies of the determinants of organizational performance with the experience that change scholars have had in trying to study the reciprocal relationship between change processes and performance outcomes” (Pettigrew et al., 2001, p. 701). The support from leaders can enable

employees' motivation and bring about change. Using attachment theory, support, and encouragement from leaders can positively affect workers' proactive behavior (Wu & Parker, 2017). Helping faculty see a stronger connection between their work and the institution's mission of fostering student success is vital. Motivating adjuncts and helping them make connections on how their work is meaningful plays a vital role in understanding the meaning of work (Carton, 2018).

Isaksen determined that employees who do repetitive work tend to find meaning through attachment to the workplace and social relationships at work, seeing work as part of a meaningful purpose (Isaksen, 2000). The more faculty feel connected to the institution, the more they will identify with it. Additionally, job crafting can support employees in fostering a positive identity and sense of meaning in their work (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013). Instead of being reactive to job change, they become a part of the change by starting it or creating the change. When faculty understand their teaching perspectives and beliefs, work becomes more meaningful.

Methods: Measuring Teaching Quality

When considering teaching quality, one must identify teaching style. The Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI) is an informative method of identifying teaching styles, views, and instruction perceptions. According to the TPI, the five good teaching perspectives are transmission, apprenticeship, developmental, nurturing, and social reform. The TPI creates a profile sheet that categorizes survey responses identifying which area is dominant. The set of sub-scores identify teaching philosophy based on belief, intent, or educational actions. Details for each perspective include examples of what good teachers do in their teaching, including dominant areas. A discussion is included for each area's challenges when heavy reliance is on solely one area.

Effective teaching is not just great explanations and lectures; it also involves getting students to take an active role and participate in their learning. One helpful method for identifying learning gains and capabilities is an interactive model for faculty and students. "The purpose of the interactive compensatory model of learning (ICML) is to provide a framework for understanding and to improve teacher skills in creating learning environments" (See Figure 1; Crippen et al., 2005, p. 637). The five main components include cognitive abilities, knowledge base, learning strategies, metacognition abilities, and motivational beliefs. Cognitive abilities refer to intelligence or the capacity to learn, while the knowledge base refers to background knowledge of the content. Learning strategies focus on procedures similar to learner-centered teaching, and metacognition looks inward to acknowledge one's learning and, lastly, motivation, what one believes about their abilities to succeed (Crippen et al., 2005).

Two of these areas in the model often overlooked are learner-centered strategies and metacognition. Learner-centered teaching looks to place the emphasis back on the student instead of being passive learners. There is a focus on the process of learning.

"Learner-centered teaching does not use a single teaching method; rather, it emphasizes a variety of different method types that shift the role of instructors from givers of

information to facilitators of student learning or creators of an environment for learning. With all of the ways we have to disseminate information using technology, the instructor should not be the primary source of knowledge for students” (Blumberg, 2009, p. 3).

Research on transforming pedagogy found that classroom environments have changed as students take on a more active role in their learning. As faculty take on facilitators’ roles, students take ownership of the learning process, and an improvement in rapport with students was apparent (Dole et al., 2015).

An additional teaching tool is the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy, initially presented by Dr. Benjamin Bloom in 1956 (see Figure 2). The purpose was for learning to transform into high-order thinking versus rote memorization. The goal was to support educators write learning objectives and outcomes that include varied complexity in learning (Orey, 2001). The multi-tiered model provides six cognitive levels, including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, increasing complexity from the lowest level moving upwards. Figure 2 shows each of the cognitive and knowledge dimensions. Bloom’s taxonomy can assist faculty in creating appropriate learning to supports high-order thinking and student success. “Most faculty would agree that academic success should be measured not just in terms of what students can remember, but what students can do with their knowledge” (Crowe et al., 2008, p. 368). Students can participate in the learning and use of Bloom’s taxonomy, which helps them identify where they are having the most difficulty answering a question. This practice by the students helps them identify their mastery and strengthens their metacognition (Crowe et al., 2008).

Across the nation and the world, higher education institutions were forced to shut down due to the global pandemic. This immediate response led to an understanding of how ill-prepared most institutions were in taking their teaching and learning online and faced the punch of the great need to invest in quality teaching. With an increased reliance on adjunct faculty, where they make up nearly three-quarters of the teaching population at community colleges in this nation, there is a dire need for investment in professional development, primarily when effective teaching practices are known. While adjunct faculty bring many benefits, including real-world connections to industries, they are often not trained in teaching techniques, with many teachings how they were taught, with a heavy lecture presence in the classroom. An investment in adjunct faculty proves necessary when they are such a large teaching population in higher education. The reliance on adjunct faculty by higher education institutions is high when comparing community colleges and four-year institutions and has continued to increase over the last decade. According to data released by the American Association of University Professors, about 73% of all faculty positions are not tenure track positions. Figure 3 gives details of who is teaching and where (Flaherty, 2018). Students learn more from improved pedagogy, and often adjunct faculty receive little support or resources for their teaching, to students’ detriment.

Adjunct faculty are dedicated to their practice even without the support needed and genuinely want to improve their teaching practices to support student success. What they do not always know is how and that is part of the problem. Effective college teaching techniques are known and play a vital role in student

achievement and retention. Therefore, professional development has connections to improving teaching techniques and job satisfaction, course instruction, and student success. Nevertheless, at many higher education institutions, this has remained a low priority. The evidence regarding effective instruction's impact is that college students are set up for success; they can learn life skills and attain degrees (Gyurko et al., 2016).

Existing data obtained were studied to provide guidance and understanding regarding the impact of an observation evaluation process on adjunct faculty professionals at Midwest Community College. Data collected from five consecutive semesters, including spring 2017, fall 2017, spring 2018, fall 2018, and spring 2019. Three hundred thirty-seven adjunct faculty professionals were selected as they had undergone an observation evaluation in one of the target semesters. Data were collected for each of these adjunct faculty members identifying student success, retention, and persistence. Overall comparison patterns indicate minimal group differences for success rate and retention rate. Students taught by unobserved adjunct faculty were less likely to persist than those taught by observed adjunct faculty. Students were more likely to persist for observed adjuncts during the concurrent observation semester and the following semester.

Overall results for adjunct faculty not observed have a success rate of 77%, a retention rate of 89%, and a persistence rate of 63% (see Table 1). The overall data showed a 75% success rate for adjunct faculty observed, 88% retention rate, and 68% persistence rate for the semester before having an observation evaluation. The data showed a 72% success rate, 88% retention rate, and 72% persistence rate for the semester concurrent to their observation evaluation. The semester after the observation evaluation, the data showed a success rate of 76%, a retention rate of 89%, and a persistence rate of 73%. The observation evaluation process had a positive impact on adjunct faculty professionals at Midwest Community College. The data showed that students taught by observed adjunct faculty were more likely to persist than students taught by unobserved adjunct faculty.

The college released the data to complete an AR study that would identify trends. An additional goal to improve the educational climate was also at the forefront. Over time, there had been a culture of intimidation, scandal, and tremendous pressure for faculty to improve student success. On top of students' ever-changing needs, climate issues, technology changes, and pressure for improved performance caused a consistent cycle of fear and high turnover. A department of support for adjunct faculty was created to break the cycle and institute support. The goal was to change the climate and culture to support students and adjunct faculty.

The department identifies opportunities for supporting adjuncts, who make up nearly 74% of the institution's faculty. A formal process was designed to observe and provide extra support for adjunct faculty. The process focused on the needs of adjunct faculty who have the content area expertise but may lack teaching experience or understand best practices and effective teaching techniques. The design included opportunities for adjuncts to discuss their interests in developing their skills, enhancing areas of expertise, and becoming effective teachers. This process became an expectation of the college. The

reaction was consistent with the climate, as adjunct faculty became fearful of the change and believed the evaluation would be punitive.

All newly hired adjuncts are observed in their first semester of teaching. The support begins with a comprehensive new hire orientation. They are introduced to the college, review job expectations, learn the types of support available, and identify areas of strength in their teaching and areas of opportunity for growth. With this information collected, adjunct faculty support managers looked at trends and identified needs to create training and workshops and make better connections with the new hires. Adjuncts frequently travel from institution to institution, teaching multiple classes. This leaves little time for interaction or making connections with their places of employment. Making the connections with adjuncts was a driving force to foster an environment of inclusion, support, and feeling connected to the institution.

An article from *Harvard Business Review* in 2019 stated that 40% of people surveyed said they feel isolated at work, which has resulted in lower commitment and engagement. They further discuss how diversity and inclusion training neglect to address the need to feel included or any attachment to the place of work (Carr et al., 2019). Understanding the significant impact that isolation can have on adjuncts, the adjunct faculty support department worked toward building opportunities within the observation process to include evidence-based interventions. These interventions serve as touchpoints where interactions can build a sense of belonging for the adjunct faculty. A warm welcome and fostering support starts at onboarding and continues with a new hire orientation. The next point of intervention occurs with the classroom observation evaluation to identify teaching practices used and areas the department can support. After the classroom visit, a scheduled post-observation meeting is booked. Attendees include the adjunct, the support manager, and a representative from the division, including the discipline chair or dean.

The collaborative approach was meant to inspire adjuncts while working on relationship building. Conversations during these meetings include various topics, such as student engagement, connecting with students, and possible professional development opportunities. The relationship building that occurs is significant, as the entire process and investment do not exist at most institutions across the nation. Hazan and Shaver's (1990) findings have revealed that securely attached employees demonstrate more significant adjustment to work; therefore, showing the importance of attachment relationships in a work environment.

As the department conducts observations, they work toward improving the climate that will change its culture. They are vested in their student's success through the professional development of their adjunct faculty.

Discussion: World of Organization Development in Higher Education

The history of relationships often influences organizations and institutions alike. As discussed in chapter three, colleges and universities need to invest in quality teaching to foster an environment of successful culture change for adjunct faculty and students. Overall, three themes emerged from the findings that play a significant role in organizational change: 1) *workplace culture*, 2) *attachment theory*, and 3) *meaning of work*.

Workplace Culture

A means of understanding workplace culture involves Schein's (2004) three culture levels, which include artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. Artifacts are surface-level observations. In the initial review, the pre-existing data analyzed for this research did not show a vast improvement in student success or retention for courses taught by observed adjunct faculty. While it could be assumed that a department dedicated to the support of adjunct faculty may increase student success and retention, this was not the case and led to further investigation beyond a surface level. While an overall review may not have shown significant percentage increases, once the data was disaggregated into sub-categories, it painted a different picture of behavior. Students of observed adjunct faculty persisted at a higher percentage rate than students taught by unobserved adjunct faculty. Identifying the factors that promote persistence would be an opportunity to develop improved best practices in higher education.

Schein's (2004) second level of espoused beliefs and values can provide a better understanding of an institution's culture. This may include looking at what adjunct faculty and students say and how they behave. Their beliefs give context to the culture of the institution. The data showed that adjunct faculty teaching three or more years increased student success rate and student retention. Multiple factors may have contributed to the positive impact. Observed adjunct faculty may feel more comfortable at the institution and better understand the students they serve at this college. They may have utilized the support from the adjunct faculty support office and thus, be more aware of the options available for student support and where to refer their students if needed. Lastly, adjuncts, over time, may have built attachment relationships resulting in positive behavior. Understanding that time plays a key role leads us to identify opportunities for support for those teaching less than three years. A factor that may play an integral role in affecting adjuncts with less than three years' experience includes the number of course preparations. More seasoned faculty may not have as many teaching preps as newer faculty, which can add a variable affecting student success and retention. This area may not have been addressed or supported in the past but can undoubtedly offer perspective for future research.

The third level is basic underlying assumptions and are the unspoken rules that guide behavior (Schein, 2004). Some may teach a certain way because it was modeled for them by how they were taught. While this may not be the best way, it may also be how it has always been done or believed to be the expectation. Identifying the behaviors is one step toward changing the culture. "Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of culture as a concept is that it points us to phenomena that are below the surface, that are powerful in their impact but invisible and to a considerable degree unconscious" (Schein, 2004, p. 14). Analyzing the data and seeing that weekend courses have a significantly lower rate of student success and retention than the daytime and evening weekday courses leads to several questions and thoughts for the next steps. This would involve looking at the historical data for the courses taught on the weekends and identifying factors that would help adjunct faculty teaching on weekends and their students enrolled in those courses to be successful. The use of qualitative data in future research may lead toward a further understanding of the type of students taking the courses, their needs, and the support needed for both students

and adjunct faculty of weekend courses. This section of the data may also be due to the small sample size; however, the findings should drive the interest to look at trend data.

Identifying culture involves looking at how the institution emphasizes identifying problems before they occur and rapidly implementing manageable, workable, and efficient solutions. Due to the pandemic, many have been forced to look at this rapid change scenario and higher education effects. Looking at ways that higher education institutions have adapted to remote teaching during a global pandemic can say a lot by the flexibility in response to external demands. Additional adaptive culture characteristics include an emphasis on trust and a willingness to make changes in culturally set behaviors (Burke, 2017). When looking at adaptive change for the data and analyzing the areas showing a significant positive change from the pre-observation to the post-observation data, one group showed the most improvement. Hispanic adjunct faculty had the most significant percentage increases in student success and retention than all other race and ethnicity groups at the institution. This may be a result of cultural influence and could play a role in intercultural communication. According to Hofstede (1984), this group would be assigned to the collectivist dimension, as they place a high value on collective interests. The Hispanic culture is also known to have stronger ties among a group and family.

Attachment Theory

With an increase in hiring and more reliance on adjunct faculty across the nation, leaders must devote time to this often-underserved group of professionals. “Although attachment theory focuses largely on experiences in close relationships, its relevance to workplace behavior has been established both theoretically and empirically” (Johnstone & Feeney, 2015, p. 413). Through support and secure attachment that promotes effective workplace behavior, it builds community and confidence by promoting positive interactions, mentorships, and peer relationships with coworkers. In the life of an adjunct, this is not always the case. Often, adjuncts work at multiple institutions to make a career out of part-time teaching. When this is the situation, there may be little time to invest in relationships at each place of work. Most institutions have little to no opportunities for adjuncts to make connections with or feel a part of the college community in which they work. Traveling from institution to institution leads adjunct faculty to take on the life of a “road warrior educator.” Understanding that building community supports workers in feeling attached to the institution and others makes it crucial that relationship building be a leadership goal. Looking at how the work environment influences development and the maintenance of relationships between coworkers are tied to leadership, coaching and mentoring, and the relationship between the adjunct and the institution, adding another lens while analyzing the data.

The data for observed adjunct faculty teaching for three or more years had more improvement in student success and retention than those teaching less than three years may align with the understanding that relationships build over time. This is all part of attachment theory directly relating to OD and behavior. Researchers studied how attachment dynamics in work relationships are connected to valued organizational outcomes, including proactivity (Wu & Parker, 2017). While adjuncts that teach four or more classes had the largest

percent increase for student success and those teaching three or more classes had the largest percent increase for retention. This may be due to feeling more attached and connected to the institution, peers, and students. More classes may be a factor that results in adjuncts teaching at fewer institutions versus adjuncts that teach fewer courses may indeed need to teach at more institutions, spreading themselves thin. More time on campus may support the attachment theory of building community, confidence, and benefits for student success and retention. In a study by Wu and Parker (2017), research showed that “leaders can help insecurely attached individuals see themselves as more competent and become more autonomously motivated, and thereby to behave proactively” (p. 1027).

Attachment theory looks at faculty connections to their peers and leaders and between faculty and their students. A large part of teaching is the relationships and connections formed in the classroom. Building community successfully and being proactive versus reactive will affect the class dynamics. In reviewing research written about the teacher-student relationship and looking at the teacher’s motivation to change their management style, connections can be made to address the lack of increase in some areas reviewed for student success and retention. “By taking teachers’ motivation into account, the reversion to old patterns of aggressive behavior suggests that the conscious motivation for change may be mediated by an unconscious motive to remain the same” (Riley, 2010, p. 54). Using this lens and looking at the student success and retention data, there are declines for both from the observed semester to the post-observation semester. This data aligns with the study on attachment theory and addresses a need for providing additional support through professional development. It could mean that not enough support was provided for the changes to be maintained or that the changes were too burdensome. The adjunct faculty member may have been more comfortable reverting to the original behaviors.

Meaning of Work

Leaders play a vital role in increasing their employees’ motivation by making connections between their work and the mission and vision of the institution. “Leaders who most effectively motivate their employees do not simply assign work responsibilities but inspire persistence by communicating transcendent messages about the organization’s ultimate aspirations” (Carton, 2018, p. 326). Data points where this may be connected include areas of faculty experience and course sections taught. Both student success and retention increased with adjuncts with three or more years of teaching at the institution. Over time, adjuncts may feel more connected with their work and their students to form a deeper understanding of the meaning of work and its impact on student success. Over time, confidence builds, and skills may be refined or enhanced. This was significant for students that had adjunct faculty teaching remedial courses. These courses may have students enrolled that have the most learning gains to be made. Adjuncts may see more of the impact of their efforts and the connection between their work and their students’ success. Research conducted on faculty members that participated in an evidence-based training program showed promising results.

Additional research conducted on the meaning of work with higher education faculty looked at aspects that drive emotion and sense of being. “On

the meaning of work for higher education professors, there seems to be a tension between pleasure and suffering, with the enjoyment coming from human contact, the act of teaching, financial independence, and schedule flexibility” (Irigaray et al., 2019, p. 6). They found that some of the challenges included work relationships and frequent travel affecting their personal lives. This helps identify factors that contribute to improved student success for observed adjunct faculty teaching four or more courses per semester. Not traveling to as many schools to teach additional classes, adjuncts may feel more connected to the institution by spending more time at one or fewer locations.

Recommendations for Future Research

This preliminary investigation shows limited evidence for a positive effect of an observation evaluation on student success rates and retention rates. From the data, more evidence is present for a positive impact on persistence rates. Where observed, the positive effects of an observation evaluation usually also occur for the difference between pre-observation and sections taught concurrently to observation evaluation. One possible explanation for this may be that the adjunct faculty’s process of being observed in and of itself affects the student experience, not necessarily, changes made the following semester where the observation happens. Observed adjunct faculty tended to have students who were more likely to persist than comparison faculty’s students were. There may be some selection bias still present in the study despite efforts to match comparison sections to target sections’ characteristics.

The current research analysis did not measure and assess the possible moderating factor of development following the observation evaluation cycle. It may be that what was observed was a limited effect of post-observation improvement. This may be because the effect is only contained among adjunct faculty who completed and engaged in a post-observation meeting and development opportunities. Since this data did not include additional semesters after the observation cycle, a future iteration could explore and disentangle this effect. Looking at the same adjuncts observed and tracking data for additional semesters could significantly impact time versus a snapshot over three consecutive semesters. Future research would benefit from looking at these same observed adjuncts over time to identify student success or retention trends after adjuncts completed any training or professional development opportunities. Future versions of this study may benefit from looking at areas with a high percentage of decline in student success and retention. One area includes the weekend courses, perhaps identifying the programs that offer the weekend courses, doing program reviews to determine the courses’ success and the students’ success over time.

CONCLUSION

While support for adjuncts varies from institution to institution, they deserve collegial treatment. Institutions should require full-time faculty to bridge the gap between the adjuncts and the institution. “Full-time faculty should make sure adjuncts are included in the intellectual and social life of the university, rather than treated like arms-length, contract workers (Brennan & Magness, 2018, p.

64). Understanding that students no longer learn effectively from hours of lecture, changing the approaches to teaching used in the classroom, and providing support to adjuncts will alter both the students' and the adjuncts' experiences. This requires a new way of utilizing OD and instructional design to change the climate and culture in higher education. As educators are encouraged to identify their students' needs, institutions should be encouraged to identify their adjuncts' needs. It is time to re-evaluate and assess the way institutions foster a positive, supportive learning environment for students and adjunct faculty.

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Figures and Table:

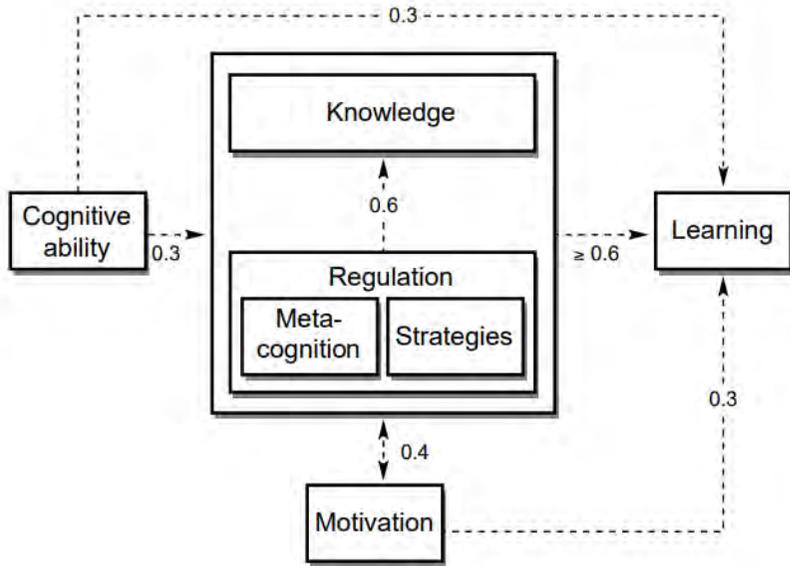


Figure 1. ICML With Decimal Values Indicating Typical Statistical Correlations Between the Model's Components (Crippen et al., 2005, p. 637)



Figure 2. Bloom's Cognitive and Knowledge Dimensions

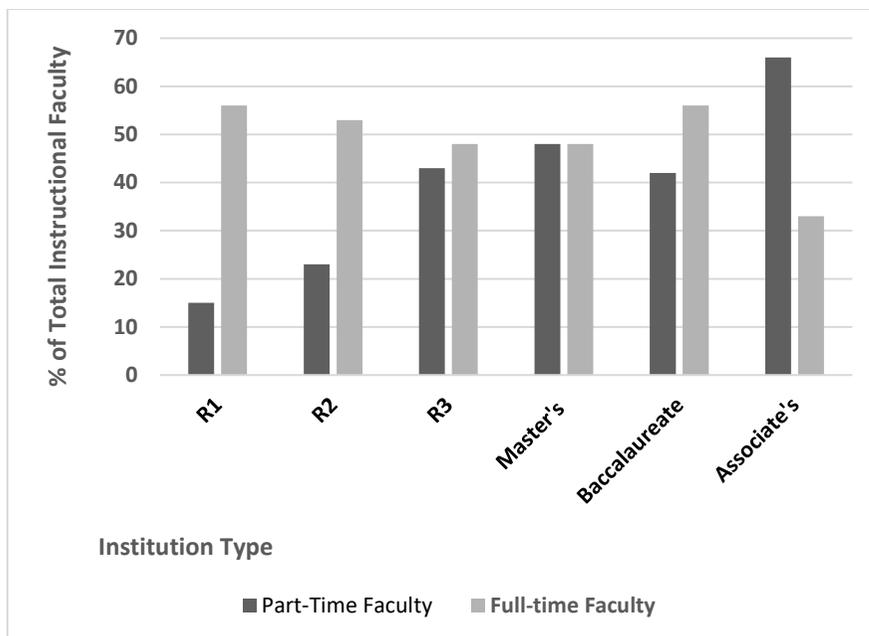


Figure 3. Distribution of the Institutional Faculty Workforce by Appointment and Institution Type, 2016; Source: Adapted from AAUP research and IPEDS data; accessed July 3, 2018.

Group	Success Rate, N=218,973		Retention Rate, N=239,913		Persistence Rate, N=178,507	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Not Observed	178,441	77	178,441	89	146,228	63
Pre-Observation	122,298	75	12,298	88	12,298	68
Concurrent Observation	4,892	72	4,892	88	4,892	72
Target Section	6,516	76	6,516	89	6,516	71
Post-Observation	16,826	76	16,826	89	8,573	73

Table 1. Overall Results for Adjunct Faculty