

Elements of Transformational Leadership in the Attitudes, Experiences, and Perceptions from Higher Education Faculty

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ABSTRACT

The utilization and reliance of contingent faculty have grown and continue to grow more and more at institutions of higher education. Research suggests that contingent faculty have both positive and negative experiences in academia, and one common perception is that contingent faculty are underappreciated and unfairly compensated. Theoretically, contingent experiences, whether positive or negative, may influence their leadership development. This leadership style that manifests from these experiences may have implications and consequences in and out of the classroom. Currently, there is a demand and dire need for leadership in academia and institutions of higher education, businesses, and corporations. Leadership in academia is one of the key drivers for educating, molding, teaching, and transforming students into future leaders; future leaders that will be an influence in all corners of society. The purpose of this exploratory study was to garner, both qualitatively and phenomenologically, the attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of higher education faculty. This qualitative phenomenological study interviewed a sample of higher education faculty (N = 21) garnering their attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of working in higher education, then examined those responses seeking out elements of transformational leadership. Eight themes were identified: (1) leader/follower connection, (2) inspiration/inspirational motivation, (3) support/individualized consideration, (4) vision, (5) intellectual stimulation, (6) charisma/idealized influence, (7) morals, values, and ethics (moral compass) and (8) pseudotransformational leadership. These findings are vitally important because these experiences have the potential to create transformational or pseudotransformational leaders in contingent, faculty, higher education faculty, and students.

Keywords: transformational leadership, pseudotransformational leadership, contingent faculty, higher education faculty, leadership development, leadership style

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INTRODUCTION

Higher education is a place where change, learning, growth, and transformation can and does occur. This transformation occurs at all levels of higher education, i.e., administration, faculty, and the student. Part and parcel of higher education is social interaction, which occurs, and its effects are learning, growth, and transformation. The aim of colleges, universities, and institutions of higher education is to educate, prepare, and transform students into future leaders and theoretically develop a new self. Higher education has a purpose to provide students with the education and resources that prepare them to live, work, and participate in society.

According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (n.d.), the number of part-time faculty increased by 72% between 1999 and 2011. However, it decreased by 7% between 2011 and 2018. Adjunct faculty utilization is rapidly growing in higher education, and so is the reliance on their need (Landrum, 2009). According to Bernhagen (2017) approximately three out of four workers who teach college students are contingent professors. Yakoboski (2016) writes that adjunct faculty are growing and that 79% of contingent faculty work for a college or university. Burns (2013) writes that adjunct faculty are no longer “adjunct” to college and university operations, but are central to them, and are an important part of the professoriate (p. 31). Frye (2017) writes that contingent faculty employment and utilization will increase well into the future.

Research suggests that adjunct experiences in academia are less than favorable (Wallis & Kelley, 2018). Cronin and Smith (2011) found that whether it is due to mistreatment or working conditions, there is truth that adjunct faculty are unhappy. Mintz (2021) writes that contingent faculty suffer some indignities such as low pay and low job security. Throughout this study, contingent and adjunct were used interchangeably. The overreliance and dependency on adjuncts in higher education or *adjunctification*, which is the increase in students taught and influenced by contingent faculty, has increased as well. With such a high use of contingent faculty in academia, one might expect more research given to their plight, especially since most of these adjunct faculty are educating and leading our students, who are future leaders. Adjuncts have experiences working in higher education that can influence their leadership style, and this study seeks to examine the development of leadership style in individuals as educational leaders.

Leadership is the deciding factor of progression or digression, success or failure, and growth or decline within and throughout our global society in organizations, institutions, or departments, etc. Price and Weiss (2013) write that leadership is a term that is widely utilized with a myriad of definitions, meanings, and conceptions. According to Northouse (2010) leadership is defined as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 3). Leaders and leadership come in many forms, with various guiding epistemologies, ideologies, and philosophies. Inherent to leadership is the leader and follower process. Leaders and followers are inextricably connected. Leaders need followers, and followers need leaders. Boyle et al. (2018) argue that an individual’s leadership style must be honed over time. Northouse (2010) goes on to define leadership as a process that is akin to management which includes influence, working with people, and effective goal and objective accomplishment.

It is worth noting that there are some adjuncts who have gained many years of experience with one institution of higher education, function as part of the institution’s professoriate, and are seen by students as no different than full-time tenured faculty (Sternson et al., 2010), and have not or do not experience the downside to teaching as an adjunct faculty. These experiences,

whether good or bad, are beneficial in exploring further to uncover if and how they shape leadership style because ultimately, the student is affected. This leads one to consider whether these experiences may be transformative in nature, contain elements of transformational leadership, and may affect leadership style development, and consequently students. This is an issue that affects all higher education faculty and administration.

LITERATURE REVIEW/CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

Historical Background

There was a time when most students were taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty and there has been a push to hire more non-tenure track and part-time faculty instructors which began just over 40 years ago (Wallis and Kelley, 2018). Higher education has been relying on structurally dependent on part-time adjunct faculty (Wyles, 1998). *Adjunctification* occurs when institutions of higher education increase utilization and reliance on adjunct faculty rather than tenure-track faculty. Adjunctification leads to other issues faced by the college or university, adjunct faculty, and students.

Wallis and Kelley (2018) go on to write that during the mid-1970s, as states were losing their state funding, they began to implement a more affordable alternative, part-time adjunct faculty. Wallis and Kelley (2018) go on to write that colleges and universities have reduced the number of tenure-track and full-time professors and relied on hiring more adjuncts and part-time professors as a way to cut and trim their budget. Higher education's use of adjunct and part-time instructors is cheap and inexpensive (Nica, 2018), so it is easy to see how hiring part-time professors and adjuncts has become the standard, norm, and model at and for institutions of higher education. Adjunct faculty perform the same essential "work," but the benefits, compensation, and length of employment are not, resulting in receiving less favorable courses, class time, and little governance and influence over department and curricular content (Cronin & Smith, 2011).

Characteristics of Adjuncts

To comprehend the plight of the adjunct, one must understand the fundamentals of adjunct faculty, such as benefits, or lack thereof, credentials, pay, job security, and role and responsibilities. These characteristics are a consensus of the adjunct faculty aimed literature. According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) (2014), a contingent faculty is defined as part-time or full-time faculty at an institution of higher education that is not on a tenure track and share the common characteristic that institutions make little to no long-term commitment to those faculty holding these positions. There is a myriad of titles given to contingent faculty: lecturer, adjunct, professor of practice, and instructor. Whatever the name, McNaughtan et al. (2018) point out that institutions of higher education utilization of adjuncts may be either a) the result of unstable funding, or b) part of the strategic plan. This use of adjuncts by institutions of higher education may be due to convenience and/or affordability (Sternson et al., 2010).

With regards to an educational requirement, adjuncts must possess a Master's, which most do, or a Doctoral degree to teach in higher education, and some institutions may require some previous teaching experience (Resilient Educator, 2020). Adjuncts are generally hired part-

time, on a contractual basis from semester to semester, and their role and responsibilities may vary from institution to institution. Sternson et al. (2010) write that adjunct faculty may offer some professional experience in a field that may be outside of faculty members. Adjuncts may teach online or traditional face-to-face courses at one or multiple institutions. According to Yakoboski (2016) adjuncts may be employed to teach a single course or multiple courses and are often remedial, introductory, and lower-level.

Pay and compensation for adjuncts vary from state to state and institution to institution. Adjunct faculty earn significantly less than their colleagues, even those at the same institution (McNaughtan et al., 2018). In some cases, adjuncts have some of the same responsibilities, such as interacting and working with students, developing and managing course syllabi, grading and reporting outcomes, advising students, participating in professional development activities, and of course teaching (Resilient Educator, 2020). Most adjunct faculty are paid per course, averaging \$2,700- \$3,500 (McNaughtan et al., 2018; Miller, 2015), seldom offered benefits, and often teach more courses than a full-time faculty member (Meixner et al., 2010). Furthermore, adjunct faculty will seek government assistance or other avenues of income, such as working for multiple institutions, due to the instability and lack of compensation.

ADJUNCT EXPERIENCES

At the core of this study are adjunct experiences and is one of the driving forces of this study. The literature provides examples and stories of adjunct experiences which perpetuate the idea that these experiences have profound effects. Adjunct faculty face the barrier of distance, physically and psychologically, from their peers (Huffman, 1997). Little is known regarding contingent faculty experiences because literature is focused on the community college level context rather than at four-year institutions, and current literature is focused on their teaching effectiveness at four-year institutions (Kimmel & Fairchild, 2017). McNaughtan et al. (2018) writes, “They [adjuncts] have become an integral part of the higher education workforce, yet our understanding of their experiences in academia illustrates the many challenges and struggles they face as short-term, contingent employees” (p. 11). If institutions of higher education and educational leaders are to empathize with contingent faculty, then more attention and research into contingent faculty is needed and recommended. Moreover, research pertaining to contingent faculty experiences at colleges and universities is warranted. Through awareness, empathy, and understanding, change can occur to improve adjunct experiences and conditions. The experiences that adjunct faculty face start with simplicity and those things needed to operate as an effective instructor.

The extent of contingent faculty experiences is broad and range from small grievances, such as lack of basic items/materials, i.e., email accounts, to large grievances, such as lack of health benefits and opportunities for promotion. More specifically, Kezar and Maxey (2014) report that items and requests include technology, such as access to copiers and fax machines, little to no office space, and administrative support. Wang’s (2014) article is also consistent with adjunct faculty’s grievance that faculty which are not on the tenure-track lack many of the resources needed to teach, much less conduct research. Furthermore, Kezar and Maxey (2014) point out harmful practices such as the practice of last-minute hiring, lack of evaluation of performance, low wages, exclusion from decision-making and participation in faculty meetings all lead to the degradation of the academic profession and “threatens to drive talented and committed educators out” (p. 34).

Kimmel and Fairchild's (2017) study examined experiences and perspectives of part-time faculty at a public, regional institution which sought adjunct faculty narratives of their teaching experience, how they viewed their role at the university, and what were some recommendations that administrators could implement to achieve success. This exploratory study found four emerging themes among part-time adjunct faculty: a) evaluation of teaching, b) student-centered instruction, c) instructor use of technology, and d) a sense of disconnection. The study exhibited themes with positive experiences such as making a difference in a student's academic career and the opportunity to interact with students. The study also provided themes with negative experiences such as little to lack of evaluation teaching methods and feeling disconnected from the university and full-time faculty.

Pyram and Roth (2018) conducted a qualitative single case study which explored the affiliation need of career college adjunct faculty and the influence that their working conditions have on their commitment, loyalty, professional growth, motivation, and connectedness to the institutions they serve. In their study, Pyram and Roth (2018) found that despite the lack of fellowship, interaction, and participation in professional development activities, adjunct faculty remain loyal to their students and motivated to teach. Furthermore, Pyram and Roth (2018) found that the participants felt a lack of affiliation, motivation, and inclusion. The study was limited to adjunct faculty from a South Florida institution, and cannot be generalized, yet it continues to show the less than positive experiences adjunct faculty go through.

Additional studies examining adjunct experiences have been conducted and ascertained themes of outreach, challenges, and skill development (Meixner et al., 2010). Meixner et al. (2010) conducted a study which consisted of 85 participants at a mid-sized undergraduate public university in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The study was qualitative and utilized open-ended questions in their interviews to obtain insight into the "nuanced and layered experience of part-time faculty members" (p.144). Meixner et al. (2010) found three core themes: receiving outreach, navigating challenges, and developing skills, and several sub-themes (p. 141). Once again, this study does not examine how these experiences affect leadership style. One of the sub-themes of developing skills found was that adjuncts expressed interest in gaining knowledge to advance their teaching (Meixner et al., 2010).

Literature has shown that adjunct faculty interactions and experiences in their department are affectual and produce common themes that appear to be less than positive. Haviland et al. (2017) examined collegiality experiences of 38 full-time non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) at a public comprehensive university, and religiously affiliated research university. Haviland et al. (2017) found four themes: a) work and roles, b) status and hierarchy, c) voice and input, and d) social inclusion and exclusion experiences, and that these experiences or interactions, created a "separate but not quite equal" status. The study did not examine or find any data pointing to leadership style, rather what was found was NTTF experiences in an expected leadership role in service committees. Literature suggests that contingent faculty experiences are affectual. Haviland et al. (2017) points out that interactions NTTF have reflect role ambiguity which creates a "separate but not quite equal" status for NTTF. This study is interested in examining how adjunct faculty attitudes, experiences, and perceptions may affect their leadership style.

Adjunct faculty experiences vary from positive to negative and can come in the forms of lack of email to lack of health benefits. In some instances, adjunct experiences can be construed as mistreatment. Cronin and Smith (2011) studied how adjunct faculty respondents reacted to mistreatment and was shaped by identification with their occupational rank and source of mistreatment. The study found that administrative mistreatment increased the willingness of

adjunct faculty respondents to protest and engage in workplace deviance, and that adjunct faculty that experienced mistreatment decreased their willingness to protest (Cronin & Smith, 2011). Furthermore, the study found that adjunct faculty “respondents who identified with occupational rank were less sensitive to differences in mistreatment” (Cronin & Smith, 2011, p. 2352). As we see with this research, there is truth to the idea that adjunct faculty are unhappy, whether it is due to working conditions or mistreatment. This quantitative study would benefit from expanding with a qualitative component. Moreover, this study does not explore how this mistreatment may shape leadership style.

Extreme Adjunct Experiences

Literature has provided insight into stories and experiences of adjuncts that have been positive and worthwhile. However, there is also literature that has provided an insight into the hardships and consequences of adjunct faculty. Mary Vojtko’s story has many of the same aspects that other adjuncts experience but with a more extreme and tragic ending. Mary Vojtko was an adjunct faculty member who served at Duquesne University, had no health benefits savings, was forced to work into her 80s, and died after she was let go of her 25 years of continuous service (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). Vojtko was earning less than \$25k per year for teaching eight courses and living on the edge of homelessness when she was told by her doctor that she had six months to live resulting from her battle with cancer (Hanlon, 2019). Stories and experiences such as Mary Vojtko’s are tragic and unfortunate and is one consequence suffered by adjunct faculty working in an abusive and exploitative system (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). Some of the experiences that adjunct faculty face consist of those that involve being denied support to allow them to perform their job. Adjunct faculty experiences can range from things such as not having an office or access to a work email to the more extreme, as seen in Mary Vojtko’s case.

Alternate Views of Adjunct Faculty Experiences

Brennan and Magness (2018) were skeptical that adjunct faculty are exploited, mistreated, and unhappy by arguing to disprove the exploitation. Brennan and Magness (2018) offer a comparison and they argue that the Adjunct Exploitation Thesis is weak saying that many cases rely on mistaken empirical premises, and that most arguments fail to show that adjuncts are exploited. Moreover, they argue that the narrative of adjunct exploitation is from a subset of adjunct faculty which does not prove exploitation of the larger whole. They argue that adjuncts choose to be in the career field, are paid a living wage, and possess positive views of their jobs. Leslie and Gappa (2002) make a similar argument about the stereotypical adjunct faculty stating that there is only a small fraction of part-timers living on starvation wages while holding down multiple part-time jobs. Furthermore, Leslie and Gappa (2002) write that most contingent faculty are in fact not seeking full-time employment, but rather for other reasons such as satisfaction in teaching. Finally, Brennan and Magness (2018) concede that those numerous characteristics of adjuncting are undesirable, and that adjunct faculty have legitimate grievances with their salaries and/or working conditions.

Adjuncts at Community College

Adjuncts are used heavily at community colleges (Sternson et al, 2010). Ellis (2013) wrote about adjunct faculty having demotivating factors such as their treatment by the college, ambiguity of job security and lack of benefits. Moreover, Ellis (2013) found that the common feelings that adjunct faculty express are isolation, marginalization, and lack of recognition. This literature reiterates the negative experiences that adjunct faculty have at community colleges. The author speaks professional development as one of the ideas from community colleges from across the country but does not mention leadership style.

Usher (2015) is an English adjunct instructor at two community colleges and wrote about some of her experiences as a black woman in higher education. Usher details the long and difficult road of working as adjunct faculty. During a conversation with her supervisor, she felt that she had to walk a tightrope trying to give the right responses, as she felt that that was a struggle of adjunct faculty. Usher (2015) speaks about how the conversation about her performance with her supervisor was humiliating, frustrating, negative and included irrational assumptions.

Online Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct faculty often teach at multiple institutions of higher education and/or often times teach online courses. Of the many duties that adjunct faculty perform, teaching online classes is one of them. There is a lack of research on adjunct faculty online teaching experiences (Barnett, 2018). Colleges and universities hire adjunct faculty to teach online and to accommodate their increased online enrollment (Barnett, 2018). There are a few items that adjunct faculty must have to be able to teach and perform their job and sometimes adjunct faculty lack technological items such as email accounts, access to copies, or administrative support (Kezar & Maxey, 2014).

Adjunct faculty consists of a myriad of walks of life in terms of characteristics. That is, adjunct faculty vary in their characteristics, descriptions, and motivations. Starcher (2017) conducted a quantitative study that examined characteristics of part-time online instructors from 19 faith-based institutions in the United States. Starcher (2017) found that online instructors were similar in several characteristics ranging from age, income, and motivation to become an online instructor. The study revealed instructor's roles and goals, environment and teaching loads, and instructor satisfaction, however, leadership was not mentioned, nor was there mention of how experiences may have shaped leadership style. Starcher (2017) suggests research be expanded qualitatively to better appreciate the experiences of these instructors.

Research aimed at adjunct faculty online experiences is far and few between. Barnett (2018) conducted a quantitative study with 77 participants from a for-profit university in the United States, which investigated the relationship between dimensions of the Full Range Leadership Theory, which includes, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors, and overall job satisfaction. Barnett (2018) performed a multiple linear regression and found that "transformational leadership was a significant predictor of job satisfaction and increased overall satisfaction when present, transactional leadership was a significant predictor of overall job satisfaction, but demonstrated a negative relationship, and found that laissez-faire leadership was not a significant predictor of overall job satisfaction" (p. 226). Furthermore, Barnett (2018) found that if transformational leadership behaviors decreased, overall job satisfaction decreased as well. This research is important because it studies the relationship between adjunct faculty experiences and its relationship with transformational leadership. Finally, Barnett (2018) argues that her data indicates that online teaching adjunct faculty who are

often isolated from their colleagues and leaders, appear to benefit from transformational leadership. What this study lacks are the qualitative component to expand on the attitudes, experiences, feelings, or perceptions and those effects therein.

Qualitative studies have examined adjunct faculty experiences teaching online and its effects. Dolan (2011) examined the experiences of 28 adjunct faculty members exploring their views on whether periodically meeting face-to-face with management and peers as the potential to affect their motivation on the job and consequently the quality they provide to students. Dolan's (2011) study suggests that institutions must address their efforts to improve adjunct's sense of affiliation and loyalty to their institution, which will consequently positively affect student retention levels. This study sought to explore how isolation of adjunct faculty experiences teaching remotely might affect their motivation and consequently their performance in the online education environment (Dolan, 2011). The study sought to determine how performance would be affected, but it did not address leadership.

Adjunct Unionization

Literature has been consistent when it comes to the working conditions of adjunct faculty in the United States. There is a correlation between adjunct faculty experiences and their unionization. Yakoboski (2016) suggests that unionization may stem from a level of dissatisfaction among adjunct faculty. Edwards and Tolley (2018) write that adjunct faculty have started to fight back which explains why they have turned to labor unions and collective bargaining to improve their working conditions.

One grievance that adjunct faculty contend with is the reason why they are utilized overwhelmingly: cheap and flexible labor. In his article, Miller (2015), wrote about how shortly after World War II, higher education faculty largely consisted of upper-middle-class white men until around the 1970s when academia started to see a shift in the workforce. Miller (2015) goes on to write that as the academic study body landscape was changing due to the increase in veterans and immigrants going back to school, administration's solution was to turn to cheap and flexible labor. Joe Berry, an activist, labor historian, and contingent faculty member, states that while university administration were not actively changing faculty make-up with adjuncts, they became addicted to it (Miller, 2015). Furthermore, Gary Rhoades, a higher education scholar, called this trend "academic capitalism," which he defines as the "increased managerial control of the work and the employees," and had this to say, "it is easier to control employees who have less job security and whose working conditions are such that you can easily non renew them. You don't have to worry about layoffs when you have large numbers of contingent faculty" (Miller, 2015). This notion of cheap labor is also consistent with Wang's (2014) article which talked about how Democrats in the House Committee on Education and the Workforce released a report that pointed to the trend of higher education replacing tenure-track positions with "cheap labor" in the form of contingent faculty. Finally, this is consistent with Wang's (2014) article that this practice of hiring low-cost lecturers and adjuncts to teach has made increasing financial sense for colleges and universities.

Let it be clear that this paper is not making an argument for or against unionization. Rather, by understanding adjunct faculty history in higher education and their experiences, this correlation can be easily understood and is helpful in illuminating the circumstances and grievances of adjunct faculty.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This qualitative study interviewed higher education faculty to attain rich descriptive responses which were examined, seeking elements of transformational leadership. Utilizing the phenomenological approach, 21 higher education faculty in the Southern United States were interviewed. Semi-structured and open-ended interviews were employed to interview contingent and tenured faculty to garner their experiences. The research question that guided the study was: Which elements of transformational leadership were present in the experiences of higher education faculty?

Population and Sample

The population and sample included participants from surrounding South Texas colleges and universities, as well as Oklahoma, and Arkansas community colleges and four-year universities. In total, participants were from two, two-year community colleges, and 3, four-year universities. Other participants were acquired through word of mouth and the snowball effect. In total, the study aimed for 20 participants and acquired 21 (N = 21). The participants included adjuncts, lecturers, an assistant professor, associate professors, a department chair, directors, a former VP of student affairs, tenured, and tenure-track higher education faculty. Of the 21 participants, eleven were female (N = 11), and ten were male (N = 10). There were 8 Ph.D.'s and 13 non-Ph.D.'s. The participants combined for 269.5 years of teaching experience. The participants' field of study included Behavioral and Social Sciences, Engineering, Education, and Physics and Geosciences.

Ethical Data Collection Procedures

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained. Collection of data was conducted ethically, confidentially and with the utmost respect for the participants and their sensitive information. No harm befell the participants, as the names of the participants and the colleges and universities remain anonymous and/or pseudonyms were utilized. It was crucial and imperative that participants felt comfortable and safe, so that accurate and in-depth data could be collected. Bias is truth and one person's bias is another's truth. Cadena (2019) writes that in qualitative research endeavors, biases may be recognized by the study participants which can then affect the responses. Attaining qualitative data included multiple methods, such as interviews, surveys/questionnaires, and any related documents.

Contingent and other higher education faculty from various disciplines, colleges, and universities in the southwestern United States were contacted to be interviewed. Once the study participants were obtained, data collection commenced, recorded, and maintained to ensure confidentiality. Ethical data collection included providing the participants with an informed consent form and instructions. Once consent forms were collected, the interview process began. Interviews were conducted through the video and web conferencing platform Zoom.

A thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the qualitative and phenomenological data that was acquired. The thematic analysis for this study, transformational leadership theory, was used as the primary theoretical framework to create the categories and themes that were used as benchmarks. Coding began after all interviews were recorded and transcribed. While reading the

transcripts, notes were taken and marked for coding. Transcripts were read and reread to locate recurring thoughts, words, phrases that could potentially manifest into the form of repeated patterns.

RESULTS

Categories were created using the theoretical framework of transformational leadership theory. Eight main categories were extracted from the transformational leadership theory serving as benchmarks. They include: (1) leader/follower connection, (2) inspirational motivation, (3) individualized consideration, (4) vision, (5) intellectual stimulation, (6) idealized influence/charisma, (7) morals, values, and ethics, (moral compass) and (8) pseudotransformational leadership. Finally, this last category was created not from transformational leadership, but from its antithesis, pseudotransformational leadership. Moreover, elements of pseudotransformational leadership were present as well. The findings revealed that higher education faculty attitudes, experiences, and perspectives all contained some elements of transformational leadership.

Theme 1: Leader/Follower Connection

The leader/follower connection is defined as when a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leaders and the follower; followers and leaders are inextricably bound together in the transformation process (Northouse, 2010). For this category, participants either responded that they experienced a leader/follower connection as the leader or as the follower. Sixty-two percent ($n = 13$) of the participants reported having a leader/follower connection, either as the leader or the follower.

Theme 2: Inspirational Motivation

Inspiration can be defined as inspiring followers through motivation to become committed to and a part of the shared vision in the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1994). A minority of participants ($n = 6$, 28.5%) revealed inspiring others, being inspired themselves through motivation.

Theme 3: Individualized Consideration

Individualized consideration is a leadership factor in which the leader provides a supportive environment and climate conducive to the needs of the followers (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Northouse, 2010). A large percentage of the participants ($n = 15$, 71.4%) responded that they received support or were supportive of others.

Theme 4: Vision

Northouse (2010) writes that transformational leaders possess a vision that can be defined as an organizational map, that manifests from the collective interests of those individuals within the organization, that gives meaning as it clarifies an organization's identity. Bennis and Nanus (1985) argue that transformational leaders possess a clear vision, which is the image of a future

that is believable, realistic and attractive, for an organization. The vision is created by the transformational leader and is a focal point (Northouse, 2010). A small minority, 47.6% (n = 10) reported their department, their chair, or themselves have a vision.

Theme 5: Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation, according to Bass and Avolio (1994), is leadership that stimulates followers to challenge their own beliefs and values, and to be creative and innovative. A minority of participants, 9% (n = 2) remarked on intellectual stimulation. It should be noted that although this number is extremely low, participants were never directly asked about intellectual stimulation.

Theme 6: Idealized Influence/Charisma

According to Northouse (2010), idealized influence describes leaders who act similarly to role models, and followers want to emulate them. Weber (1947) defines charisma as a personality characteristic that gives an individual exceptional powers and results in the person being treated as a leader. Charisma is the term used to illustrate that special gift that some individuals possess, which gives them the capacity to carry out exceptional things (Northouse, 2010). A small minority of respondents 28.5% (n = 6) reported either having charisma themselves or working with leaders who had charisma. According to Bass and Avolio (1994), charisma can be seen as a factor that describes individuals who are special and who makes others want to follow. A small minority of participants had this say regarding their charisma or charismatic leaders they have worked with.

Theme 7: Morals, Values, and Ethics (Moral Compass)

Burns (1978) argued that transformational leadership involves the leader attempting to shift people to higher standards of moral and ethical responsibility. Northouse (2010) writes that transformational leaders place strong emphasis on followers' needs, values, and morals. This category includes those participants that had experience morals, values, and ethics, either as leader or follower. A majority 76.1% (n = 16) of the participants experienced this category as either a leader or follower.

Theme 8: Pseudotransformational Leadership

Bass and Riggio (2006) define pseudotransformational leaders as self-absorbed, power driven, with contorted values, and exploitative and manipulative. This study was aimed at examining elements of transformational leadership in the attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of higher education faculty, and while some elements were found, elements of pseudotransformational leadership were found. Although participants were never directly asked about pseudotransformational leaders, a few participants experienced some form of leadership that is similar and/or contained some elements of pseudotransformational leadership. A small percentage of participants 28.5 % (n = 6) had some experience with pseudotransformational leadership.

DISCUSSION

This study interviewed contingent and other higher education faculty and examined their responses to working in higher education seeking elements of transformational leadership theory. Indeed, this study confirmed that there were various elements of transformational leadership theory within the attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of participant responses. The findings were analyzed and interpreted in the context of the theoretical framework of transformational leadership. During the analysis and interpretation of the participant responses, C. Wright Mills (1959), *sociological imagination* was utilized. The sociological imagination is a quality of mind or imaginative thought that enables us to understand the relationship between larger historical perspectives of social forces such as race, class, gender, religion, economics, or politics, and individual circumstances and meaning in our own lives (Newman, 2006; Ferris & Stein, 2018; Giddens et al., 2018).

Theme 1: Leader/Follower Connection

Just over half of the participants 62% (n = 13) reported having a leader/follower connection, either as the leader or the follower. Northouse (2010) writes that the leader/follower connection is defined as when a person engages with others, creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower, and moves the follower to seek out and accomplish extraordinary things. Moreover, this study sought connections in the form of bonds with another individual. A few examples of the leader/follower connection included students asking for advice, asking for help with degree plans, and how to manage courses. These examples also included formative experiences of leaders welcoming new hires, leadership and teaching style compared to that of a coach or parent, and faculty working cooperatively with students when there was a tenuous relationship. What these examples had in common was that they exhibited multiple forms of the leader/follower connection, how it is built, what it entails, and why it is vital to transformational leadership theory. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of transformational leadership, (2) has the potential for transformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of transformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of transformational leadership.

Theme 2: Inspirational Motivation

Only a few participants 28.5% (n = 6) revealed inspiring others, being inspired themselves through motivation. Bass and Avolio (1994) defined inspirational motivation as a leadership factor in which leaders communicate high expectations to and of their followers and inspire them to commit and share the vision of the organization through motivation. This distinction is to include those followers that were inspired by their leaders to achieve extraordinary things and not just inspired to share or commit to the vision of an organization. A few examples of inspirational motivation included students changing majors, to a participant starting Ph.D. program, to participants stating that they may be inspirational and motivational. These examples are consistent with Bass and Avolio's (1994) definition of inspirational motivation where leaders inspire through motivation, their followers to commit or share the vision of an organization. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of transformational leadership, (2) convey the potential for transformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of transformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of transformational leadership.

Theme 3: Individualized Consideration

A large majority of participants, 71.4% (n = 15) responded that they received support or were supportive of others. Participant responses revealed instances that contained elements of transformational leadership, specifically individualized consideration. Individualized consideration is a leadership factor in which the leader listens and provides a supportive environment and climate conducive to the needs of the followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2010). Additionally, this theme was analyzed in the context of emotional or physical support from the leader to the follower in the leadership process. Participant responses varied. Participants 4 and 16 spoke about writing letters of recommendation. Participant 5 recalled an incident where he lent support to one of his students lending an ear to their issues. Participant 1's response exhibited a follower that was brought into a college and program for their value and worth allowing them to grow. This behavior was also seen in Participant 14's recollection of when she spoke to the provost, as an administration educational leader, on behalf of her colleague who was a female Latina, for a tenure-track appointment at the university she had worked at as a director. Finally, participant 3's recollection as to why he went into teaching was due to the support he received from his professor. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of transformational leadership, (2) convey the potential for transformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of transformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of transformational leadership.

Theme 4: Vision

A very small minority of participants 47.6% (n = 10) reported that their department, their chair, or themselves have a vision. These two examples represent the concept of a vision, which is an element of transformational leadership, and is the conceptual map of an organization that provides identity and a collective shared interest in the direction of the organization (Northouse, 2010.) Participant 14's response was from that of a leadership perspective and participant 16's response was that of a follower perspective. Both examples show the dynamic between the two perspectives. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of transformational leadership, (2) have the potential for transformational leaders, and (3) attitudes

or behaviors of transformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of transformational leadership.

Theme 5: Intellectual Stimulation

A small minority of participants, 9% (n = 2) remarked on or had some experience regarding intellectual stimulation. Participant responses convey intellectual stimulation from higher education faculty members and display higher education's purpose of education, preparing, and working with adult students. Furthermore, these examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of transformational leadership, (2) convey the potential for transformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of transformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of transformational leadership.

Theme 6: Idealized Influence/Charisma

A small minority of participants, 28.5% (n = 6) responded that either they had charisma or worked with a leader or colleagues who possessed that trait. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of transformational leadership, (2) convey the potential for transformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of transformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of transformational leadership.

Each of these participants discussed in this theme all had experiences that in one way contained elements of pseudotransformational leadership. A small percentage of participants 28.5% (n = 6) had some experience with pseudotransformational leadership. These experiences create the potential for contingent and other higher education faculty and students to become pseudotransformational leaders. The responses from the participants ranged from faculty complacency to adjuncts being referred to in demeaning ways, to dehumanizing behavior in assigning colored folders to distinguish between those receiving benefits to those that are not, to faculty being perceived as underpaid and exploited, and finally to university administration referring to students in economic terms. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of pseudotransformational leadership, (2) convey the potential for pseudotransformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of pseudotransformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of pseudotransformational leadership.

Theme 7: Morals, Values, & Ethics (Moral Compass)

Over half of the participants, 76.1% (n = 16), responded that they either had morals, values, and ethics or worked with a leader or colleagues who did. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of transformational leadership, (2) convey the potential for transformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of transformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of transformational leadership.

Theme 8: Pseudotransformational Leadership

Each of these participants discussed in this theme all had experiences that in one way contained elements of pseudotransformational leadership. A small percentage of participants 28.5

% (n = 6) had some experience with pseudotransformational leadership. These experiences create the potential for contingent and other higher education faculty and students to become pseudotransformational leaders. The responses from the participants ranged from faculty complacency to adjuncts being referred to in demeaning ways, to dehumanizing behavior in assigning colored folders to distinguish between those receiving benefits to those that are not, to faculty being perceived as underpaid and exploited, and finally to university administration referring to students in economic terms. These examples show that these experiences: (1) contained elements of pseudotransformational leadership, (2) convey the potential for pseudotransformational leaders, and (3) attitudes or behaviors of pseudotransformational leaders. Assuming that the traits are taught, these traits aim in the direction of pseudotransformational leadership.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has the potential to make a huge impact towards positive change at a myriad of levels within society. Simply put, the positive change can occur at the student, professor, chair, dean, and administrator levels within a college or university, and at the individual and citizen, and societal level. The impact of this study would be internal and external level. As an educational leader and higher education faculty member, this is an internal issue. The issue of the leader and follower connection. First, internally, this study has potential to impact higher education and those therein, such as administration, faculty, and staff. Through understanding the leader and follower connection that is inherent to the leadership process, educational leaders, whether president, provost, dean, or chair can better nurture and mold future educational leaders in their institution, department, and faculty and staff. Secondly, externally, this study has potential to impact that outside of higher education, such as the parents, businesses, the community, and society overall. Positive social change can occur at these levels. Transformational leadership possesses the ability to invoke positive social change.

Not only does the study have the potential to make an impact at the internal and external levels, but it can also occur at the micro and macro levels. The interviews with the higher education faculty participants were aimed with the micro level perspective. The impact that occurs at the micro level is with each individual higher education administrator, faculty and staff member, and the student. Individually, administrators can create professional development courses or develop training programs for new and existing higher education faculty. The macro level of potential positive social impact occurs in social structures, society, businesses, and the community. To be clear, what happens is that adjuncts and other higher education faculty have experiences, positive and negative, that have meaning in their life. The meaning from those experiences socializes them, their attitudes, behavior, and perceptions. That socialization then transfers over into the classroom where the students are then potentially impacted. Once the student is socialized from their experiences with higher education faculty, after graduation their socialization then has potential to impact society at large. Finally, transformational leadership theory in this study makes it accessible to sociology, psychology, anthropology, and business due to the lineage of thought that it is now connected to.

CONCLUSION

Higher education is a place where transformation can and does occur. Educational leaders such as administration and faculty cultivate, develop, educate, and nurture students in their academics. However, indirectly these educational leaders can become role models which inspire, and influence students. Moreover, some of these educational leaders are increasingly contingent or adjunct faculty. This is because institutions of higher education are relying more and more on contingent faculty. This study was interested in scrutinizing leadership, its effect on higher education faculty and its potential impact on students, and ultimately society. The research examined contingent and other higher education faculty which may have the potential to be transformative in creating that potential for others to become transformational leaders. There are multiple levels for potential impact. These levels include: (1) individual, (2) systemic, and (3) societal.

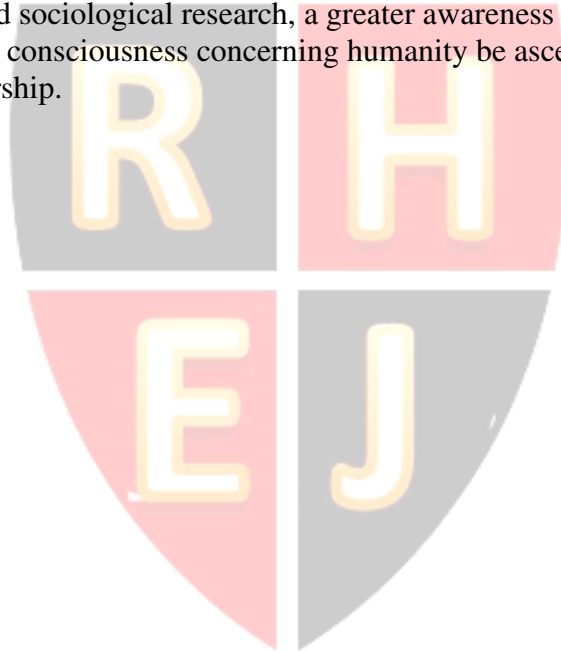
The first level of potential impact is individual. This individual level can be broken down further, i.e., university administrator, department chair, faculty, and the student. Each level has its own leader and follower dynamic, such as the department chair (leader) and the faculty member (follower), and the faculty member (leader) and the student (follower). This research was interested in those experiences between the leaders and their followers and largely examined adjunct faculty experiences. The study garnered rich descriptive responses, specifically from contingent faculty, but also from other educational leaders in higher education. The results indicated that participants, regardless of title and rank, all had experiences working with transformational or pseudotransformational leaders, and that those experiences contained element of those types of leadership. In many of the responses, respondents were transformational leaders or possessed transformational leaders' traits whether they knew it or not. The participants themselves did not give any indication within their responses that they themselves were pseudotransformational leaders nor did they possess any of those traits.

The second level of potential impact is systemic. In this study many adjuncts were and are obstructed from being transformational leaders, because of systemic problems coming directly out of bureaucratic thinking that is associated with the business model and hierarchical patterns in academia. Transformational leadership theory in this research was to be in direct conflict with modern notions of bureaucracy. Bureaucracies are based on competition and efficiency with little care or concern for the workers. Due to this model, bureaucracies accomplish such things as managing large groups of people effectively, however, one unintended consequence is the alienation of its workers. This alienation occurs in part because bureaucracies are impersonal, which would explain why there is little concern for its workers. Simply put, if bureaucracies alienate their workers to the point where they feel a loss sense of self, and are reduced to animalistic thinking and behaviors, as Karl Marx (1964) pointed out, then transformational leadership does the opposite and embraces its workers humanity, creativity, and are treated as full human beings in the leadership process. This is because bureaucracies are based on competition which is informal and impersonal, whereas transformational leadership is based on cooperation and collaboration which is personal and intimate.

The final level of potential impact is societal. Every semester, colleges and universities are sending new leaders to all corners of the world. This study employed the symbolic interactionist approach as a theoretical framework because of its microlevel, narrow, and individual scope, which also has macrolevel implications. For this study, participant responses regarding their individual experiences (micro) were of interest because as I have argued, these

experiences have socialized higher education faculty whom in turn will socialize students into future leaders of society (macro). These once student leaders are becoming business, community, education, and government leaders where their influence will have a significant impact. The impact will be seen through the creation and implementation of those institutions' leader's policies and procedures which will have positive and negative ripple effects throughout society.

The traits or elements of transformational leadership which were extracted from participant responses indicate that those respondents are transformational leaders whether they know it or not. Had these respondents been aware of transformational learning theory and transformational leadership theory, they might have been able to understand and work through their experiences differently, and in some cases avoiding pseudotransformational leaders. The findings are important because they have shown the potential to create transformational or pseudotransformational leaders in the experiences of college and university administrators, faculty, and students. Colleges and universities are creating and molding leaders and sending them into society and the larger world where their impact will be felt. Through this educational leadership, humanistic, and sociological research, a greater awareness can and must be achieved, and only then can a higher consciousness concerning humanity be ascertained for the betterment of mankind through leadership.



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