

OUR STORY:
THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ADJUNCT FACULTY IN HIGHER
EDUCATION BUSINESS SCHOOLS

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**Our Story: The Phenomenological Study of Adjunct Faculty in Higher Education Business
Schools**

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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Southern New Hampshire University

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Dedication

I want to thank our Heavenly Father for blessing me throughout this journey. To my grandmother and mother for their unwavering love and support. Thank you for always making my education a priority.

To my son, Trenton, I love you and I want you to know that anything is possible when you trust in God and believe in yourself. You will accomplish greatness!

Thank you to my dissertation chair, Dr. Margaret (Peg) Ford and committee members, Dr. Richard Ayers and Dr. Mark Hecox, for your leadership, guidance, words of wisdom, and of course, our Nespresso sessions.

And to my family, friends, and colleagues that have supported me along the way... Thank you.

Chapter 1: Statement of the Problem

Universities and colleges have long been a catalyst of learning in higher education for the United States. Since the early 1970's, there has been an increase of part-time faculty members teaching at degree-granting institutions. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2004), in 1993, the position of part-time faculty grew by 27 percent, the second largest increase in history. The major contributing factor to growth was partly due to the expansion of American Higher Education institutions over three decades (1969-2003) from 2,525 to 4,168 respectively, which was an astounding rate of 65.1 percent (NCES, 2004). According to Snyder and Dillow (2011) the number of students enrolled in higher education went from nearly 4 million in 1960 to 20 million in 2009. In the most recent survey conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (2019), full-time faculty saw an increase of 38 percent between fall 1999 and fall of 2017, while the number of part-time faculty rose to nearly 72 percent, from 1999 and 2011, with a 5 percent decrease from 2011 and 2017. This begs the question, who is teaching in higher education?

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the “lived experience” of adjunct faculty in higher education. The landscape in academia has changed drastically since the 1960's when adjunct faculty first began appearing in institutions of higher education (IHEs). According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 2017) the labor force in higher education uses the terms adjunct, contingent, and non-tenure track (NTT) faculty to describe a marginalized group that receives one-third less pay than full time faculty but represent 70% of higher education academic positions. To this point, Curtis and Jacobe (2006) states, “The problem lies in the nature of contingent work, its lack of support

structures and the constraints on academic freedom for faculty in these positions” (p. 6).

According to Lyons (2004), to meet the demands of expansion across colleges and universities most “rely on the growing body of contingent workers- primarily adjunct faculty-to mitigate spikes and troughs in its core business and to help curtail rising cost and decrease revenues”

(p.2). Varying across institutions are three reasons that explain the driving use of adjunct faculty (Kezar, 2013; Yakoboski & Foster, 2014; Yakoboski, 2016):

- Cost control: Adjuncts are paid less than tenure track faculty (TTF). The savings from reduced wages may offset to some degree, however, if there is a need to constantly recruit and replace adjunct faculty.
- Flexibility to fill gaps in course coverage: Such gaps can emerge for various reasons, such as course enrollment surges, course buy-outs by TTF, sabbaticals and other leave taken by TTF, or the phased retirement of tenured faculty. There may also be periods of time when long-term budget uncertainty prevents filling open tenure-track positions.
- Demand for a more diverse set of roles: Distance Learning, continuing education, job training, and interest in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have led to a greater need for people who can meet specific needs within limited budgets.

(p.55)

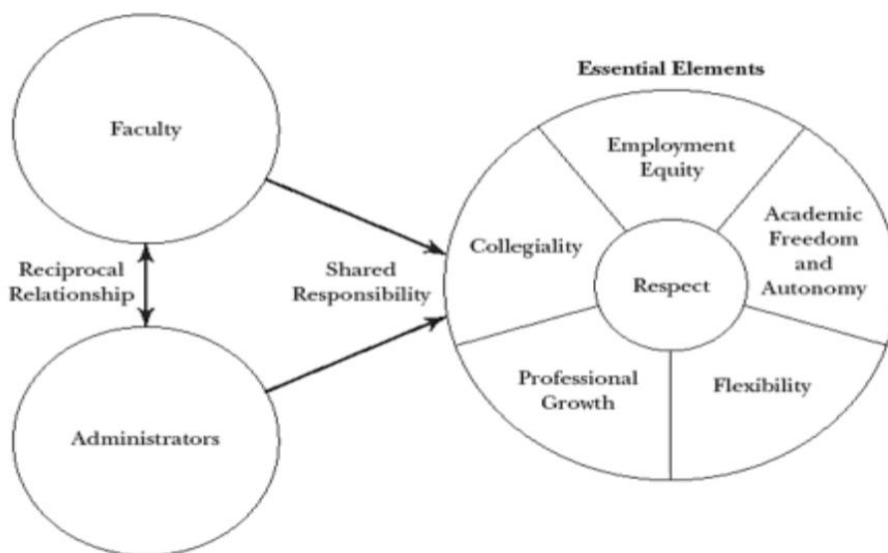
Since the Great Recession of 2008, the trend of hiring contingent or part-time faculty has increased across doctoral, masters, baccalaureate, and associate institutions. For example, more than 54.9 percent (part-time) or 15.5 percent (full-time) of positions were held by adjunct faculty at master’s institutions (AAUP, 2020). Years following the Great Recession, universities and colleges saw an increase in enrollment that forced more adjunct hiring practices, which

conversely may affect the current landscape in higher education due to the Covid-19 pandemic (AAUP, 2020). Will higher education continue to be altered from the employment of full-time faculty to the use of adjunct faculty and what will adjuncts lived experiences say about the landscape of higher education in the U.S.?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this phenomenological study provided an insight that supported and guided the researcher. Defined by Wolcott (2009), “Theory is a way of asking (inquiring) that is guided by a reasonable answer” (p. 75). The Impact of Faculty and Institutional Characteristics on the Essential Elements (Figure 1) provided the lens for exploring the phenomenon of adjunct faculty first developed by Gappa, Austin, & Trice (2007).

Figure 1. *Impact of Faculty and Institutional Characteristics on the Essential Elements*

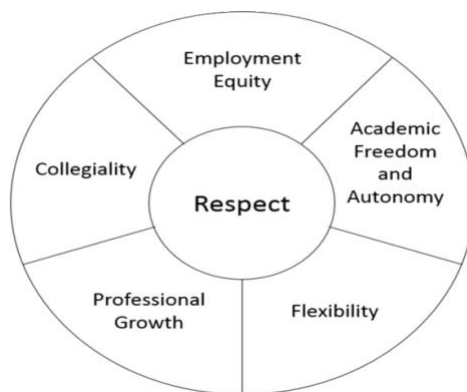


Note. Adapted from *Rethinking faculty work: Higher education's strategic imperative*, by J. M. Gappa, A. E. Austin, and A. Trice, p. 137. Copyright 2007 by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Theoretical Framework Narrative

The framework for this research is the Impact of Faculty and Institutional Characteristics on the Essential Elements. The five essential elements of the framework helped conceptualize the work of faculty regardless of the academic appointment they may hold. According to Gappa et al. (2007), “A culture of respect and commitment to shared responsibility from faculty members and administrators alike are both critical to fostering an environment where the essential elements are part of faculty work and the academic workplace” (p. 125). Exploring the major components of the five essential elements provided insight into the link between adjunct faculty members, their lived experience, and the core of respect within higher education. The five essential elements outlined by Gappa et al, (2007) as illustrated in (Figure 2) are: Employment Equity, Academic Freedom and Autonomy, Flexibility, Professional Growth, and Collegiality. The essence of the five essential elements is centered around respect.

Figure 2. *The five essential elements*



Note. Adapted from *Rethinking faculty work: Higher education's strategic imperative*, by J. M. Gappa, A. E. Austin, and A. Trice, p. 134. Copyright 2007 by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Equity in Employment

The element of equity in employment can be defined as the treatment of every faculty member regardless of their appointment type (Gappa et al, 2007). The views on institutional policies and practices should be consistent and fair among faculty members and should be communicated effectively. Equity also means a flexible balance of work and life. Faculty seek access to tools to perform the job well (i.e., an office, computer, supplies, etc.).

Academic Freedom and Autonomy

This element protects faculty's intellectual expression and inquiry without penalty or threat of institutional penalty. The American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure defined three key elements of academic freedom (1940):

1. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties.
2. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.
3. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution...they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline. (p.14)

Flexibility

Flexibility is defined as the ability for faculty to have a working schedule that allows them to maximize their hours to address varying needs (maternity/paternity leave, family concerns, tend to a sick parent, etc.). Flexibility also provides varying options for career path

decisions. Flexibility in the workplace is an intersectional element to equity in employment as it is also the focus of work/life balance for faculty.

Professional Growth

The work of Gappa et al. (2007), defined professional growth as, “opportunities that enable faculty members to broaden their knowledge, abilities, and skills, to address challenges, concerns, and needs, and to find deeper satisfaction in their work” (p. 141). Faculty seek the availability of professional development/growth through funding, establishing growth plans, and receiving support at varying stages.

Collegiality

This element is defined as a sense of belonging and inclusion to the institution and community where a faculty member works. It is a connection to the students, their colleagues, and administration that the value of contributions is respected. “Collegial interactions help faculty members feel that they belong, and a sense of belonging and feeling connected contributes to satisfaction and morale” (Rice & Austin, 1988; Kezar & Maxey, p. 70).

The theoretical framework for this study serves as a guide to connect the phenomenon of adjuncts to the five essential elements, institutional characteristics, and faculty characteristics. The research illustrates an importance to inform deans, hiring committees, and faculty on the lived experiences of adjuncts and their needs for success in business schools of colleges and universities.

Definition of Terms

Academic Freedom and Autonomy The right of all faculty members to freely express their views in research and in the publication of results, in the classroom in discussing their subjects, and as citizens without institutional censorship (Gappa et al., 2007, pp. 140-141).

Adjunct faculty Faculty that are contracted to serve a term typically on a course-by-course basis. They usually do not have any benefits and are also known as part-time faculty. The term adjunct faculty and adjunct professors can be used interchangeably (AAUP, 2018).

Aspiring academics Faculty who are looking for full-time or tenure-track positions (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2010).

Career enders Individuals in the process of retiring or already retired (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2010).

Collegiality Opportunities for faculty members to feel that they belong to a mutually respectful community of colleagues who value their contributions to their institutions and who are concerned about their overall well-being (Gappa et al., 2007, p. 142).

Constructivism or social constructivism Seeks understanding of the world in which they live and work.

Contingent faculty Can be either contracted part-time or full-time faculty that are not on a tenure track (AAUP, 2008).

Employment Equity The right of every faculty member (regardless of appointment type or time base) to be treated fairly in regard to all aspects of his or her employment by the institution and its departments, to have access to the tools necessary to do his or her job, and to have status as a fully-fledged, albeit necessarily different member of the faculty (Gappa et al., 2007, p. 140).

Essence The most significant element, quality, or aspect of a thing or person (Merriam-Webster Online, 2021).

Flexibility The ability of faculty members to construct work arrangements to maximize their contributions to their institution as well as the meaningfulness of their work and personal lives (Gappa et al., 2007, p. 141).

Freelancers Work part-time to supplement income. They may be caretakers or homemakers, gig workers, or seeking affiliation with an institution (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2010).

Full time faculty (FT) Varies by institutions; Contracted employment that teach 12 credits per semester, have a dedicated office space, advise students, and have a variety of benefits (health insurance, retirement, professional development funds, etc.)

Hermeneutic-Phenomenology A methodology of interpretation. A philosophy which studies “the personal, the individual, which we pursue against the background of an understanding of the evasive character of the logos of other, the whole, the communal, or the social” (van Manen, 2016, p. 7).

Non-tenure track faculty (NTTF) Comprises more than half of faculty appointments in a variety of titles such as part-time, full-time, lecturer, senior lecturer, visiting professor, graduate assistant.

Professional Growth Defined as opportunities that enable faculty members to broaden their knowledge, abilities, and skills, to address challenges, concerns, and needs, and to find deeper satisfaction in their work (Gappa et al., 2007, p. 141).

Respect Defined by Gappa et al. (2007), “Respect is the basic human valuing of every faculty member” (p. 139).

Specialist, experts, and professionals Employed full-time elsewhere and come from a varied range of careers (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2010).

Tenure Track Faculty (TTF) An appointment of indefinite employment that safeguards academic freedom, promotes stability, that benefits society and student learning through the advancement of knowledge free of systemic oppressions (AAUP, 2021c).

Research Questions

RQ1. What is the lived experience of adjunct professors in business schools across the New England region serving in 4-year public and private institutions of higher education?

Sub Questions:

SQ1. What is the nature of communication at the institution for adjuncts?

SQ2. What has the work/life been like for the adjunct professoriate prior to the Covid-19 pandemic?

SQ3. How would adjunct professors describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Significance of the Study

This study will help administrators, TTF faculty, policy makers, and future contingent faculty understand the importance of the role of adjunct faculty in institutions of higher education. It is imperative to include all stakeholders to provide the best services to all learners. The findings will contribute to the literature through the relationship discipline in the areas of communication and leadership among higher education faculty. As contingent work continues to change the landscape of higher education, for new PhD/EdD recipients who may want to work in higher education, and those looking to teach in higher education, the search for full-time employment may pose a challenge. The significance of this research was to explore the phenomenological experiences of adjunct faculty in business schools of academia.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to gain a deep understanding of adjuncts in higher education business schools from their lived experience. It is their story that the researcher sought to explore and provide a lens through which organizations begin to understand the value and worth of the adjunct faculty. Using a social constructivism perspective, the focus

of the research was to understand the world of adjunct faculty through their “lived experience.” This perspective allowed the researcher to interpret and understand the phenomenon of the adjunct faculty teaching in business schools located in New England and then make meaning of those experiences.

General Procedures

The research for this study used a phenomenological methodology that sought to uncover the “lived experience” or “phenomenon” of adjunct faculty in Schools of Business in institutions of higher education. According to Van Manen (2016), “The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence” (p. 36). The researcher used surveys and conducted interviews to examine the lived experience of adjunct faculty. The goal of the research was to explore the phenomenon of adjunct faculty teaching in business schools across New England states. The investigation of the study took place virtually (via Zoom or Teams) or in-person at a designated location (Starbucks, Barnes and Nobles, etc.).

Limitations

For this phenomenological study the researcher has identified limitations that may affect the research. A limitation to the research might be a small sample size based on the participant pool for this study. Another limitation identified might be the willingness of participants to be honest in response to the questions as the responses are based on their own lived experience. The responses may not be generalizable. Lastly, researcher bias was a limitation because the researcher worked and has experience as an adjunct in a business school.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to the ways in which the researcher chooses to design and conduct the study. Delimitations are within the control of the researcher and clarify and define the scope and

boundaries of the research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). The following are delimitations that might impact the study:

1. Location of the research is limited to New England states.
2. Sample size of 5-10 participants being solicited is confined to adjunct professors teaching only on campus at business schools in higher education.
3. The researcher chose a qualitative method to gain a greater understanding of the lived experiences of adjunct professors, realizing that the findings are based on the perceptions of the participants.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

For this phenomenological study, the review of the literature will encompass the relevant research of adjuncts in higher education. To understand the lived experience of adjuncts, the review of the literature will address the historical typology of adjunct faculty and growth of part-time faculty, along with labor and cost effectiveness. As outlined in the theoretical framework first established by Gappa, Austin, & Trice (2007), the Impact of Faculty and Institutional Characteristics on the Essential Elements combined with the research in this literature review indicate that adjuncts want respect from their institutions and other faculty members.

Typology of Adjunct Faculty and Full-time Faculty

Part Time Faculty

Higher education in the 20th century as a profession was once well defined with most of the faculty represented on a tenure track path. As the workforce, institutions, and organizational ecosystems began to experience changes, so did the traditions of the professoriate. Howard Tuckman (1978) developed a taxonomy of part-time faculty based on their reasons for choosing part-time employment. “The taxonomy contained seven categories: semi-retirees, graduate students, hopeful full-timers, full mooners, home workers, part-mooners, and part-unknowners” (Tuckman, 1978; Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 46-47). Although Tuckman’s typology served as a foundation for part-time faculty descriptions, motivations, and experiences, Gappa and Leslie (1993) extended his typology into four categories: career enders; specialist, experts, and professionals; aspiring academics; and freelancers (Table 1). This became the standard in adjunct typology models. According to Gappa and Leslie (1993), “career enders include individuals in the process of retiring as well as retirees” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2010, p.34). Career enders sought this professional work because it offered them supplemental income

beyond retirement, allowed for them to remain in the field, or enabled them to seek a new and enjoyable experience. “Specialists, experts, and professionals are employed full-time elsewhere and come from a varied range of careers. They are hired for their specialized knowledge or success in a certain field, typically in the arts or business” (Kezar & Sam, 2010, p.34). With full-time employment, security, and benefits from another employer, this group are teaching because they want to teach, and they may not want to be involve in the day to day of higher education duties. They find their work rewarding because they are not relying on faculty income. “Aspiring academics include faculty who are looking for a full-time or tenure-track position such as a graduate students or individuals looking for a position at the same schools as their partners” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2010, p.35). Included in this group are recent PhD’s, EdD’s, and even doctoral students that classify as ABD (all but dissertation). Aspiring academics have also been called “freeway fliers” because they often teach at multiple institutions to comprise a full-time workload (Gappa and Leslie, 1993). Even when those associated with this group can arrange a full-time schedule, Gappa and Leslie (1993) noted that, “they remain without the status, salary, benefits, and security normally associated with full-time or regular employment” (p. 55). The last profile of part-timers are the freelancers. They are the 21st century’s “gig” employee, working a variety of jobs, utilizing their many skills and talents across different sectors of employment. “Freelancers, are predominately faculty who supplement their part-time positions with other jobs not in academia or who may be caretakers at home, use the position for supplemental income” (Kezar & Sam, 2010, p.35).

Table 1. *Who are part- and full-time non-tenure track faculty members?*

Part-Time	
Career Enders	People who are retired or in the process of retiring. They may be faculty who decided to teach in retirement, or they may come from established careers outside of academia.
Specialist, experts, and professionals	Faculty who are employed full-time elsewhere, in a varied range of fields. They are hired for their specialized knowledge or success in certain fields, such as the arts or business. Often these individuals do not rely on faculty positions for income but enjoy being involved in the academy and teaching.
Aspiring academics	Faculty members who are looking for a full-time or tenure-track position. So-called freeway fliers are a type of aspiring academic who typically teach at multiple institutions to create the equivalent of a full-time position.
Freelancers	People who typically have a job outside of academe and supplement their income with teaching. Some are also caretakers at home and prefer the flexibility of working part-time because of their demands.
Full-Time	
Teachers	People who spend over two-thirds of their time in instruction, with the rest of their time split between administrative task and research.
Researchers	People who are specifically hired to conduct research for over half their time, dividing the other half between instruction and administration.
Administrators	People who spend about half their time in administrative work (for example, as an associate dean) and the rest of the time in research and other activities.

Academic professionals	Full-time non-tenure track faculty who spend half of their time on activities other than teaching, research, or administration. They are often lab technicians, programmers, or community service faculty members. Usually, they spend a quarter of their time teaching, depending on their qualifications.
<p><i>Note.</i> Adapted from <i>Envisioning the faculty for the 21st century: Moving to a mission-oriented and learner-centered model</i>, by A. Kezar, and D. Maxey, p. 6. Copyright 2016 by Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ. Original works adapted from Baldwin and Chronister (2001); Gappa and Leslie (1993).</p>	

Full-time Faculty

To better understand full-time non-tenured track faculty (FTNTT), Baldwin and Chronister (2001) created a typology based on employment responsibilities. The four distinct labels were: *teachers*, *researchers*, *administrators*, and *other academic professionals* (Table 1) (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Kezar & Sam, 2010; Maxey & Kezar, 2016). *Teachers* are labeled as those that “spend about two-thirds of their time teaching and the remainder in research and administration task and other professional activities” (Baldwin and Chronister, 2001, p. 99; Maxey & Kezar, 2016; Kezar & Sam, 2010). *Researchers* according to Baldwin and Chronister (2001) are faculty that conduct research half of their time, while the other half is spent teaching, working on administrative duties, or other professional activities. *Administrators* for example, an associate dean, spends their time handling administrative duties. Administrators tend to serve on more committees, thus limiting the number of courses taught due to the nature of work involved with their position. The final group of FTNTT faculty as labeled by Baldwin and Chronister (2001), are the *other academic professionals*. These professionals are typically in technical fields like programming, engineering, laboratory technicians, or community service members (i.e., social worker, therapist). Much of their time is spent on activities other than teaching. Full-time appointments held garner the work of the professional typically being conducted at just one

institution. Typically, FTNTT faculty serve contracts of three to five years, which provides a sense of job security, which is not always the case for adjunct and contingent faculty (Kezar & Maxey, 2016). According to Gappa et al. (2007), “faculty members choose an academic career because it offers autonomy, intellectual challenges, and freedom to pursue personal interest. They derive considerable satisfaction from contributions they make to research, student development, and social change” (p. 105). The model of using FTNTT faculty has provided institutions of higher education the ability to accommodate the fluctuations in student enrollment, the handling of economic challenges, and the corporatization of the American higher education system. According to Gappa and Leslie (1993) in *The Invisible Faculty*, “full-time temporary appointments are not viewed positively by all members of the academic profession. Some senior faculty regard full-time temporary appointments as an erosion of the tenure system and as setting undesirable if not dangerous precedent” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 157).

Variance of Titles Across Campuses

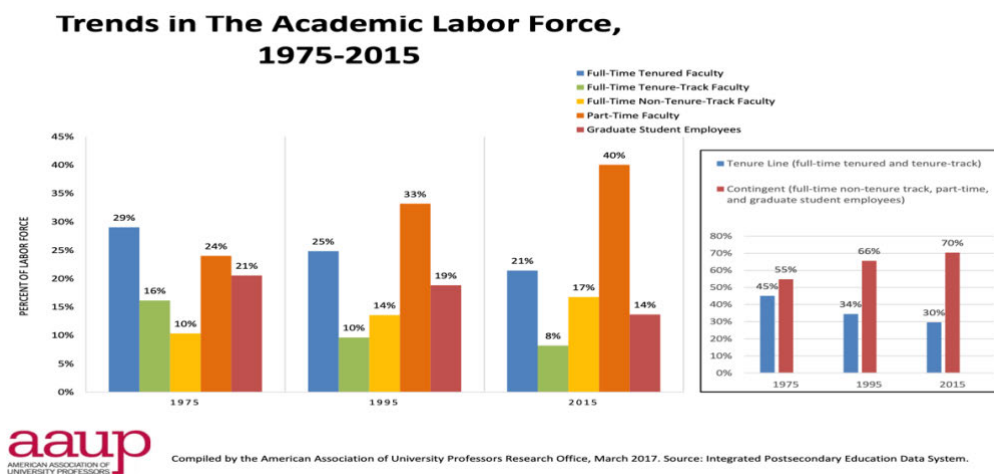
When it comes to the variance in the titles of part- and full- time faculty, there is no definitive uniformity across all campuses. This variance even happens on the same campuses. Researchers Kezar and Maxey (2016) stated, “Full-time non-tenure-track faculty may be referred to as lectures, instructors, or clinical faculty (p.8). Due to the institutional structures or systems of each campus, the assigned titles may vary among nontenure track faculty (NTTF). According to Kezar and Sam (2010), the use of the term, “‘lecturer’ at one campus may indicate part-time faculty, while another campus may use the term ‘instructor’” (p. 37). Another variance that arises across campuses is that similar titles can also carry different positionalities depending on the ecosystem of the school. “The term “fixed term” or “adjunct” may indicate a full-time non-tenure track faculty member on one campus and a part-time faculty member on another campus”

(Shavers, 2000; Kezar & Sam, 2010, p. 37). Due to the interchangeability of terms related to NTTF and contingent faculty, these positions normally do not lead to staff finding a position on the tenured track or even considered as eligible for such an appointment (Kezar & Maxey, 2016).

Growth of Part-time Faculty in Higher Education

In the past 40 years, the growth of adjunct faculty has seen an explosion across campuses nationwide while the number of tenured professors has decreased (Drozdowski, 2021). While the model of using part-time faculty in higher education in 1970 was only a small portion of the workforce (roughly 20 percent), Shuster and Finkelstein (2006) noted that the number of part-timers has increased by 376 percent, which is 5 times faster than that of FTTF or FTNTT. According to a report by the United States Government Accountability Office [USGAO] (2017), full-time tenured track positions were estimated at 436,403, full-time adjunct at 331,313, and part-time adjunct positions were at 767,565. In more recent research, according to the American Association of University Professors (2017), Figure 3 illustrates the trends in the academic labor force over a 40-year period has increased greatly among part-time faculty.

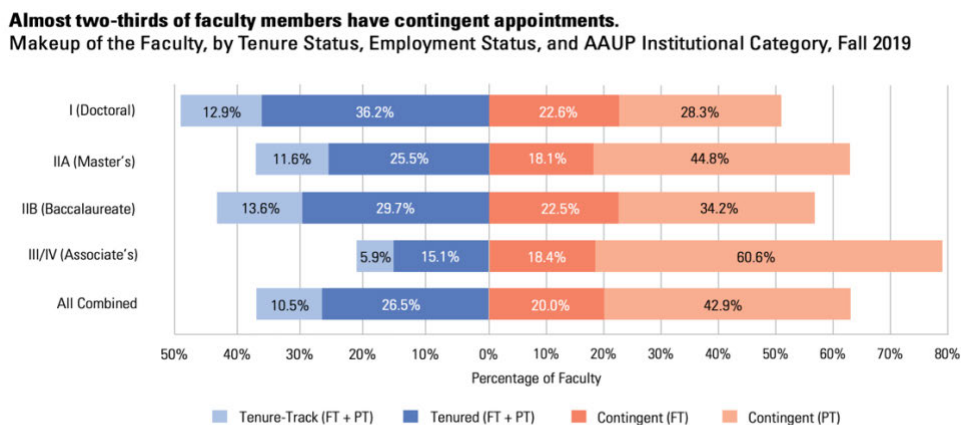
Figure 3. *Trends in the Academic Labor Force, 1975-2015.*



Note. Adapted from American Association of University Professors, AAUP, 2017.

Researchers Kezar and Maxey (2016) stated, “this group has become the largest subset of the faculty-comprising approximately half of the instructional faculty at nonprofit institutions nationally” (p. 29). Recent research conducted by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 2021b), showed that 63 percent of contingent workers, both part- and full-time, made up the largest group classified by employment status in 2019 (Figure 4).

Figure 4. *Almost two-thirds of faculty members have contingent appointments.*



Note: Figures represent nonmedical instructional staff with faculty status in degree-granting nonprofit institutions participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs.

Source: IPEDS HR survey component, 2019–20 provisional release. Data compiled by the AAUP Research Department.

Note. Adapted from American Association of University Professors (AAUP), *Bulletin*, 2021b.

The use of adjunct faculty was a means to be a low cost and flexible alternative to provide instruction to the growing student population without increasing cost (Kezar & Maxey, 2015). The adjunct model has become the definitive outsourcing phenomenon that has allowed colleges and universities to corporatize the American education system. There have been several researchers that argued the increase of NTTF is a blatant undermining of tenure appointments only to show that the work can be done at a fraction of the cost. Others suggest that it was the result of unintended consequences and various intersectionality occurrences like rising tuition, rapid expansion, and economic downturns (Kezar & Maxey, 2010). According to Gappa et al. (2007), “the increased use of part-time faculty has enabled institutions to handle more students efficiently and effectively, without increased resources” (p. 93). The ability to provide real-world

experiences to the classes, allowss a different dimension to learning when adjuncts are teaching a class. Adjuncts often will have a “very broad background of experience, deep and productive career record, and highly specialized knowledge that is scarce in the overall faculty workforce” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 282).

Five Elements of Adjuncts

In their book, *Rethinking Faculty Work*, Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) highlight the five essential elements of faculty. The elements are employment equity, academic freedom and autonomy, flexibility, personal growth, and collegiality (Gappa et al., 2007) (Table 2). According to Gappa, et al (2007) “faculty should be fully accepted and valued as members of the academic community, regardless of differences in their appointment types, job responsibilities, or personal situations” (p. 195). At the center of the five elements is respect, as this represents what should be the “fundamental entitlement for every faculty member (indeed, for every employee) and is at the core of any reciprocal relationship between faculty members and their institutions (Gappa, et al., 2007, p.139). The intent of the five elements is necessary to help support the “well-being and productivity” of all employees (Gappa, et al., 2007, p. 144). “Equitable treatment means that all faculty members have access to the tools they need to do their jobs well” (Gappa, et al., 2007, p. 196).

Table 2. *The five essential elements of effective faculty work*

Essential Element	Description
Academic Freedom and Autonomy	The right of all faculty members to express their views in research and in the publication of results, in the classroom in discussing their subjects, and as citizens without institutional censorship, when such views are appropriately and responsibly expressed.
Collegiality	Opportunities for faculty members to feel part of a mutually respectful community of

	colleagues who value their unique contributions to their institutions and who are concerned for their overall well-being.
Employment Equity	The right of every faculty member (regardless of appointment type or time base): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be treated fairly in all aspects of their employment by the institution and its departments • to have access to the tools necessary to do their jobs • to have status as fully fledged, albeit necessarily different, member of the faculty.
Flexibility	The ability of faculty members to construct work arrangements to maximize their contributions to their institution as well as the meaningfulness of their work and personal lives.
Professional Growth	Opportunities that enable faculty members to broaden their knowledge, abilities, and skills, to address challenges, concerns, and needs, and to find deeper satisfaction in their work.

Note. Adapted from *Examining the factors that impact adjunct faculty retention in private nonprofit universities* (Publication No. 10792747), [Doctoral Dissertation, Brandman University], by K. Kuvakas, p. 37. Copyright 2018 by ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. Original works adapted from *Rethinking faculty work: Higher education's strategic imperative*, by J. M. Gappa, A. E. Austin, and A. Trice, p. 139-142. Copyright 2007 by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Working Conditions for Adjunct Faculty

Driving from campus to campus, little to no health insurance or benefits, and the lack of support are just a few of the inequities adjuncts face. These meager working conditions have led to adjuncts having a disconnect in curriculum design, department meetings, an office or space to connect with students, and a sense of job security (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Maxey, 2016). “Departments are also missing out on opportunities to draw on adjunct expertise and knowledge from the field, which could help innovate and support students” (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2010; Kezar & Maxey,

2016, p. 32). The work of Gappa et al (2007) pointed out a link between good circumstances for adjuncts and them feeling “valued and established”, while bad circumstances will cause them to “remain marginal and are subject to capricious and arbitrary treatment” (p. 96). “Regardless of their performance, the length of their employment, their qualifications for their positions, or the needs of their institutions, part time faculty in most colleges and universities are employed under exploitative practices” (Gappa, et al., p. 96). Adjuncts are subjected to a myriad of challenges and obstacles in which they must overcome. They are highly valuable to their institutions, yet they are the invisible faculty.

Support for Adjunct Faculty

Contingent appointments in higher education offer limited security, are the least compensated in pay and benefits, and lack support from the institution. According to Gappa et al. (2007), “Many institutions have not seriously considered how support for faculty must evolve to better enable them to accomplish their work” (p. 4). Due to inadequate institutional support services for adjuncts, many are hampered by missed opportunities in professional development funds, conferences, and career advancement (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Mcardle, 2002; Nutting, 2003; Gappa et al., 2007; Yakoboski, 2016). These employment trends by institutions have created limitations to access thus stifling the effectiveness of pedagogical advancement for adjuncts. According to Gappa et al. (2007), “This proliferation of various types of faculty appointments, with their differences in compensation and support structures, raises important questions about whether all faculty members are treated equitably and with respect by their institutions” (p.127).

Labor and Cost Effectiveness of Adjunct Faculty

Adjuncts have been referred to as cheap labor, even compared to migrant workers of higher education (Drozdowski, 2021). One of the many ways institutions have sought to cut cost and budgets is through hiring part-time faculty. “The adjunct model has been expanded and exploited as a way to provide instruction to students at the lowest possible cost” (Kezar, 2013; Kezar & Maxey, 2016, p.29). The contributing factors which have led to this explosive growth of adjunct faculty ranges from the rapid expansion of higher education institutions, the rise in student enrollment, and the corporatization of colleges and universities (Berry, 2005). Economically, the most cost-effective practice for institutions is to hire more adjuncts than a full-time tenure-track faculty member (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009; Kezar & Sam, 2010). According to AAUP (2021b), adjuncts teaching a three-credit course saw an average of \$3,556 in 2019-20. Pay rates varied across institutional types. On average adjuncts make between \$20,000 to \$25,000 annually, while the average salary for a full-time professor is \$80,000 (Drozbrowski, 2021; Reichman, 2021). “The lack of benefits is another way that non-tenure-track faculty can be cost-effective for the institution; very few part-time faculty receive benefits through the institution” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Monks, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2010, p.32). The adjunct model as a means for institutions to reduce cost according to Kezar and Maxey (2016), “has resulted in inequities in compensation, access to benefits, and working conditions” (p. 33). Benefits adjuncts are not offered compared to their full-time-tenured track colleagues range from basic health insurance, retirement programs, tuition reimbursement, to even transportation allowances (Davis, 2017). “With its lower pay, lack of job security, inadequate professional development, and lack of input on the curriculum, adjunct faculty work is no longer a profession” (Rhoades, 1998; Kezar & Maxey, 2016, p.33). With the growing model of contingent workers over the last 40

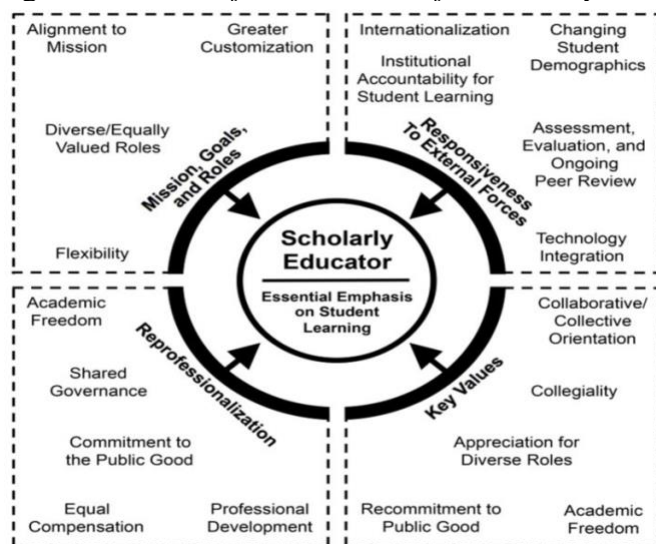
years, replacing the tenure model, institutions of higher education need to assess and reevaluate their most distinguishable asset, their adjuncts (Ulrich, 1998; Gappa et al., 2007).

Recent Studies

Recent research by Kezar, Scott, and Yang (2018) suggested, that the last 30 years in the higher education system, the model of tenure-track and adjunct faculty is in disarray. Due to adjuncts receiving below poverty wages, little-to-no benefits, exclusion from professional development, and the struggle of job security, it's imperative that the future of the profession change. Kezar et al (2018) pointed out in their research that the vision of the adjunct faculty for the future be shared amongst professors, administrators, and policy makers and hinge on a variety of key agreements. Some of those key points are:

1. Discontinue the overuse of hiring part-time faculty and hire more full-time.
2. Provide longer contracts with ranges of three to seven years. The semesterly and yearly contracts are too short.
3. Emphasize on a culture of collaboration and cross-departmental work streams to foster student success.
4. Embrace a shared ecosystem of academic freedom, inclusion in governance, and support professional development for all faculty.

The model that researchers Kezar and Maxey (2016a) created captures the themes in which the agreements shape what faculty roles of the future should embody across higher education (Figure 5).

Figure 5. *A Model for the Future of the Faculty*

Note. Adapted from *Envisioning the faculty for the 21st century: Moving to a mission-oriented and learner-centered model*, by A. Kezar and D. Maxey, p. 213. Copyright 2016 by Rutgers University Press.

In the article, *An Exploration of the Challenges Faced by Traveling Adjuncts* (2021), researchers Witt and Gearin, explore through the lens of phenomenology, the lived experiences of part-time adjuncts that travel between multiple universities. The emerging themes of the research shed light onto job insecurity, low salary wages, and a disconnect in communication from institutional leadership which led to feelings of isolation.

A recent phenomenological study conducted by researchers Barnes and Fredricks (2021), examined the lived experiences related to retention and job satisfaction of adjuncts in higher learning institutions. The study also investigated the link between the leadership styles of university leaders, their effectiveness of communication, and whether that had an impact on adjunct retention and job satisfaction.

Summary

As many colleges and universities have shifted from the full-time-tenured track model to a contingent workforce with the use of adjuncts, the purpose of this research is to investigate the “lived experience” of adjunct faculty in higher education. An objective of this research is to

inform administrators, deans, and policy makers on the impact that adjuncts have on institutions and how they can be supported and compensated fairly, thus reducing the inequalities between full-time-tenured track and part-time faculty.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design, methodology, participants, and the procedures that were used for collecting and analyzing the data. A qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological approach was used to conduct the research. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), phenomenological research will allow for the “essence of the experiences for several individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon” (p.13). The use of surveys, interviews, and audio and video recordings were used to collect and analyze the data provided by the participants of this study. Conducting a qualitative research design allowed the researcher to engage participants from the business schools of 4-year public or private colleges and universities located in the New England region to share their voices as adjuncts navigating the ecosystem of higher education.

Philosophical Assumptions

The philosophical foundation used for this research was ontological. Ontology can be defined as, “issues related to the nature of reality and its characteristics” (Creswell, 2013, p. 20). Phenomenologists often use this philosophical worldview because ontology provides multiple paradigms that are specific to the participants “lived experience” or “essence” in the data collection. The adjuncts in this study, teaching in the New England area might have similar or varying experiences. Through surveys, interviews, and audio/video recordings, the researcher sought to explore the nature of reality and being, through the mind of the participants in their own words.

Interpretive Framework

The specific qualitative interpretive framework for this research was social constructivism (also described as interpretivism). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018),

Social constructivists believe that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experience – meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than the narrow meanings into a few categories or ideas. (p. 8)

The purpose of using a social constructivist, interpretive framework for this study was to interpret and understand the lived experiences of adjunct faculty at business schools located in the New England region and then to make meaning of those experiences.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding the study were as follows:

RQ1. What is the lived experience of adjunct professors in business schools across the New England region serving in 4-year public and private institutions of higher education?

Sub Questions:

SQ1. What is the nature of communication at the institution for adjuncts?

SQ2. What has the work/life been like for the adjunct professoriate prior to the Covid-19 pandemic?

SQ3. How would adjunct professors describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Participants and Sampling

The selected participants for the research study were adjunct faculty members located in the New England region that taught at a 4-year (public or private) college or university. The participants worked within the business school of the institution and directly on campus as an adjunct. The suggested sample size in qualitative, phenomenological research used to collect data is from three to 25 participants (Creswell 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A sample size of

three to 25 participants permits the data to be robust and rich in depth (Miles, et al., 2014). Purposive sampling was used in the selection of the participants to collect the richest data and provide insight into the phenomenon (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The sample for this study consisted of five participants. With the approval of Southern New Hampshire University's IRB, the researcher used social media platforms, Facebook and LinkedIn, institutional databases (Listserv) to connect with qualified participants, and through word of mouth used the snowball sampling approach. Snowball sampling is a form of purposeful sampling that ask participants for a recommendation of other individuals that are willing to participate in the study (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The criteria in which the participants met were the following:

- a) On campus adjunct (current or within last 5 years).
- b) Works at a 4-year private or public college/university in the New England region (states include Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, Rhode Island, or Vermont).
- c) Participant is an adjunct within the business school of the college/university.

The identity of participants in this research will remain confidential for them to “retain ownership of their voices and exert their independence in making decisions” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 95). Participants in this study were each given a unique code to hide their identity allowing for protection and anonymity. The participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any point, for any reason. Upon completion of the interviews, participants were given the opportunity to review transcripts to ensure correctness of data collected by the researcher.

Research Design

The selection of a qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological research design allowed for the participants to share the “essence” of the phenomena or experience. The term “essence” according to Max van Manen (2016) is, “that what makes a thing what it is rather than its being or becoming something else” (p. 177). Mark Vagle (2018) states, “when we study something phenomenologically, we are not trying to get inside other people’s minds. Rather, we are trying to contemplate the various ways things manifest and appear in and through our being in the world” (p. 23). Hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodology is both descriptive and interpretive. Descriptive research questions allowed the researcher to “ask what is going on in terms of actual observable (or potentially observable) events and behavior” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 91). Drawing from the works of Bloomberg and Volpe (2016), the methodology of using interpretive research questions, “seek to explore the meaning of things, situations, and conditions for the people involved” (p.91). The intent of this research was to capture the lived experiences of adjunct faculty in academia and inform an audience of business educators and policy makers on how to best support its contingent workforce.

Data Collection

Prior to the data collection for this phenomenological study, the researcher began with seeking approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the research. Once IRB approval was granted, the researcher identified participants from 4-year, public or private, colleges and universities, located in the New England area for the research. The distribution of participant consent form and survey were submitted to school listservs and social media platforms, Facebook and LinkedIn, to establish the purposeful sampling size of the participants. The survey, which was distributed through Qualtrics, contained 15 questions based on

demographics, teaching history, and experiences as an adjunct faculty member in higher education (See Appendix B). The survey was a mix of closed and open-ended questions. The data collected from the survey helped to establish the participants (adjunct faculty) that fit the criterion to move on to the next phase, which were interviews. A purposeful sampling concept was used to “intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon” (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p. 207). The participants selected for the research were chosen based on their responses to the survey that fit the criterion, their consent to participate, and the need to have enough participants to achieve sufficiency in the population being studied.

Interviews were conducted using Siedman’s interview protocol. The process suggested that the interviewer conduct three, 60 to 90-minute interviews with each participant. Conducting a series of three separate interviews in phenomenological study leads to an in-depth exploration into the meaning of the participants lived experience (Siedman, 2013). Each interview had a different focus to provide varying insight into the participant’s experience. According to Siedman (2013), “the first interview establishes the context of the participants’ experience (p. 21). For the research of this study, interview one focused on the participant’s life history leading to becoming an adjunct. Interview two concentrated on the detailed “essence” of the lived experience. The second interview provides the participant the opportunity to offer detailed information of their experience (Siedman, 2013). Interview three reflected on the meaning of their experience. Siedman (2013) noted that the third interview should, “encourage the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them” (p. 21). The third interview is designed to allow the participant to further make meaning or understanding of their

experience, although they might have done so in the previous interviews. The interview protocol was designed as follows (See Appendix D):

First Interview

The first interview included a prompt of “journey mapping” to guide the conversation in the first interview. Using the following prompt, tell me about your journey experience that led to becoming an adjunct? What led to you making this career choice?

Prompt

Map your journey to becoming an adjunct professor from when you first thought about teaching to being hired into the profession. Include people, places, obstacles, and opportunities along your way. Draw upon your relationship with the school. You can include what works for you and/or what does not. You can use symbols, pictures, lines, arrows, diagram, or even a flow chart to map your journey. Be creative!

Second Interview

The purpose of the second interview was to focus on the details of the participant’s lived experience. The timing of this interview was planned and scheduled three days to a week after the first interview. What has your experience been in the role as an adjunct? How would you describe life prior to the Covid-19 pandemic as an adjunct? How would you describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic as an adjunct? As an adjunct, what are the challenges, issues, benefits to your role? What is the nature of communication at the institution for adjuncts? Why are you doing it? (See Appendix D)

Third interview

The timing of the third interview took place three days to a week after the second interview. The purpose of interview three according to Siedman (2013) is for the participant to reflect on or make meaning of how their experience has been thus far. The third interview framed the participant’s understanding of their lived experience. What are you looking to do

now? Given what you have said about your life being an adjunct, what are your future endeavors in this career?

Data Analysis

During the interviews, the data was collected using a variety of methods. The researcher used the voice recording feature on a cell phone, jotted down handwritten notes, or recorded a video of the interview conducted using Zoom or another video conferencing platform. The researcher then used Otter.AI, which is a speech-to-text software application, to transcribe the audio or video recordings into text. Upon completion of the transcribed audio, the researcher validated and ensured the accuracy of the data transcription.

Upon completion of the first round of interviews, the researcher transcribed the recorded interviews and began analysis with in vivo coding. The preliminary coding was conducted by hand and with the use of a coding and qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) program, NVivo and Delve. Saldaña (2016) suggests using in vivo coding as it translates to, “in that which is alive” (p. 105). According to Saldaña (2016), in vivo coding captures the words of the participant verbatim. Conducting in vivo coding as a first-round analysis provided the researcher with a lens to identify if the significance of the participants’ words were annotated properly. The use of descriptive coding was conducted by the researcher in tandem with in vivo coding. Descriptive coding allowed the researcher to capture the ideas that emerge in the narrative that might not have been revealed by the individual words spoken by the participant. According to Saldaña (2016), “descriptive coding leads primarily to a categorized inventory, tabular account, summary, or index of the data’s contents” (p. 104). The use of descriptive coding allowed the researcher to understand and analyze from an organizational lens the basic topics of what was

going on within the research. In vivo and descriptive coding were the coding strategies used by the researcher in the first level of coding.

Pattern coding was used as a second level of coding to collapse and sort larger patterns or themes into categories. Miles et al (2014) states, “pattern codes are explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation” (p. 86). The researcher developed an interpretation of the collected data to sort the codes into categories. Examining the categories and the codes within each category allowed the researcher to see themes and patterns that emerged in the data as well as determine the importance of the themes and patterns.

Researcher Positionality

The researcher of this study was aware of biases that might form within this study due to his personal connection working as an adjunct for several years at various institutions of higher education. The researcher’s reflexivity required an important awareness of explicitness in understanding that the experiences of the participants and the researcher’s interpretations could shape the themes of the study, therefore it was important for the researcher to remain impartial throughout the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Summary

The proposed methodology for this study used a qualitative, phenomenological approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experience of business adjuncts in New England states. The researcher used a philosophical, ontological assumption and a social constructivists (interpretivism) framework to seek and make meaning of the phenomena of adjuncts. The data for this study was collected using a survey and interviews. Phenomenological research is essential to gaining information about the lived experiences of the participants through

interviews. Using Siedman's (2013) interview protocol, the researcher conducted three, 60-90 minutes interviews with five participants. This approach allowed the researcher to explore in-depth the participants lived experience with varying focus for each interview. The data collected for this research will be used to inform administration, policy makers, and future adjuncts on how to best support contingent workers in higher education.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Data

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experience of adjunct faculty teaching on campus at college and university business schools across the New England region. This chapter will discuss participant demographics, analysis of the research data, and the participants findings. The following are the research questions that guided the study:

RQ1. What is the lived experience of adjunct professors in business schools across the New England region serving in 4-year public and private institutions of higher education?

Sub Questions:

SQ1. What is the nature of communication at the institution for adjuncts?

SQ2. What has the work/life been like for the adjunct professoriate prior to the Covid-19 pandemic?

SQ3. How would adjunct professors describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic?

The interviews conducted for this research were coded using the processes of in vivo, descriptive, and pattern coding (Saldaña, 2016). Five adjunct faculty were interviewed via Zoom from the New England region over three interviews within a week's timeframe according to Seidman's protocol for interviewing (2013). The findings will address the themes that emerged from the coded interviews with the participants of their lived experience as an adjunct teaching at business schools located in New England.

Participant Demographics

The participants for this qualitative phenomenological study were identified using a survey through Qualtrics. Participants were sent a survey to consent to being part of the study. The survey was administered via Facebook, LinkedIn, and through word of mouth using

snowball sampling (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Out of the 34 respondents to the survey, five met all criterion of the purposeful sampling, resulting in a 14.7% participation rate. Upon receiving consent to participate in the study, participants were then sent a Zoom link for interviews. All three interviews with each participant were conducted via Zoom, along with the usage of Otter.Ai speech-to-text recording software. Prior to interviews, participants signed audio and video consent forms and were informed that participation was voluntary. Table 3 outlines the participant demographics including age range, degree level obtained, years as an adjunct, years at current institution, and New England state teaching in.

Table 3. *Participant Demographics*

Participant	Age Range	Degree Level	Years as Adjunct	Years at Institution	NE State Teaching In
P1	35-44	Masters	3-5	0-2	NH
P2	25-34	Masters	0-2	0-2	MA
P3	55-64	Doctorate	11-20	11-20	NH
P4	65 or older	Doctorate	11-20	3-5	NH/MA
P5	55-64	Masters	More than 20yrs	0-2	NH

Coding Process

Prior to the coding process, the researcher reviewed and transcribed the Otter.Ai speech-to-text software and Zoom video recordings of the participants to validate and ensure the accuracy of the data. To protect the participants of the study, pseudonyms were used and the transcripts were stored on a thumb drive and locked in a safe that only the researcher had access to. Once the transcripts from the interviews were complete, they were entered into Delve, which is a coding and qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) program. The data was first analyzed using in vivo coding, which means verbatim from the words of the participant (Saldaña, 2016). Conducting in vivo coding as a first-round analysis provides the researcher with a lens to

identify if the significance of the participants' words were annotated properly. The following statements emerged as an example from the in vivo codes from three of the participants:

- "I don't think that there's much respect for adjuncts, in general."
- "Support for adjuncts could be better in that they should not just throw adjuncts to the wolves."
- "It was a very, you know, frustrating time for me that I wasn't getting enough training and information for this particular role."

In tandem with the in vivo coding, descriptive coding was used as a first-round coding process. According to Saldaña (2016), "descriptive coding leads primarily to a categorized inventory, tabular account, summary, or index of the data's content" (p. 104). While coding the transcripts, categories began to form from the quotes of the participants, thus identifying emerging themes in the research. From the example of the three previous quotes, the researcher labeled them under "respect." The word respect embodies many definitions to people. Respect can evoke feelings, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, and a passion or love for doing or being part of something. Any quotes that fell under the umbrella of respect were placed into this primary category. Secondary categories also emerged that lead to why the participants were feeling this way. The category of respect was then classified:

Respect

- Feelings
- Motivation
- Love

The researcher continued this process of in vivo and descriptive coding until all interview transcripts were coded. The next level of coding conducted was pattern coding, which according

to Saldaña (2016), “is a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, or concepts” (p. 236). Pattern codes are a second cycle process that identifies emergent themes and pulls together the research to make the first cycle of coding more meaningful (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016). From the numerous categories that emerged from the analysis of the coded data, the researcher then narrowed them down into five themes with a series of subcategories. The presentation of the data and findings will be explained in the next section.

Report of Analysis

The report of analysis for this research lists the themes that emerged from the coding of the participants’ interviews. The following are the major themes that guided the research:

Administrators and Dean, Academic Freedom and Autonomy, Adjunct Experience, Challenges, and Respect.

Administrators and Deans

Relationships with the Deans and administration. The relationship surrounding adjunct faculty and the Deans had a major impact on the participants at varying stages during their journey. The analysis of the data showed a lack of communication, the hiring and onboarding process, and an absence of pedagogical analysis. Participants 1 and 3 exposed the largest disconnect with their dean and communication based on two factors: scale of the institution size and gender. Participant 1 stated, “Communication is a little bit weak, weaker than a smaller college or smaller organization. It’s a little bit for me frustrating.” Participant 3 mentioned, “the communication is not great or has not been in the past. It’s better now, but it used to be really bad. And, I mean, it used to be really bad.” According to participant 3 the communication was better once leadership shifted to having a female dean in office. “When we got a female administrator in the school of business that really helped because when it was all male driven,

there was a feeling of, “do I really belong,” as quoted by participant 3. All the participants mentioned that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, communication was better. Most of the communication was through Zoom or some other form of video conferencing and email listservs specific to adjuncts. Meetings were held weekly or biweekly which created a sense of belonging to the administrators, faculty, and staff. Participant 3 recalled,

“I think that there’s been a little bit of a silver lining with covid because it has, I feel it brought more cohesiveness to the faculty... and we got to know, or I got to know our administrators better because we were meeting like every other week.”

The hiring and onboarding process. All five of the participants were hired on the basis of people they knew at the institutions, whether it was a faculty member or dean. Each participant was encouraged to apply for their respective teaching positions. Participant 2 began their work post graduate school, while all others came from established careers in varying business fields. While the ask was easy, the process of being hired was stressful. Participants spoke of the hiring process as:

- “Wasn’t very complicated, but it’s very stressful because you don’t know if they will pick you up or not.”
- “It was a whole rigmarole.”
- “With no real network, I applied for and was put through what I consider a much more rigorous process, a vetting process with letters of recommendation, personal references, transcripts, interviews, role playing, background checks, etc., etc.”
- “I found out that they ask for your philosophy for teaching. I didn’t know what that meant.”

The participants mentioned Deans and administrators should engage in creating an onboarding program. Participant 3 stated, “The first thing would be to have an onboarding system, an onboarding program for adjuncts...this would require them to really hire an adjunct a few months before the adjunct is supposed to start.” This would include hiring before August or a week before classes start, offering a paid training system, provide an adjunct handbook, and assigning a mentor to assist within the first year. As Participant 1 described a few times, “My first experience was very stressful because nobody trained me.... Nobody trained me and I just, you know, tried to learn from my colleagues and other PhD students.” Participant 4 has worked for multiple institutions and said, “a lot of the schools offered mentors to me in that first year.” Creating an institutional system for adjuncts would provide a trained candidate pool of qualified adjuncts. “If we could get training, onboarding, get to know who our administrators are, continuous communication, like meetings once a month...because as human beings, we all need to feel valued, right?” noted Participant 3.

Academic Freedom and Autonomy

When discussing what freedom and autonomy adjuncts have in their role, the ability to teach to their style was unanimous amongst the participants. Participant 2 mentioned,

I’m grateful to work at an institution where academic freedom is very important. We are allowed to alter our courses as we see fit.... I was told by one of our union professors that I could eliminate the papers if I wanted to which I did, because being a hands-on course, I didn’t find it fit with student need to learn how to write a research paper in my class...but I was able to alter all the assignments and alter the course schedule. So, I’d say academic freedom is I just don’t have many guidelines. All my students show up and I have tangible things to grade.

The participants expressed that they were given a template or course syllabus to follow and allowed to draw upon real-world experiences to support the pedagogy from the assigned textbook. Participant 1 stated, “I had the freedom to pick different chapters of the book...freedom to pick up knowledge or information from the book, but I didn’t have that much freedom to change the book or course.” Participant 3 drew upon their experience saying,

We couldn’t really change things in those courses, but that’s sort of an anomaly, generally speaking, you teach a course or at least when I was first hired, this is the book we want you to use, here’s a syllabus that somebody else used, but you can change it up. So there used to be a lot of freedom.

Although the participants shared a passion for what they do as educators, there were some areas of concern in flexibility, support, and course creation.

Flexibility

As the participants talked about academic freedom and autonomy as adjuncts a few underlying subcategories emerged. The first was about having a flexible schedule and time in their workday. When addressing time, it included teaching at multiple institutions, submission of assignments from students due to pandemic, and the flexibility of teaching to undergraduate vs. graduate students. Participant 4 stated, “I can’t always be available as needed, because of conflicting schools.” Although they are semi-retired, Participant 4 typically adjuncts at four to five institutions per semester which makes time management critical to their flexibility and work life balance.

Support

The act of support for adjuncts by the deans was felt amongst all the participants in the study. In the experience of the adjuncts, they unanimously revealed the increase of adjunct

support due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Participant 1 shared, “They care about how they can support the professor.” The participants reported seeing an uptick in the weekly outreach, communication of resources, and training opportunities. There was even more support around mental health and how to best service the students. “I am very supported honestly by the whole community,” mentioned Participant 2.

Course creation

Four out of the five participants in the study had been asked by their deans to create or develop a course. Those creations led to being part of the core curriculum. Participant 5 stated, “I wrote the class and created the course, The Art and Science of Selling Advertising, and established it as a core curriculum.” Participant 3 in their 11+ years as an adjunct mentioned, “they (deans) asked me to basically develop a French program for the culinary students. It wasn’t so much conversational French, as it was terminology...I taught that for 10 years.” Currently Participant 3 is working to develop a new MBA program. Each participant was thrilled and enjoyed being able to create a course. They all were minimally compensated for work but saw the opportunity in course creation as a career builder.

Adjunct Experience

The participants identified a deeper insight through their lenses around the topic of the adjunct experience. The five subcategories the participants stated were the biggest lived experiences as an adjunct were ageism, benefits, compensation, pay, and culture.

Ageism

With three of the participants identifying over the age of 55+ and one between the age of 35-44, they all mentioned some form of ageism. Participant 4 experienced ageism firsthand during the interview process which not only caused some PTSD in applying for a full-time job

later in their career, but it was also an illegal action committed by the institution. The participants described their experiences of ageism as:

- “The college should not have said to me, “we’re looking for someone who could stay a long time,” that’s ageism.”
- “Well, we’re really looking for someone who can stay with the college for a very long time, which was code words for you’re too old.”
- “I felt like, you know, the generation gap between me and the undergraduates wasn’t that much. But I’m 60 now...and of course the students have changed.”
- “There is that disconnect between the professor and the student, age wise, I think.”

Benefits, compensation, and pay

Although two of the participants mentioned “it’s not about the money,” benefits, compensation, and pay were the second largest theme that emerged from the interviews. Participant 2 pointed out in their interview, “as an adjunct, we actually are not eligible for benefits. It might be different because I only teach one course.” Participant 4 stated, “it would be great to have some combination of either higher pay or benefits that don’t trigger federal requirements like health insurance.” Participant 5 mentioned, “I’m just not one of them who are actually trying to have their primary income come from adjuncting, if you will...for me, it’s more of a labor of love.” All the participants felt there needs to be some form of compensation, especially when it came to training programs, conferences, and professional development. Whether for an onboarding training program, a course, or being paid to attend a training, the participants want to be compensated. To attend a summer course on Negotiations and Business Deals at an Ivy League school, participant 4 mentioned, “I had to pay for that myself. It would have been great if the school would say, ‘hey, we’d like you to take a course in X and we’re

going to pay for that.” Participant 3 expressed during their interview, “if they (university) instituted a program of really comprehensive compensation program, I think they would get really quality educators.”

Culture

The culture uncovered through the research expressed by the participants was around community, collegiality, and relationships. Much of the cultural shifts were due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Participant 2 said, “I am very supported honestly by the whole community... more of a family-oriented type community before you know, years ago.” A factor contributing to the culture of community was the size of the institution. The smaller the college or university the more connected the participants felt. Participant 4 voiced in their interview, “feeling connected to the community is not only being invited to meetings, and the collegiality, and the mentoring. To me, it’s also the credibility.” Although the participants expounded on their experiences of culture with community and collegiality, relationships varied in response. Participant 5 mentioned, “unless someone reaches out and wants to collaborate on something, I have not had much of a relationship to my colleagues.” Due to a merger with the business school, Participant 2 said, “I wouldn’t say I’m very close with the business department just yet, but we’re a family; We do have a good working relationship.”

Challenges

The participants in this study discussed various challenges to the role of being an adjunct. They reported difficulties prior to, during, and after the Covid-19 pandemic. The challenges ranged from classroom technology to the transition from face to face (F2F) to remote learning for campus students over the last two years from the pandemic. The participants did report some positive outcomes when it came to covid and the feeling of inclusion.

Classroom technology

The use of technological equipment has revolutionized pedagogy in today's classrooms. This often requires some form of training to operate these systems. Two of the participants that taught at multiple institutions addressed their concerns of being trained at one while not being trained at another which varied in their IT systems. Participant 1 stated, "They (IT) trained me how to use PowerPoint or different technology in my class. They took me to the actual class. It was a very good experience that I didn't have with the other institution." Participant 4 described their experience of teaching for the first time in a hyperflex classroom on their first night with no experience as "awful because I had to turn my back to the classroom." They needed help from both the Dean and IT to get the classroom set up to teach their course for the evening due to the lack of training on the technology.

Covid-19 pandemic

The global pandemic that began in 2020 forced the world to operate in an all-new way. As the world shut down, people went into quarantine, businesses and schools were sent scrambling to not only keep production going, while schools had to figure out new ways to educate remotely. The pandemic proved to be a very difficult transition for on campus students that impacted their learning, mental health, and their inability to make human connections due to wearing mask. Participant 2 mentioned, "the university brought in a lot of therapists especially this year because covid was something really hard to deal with for a lot of people." Although each participant mentioned how much they enjoyed being face to face, they witnessed a shift in student output and emotional coping issues. Participant 4 stated, "more than a couple of students would say, 'I get the whole covid thing, but I signed up to learn on campus and now I can't, and I feel cheated.'"

Respect

Merriam-Webster dictionary online (2022), defines the word respect as, “high or special regard: the quality or state of being esteemed.” Respect is an emotion that is felt both negatively and positively and can impact the motivation one may have to succeed. The participants in the study talked about feelings of indifference in the target audience they teach to, motivation for why they teach, and the love they feel from teaching. These emerging themes are what lead to a category of Respect.

Feelings

While all the participants have taught at the undergraduate level, Participant 3 stressed a major difference in teaching at the graduate level. “My experience with the grad students is very different. They always greet you,” stated participant 3. They further mentioned, “The grad students are very respectful...the undergrads will just walk in the classroom and not even greet you because they are so busy on their phones, or whatever.”

Motivation

There were several words that emerged to describe the motivation as to why the participants are adjuncts. Words like purpose, gratifying, and motivational all were descriptors that participants felt as a form of respect. “Teaching gives me a purpose. That’s what I love about it. I don’t think I’ve ever felt more purposeful in a job than I have in education teaching,” mentioned Participant 3. Being pushed by other professors was another way in which the participants were encouraged to seek out being adjuncts. Participant 2 said, “Meeting all these professors that love what they do, really kind of pushed me towards teaching. I’m forever grateful because it really brought out that passion for teaching and how I love what I do.”

Love

If there was one sentimental word that truly was verbalized by each participant, it was the word love. The ways in which love appeared were rooted in why they adjunct, their love for teaching, and the love of purpose. Some reasons that the participants listed as why they love to teach were:

- “Because I love to deliver my knowledge to someone else. I love teaching. I love to work with people.”
- “I love those moments when the students can see the lights come on, and they’re like, oh, now I get it. It’s why I really enjoy the teaching.”
- “So, I love to the fact that teaching college in particular... I feel that it keeps me young. Because I’m with young people all the time. So, I feel like it keeps me young.”

There was a love of purpose that came from being an adjunct too. Participant 3 stated, “Teaching gives me a purpose. That’s what I love about it. I don’t think I’ve ever felt more purposeful in a job than I have in education in teaching. I just now realize that gives me purpose.” With students being the key stakeholder, participant 2 shared, “It’s really gratifying to see students graduating and moving on to these incredible jobs and knowing I had a part in it.”

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the lived experience of adjunct professors in business schools across the New England region serving in 4-year public and private institutions of higher education?

The research question addresses the lived experience of adjuncts living in the New England region teaching at 4-year public and private institutions. While the question is broad, participants candidly shared their lived experience. There were nearly 500 codes that were

derived from the research that was then coded using in vivo, descriptive, and pattern coding to create themes for the analysis of the research. Of the participants in the study two were less than five years into their career as adjuncts and the other three were 11+, yet many of the experiences were similar. The major themes that emerged from the coding analysis based on the research question were Relationships and Deans, Academic Freedom and Autonomy, Adjunct Experience, Challenges, and Respect.

Relationships and Deans

All five of the participants in the study stated that their entrance into the world of adjunct teaching was through either a connection to someone at the school like a faculty or staff member or directly from a dean. Participant 3 mentioned, “And basically, the dean of the school asked me if I wanted to go teach there. And I was like, yeah, of course.” Participant 5 stated, “I was often a guest speaker...It was not my intention to apply for an adjunct position, but I had this conversation with the dean after creating a course and he said, Congratulations you’re starting in the fall.” When asked about the hiring and onboarding process the participants in the study felt it was stressful. Participant 5 voiced in their interview, “With no real network, I applied for and was put through what I considered a much more rigorous process, a vetting with letters of recommendation, personal references, transcripts, interviews, role playing, background check, etc.” And Participant 1 noted, “I found out that they ask for your philosophy for teaching. I didn’t know what that meant.” The process was described by Participant 3 as, “A whole rigmarole.” Upon hiring the participants stressed the importance of having an onboarding or mentorship program for new adjuncts too. Through establishing such program, the adjuncts felt their experience would provide a sense of belonging and connection with the school, faculty, and staff. Participant 3 proposed during their interview, “If we could get training, onboarding, get to

know who our administrators are, continuous communication, like meetings once a month... because as human beings, we all need to feel valued, right.”

Academic Autonomy and Freedom

The participants of the study responded to the questions surrounding academic autonomy and freedom collectively regarding their experience. Four of the five participants have created courses within their respective subject fields. While this is not often an ask of adjunct faculty, they saw this as a career builder. A minimal compensation package was awarded for the extra work done. The academic autonomy and freedom in the classroom were limited to minor changes. Participant 4 mentioned, “If we’re teaching and we observe something that needs a small change, for instance, maybe there’s a page number wrong or we want to bring video content or whatever, we have the freedom to do those small things.” The participants realized they had more freedom in their role, but it led to increasing their time management skills, especially if teaching at multiple institutions. The flexibility allowed from teaching at multiple institutions placed more focus on their work/life balance. This was due to the number of courses taught between institutions, grading assignments, travel time, and course preparation. Participant 5 pointed out how fellow adjuncts were faced with the work/life balance of being an adjunct:

“I have friends who have four or five adjunct positions concurrently. And so, for them, it’s a real balancing act and juggling act, to get from institution A and B, but that’s until they get hired full-time somewhere. They’re cobbling together their livelihood by holding, you know, teaching three or four or five classes.”

As a semi-retired adjunct and freeway flier, meaning flexibility in commuting between institutions, Participant 4 expressed the journey as, “I always considered it to be kind of a

calming event before the class where I could get my ideas together, mentally prepared what I wanted to talk about during the lecture, and I really didn't mind the driving."

Adjunct Experience

The participants were candid in discussing their adjunct experience, although there was a wide array of answers. When asked to use a journey map to describe their path to becoming an adjunct professor, Participant 2 said, "it's been a crazy journey, but I guess I couldn't be more grateful because I love what I do." However, Participant 4 pointed out "it is a long torturous journey actually." Participants explained that ageism and the generation gap was part of the experience they encountered. Three of the five participants identified themselves over 55+ and have experienced ageism firsthand. Participant 4 stated, "The college should not have said to me, "we're looking for someone who could stay a long time." That's ageism!" Meanwhile, Participant 3 acknowledged the fact that, "I felt like, you know the generation gap between me, and the undergraduates wasn't that much. But I'm 60 now and of course the students have changed." This experience around ageism drew out feelings of disrespect from the institution and a disconnect from the undergraduate students. Participant 3 mentioned,

"The generations have changed a lot. To be perfectly honest, I really enjoy the graduate students a lot better. The grad students are very respectful...the undergrads will just walk in the classroom and not even greet you because they are so busy on their phones, or whatever."

While the adjuncts may work only part-time, the amount of work often put in is equivalent to a full-time faculty professor's work. As Participant 4 stated, "it's a very difficult way to earn a living." Most of the participants in the study agreed that benefits, compensation, and pay need to improve for adjuncts. Although two of the participants declared it is not about

the money, they suggested compensation in other areas. “It would be great to be paid a little bit more or receive some sort of professional stipend,” stated Participant 4. Receiving compensation for training programs, conferences, and professional development were of importance to the participants. This was because the participants had to support themselves financially to attend these types of events. In attending a professional development summer course that was held at an Ivy League school, Participant 4 mentioned, “I had to pay for that myself. It would have been great if the school would say, ‘hey, we’d like you to take a course in X and we’re going to pay for that.’” Participant 3 stated, “I would just assume to pay for something myself. If I wanted to go rather than go through the rigors of, you know, can you pay for this?” Although there was a lack in benefits and compensation received, the participants did not allow it to impact their continuance to work as adjuncts. As Participant 5 voiced, “I’m just not one of them who are actually trying to have their primary income come from adjuncting, if you will...for me, it’s more of a labor of love.”

Culture among the participants varied in their lived experiences. The themes that emerged from the research for culture were defined as community, collegiality, and relationships. The participants felt that due to the Covid-19 pandemic there was a cultural shift for adjuncts and the community they serve. Participant 2 said, “I am very supported honestly by the whole community... more of a family-oriented type community before you know, years ago.” Participant 5 mentioned, “Adjunct to adjunct very supportive, cover classes, share material, so on and so forth. Adjunct to full-time, I have had personal experiences, where I felt less than or second class or non-collegiate.” During their interviews the participants were asked, do you feel like you are part of your institution’s community? Participant 1 stated, “Not 100%, maybe

50%...I think as an adjunct not really, you don't consider yourself because there are a lot of restrictions because you're an adjunct." Participant 5 voiced in their interview,

I get involved. I took it upon myself.... I could see someone else saying, I don't get involved at all. I just go and teach my class and go home. That's a choice as an adjunct that you make. In my lived experience, I just choose the opposite because I just like being around the school. I like getting involved. I listen and learn you know, so I've always been more involved...than other adjuncts on staff.

One area that was pointed out in the interviews was the size of the institution in relation to a sense of community. The smaller the college or university, the more connected the participants felt. Participant 1 explained, "Culture of community, I think it depends on the size of the university, in bigger university...the communication is a little bit weaker than a smaller college." Participant 4 mentioned,

Feeling connected to the community is not only about being invited to meetings, and the collegiality, and the mentoring. To me, it's also the credibility.... It makes us feel more connected. Even if it's just a folder with your name on it in the mailroom, or an ID badge... those little things make you feel really connected and they don't cost much money. I think being recognized as an academic, someone who teaches for the institution, maybe an occasional small gift...also important.

The relationships with colleagues were varied by the participants. Participant 2 described the relationship thusly, "I wouldn't say I'm very close with the business department just yet, but we're a family. We do have a good working relationship.... The community here is definitely close knit. We're a pretty small college." While Participant 5 explained, "unless someone

reaches out and wants to collaborate on something, I have not had much of a relationship to my colleagues.”

Challenges

The challenges the participants discussed were in accordance with the Covid-19 global pandemic that began in early 2020, when the world went into lock down. They reported various difficulties prior to, during, and after the pandemic. The challenges ranged from classroom technology, Covid-19, and the transition from face to face (F2F) to remote learning for campus students, staff, and faculty.

Sub-Question 1. What is the nature of communication at the institution for adjuncts?

Participants reflected on the importance of open and continuous communication and how it was relevant to feeling connected to the overall community of faculty, staff, and students. The adjunct experience was greater when there was a sense of an organizational culture that was inclusive and supportive. Two factors that exposed a larger disconnect in communication between the adjunct and the dean were the following: the scale of the institution size and gender. Participant 1 mentioned it was frustrating because, “Communication is a little bit weak, weaker than a small college or smaller organization.” And according to participant 3, once the office hired a female dean the communication was better. Participant 3 pointed out that, “When we got a female administrator in the school of business that really helped because when it was male driven, there was a feeling of, Do I really belong?” The communication also increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of the global pandemic forcing most people to work from home remotely, the avenue of communication was all virtually. Meetings were held via Zoom, Teams, or some other form of video conferencing almost weekly or bi-weekly along with emails that

kept everyone up to date with the state of the school and institution. These meetings created a sense of belonging as Participant 3 mentioned,

I think that there's been a little bit of a silver lining with covid because it has, I feel it brought more cohesiveness to the faculty... and we got to know, or I got to know our administrators better because we were meeting like every other week.

Sub-Question 2. What has the work/life been like for the adjunct professoriate prior to the Covid-19 pandemic?

While the participants of the study all were working prior to the pandemic, there was very little that they talked about when addressing the work life. Participant 3 mentioned, "prior to, there was that feeling of, you know, Do I really belong here? And I don't mean, qualification wise. I mean, do I really belong here?" The sense of belonging shifted due to the pandemic because there was intentionality with inclusion to support adjuncts remotely from the deans. Participant 2 answered the question by saying, "Great! In one word, great, much better than what it is now. There was definitely more of a community for sure."

Sub-Question 3. How would adjunct professors describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic?

The participants talked about the various barriers in which the Covid-19 pandemic presented to them. The use of classroom technology and lack of training by the institution was addressed as a concern of two participants. While both participants work at multiple institutions, they stated one trained them and the other did not. Participant 1 emphasized, "They (IT) trained me how to use PowerPoint or different technology in my class. They took me to the actual class. It was a very good experience that I didn't have with the other institution." Participant 4 described their experience of teaching for the first time in a hyperflex classroom on their first

night with no experience as “awful because I had to turn my back to the classroom.” They needed help from both the Dean and IT to get the classroom set up to teach their course for the evening due to the lack of training on the technology. Because of Covid-19 and the shutdown of institutions, the transition to using Zoom for class proposed other technological challenges. Participant 2 mentioned, “Switching to Zoom was really tough. Campus life was empty. Zoom was not the worst thing but definitely not fun.... It was a tough transition to deal with that, even for students.” Participant 4 stated,

I found it tough to read body language sometimes in the Zoom meetings, and then a lot of kids wouldn't even turn their video on. So that makes it difficult. I go face to face as often as I can...I like seeing students in the classroom.

The pandemic presented other challenges beyond just technology. One such challenge was the wearing of face mask for protection to reduce the spread of the virus. Participant 1 stated,

It was difficult for me... I couldn't breathe easily, I wanted to make sure my students understood me under my mask. I had to speak louder and slowly in class to make sure everyone understood me. It was very challenging.

Participant 5 mentioned,

I struggled with wearing my mask while teaching in the classroom. I felt like I was detached even though I was physically in the classroom during Covid. I did feel like there was a separation.... I do feel like it took away a little bit from my personality in that true connection you make with a person when you see a face... I just know there's nothing more powerful than eye contact and face to face. But I had to adapt. I had to really work the mask and the separation thing into my routine.

The pandemic for on-campus students proved to be a very difficult transition that impacted their learning, mental health, and their inability to make human connections due to wearing mask. Participant 2 mentioned, “the university brought in a lot of therapists especially this year because covid was something really hard to deal with for a lot of people.” Although each participant mentioned how much they enjoyed being face to face, they witnessed a shift in student output and emotional coping issues. Participant 4 stated, “more than a couple of students would say, ‘I get the whole covid thing, but I signed up to learn on campus and now I can’t, and I feel cheated.’”

Respect

The most overwhelming and unanimous experience in which the participants felt the most connection with the students was due to their passion and love for teaching. The adjunct experience that each participant stated for why they do this work was centered on their feelings, motivation, and love. These emerging themes are what lead to the category of respect. When asked how they would define respect for the work that they do as an adjunct, Participant 5 said, “Respect is that compassion and ability of one human to actually listen to the other and respond, not based on their needs, but based on the other person.” Participant 3 stated, “We all deserve respect as human beings. So, for me, it’s treating somebody the way in which I would want to be treated, and that’s fair, good, and kind.”

The participants all shared one thing in common and that was teaching at the undergraduate level. There was a feeling of indifference regarding the target audience being taught. Participant 3 discussed a different feeling as an adjunct teaching at the graduate level. Participant 3 noted,

My experience with the grad students is very different. They always greet you. The grad students are very respectful... the undergrads will just walk in the classroom and not even greet you because they are so busy on their phones, or whatever.

The words that emerged from participants to describe motivation were centered on purpose, motivation, and gratification. These were the words that the participants said were the reasons they do this work and they saw the words as a sign of respect for the profession.

“Teaching gives me a purpose. That’s what I love about it. I don’t think I’ve ever felt more purposeful in a job than I have in education teaching,” mentioned Participant 3. Prior professors were the driving factor for why and how a few of the participants found themselves becoming an adjunct. Participant 1 stated, “It was the international professors that influenced and motivated me to become a professor. Seeing someone that looked like me doing this was the motivation that I needed to become an adjunct professor.” Participant 2 shared in their experience,

“It was the motivation and encouragement that my professors back then gave me. They really instilled something in me. Meeting all these professors that love what they do, really kind of pushed me towards teaching. I’m forever grateful because it really brought out that passion for teaching and how I love what I do.”

Love was a word that was used by the participants to express their zeal for teaching and how they saw change due to the passion and gratification that came from being an adjunct. Participant 2 said, “Because I love to deliver my knowledge to someone else. I love teaching. I love to work with people.” Participant 4 stated, “I love those moments when the students can see the lights come on, and they’re like, ‘Oh, now I get it.’ It’s why I really love teaching.” Participant 3 remarked, “So I love the fact that teaching college in particular...I feel like it keeps me young. Because I’m with young people all the time, I feel like it keeps me young.”

Conclusion

Chapter 4 provides a brief overview of the purpose of the research, followed by the participant demographics, analysis of the research data, and the participant findings. The qualitative phenomenological study focused on the lived experience of adjunct faculty teaching on campus at college and university business schools across the New England region. The findings presented in this chapter through the analysis of the interview data, identified several emerging themes of the participants. The use of direct quotes allowed for the themes to emerge, thus providing insight into the lived experience of the participants as adjuncts.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Implications

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the lived experience of adjunct faculty teaching on campus at business schools across New England. This chapter will address the findings of the study relative to the framework and literature review, recommendations for future research, recommendations for future practice, limitations and delimitations of the study, and the researcher's conclusions.

Using three-interview protocol process to collect data, allowed for an in-depth exploration into the lived experience of the participants. Once the interviews were complete, the recordings collected using Otter.AI voice-to-text software were then transcribed by the researcher, and then coding software, Delve, was used to code the data from the transcripts. The first round of coding was in vivo coding which was then followed by descriptive coding. The first level coding led to the emerging themes that were later synthesized by a second round of coding which was pattern coding. Thus, the final themes emerged.

The phenomenological study conducted was guided by the following research questions:
RQ1. What is the lived experience of adjunct professors in business schools across the New England region serving in 4-year public and private institutions of higher education?

Sub Questions:

SQ1. What is the nature of communication at the institution for adjuncts?

SQ2. What has the work/life been like for the adjunct professoriate prior to the Covid-19 pandemic?

SQ3. How would adjunct professors describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic?

The collegiality that adjuncts felt was greater when there was a connection with the staff and the deans. This greatly aligned with Gappa, Austin, and Trice's (2006) description of relationships and community:

The higher education community must rethink the academic career, the organization of faculty work, and how to make best use of and support all faculty members in their varied roles. To do this we must revisit the historic relationships between faculty members and their institutions (p. 36).

According to the research findings, the themes that emerged from the study were: (a) administrators and deans, (b) academic freedom and autonomy, (c) adjunct experience, (d) challenges, (e) and respect. The themes are based on the lived experience of the participants as adjuncts working in business schools across New England.

Interpretation of Findings

As the demand for adjuncts by higher education institutions continue to increase, the support structure and constraints on adjunct faculty remains to impact them tremendously. As most campuses shifted to remote learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic, adjuncts continued to navigate the landscape to create a lasting future in higher education. The findings below are based on the analysis of data compiled and have been organized by the research questions.

RQ1. What is the lived experience of adjunct professors in business schools across the New England region serving in 4-year public and private institutions of higher education?

Major Finding 1

The participants of the study all mentioned the importance of having a meaningful relationship with deans and administrators. Having direct contact with the deans and administration led to a symbiotic relationship that was fundamental to a shared responsibility of

the Essential Elements framework laid out by Gappa, et al (2007). The participants all shared that their hiring to teach as an adjunct was through either a dean or faculty member at the school they already knew. The participants also mentioned how stressful the hiring and onboarding process was and how it impacted the sense of belonging to the school community. This is consistent with rethinking the organizational structure that is integral to creating change within an institution (Gappa, et al, 2007). In a recent study conducted by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) (2022), 52.7 percent of adjunct faculty felt they were treated as a member of the faculty by administration. The participants felt that establishing an onboarding mentorship program would provide a sense of belonging and community with the school, faculty, staff, and students. According to Gappa, et al (2007), “when decision making is shared among faculty members and administrators at all levels, the campus atmosphere is conducive to thoughtful, deliberate, creative approaches to incorporating the essential elements, and to good working relationships between administrators and faculty” (p.190).

Major Finding 2

The participants of the study reported that they were given an appropriate amount of academic autonomy and freedom. They were able to make minor modifications to course content, teach to their pedagogical style that was suitable for the success of their students, had flexibility in their schedule different than their FT colleagues, and were able to create or develop courses. Although the participants were usually given a template or previous course syllabus, they had the flexibility to draw upon their own real-world experiences and the use of other supporting resources. This is in alignment with two of the three actions of academic freedom and autonomy according to Gappa, et al (2007):

- Regardless of the appointment type, all faculty members academic freedom rights have been defined.
- Autonomy to teach courses assigned is granted to all faculty members.

Major Finding 3

The adjunct experience was summed up by Participant 4 as, “a long torturous journey actually.” The participants used journey mapping to tell their story and describe their path to becoming an adjunct. Three of the five participants not only identified themselves over the age of 55, but stated that ageism and the generation gap was experienced in the hiring process and felt in the classroom. The findings of the research are consistent with a recent study showing that 60 percent of adjunct faculty are 50 or older (AFT, 2022). Although age seemed to play into their experience as adjuncts, they continue to do the work because they love what they do.

Major Finding 4

The fourth major finding of the study is that compensation and benefits need improvement. Participant 4 mentioned, “it’s a very difficult way to earn a living.” Although two of the participants disclosed that it is not about the money, compensation should be awarded in other areas. The participants felt compensation would be beneficial in the ways of offering or paying for training programs, conferences, and professional development. According to AFT’s study (2022), “Contingent faculty members want their contributions recognized with equitable compensation (p. 4).”

Major Finding 5

The culture of community, collegiality, and relationships was another major theme address by the participants. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, participants discussed a cultural shift surrounding inclusion and support. Participant 2 mentioned, “I am very supported honestly by

the whole community...more of a family-oriented type community before you know, years ago.” The findings of this study can be compared to results of a recent study conducted by AFT (2022) when asked about feeling like they are part of the institution, 59 percent of the adjuncts surveyed said yes. Notably, 73.6 percent said they felt treated as a member of faculty by their colleagues, according to the AFT study (2022). There was a slightly different feeling among participants on the relationship with colleagues of this study. In describing their relationship with colleagues, Participant 2 stated, “I wouldn’t say I’m very close with the business department just yet, but we’re a family. We do have a good working relationship... The community here is definitely close knit. We’re a small college.”

SQ2. What has the work/life been like for the adjunct professoriate prior to the Covid-19 pandemic?

Major Finding 6

When asked about life prior to the Covid-19 pandemic there was very little that the participants talked about in addressing the work life. A sense of belonging shifted during and post pandemic. Participant 3 mentioned, “prior to, there was that feeling of, you know, Do I really belong here? And I don’t mean, qualification wise. I mean, Do I really belong here?” Because of the pandemic there was a shift in administration behaviors to be more intentional with inclusion and support for adjuncts.

SQ3. How would adjunct professors describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Major Finding 7

During the pandemic, as the world shut down and transitioned to working from home and hosting online meetings, so did higher education. Classes were taught using Zoom or other video conferencing platforms thus leading administration to hold weekly meetings, provide

technological support, and institute trainings due to this emergency transition. Participant 2 mentioned, “Switching to Zoom was really tough. Campus life was empty. Zoom was not the worst thing but definitely not fun.... It was a tough transition to deal with that, even for students.” The findings can be compared to results of an earlier study conducted by AFT (2022) that showed 78.7 percent of adjuncts were teaching primarily on campus face to face pre-pandemic. By April 1, 2020, the numbers had shifted to 79.9 percent teaching primarily online, while 16.6 remained in person on campus (AFT, 2022). According to the AFT (2022) study, 62 percent were provided tech tools (Zoom or other video conferencing platform) necessary to teach online, and 56.3 percent were provided technical support from their institution for switching to remote learning. Participant 4 stated,

I found it tough to read body language sometimes in the Zoom meetings, and then a lot of kids wouldn't even turn their video on. So that makes it difficult. I go face to face as often as I can... I like seeing students in the classroom.

Major Finding 8

The last major finding was that participants felt valued and respected because they all shared motivation, passion, and love for teaching. As Participant 3 mentioned, “Teaching gives me a purpose. That’s what I love about it. I don’t think I’ve ever felt more purposeful in a job than I have in education teaching. The respect was not from the institutional or organizational levels, but through the love of the profession and the students they teach. According to Hacker and Dreifus (2011), “Some contingents love teaching so much that they’ll do it with dignity and care, regardless of low pay. It’s sad that their passion for the classroom is so readily exploited” (p.59). In contrast to earlier research, adjunct faculty did not feel valued or respected and the

absence of respect eroded the feeling of belong and satisfaction (Austin and Trice, 2016; Kezar and Maxey, 2016; Kezar and Sam 2011; Gappa and Leslie, 1993).

Unexpected Findings

The findings that emerged from the research conducted in this study were mostly congruent with the prior research. However, some findings that emerged were unexpected and did not align with prior research.

Unexpected Finding 1

In this study, four out of five of the participants were tasked with creating or developing a course at their institutions. All were minimally compensated for their work and saw the experience as an opportunity for career growth. Full-time faculty are usually tasked with course development as they work with department chairs on the core curriculum to meet accreditation standards. As scholarly educators, it is important for adjuncts to establish a scholarly identity that helps build connections to their discipline, thus creating opportunities to engage in scholarship (Kezar and Maxey, 2016).

Unexpected Finding 2

Building off the work of Tuckman (1978), researchers Gappa and Leslie (1993), created the second typology adjunct model which became the standard. The categories were as follows: career-enders; specialists, experts, or professionals; aspiring academics; and freelancers. Muncaster (2011) later added two more categories road scholars and minimalist. The road scholars were defined as someone that teaches at two or more different institutions and is teaching a minimum of five classes. According to Gappa and Leslie (1993) road scholars were labeled as freeway fliers but were categorized with aspiring academics. Among the participants of this study only two identified as road scholars. Participant 4 identified between the

intersectionality of career ender and road scholar because they are semi-retired and travel to multiple institutions. Only two of the participants in the study were aspiring academics early into their career, but were not freeway fliers, and only taught at one institution. This is consistent with an article written by Henry Reichman (2021) in *Academe Magazine*, “Approximately one-half teach one or two courses at a single institution, while 22 percent teach three or more classes at two or more institutions” (p. 35).

Recommendations for Future Research

There has been a substantially large increase in hiring adjunct faculty across higher education over the last four decades. “Forty years ago, 70 percent of academic employment were tenured or on tenured track. Today, that figure has flipped; 75 percent of faculty are not eligible for tenure, and 47 percent hold part-time positions” (AFT, 2022). As the landscape continues to shift and change it is imperative for organizations and leaders to recognize the value adjunct faculty provide. This study was conducted using a small sample size located in the New England region. Recommendations for future research may include:

1. Expanding the research beyond the New England area. Future research should focus on replicating this study in Southern, Midwestern, and Western regions of the country.
Increasing the study sample size to explore a larger population of adjuncts faculty.
2. Differentiating the school department in which the adjunct faculty teaches. For future research, adjuncts teaching in other school departments like Arts and Science, Engineering, Social Sciences, etc. may differ in response.
3. Future research will have to examine a quantitative or mixed methods study to gather data through a statistical model. This will help further our understanding of adjuncts working in higher education.

4. Another recommendation would be to conduct a study that is post Covid-19 pandemic to explore the impact on adjuncts teaching in higher education.
5. A final recommendation is to explore through the lens of Deans and department chairs the leadership models in which cultivating a community of cultural change and professional development can have on adjunct faculty.

Recommendations for Future Practice

Higher education in the United States has seen a major shift in college and university professors. Part-time faculty positions make up 47 percent of the workforce in higher education (AFT, 2022). Many adjuncts struggle to meet basic needs to live and make wages that place them well below the federal poverty guideline for a family of four. The lived experience of adjuncts from the findings of this study in addition to the literature review will guide recommendations for future practice.

Relationship-building begins at the hiring and orientation process. Deans and department chairs must be the leaders of cultural change when ushering in new adjuncts. The framework by Gappa, et al (2007) describes this as a relationship that is symbiotic and fundamental to a shared responsibility of the Essential Elements. At the center of the Essential Elements framework is respect. When there is an absence of respect, adjuncts feel marginalized (Austin and Trice, 2016; Kezar and Sam, 2011; Gappa and Leslie, 1993). As Austin and Trice (2016) stated, “this new relationship would be characterized by both reciprocity and mutuality- that is, it would provide benefits for faculty employee and employing institution, while also requiring them to honor their mutual responsibilities” (p. 62). Deans and department chairs should create an onboarding mentoring program for adjunct faculty members to guide and support adjuncts through the orientation process and through their first year of employment. The mentor program can help

adjuncts navigate policies and procedures, learn the ecosystem of the institution, have a resource to provide information about governance, and so on. Regardless of employment type, creating a community in which adjuncts feel supported will greatly impact a culture of collegial respect and sense of belonging to the institution and organization.

Colleges and universities should work to improve benefits and professional development opportunities for adjuncts. In the study conducted by AFT (2022), “more than 51 percent indicated that they believe they should be paid at least \$5,000 a course” (p. 4). Low wages are not the only benefit that adjuncts want to see improvement on. Institutions must find ways to support adjunct faculty through providing funds for conferences, training programs, and professional development, as they can help develop and improve teacher effectiveness and collegiality. As Tapp and McCourt (2017) wrote, “Investing in adjunct faculty members’ professional development, supporting them in the classroom, and including their voice on campus positively affects their job performance and satisfaction” (p. 96).

Leadership in higher education should improve the quality of life for adjuncts by exploring the outcomes that have been outlined by the Essential Elements of Faculty Work framework designed by Gappa, et al (2007). The outcomes will help increase faculty satisfaction and a sense of belonging, increase organizational commitment, enhance recruitment and retention, broader spectrum of individuals represented on the faculty, and a more strategic utilization of intellectual capital (Gappa, et al, 2007). The five elements of the framework; employment equity, academic freedom and autonomy, flexibility, professional growth, and collegiality are the bedrock to the organizational changes that will help leaders create a vision for the future of adjuncts in higher education. This approach will shift higher education systems

from the traditional individualized approach to a collaborative and community-based approach (Austin & Trice, 2016).

Access to support services is an important component for all, regardless of employment status. Deans and administrators need to make sure access to office space, equipment, supplies, and technology is available to adjuncts. Having limited access impacts the efficacy in which adjuncts can support students and reduces their connection to the larger community of the institution. Integrating this organizational shift into practice increases employment equity and professionalism for adjunct faculty creating a greater opportunity for deeper engagement across the landscape of the college or university.

Delimitations

As this study focused on a small sample size of a much larger population of adjuncts, the delimitations of this study provide an opportunity for future research on this topic. The following were delimitations of the study.

- The location of the research conducted was limited to only New England states.
- The adjunct faculty members worked on campus at a four-year, public or private institution led to only one group of lived experiences.
- The sample size of five participants solicited was confined to adjunct professors working in the Business school of their institutions.
- Phenomenology was the chosen research design by the researcher to gain a greater understanding of the lived experience of adjunct professors, realizing that the findings are based on the perceptions of the participants.

Limitations

This phenomenological study contained a few limitations to the research.

- The relatively small sample size of the participants was a limitation to the research although according to Creswell and Creswell (2018), phenomenological research suggests three to 25 participants to collect data.
- The use of social media platforms LinkedIn and Facebook was a limitation due to the solicitation and response rate.
- There were only two states (MA/NH) out of 6 represented, which was another limitation to the study. Access to other states located in the U.S., could be expanded for future research.
- Additionally, the willingness of the participants to be honest in response to the questions as the responses are based on their own lived experience. This limitation also may have made their responses not be generalizable.
- Although no longer working as an adjunct in a business school, researcher bias exists based on the researcher's experience. The researcher taught for three different institutions located in the New England region prior to and briefly during the beginning of the research.

Conclusion

Higher education has experienced a drastic change in faculty employment over the last four decades. Employment for college professoriates once was a prestigious role held by a 70 percent majority of tenured or on tenured track academics (AFT, 2022). Today, those numbers have reversed, and 75 percent are not eligible for tenure, and nearly half of faculty are part-time contingent or adjunct employees (AFT, 2022). The effort of this research was to understand the lived experience of adjunct faculty teaching at 4-year, public or private, business schools across New England states.

The framework created by Gappa, et al (2007), on the Essential Elements of Faculty Work- consisting of employment equity, academic freedom and autonomy, flexibility, professional growth, and collegiality was the lens in which the insight to deeply understanding the lived experience of adjuncts informed this study. At the center of the essential elements is respect. The participants in the study saw respect as an integral part to building a sense of community and belonging to the organization through a shared reciprocity from deans, administration, and faculty. Envisioning the redesign of the faculty role for adjuncts should be at the forefront of organizational leaders because they have become the lifeline of the academy. Creating better working conditions through professional development, better pay wages, support services, benefits, and a culture of belonging are what the adjunct voices are saying. This reimagining of the role for adjunct faculty will cultivate a community of inclusivity regardless of title and eliminate the exploitation of human capital that is currently permeating through the ecosystem that is higher education.

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Appendix A

Consent to Participate Form

Hill Doctoral Research Study:

Our Story: The Phenomenological Study of Adjunct Faculty in Higher Education Business Schools

Dear Participant,

I want to first thank you for your interest and time in being a participant in my doctoral research study. My name is Dennis R. Hill II, and I am a doctoral candidate at Southern New Hampshire University. The purpose of this form is to tell you about the study, your rights as a participant, and to obtain your written consent to participate.

The purpose of the research is to gather and analyze the phenomena or “lived experiences” of adjunct faculty professors at 4-year public or private college/university, business schools in the New England region. The research is designed as a qualitative study in which I will collect data from participants beginning with a brief survey followed up with a series of three 60–90-minute interviews. Prior to the first interview, you will be asked to respond to a prompt, which will form the basis of the first interview.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from the research at any time. Please be assured that confidentiality will be protected as I will use pseudonyms rather than your real name in the report. In addition, I will use general descriptions rather than specific names in identifying where you work and where you teach.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me with this research. The benefits of your participation will help create recommendations for Deans, department chairs, and colleagues on understanding the important contributions of adjuncts to the ecosystem of academia through their lens.

Please feel free to ask me questions at any point in the process. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant or any concerns regarding this project, you may report them-confidentially, if you wish- to the UC Institutional Review Board Chairperson at IRB@snhu.edu. If you would like a summary copy of this study, you may request one at the email address below, as I would love to share my final report with you, if interested.

To access the survey, please go to the following link: [Qualtrics Survey](#)

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Hill II
d.hill4@snhu.edu
(603) 809-5392

Informed Consent for Video and Audio Recording

The interview process for this research should take about 60-90 minutes, and with your permission, I would like to record the video and audio sessions. The recordings will be transcribed with anonymity and confidentiality for the protection of the participant. All transcriptions will be stored safely on an external hard-drive and locked in a safe, that only the researcher has access to at his place of residency. All files will be destroyed three years after initial research is complete. After each transcription, I can send you a copy to review to ensure that your thoughts have been recorded accurately.

Do you consent to interviews being recorded by video? _____ (yes/no)

Do you consent to interviews being recorded by audio? _____ (yes/no)

Would you like a copy of the transcript for your review to check for accuracy, when available?
_____ (yes/no)

Appendix B

Survey Questions

1. Please indicate your gender.
 - Female
 - Male
 - Non-binary/third gender
 - Other (please specify) _____
 - Prefer not to say

2. Please indicate your age range.
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-54
 - 55-64
 - 65 or older

3. What is your race or ethnicity?
 - White
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic or Latino
 - Asian
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - Other (please specify) _____

4. What is the highest degree you have obtained?
 - Bachelor's Degree
 - Master's Degree
 - Doctoral Degree
 - Other (please specify) _____

5. Which New England state do you teach in? (Check all that apply)
 - Connecticut
 - Maine
 - Massachusetts
 - New Hampshire
 - Rhode Island
 - Vermont

6. What is your primary profession (e.g., Accounting, Human Resources, Marketing, etc.)?

7. How many years have you worked in this profession?
 - 0-2

- 3-5
- 6-10
- 11-20
- More than 20 years

8. Where do you teach (or most recently have you taught) as an adjunct?

9. How many years have you taught at this institution?

- 0-2
- 3-5
- 6-10
- 11-20
- More than 20 years

10. Have you taught at other institutions?

- Yes
- No

11. In which mode do you teach?

- On-Campus (Face to Face)
- Online
- Blended/Hybrid/Flipped

12. Do you currently have a part-time or full-time job in addition to your adjunct faculty position?

- Part-time
- Full-time
- Neither

13. Does your institution have an Adjunct Handbook?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

14. Are you willing to participate in a series of interviews on your lived experience as an adjunct faculty?

- Yes
- No

15. Thank you for your willingness to participate in the interview process of my research via either in person, phone, or video. As a reminder, I will use pseudonyms to protect you as a participant in this research. Please provide your contact information here:

Preferred Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Appendix C

Journey Map Email

Dear (Participant),

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview process with me as I work my way through Qualitative Research Methods on my journey to a doctoral degree. I appreciate you for your interest and time in being a participant in this doctoral research study. My name is Dennis R. Hill II, and I am a doctoral candidate at Southern New Hampshire University.

As you know from the participant consent form, we will engage in 2-3 interviews:

1. 1st Interview- Education Journey Mapping- Max: 90 minutes
 - a. Sometime before December 1st
2. 2nd Interview- Conversation about you experiences as an adjunct faculty member in higher education- Max time: 90 minutes
 - a. Sometime before January 1st
3. 3rd Interview- Looking back at your experiences and the meaning of those experiences.
 - a. Sometime before February 1st

I would like to schedule the 1st date and time. My best available times are as follows, but I can be flexible. **(Insert days and time frames).**

*I'm attaching the prompt for your Adjunct Journey Mapping. Please draw your map and send it to me prior to our 1st interview. The purpose of the first interview is to explain/discuss your map.

I look forward to meeting you and to exploring your adjunct journey.

Thank you,

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Adjunct Journey Mapping Prompt

Map your journey to becoming an adjunct professor from when you first thought about teaching to being hired into the profession. Include people, places, obstacles, and opportunities along your way. Draw upon your relationship with the school. You can include what works for you and/or what does not. You can use symbols, pictures, lines, arrows, diagram, or even a flow chart to map your journey. Be creative! In your first interview, you will have a chance to explain your adjunct journey.

Thank you!

Appendix D

Interview Questions

For my research I'd like to learn about the lived experiences of adjunct faculty members teaching in higher education. I would like to hear, in your own words, about your experience. I will be asking you some questions about your experience.

Interview One: Journey Mapping

Journey Map Prompt

Map your journey to becoming an adjunct professor from when you first thought about teaching to being hired into the profession. Include people, places, obstacles, and opportunities along your way. Draw upon your relationship with the school. You can include what works for you and/or what does not. You can use symbols, pictures, lines, arrows, diagram, or even a flow chart to map your journey. Be creative! Prior to our first meeting you will send me a copy of you journey map. The purpose of the first interview is for you to explain/discuss your map.

Q1. Tell me about your journey experience that led to becoming an adjunct?

Q2. What led to you making this career choice?

*Additional questions may be asked by the researcher to prompt the participant

Interview Two:

The purpose of the second interview is to focus on the details of your lived experience. The researcher will ask you a series of questions to guide the conversation.

Q1. What has your experience been in the role as an adjunct?

SQ1. How would you describe life prior to the Covid-19 pandemic as an adjunct?

SQ2. How would you describe life during the Covid-19 pandemic as an adjunct?

Q2. As an adjunct, what are the challenges, issues, benefits to your role?

SQ3. What is the nature of communication at the institution for adjuncts?

Q3. Why are you doing it?

*Additional questions may be asked by the researcher to prompt the participant

Interview Three:

The purpose of interview three is for you [participant] to reflect on or make meaning of how your experience has been thus far as an adjunct.

Q1. What are you looking to do now? Given what you have said about your life being an adjunct, what are your future endeavors in this career?

Appendix E

Probing Interview Questions

Employment Equity

- Please provide a brief description of your academic background and professional experience.
- Did you intend to work in higher education?
- How would you describe the hiring process at your institution?
- Does your institution provide an adjunct handbook?

Academic Freedom and Autonomy

- Describe what rights you have as an adjunct to make, modify, or change your courses?
- How would you describe the communication with your department to modify coursework to accommodate student learners?

Flexibility

- How would you describe the work-life balance at your institution?
- Describe what the pros and cons of your work schedule as an adjunct?

Professional Growth

- Does your institution offer other resources that help support adjunct faculty? Are they easily accessible?
- How would you describe the support offered to adjuncts at your institution?
- Does your institution provide opportunities for professional development? What has your experience been at your institution with professional development?

Collegiality

- How would you describe the culture of community on your institution's campus?
- Do you feel like you are part of your institution's community?
- Can you describe your relationship with your colleagues or department? Deans?

Respect

- How would you define respect for the work that you do as an adjunct?
- Do you feel respected by your institution? Why or why not?