WHAT MATTERS MOST: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE

EXPERIENCES OF ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSION OF ONLINE PART-TIME

FACULTY IN CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dedications

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ABSTRACT

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WHAT MATTERS MOST: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE
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FACULTY IN CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Under the direction of DR. PAMELA LARDE

Higher education institutions significantly rely on part-time faculty members to meet

course demands. The growth of part-time faculty has grown over 250% since the 1970s.

Part-time faculty are now seen as the majority over tenured and tenure-track faculty. Due

to the changes in higher education and the crucial role online part-time faculty play in

higher education institutions, online bachelor-level program deans must learn to support

and engage these faculty members more effectively. The leadership problem identified

for this study is that online bachelor-level program deans are being challenged to deliver

the support needed to online part-time faculty members to ensure their engagement and

inclusion in an online learning setting and the organization as a whole (Weber et al.,

2022; Thacker, 2020; Hoyt et al., 2008). This phenomenological qualitative study aims

to discover leaders' strategies that program deans of online undergraduate programs

utilize to increase engagement and inclusion among online part-time faculty at

Baptist/Southern Baptist-affiliated, Council for Christian Colleges and Universities

(CCCU).   From the interviews and data analysis of the current study seven themes to

support the research questions were developed: sense of belonging, authentic

leader/follower relationship, autonomy and empowerment, consistent communication and

support, recognition, passion for teaching, leadership strategies representative of

institutional culture. These seven themes contributed to the study's major findings surrounding three components: intrinsic motivations, positive and supportive leader/follower relationships, and institutional culture, which seem to impact online part-time faculty members' overall engagement and inclusion in their roles, leading to their overall sense of belonging within their organization. The implications of practice from the findings of the current study to engage and include online part-time faculty included (1) for the institution and senior leadership to offer more opportunities for online part-time faculty to participate and integrate with the institutional community, (2) for updated policies, procedures, and faculty models, and (3) streamline institutional-level communication directed toward part-time faculty to increase clarity and a sense of belonging. The implications of leadership from the findings of the current study to engage and include online part-time faculty included (1) improving leader education on effective leadership styles with online part-time faculty, (2) Increasing leader awareness of the needs and desires of online part-time faculty.

CHAPTER 1

Part-time faculty are essential to higher education institutions' everyday work and mission.   Within the last several decades, there have been significant increases in the public demand for higher education programs and competitive pressures from for-profit and non-profit institutions throughout the higher education landscape (Bettinger & Long, 2010). Part-time faculty have filled the gap in meeting these higher demands and competitive pressures while allowing institutions to implement cost-savings and resource efficiency. Part-time faculty bring an area of expertise to the classroom with their use of professional real-world experiences (Wickun & Stanley, 2000). Utilizing part-time faculty in the faculty model can also allow for flexibility within the institution regarding hiring practices, duration of employment, course offerings, and relief for tenure-track research opportunities (Thedwall, 2008).

Technology has also changed the landscape of educational opportunities for students, faculty, and society; the structure of higher education has shifted to offer more online programs (Barnett, 2018). Technology has increased access to higher education for students that may not have had the opportunity otherwise. According to Akour and Alenzi (2022), technology has improved communication between faculty and students, advanced institutional missions, and allowed people who might otherwise not be able to access college courses to have educational opportunities in higher education environments.

Higher education leaders continue to face two interrelated movements: the growth of online education and the substantial increase in part-time, contingent faculty (Tipple, 2010). Due to the continued change in the landscape of higher education (shifts in student demands, technological advancements, competitive markets, and evolving faculty models) and the crucial role online part-time faculty play in higher education institutions, higher education leaders must learn to support and engage these faculty members more effectively to fulfill institutional missions fully. According to Dolan (2011), many online part-time faculty members feel disconnected from their higher education organization. These faculty also feel they need to be recognized for the contributions they bring to the knowledge and the field of higher education. Research has shown a connection between poor support and engagement of part-time faculty members, negatively impacting student learning outcomes (Murray, 2019). One area lacking in the current research is the perspectives online part-time faculty have toward the engagement strategies utilized by their respective program deans.

This research study focused on part-time faculty, with a minimum of two years of teaching experience, currently teaching online at the bachelor level at a Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) affiliated, Baptist/Southern Baptist denomination, Christian higher education institution within the United States. Within Christian higher education, there is an essence of hospitality and service with the overarching mission of being Christ-centered and service-focused. Leaders at Christian higher education institutions have the opportunity to demonstrate warm, welcoming, and intentional engagement and inclusion with their part-time faculty. According to Derrida

(1998), being hospitable is about being open to others and stretching or extending the self to welcome others by sharing and receiving resources and insights. Within higher education, the institution has an opening to foster hospitality, extending self to accept others by transmitting and receiving intellectual resources and insights (Bennett, 2000). Leaders must engage and include online part-time faculty to be a party to this academic hospitality instead of simply a contingent workforce to cut costs and fill overloads. If one does not feel connected to their organization's culture, there will be detachment and possible indifference toward the organization and their respective work roles. To fully engage, support, and include online part-time faculty members in higher education institutional cultures, leaders must implement explicit cultural norms, activities, and beliefs that reach across the digital realm (Coman, Bonciu, 2016; Klempin & Karp, 2018; Luvalo, 2019).

Additionally, leaders visibly model their commitment to an institution's mission and inspire and motivate their followers (Wood, 2019; Tipple, 2009). As leaders model commitment and focus on inspiration and motivation to their part-time faculty, they demonstrate concepts of transformational and servant leadership style, the natural feeling to serve and motivate others, two of the theoretical lenses identified for this study.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2023), approximately 4,000 degree-granting higher education institutions currently operate in the United States, and around 900 are religiously affiliated. Christian higher education institutions are a distinct segment of the higher education landscape and offer a Christ-centered approach to educational experiences for students, faculty, staff, and communities. The overarching

mission of Christian higher education institutions is to "advance the cause of Christ-centered higher education and to help our institutions transform lives by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical truth" (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, 2018, p. 1). According to Holmes (1975), Christian higher education institutions have distinct characteristics, including cultivating creative and active integration of faith and learning and faith and culture.

Leaders within Christian higher education institutions typically have a common goal aligned with their institution's mission: serving students, faculty, and community through Christ-centered works (Frawley, 2014). Heie and Sargent (2012) argued that higher education leaders must carefully assess their daily walks as Christians regarding the challenging tasks and cultural pressures they regularly face within their institutions.

This phenomenological qualitative study examined the lived experiences associated with engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty teaching at a bachelor level within Christian higher education institutions. The findings of this current study could guide other higher education leaders within Christian universities in developing and implementing new strategies, policies, practices, or conceptualizations to engage, support, and include online part-time faculty members in higher education institutions. Employing specified leadership strategies geared toward engagement and inclusion for online part-time faculty could increase a sense of collegiality. (Terosky & Heasley, 2019; Haviland et al., 2020). Also, if online bachelor-level program leaders develop and implement more engagement and inclusion strategies, online part-time faculty could feel more connected to the organization, improve their performance, and

positively impact student learning outcomes (Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Terosky & Heasley, 2015; Murray, 2019; Gibson & O'Keefe, 2019; Matos & Kasztenlnik, 2021).

In this chapter, the background of the study is assessed. Additionally, the problem statement for the study, the purpose of the study, and the research question are identified. There will also be a summarization of the theoretical framework, including shared leadership, servant leadership, transformational leadership, and inclusive leadership. Additionally, the current literature on the engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty was assessed. Next, the research methodology of the study is discussed. Moreover, the definitions outlined for the study and distinguishing assumptions, scope, delimitations, and limitations are identified. The study's significance to the leadership field is examined. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the research study.

Background of the Study

Seventy percent of faculty employed at non-profit higher education institutions are contingent (both non-tenure and part-time) faculty, making them the majority among faculty (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). Part-time, also known as adjunct or contingent, faculty positions are often characterized by low wages, little to no benefits, lack of professional development opportunities or promotion, exclusion from curricular decisions, faculty retreats and governance, and often a lack of adequate support for their roles in their institutions. According to Kezar and Maxey (2014), "these practices degrade the entire academic profession and threaten to drive talented and committed educators out of the academy" (p. 34). Research has reported that many part-time faculty feel disconnected or disengaged from their institutions. Kahn (1990) noted that disengagement is when a

person demonstrates a lack of connections (physically, cognitively, and emotionally) and is passive in their role performance. If part-time faculty demonstrate disengagement from their respective institutions, this will, in turn, impact the outcomes and experiences of students and the mission of the organization.   According to Black (2019), when part-time faculty have less access to institutional support and professional development, student learning has a direct negative impact. To maximize educational quality and institutional effectiveness, leaders must develop strategies to effectively leverage the characteristics and talents part-time faculty bring to their role within the institution (Tipple, 2010). Online undergraduate program deans can provide online part-time faculty with exceptional support by employing programs to increase their instructional effectiveness and include them in the institution, ultimately contributing to their continued retention (Dolan, 2011; Ferencz, 2017; Tipple, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Part-time faculty members are essential to higher education institutions due to steady growth, changing faculty models, and increased competition throughout the higher education field. With the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education institutions were also faced with rapid, forced change. The pandemic disrupted higher education teaching, research, and community service, resulting in a loss in revenue streams and human resources (Kara, 2021). Many institutions have had to adapt and implement change strategies to stay relevant, including the increase in online education offerings. Higher education leaders recognize how much their institutions and programs rely on qualified part-time faculty members (Hoyt et al., 2008). As Hoyt et al., (2008)

stated, "no part-time faculty, no program" (p. 27). However, part-time faculty are typically seen as "at-will," "second-class," invisible," or "fixed term" contingent faculty (Murray, 2019). This view of part-time faculty can impact their support, engagement, and inclusion within the higher education organization. According to Barbera et al. (2017), without appropriate acclimation to resources, policies, procedures, and practices, engagement with the organization's culture (mission, vision, values, and goals), and inclusion in program development initiatives, part-time faculty can be negatively impacted which in turn affects student experiences. Haviland et al. (2020) also addressed the sense of dissatisfaction and marginalization of part-time faculty. The researchers stated that part-time faculty feel disconnected from the curriculum and decision-making spaces, resulting in wasted organizational human capital.

Challenges and barriers can arise for leaders and followers when there are digital barriers between workers and their institutions. The leadership problem identified for this study is that online undergraduate program leaders are being challenged to offer the support needed to online part-time faculty members in a rapidly changing and complex educational environment. Leaders are being challenged to effectively ensure engagement and inclusion in online settings and within the organization as a whole for their remote part-time faculty (Weber et al., 2022; Thacker, 2020; Hoyt et al., 2008).

Interactions of leaders, followers, and situations have become essential in explaining leadership in higher education. Smith and Hughey (2006) note, "contemporary academic leaders need to be proficient in assessing student needs, conducting comprehensive evaluations of programs and services and providing

aggressive leadership within a more democratic and legalistic framework" (p. 159). As higher education advances, leaders will be challenged to interact with their followers more effectively.

There has been comprehensive research on issues related to part-time faculty, including lack of inclusion and engagement in the institution. Layou et al. (2022) noted that most part-time faculty have limited, unclear, or inconsistent access to the institution's orientation, professional development, administrative support, technological support, office space, and areas for student meetings. Layou et al. (2022) also suggested that part-time faculty have limited interactions and opportunities to interact with peers about their teaching and learning experiences. Part-time faculty are also commonly excluded from important institutional decisions that impact student learning, outcomes, and academic progress. These issues represent the need for online bachelor-level program deans to implement leadership strategies to engage, support, and include online part-time faculty in higher education institutions. Research has noted that engaged employees perform better, are less prone to burnout, and stay with organizations longer (Stein, 2021). Kahn (1990) suggested that engagement relates to a person's feelings of meaningfulness, safety, and availability in their role. May et al. (2004) also found meaningfulness, safety, and availability to be related to engagement. Kahn (1990) and May et al. (2004) suggest that supportive leaders positively influence these variables. Haviland et al. (2020) also argue that collegiality, the shared prosocial behaviors within an organization that facilitate a larger purpose, is essential to engaging and including part-time faculty.

The identified problem for the current study is the significant evidence of disconnection and a feeling of not belonging among online part-time faculty. This research will focus on online part-time faculty's perspectives and experiences with engagement and inclusion by the program deans within Baptist/Southern Baptist denominational, CCCU-affiliated, and Christian higher education institutions within the United States.

History of the Problem

Part-time faculty have been a part of the higher education landscape for over a century. After World War II, returning soldiers headed back to colleges and universities with the assistance of their government-subsidized tuition grants. According to Thedwall (2008), "student enrollment grew 500 percent between 1945 and 1975" (p. 12). This significant growth in student enrollment and the pressing issues with unionized faculty forced higher education leaders to address the hard questions facing them. One lasting solution that evolved from these trends was the increase in higher education institutions' employment of part-time faculty. These faculty "worked for lower wages, required little or no professional development support, and could be hired or released quickly as enrollments fluctuated" (Thedwell, 2008, p. 12).

Currently, part-time faculty are considered the new faculty majority in higher education. According to Murray (2019), even though they outnumber tenure/tenure-track faculty, part-time faculty are compensated significantly less, offered little support and resources, and have minimal job security. Kezar and Sam (2010) also suggested that despite the significant increase in part-time faculty in higher education institutions, many

institutions still operate as though these faculty members are a supplementary workforce. Murray (2019) argues that higher education administrators seem to have little motivation to decrease the percentage of part-time faculty utilized to teach courses within their institutions due to cost savings, budgetary constraints, and easy fulfillment of teaching positions. Murray (2019) also suggested that excessive reliance on part-time faculty can diminish the quality of student learning and outcomes due to several factors: lack of availability outside of the classroom for part-time faculty, lack of knowledge on student support services and resources, lack of understanding of technology and learning management systems, lack of knowledge of university policy and procedures, and lack of support by administration. Murray (2019) argued that the "use of contingent labor in higher education is the site of an exigent crisis of power, privilege, dominance, and control that must be interrogated, illuminated, and reformed as a fundamental component in advocacy for social justice" (p. 243). Murray's (2019) perspective suggested that higher education institutions exploit and unjustly support part-time faculty, and new policies, procedures, and practices must be implemented to better back this population.

Current Status of the Problem

American higher education institutions are pioneers in developing and preparing individuals for careers and engaging in services to advance communities (Rich, 2016). Research has shown three common factors when describing the overarching missions of higher education institutions: research, teaching, and service (Cowen & Winston, 2019; O'Banion, 2010; Papadimitriou, 2019; Rutter, 2017). In recent debates, another concept has emerged about the mission of higher education. According to Meixner, Kruck, and

Madden (2010), higher education institutions have two primary outputs: creating and disseminating knowledge. O'Banion noted (2019), "As a newly articulated mission of higher education, learning has been cited by several leaders as part of the triumvirate of traditional missions" (p. 1). James Bess (2000) noted, "Institutions of higher education must maintain their unique roles in society as extraordinary places where teaching, learning, and research can unfold, unfettered by the crass, short-term expectations of profit" (p. 6). Part-time faculty lead much of the preparation of students in higher education institutions.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2023), in the fall of 2020, there were approximately 75% (11.8 million) of undergraduate students enrolled in at least one online education course and 44% (7.0 million) of all undergraduate students enrolled exclusively in online education courses or programs. This increase in online educational offerings has correlations to the increased need of higher education institutions to utilize part-time contingent faculty to teach these course offerings. The National Center for Education Statistics (2023) noted, "In fall 2020, of the 1.5 million faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 56 percent were full-time, and 44 percent were part-time" (para. 2). There are several factors that contribute to the growth in utilizing part-time faculty for higher education institutions including, cost-effectiveness, flexibility, subject matter expertise, real-world experience perspectives, and evening and weekend availability (Tipple, 2010). The growth of online education is not showing any signs of changing trajectory with the influence of technology, mobile learning, and market desires. Because these two significant

movements impact higher education institutions, leaders must seek new strategies to engage, support, and include part-time faculty in the online learning environment and organizational culture (Anthony et al., 2020).

Caruth and Caruth (2013) conducted an archival quantitative study to examine the role of part-time faculty within the overall professional higher education landscape. The researchers utilized the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data. Caruth and Caruth (2013) found that in the United States in 2011, fifty percent of faculty were considered part-time. From their research, the authors noted that part-time faculty seem to be more intrinsically motivated to teach regardless of the disadvantages they tend to see compared to their full-time colleagues. From this study, the authors suggest universities take the time to understand their part-time faculty, their teaching motivations, needs, and the impacts their teaching and support have on student outcomes. Caruth and Caruth (2013) identify two implications from this study: higher education institutions could customize professional development training specifically for part-time faculty and examine hiring practices for part-time faculty. The researchers noted that training and professional development positively impact institutions. Typically, part-time faculty are not able or not included in the institutions' professional development. Many part-time faculty may not have previous teaching experiences and lack evidence-based, practical teaching skills. Professional development geared toward part-time faculty can improve the quality of teaching, decrease turnover, and improve productivity (Caruth & Caruth, 2013). Hiring practices impact the entire university in several ways, including, "morale, turnover, productivity, student services, community relations, employee relations, and

institutional image" (Caruth & Caruth, 2013, p. 8). Part-time faculty have been known to be hired on short-term notices, on a short-term basis, and with little orientation and preparation time for classes (Caruth & Caruth, 2013). Utilizing ethical and effective hiring practices can improve the university's overall functioning, support, and mission.

Jolley, Cross, and Bryant (2014) conducted a qualitative study to explore their institution's teaching conditions and assessment processes with part-time faculty members of a community college. Twenty part-time faculty were interviewed. The researchers identified two themes from the study: a lack of institutional engagement and assessment policies and procedures (Jolley et al., 2014). The researchers suggested an evident difference in assessment practices and full-time and part-time faculty engagement. Jolley et al. (2014) noted that the current trends of part-time faculty usage within universities would not be reversed. However, universities can develop and implement more appropriate working conditions, policies integrating part-time faculty into their institutions more readily, and developing operating procedures ensuring resource availability for part-time faculty.

Matos and Kasztelnik (2021) conducted a phenomenological qualitative study to examine academic leaders' lived experiences who use transformational educational leadership and innovative strategies to engage online faculty in the United States. According to the researchers, leadership is crucial in supporting online part-time faculty's needs for efficiency in their positions. In their study, Matos and Kasztelnik (2021) found that the leader's trustworthiness and credibility were vital components of online part-time faculty engagement. The researchers also identified leaders' transparency, empowerment

strategies, open communication, availability, collaboration, and recognition of achievements as impacting employee engagement.

Terosky and Heasley (2015) conducted a qualitative study examining online faculty experiences and assessing the sense of community and collegiality. The researchers noted that the majority of faculty interviewed were dissatisfied with how their institution supports professional development for online teaching. The researchers also found that part-time faculty felt lacking a sense of community and collegiality within online education. Most institutions focus on technical support for online education but not community formation. Terosky and Heasley (2015) found that most participants interviewed desired to have greater community and collegiality in their online teaching environment with other faculty and administration. The researchers offered recommendations for administrators based on the experiences of the participants. Terosky and Heasley (2015) recommended that the needs of faculty members should guide the development of programs and resources for faculty. They also suggested that institutions should foster and support a sense of community and collegiality among online programs. Finally, Terosky and Heasley (2015) recommended offering mentoring and collaborative programs to promote growth in learning communities in online programs.

Theory and Action Related to the Problem

Several scholarly contributors to the research and theory of part-time (adjunct/contingent) faculty in higher education institutions include Judith Gappa, David Leslie, Richard Lyons, and Adrianne Kezar. Gappa and Leslie (1993) researched part-time faculty backgrounds, work experiences, motivations for teaching, and their

satisfaction or dissatisfaction with work environments. Gappa and Leslie (1993)

concluded that part-time faculty members are diverse, being more varied in many ways

than full-time faculty. The researchers identified several employment profiles of

part-time faculty:

- Career Enders: individuals at the end of their careers, retired, or soon to retire.
- Specialists, Experts, and Professionals: individuals currently working in their profession and are more concerned with serving students and communities.
- Aspiring Academics: individuals who are hoping to become full-time academics. These faculty often work at more than one institution.
- Freelancers: individuals who decide to have more than one part-time vocation.

Gappa and Leslie (1993) argued that "institutions should make a greater effort to

understand who is teaching for them, what each person has to offer, and what kind of

incentives and support would help part-timers make a greater contribution" (p. 64).

In his book, *Best Practices for Supporting Adjunct Faculty* (2007), Lyons outlined

effective initiatives to support the needs of part-time faculty. They are as follows:

- A thorough orientation to the institution, its culture, and its practices
- Adequate training in fundamental teaching and classroom management skills
- A sense of belonging to the institution
- Both initial and ongoing professional development
- Recognition for quality work that is perceived as appropriate and adequate (Lyons, 2007, p. 6)

Lyons (2007) suggested that increasing the contributions from part-time faculty members

will only benefit student learning outcomes, retention, and other accountability outcomes,

achieve stakeholders' expectations, and the institution's overall image.

Other researchers have broadened studies based on the work of Gappa, Leslie, and

Lyons. Tipple (2010) researched effective leadership for online part-time faculty. In his

article, Effective Leadership of Online Adjunct Faculty, Tipple (2010) examined the characteristics of online part-time faculty and their motivations for teaching, explored leadership styles to impact motivation, and identified a conceptual framework for effective leadership with online part-time faculty. Tipple (2010) agreed with Gappa and Leslie's (1993) categorization of part-time faculty and their motivations: specialists, freelancers, career-enders, and aspiring academics. Tipple's (2010) research agreed with previous research in that part-time faculty are intrinsically motivated to teach. "Adjunct faculty are highly motivated to succeed and derive their principal satisfaction from the intrinsic rewards of teaching" (Tipple, 2010, p. 2). Tipple (2010) suggested that higher education leaders must develop a leadership approach emphasizing the characteristics and motivations of online part-time faculty for teaching. According to Tipple (2010), higher education leaders must create an environment where faculty feel inspired to reach the institutional vision, have the skills to teach effectively, and are surrounded by support systems to meet the challenges. Tipple (2010) suggested that this environment can be created with a conceptual framework of transformational and situational leadership styles.

> The essence of effective online adjunct faculty leadership consists in education leaders creating an environment that combines inspiring and motivating online adjunct faculty towards a compelling vision (transformation leadership) with helping them collectively and individually achieves their task (situational leadership) (Tipple, 2010, p. 4).

Need for Further Study of the Problem

According to the American Association of University Professors (2023), "non-tenure-track positions of all types now account for over 70 percent of all instructional staff appointments in American higher education" (para. 3). These faculty members are typically lacking adequate compensation, and professional development, administrative support, and a voice within their organization. With the increased reliance on part-time faculty to teach courses in higher education, higher education leaders must identify and implement effective strategies to engage, include, and support them within their institutions and programs more appropriately. With the continued rise in the use of part-time faculty, they are increasingly responsible for transmitting their institution's mission to students (Burns et al., 2015).

Higher education leaders play a significant role in engaging, supporting, and including part-time faculty within their programs. There is substantial research on the needs of part-time faculty. Still, more is needed on leaders' specific leadership strategies to engage and include their online part-time faculty in their programs, institutions, and overarching mission. Additionally, more research is needed on the perspectives and experiences part-time faculty have toward the engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their respective supervisors.

Bonaparte (2022) suggested that "the goal of higher education institutions should be to ensure that part-time faculty feel valued, recognized, supported, and included in college operations. And that should be done thoughtfully" (para. 3). Jussell and Topitzes

(2022) offered suggestions for supporting faculty, including online adjuncts,

post-pandemic. Their suggestions include:

- Highlighting the value of working at a college campus: being part of a community and serving others.
- Allow members to engage in deep work that aligns with their personal values: help find meaning in their work.
- Create opportunities for collaboration with other departments: encourage collaboration for strategic thinking, planning, and execution.
- Create clear, direct, and honest communication: hearing from leaders makes members feel part of the culture.
- Let an ethic of care guide how communication is delivered: empathize and listen to all institution members.

Bonaparte (2022) also offered suggestions for including and engaging part-time

faculty in higher education institutions. She noted that leaders must be intentional about

part-time faculty space, whether online or on campus. She also stressed the importance

of including part-time faculty in professional development opportunities. Including

practical workshops, networking events, and mentoring opportunities would benefit

adjuncts' inclusion and engagement in the institution's culture. Finally, Bonaparte (2022)

suggested that genuinely investing in part-time faculty is imperative to offering a

hospitable culture in higher education institutions. "A huge trap that many institutions

fall into is believing that they are doing a part-time faculty member a favor by simply

hiring them" (Bonaparte, 2022, para. 14). Investing in the institution's relationship with

part-time faculty will only impact the students' successes and outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

This phenomenological qualitative study aimed to examine the experiences of

online part-time faculty members with engagement and inclusion strategies by their

program deans. A phenomenological qualitative approach was utilized for this study

to understand how online part-time faculty perceive and experience how their leaders personally engage and include them to create a sense of connection, support, and appreciation. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2019), researchers utilizing a phenomenological perspective focus on finding commonalities between all participants. Van Manen (1990) noted that the primary purpose of phenomenology is to "reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (as cited in Bloomberg and Volpe, 2019, p. 54). Therefore, this current study reduces online part-time faculty's individual experiences and perceptions of engagement and inclusion to evaluate strategies utilized by their program deans. This research study addressed the disconnect and detachment of online part-time faculty in higher education institutions by reviewing their perceptions and experiences with their respective program deans' leadership and specific support strategies.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The related research question will be: How do online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans?

1. How do online part-time faculty members perceive their role in their respective online programs?
2. How does the Christian university culture cultivate an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning?
3. How do online part-time faculty members perceive their leaders' ability to foster trust and respect toward remote, online part-time faculty?

The research question and supporting questions were developed from the problem statement: online bachelor-level program leaders are being challenged to deliver the support needed to online part-time faculty members to ensure their engagement and

inclusion in an online learning setting and organization. A directional theoretical

framework of shared leadership, servant leadership, transformational leadership, and

inclusive leadership guided the literature review if this study. In Chapter 2, the

theoretical framework was narrowed down to two overarching theoretical frameworks,

transformational and servant leadership, that guided the remainder of the study.

Theoretical Framework

Considering the complexity and constantly changing factors impacting higher

education institutions, leaders are relentlessly facing many challenges, including funding,

sustainable growth and development, innovative developments, and maintaining

autonomy and academic freedom. "As a crucial element to the success of an organization,

good leadership can reduce some of the effects of these challenges in higher education

institutions" (Timiyo, 2021, p. 1). Kivunja (2018) identified a theoretical framework as

"a framework that comprises the theories expressed by experts in the field into which you

plan to research, which you draw upon to provide a theoretical coat hanger for your data

analysis and interpretation of results" (p. 46). The theoretical framework for this study

will address strategies utilized by higher education leadership in demonstrating

empowerment, service, transformation, connection, trust, and respect. The components

of this theoretical framework are discussed in detail in this section of the chapter: shared

leadership, servant leadership, transformational leadership, and inclusive leadership.

As leaders in higher education continue to advance, one recent framework has

begun to emerge: shared leadership. Kezar and Holcombe (2017) define shared

leadership as "Moving away from the leader/follower binary; capitalizing on the

importance of leaders throughout the organization, not just those in positions of authority; and creating an infrastructure so that organizations can benefit from the leadership of multiple people" (p. v). Shared leadership in higher education institutions seems to be emerging more frequently as a critical leadership framework to learn, innovate, perform, and adapt to the types of external challenges that campuses now face (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017, p. v). Shared leadership structures and processes must be authentic and thoughtfully designed to produce optimal benefits for institutions. Putting the right person in the proper position to best serve the mission and goals is imperative to success in this leadership framework. Kezar and Holcombe (2017) noted,

> New models of leadership recognize that effectiveness in knowledge-based environments depends less on the heroic actions of a few individuals at the top and more on collaborative leadership practices distributed throughout an organization, suggesting that a more dynamic relational concept of leadership has emerged (p. 1).

Carson et al. (2007) noted that shared leadership is enabled by an inclusive team environment that consists of shared purpose, shared support, and voice. Wood's (2005) studies on shared leadership identified four distinct dimensions of the framework, joint completion of tasks, mutual skill development, decentralized interaction among personnel, and emotional support. He noted that empowerment was a positive outcome of shared leadership. Research studies have indicated that one of the critical benefits of shared leadership is the ability to draw from the diversity of thought across teams (Miles & Watson, 2007; Rice, 2006). Kezar (1998) noted that "when members of leadership

teams did not fully embrace the principles of fostering differences and encouraging multiple opinions, most teams slipped into groupthink" (p. 68). Matos and Kaseztelnik (2021) noted that shared leadership is an interactive approach and can assist in strengthening the relationship between higher education leaders and online part-time faculty.

Servant leadership originated with Robert Greenleaf (1970). Greenleaf (1970) stated, "The servant-leader is servant first…It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 15). This leadership theory sets itself apart by challenging beliefs about leading and influence. This theory focuses on empowering others, helping followers develop to their full capacities, and being attentive to the needs of their followers. Servant leaders want to focus on the well-being and growth of others and the communities to which they belong. Servant leaders are empathic, ethically driven, and serve others for the greater good of all. Spears (2010) identified ten characteristics of a servant leader: "listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, building community" (pp. 27-29). There are potential outcomes identified in this construct that are important to note. Follower performance and growth, organizational performance, and societal impact. Servant leadership can impact a follower's realization of their full potential, and how followers complete their assigned duties and could impact followers to become servant leaders as well. Patterson (2003) suggested that servant leadership motivates, inspires, influences, and empowers followers to serve others. Patterson (2003) identified seven components specific to servant

leadership: agape love, humility, altruism, trust, serving, and empowerment. Alshammari et al. (2019) stated that servant leadership practitioners are interested in followers' needs, nurturing problem-solving capabilities, and encouraging emotional healing. Varney (2016) suggested that servant leadership can be one strategy to engage online part-time faculty in higher education institutions. Varney (2016) stated, "Servant leaders weave together a combination of empowerment, team building, and integrity into their behaviors and actions, that promote a community feel and culture of shared decision making" (p. 14). Sokoll (2014) also suggested that servant leadership positively impacts employee commitment. Sokoll (2014) found that there is significantly strong support that a leader's servant-specific behaviors positively impact employee commitment.

Transformational leadership has been identified as "one of the most encompassing approaches to leadership" (Northouse, 2019, p. 192). Studies have shown that this leadership framework influences employees' performance and motivations. One study conducted by Kark, Shamir, and Chen (2003), assessed how the creation of personal identification with a leader and social identification with the organization influenced the follower. They also considered what the effects of these processes would be. Kark et al. (2003) found,

> Transformational leadership was positively related to both followers' dependence and their empowerment, and that personal identification mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and followers' dependence on the leader, whereas social identification mediated the relationship between transformation leadership and followers' empowerment (p. 246).

Transformational leadership focuses on how leaders can inspire their followers. Leaders under this framework are seen as change agents. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) stated that transformational leadership could vary across a "moral spectrum." They identify two types of transformational leadership: authentic (high morals and ethical standards) and pseudo-transformational (deception and manipulation). With authentic transformational leadership, they went further in discussing four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. This theoretical framework places the leader's trust in a central role. According to a study completed by Zhu and Akhtar (2014), there are two dimensions to trust in the transformational leadership leader/follower relationship: affective trust and cognitive trust. "Affect-based trust consists of emotional bonds that arise from social interactions and a sense of others' values and motives" (Zhu & Akhtar, 2014, p. 376). This gives followers and leaders deeper social relationships with a more meaningful exchange. For cognitive trust to be formed, leaders may participate in a series of impression management activities to build a "good" image. This could include positive communication, both written and spoken. The trust developed through these activities seems to have a cognitive element (Zhu & Akhtar, 2014). These two aspects of trust, in turn, develop prosocial motivation, which produces helping behaviors. Transformational leaders transform followers' values, beliefs, and attitudes to be willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization (Zhu & Akhtar, 2013, p. 376).

Schutz (1985) noted that the desire to be included is one basic need people want to experience within any interpersonal relationship (as cited in Northouse, 2019).

"Inclusion requires the consideration of belongingness and the extent to which it interacts with uniqueness" (Northouse, 2019, p. 350). Uhl-Bien (2006) suggested that inclusive leadership is constructed through the interactions between leaders and followers. Northouse (2019) noted that inclusive leadership is a form of relational leadership and utilizes approaches to establish norms with followers for consultation and participation. Inclusive leadership is still not grounded in a common theme or framework but is more of a working model of leadership (Northouse, 2019). According to Northouse (2019), there are three major components of inclusive leadership: antecedent conditions, behaviors, and outcomes. Antecedent conditions include the characteristics of leaders, group cognitions, and organizational policies and practices. These factors impact leaders' development and use of inclusive behaviors (Northouse, 2019). Leadership behaviors that can facilitate inclusive leadership are behaviors that foster encouragement, appreciation, availability, collaboration, equality, support, and incorporation of diverse thoughts and perspectives (Northouse, 2019). Inclusive leadership can promote positive outcomes for organizations. According to Northouse (2019), psychological safety, work engagement, creativity, and innovation have all been positively impacted by inclusive leadership. Bourke and Titus (2020) identified that leaders' behaviors and actions significantly affect how well followers feel included within their organization. They identified six specific traits of inclusive leaders: visible commitment, humility, awareness of bias, curiosity about others, cultural intelligence, and effective collaboration (Bourke & Titus, 2020). Shore et al. (2018) suggested that, "A commitment to provide an inclusive climate by top management is manifested in inclusionary practices that in turn encourages employee

contributions" (p. 186). Shore et al. (2011) contributed further to developing a central framework. They defined inclusion as "the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness" (p. 1265). Shore et al. (2011) created a framework that demonstrated the varying levels of belongingness and how this interacts with uniqueness, resulting in four quadrants: exclusion, differentiation, assimilation, and inclusion.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework gives meaning to the variables of a study. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2019), conceptual frameworks help define the research problem and its purpose. It also aids researchers in finding appropriate literature, forming pertinent research questions, and guiding data collection, analysis, and interpretations of the research findings. Utilizing a framework that focuses on leadership strategies of empowerment, service, transformation, connection, trust, and respect will allow online undergraduate program leaders to foster supportive relationships with online part-time faculty members. According to Bryman (2007), leaders' behaviors significantly impact their leadership effectiveness with followers. Bryman (2007) identified thirteen behaviors associated with effective leadership at a department level:

- A clear sense of direction/strategic vision
- Preparing department strategies to facilitate the direction set
- Being considerate
- Treating academic staff fairly and with integrity
- Being trustworthy and having personal integrity
- Allowing the opportunity to participate in key decisions/encouraging open communication

- Communicating well about the direction the department is going
- Acting as a role model/having credibility
- Creating a positive/collegial work atmosphere in the department
- Advancing the department's cause concerning constituencies internal and external to the university and being proactive in doing so
- Providing feedback on performance
- Providing resources for and adjusting workloads to stimulate scholarship and research
- Making academic appointments that enhance the department's reputation (p. 697).

Part-time faculty seem highly intrinsically motivated to teach in higher education institutions. "Adjunct faculty are highly motivated to succeed and derive their principal satisfaction from the intrinsic rewards of teaching" (Tipple, 2010, p. 2). Gappa and Leslie (1993) stated that part-time faculty who work elsewhere and teach part-time are motivated to do so because of the satisfaction teaching brings them. Rich (2017) noted that many part-time faculty felt obligated to give back to their profession/educational institutions. Gappa and Leslie (1993) found that for part-time faculty, intrinsic motivations seemed to be stronger than economic motives when determining to enter part-time teaching occupations.

Leadership strategies and leadership effectiveness also impact employees' job satisfaction, productivity, and sense of belonging. Bateh and Heyliger (2014) found that faculty working under transformational leaders were most satisfied with their jobs. Tipple (2010) clarified effective leadership, specifically of online part-time faculty. Tipple (2010) suggested that leaders must develop an approach that emphasizes the characteristics of online part-time faculty. "This entails utilizing a leadership approach that stimulates and continuously develops the talents, skills, and expertise of this highly

motivated workforce" (Tipple, 2010, p. 3). Basham (2012) found that higher education presidents acknowledge the importance of dedicating time to clearly communicate a vision, purpose, and values with all stakeholders.

For leaders to effectively identify and implement strategies to foster empowerment, service, transformation, connection, trust, and respect with online part-time faculty, leaders must also consider how their processes influence the sense of community among their faculty. According to Ferencz (2017), when there is a sense of community among groups, members feel more empowered to accomplish the shared goal and feel the purpose is more clearly defined. A high sense of collegiality and community also fosters pride and a feeling of being a part of something greater among online part-time faculty (Ferencz, 2017).   Figure 1 demonstrates a visualization of the variables of the current study's conceptual framework and how each factor is related to the experiences of engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Approach of the Study

Given the research purpose of examining the lived experiences of online part-time faculty pertaining to engagement and inclusion strategies by their program deans, the research approach was a phenomenological qualitative study employing the methods of virtual semi-structured interviews.

Procedures

The research methodology utilized for the current study was a phenomenological qualitative study with online part-time faculty currently teaching in an online setting at the bachelor level at a Christian higher education institution. This phenomenological

qualitative study aimed to discover the experiences of online part-time faculty members with engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their program deans. A phenomenological qualitative approach was chosen for this study to understand how online part-time faculty perceive and experience how their leaders personally engage and include them to create a sense of connection, support, and appreciation.

According to Van Manen (1990), phenomenological research is grounded in studying lived experiences. "Phenomenological research is the explication of phenomena as they present themselves to consciousness" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 9). Mapp (2013), fully describing lived experiences is the goal of phenomenological inquiry. The method emphasizes that only those who have lived the experience can communicate it to others. Ultimately, the approach seeks to answer questions of applying the meaning and understanding of experiences from those who have experienced them.

"Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 4). Creswell and Creswell (2018) also describe two distinct components of research: philosophical assumptions and distinct methods. Worldviews focus on "a basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 5). Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) further offer defining characteristics of qualitative research:

- Involves interpretive naturalistic approaches.
- Grounded in philosophical positions.
- The researcher strives to describe the meaning of the findings from the participants' perspective.
- Thick description thoroughly describes the setting, participants, and experiences to produce interpretations and finds others can gain contextual meaning from (pp. 42-43).

The qualitative research method was chosen for this current study to attribute meaning to the problem of disconnection and lack of belonging with online part-time faculty. The researcher studied the issue through the lived experiences of online part-time faculty's perspectives and experiences on how their program deans engage and include them in their respective programs and institutions.

The philosophical worldview that guided the current study is social constructivism. Creswell and Creswell (2018) identify researchers utilizing the social constructivism lens as individuals who seek to comprehend the world in which they work and live. The overarching goal of social constructivism research "is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied" (p. 6).

The methodology of phenomenology was born from the Husserlian philosophy of phenomenology (Leigh-Osroosh, 2021). This framework focuses on the examination of how phenomena are knowingly experienced. "Phenomenology is not intended to create or validate theories, nor illustrate individual truths, but instead it describes the structural core of psychological processes necessary for the phenomenon under study to be consciously lived" (Leigh-Osroosh, 2021, p. 1817). Additionally, this methodology intends to make meaning of a concept/phenomenon through the lived experiences of a group of individuals (Creswell, 2018).

In the current study, the lived experiences of online part-time faculty were examined to reduce the phenomenon of disconnection and detachment. According to Kezar and Maxey (2016), using part-time faculty in higher education institutions began as a means to bring professional knowledge into the classrooms. It has developed into a

mechanism for higher education institutions to cut costs and utilize flexible employees for course delivery.

Research procedures for this study included two types of recruiting. The first recruiting procedure included recruiting participants through an open request on an online social media platform. This request/question asked anyone teaching online part-time within a Baptist/Southern Baptist denominational, CCCU-affiliated higher education institution in an undergraduate program to consider participating in the research study and to contact the principal investigator to receive additional information. Those who verbalized interest were contacted via email, given a short study description, and offered informed consent documents. The interview was then scheduled between the participant and the principal investigator. Before the interview, participants received an email prompt with interview protocols and reminders. On the interview day, the principal investigator reviewed informed consent, requested audio recording permission, and reviewed any questions before the interview. The interviews conducted took approximately 60 minutes. After the interview, the principal researcher thanked the participants for participating, allowed them to ask further questions, and discussed the follow-up protocol. Once the interview was completed, the principal researcher transcribed the audio, sent it back to the participant for member checking, and sent the participation gift card. After all interviews, the identifying information was removed from their interview transcripts and protocol documents.

The second type of recruiting strategy utilized for the current study was snowballing. This type of recruitment was utilized due to challenges the researcher encountered after

the first round of recruitment, which are discussed in detail in Chapter Three. With the recruitment strategy snowballing, academic leaders with knowledge and connections with online part-time faculty were contacted to ask to have the recruitment email shared with potential participants who met the criteria of the study. Once potential participants were identified, they were contacted via email to gauge their interest in the current study. Those who verbalized interest were provided with additional information about the current study and offered informed consent documents. The interview was then scheduled between the participant and the principal investigator. Before the interview, participants received an email prompt with interview protocols and reminders. On the interview day, the principal investigator reviewed informed consent, requested audio recording permission, and reviewed any questions before the interview. The interviews conducted took approximately 60 minutes. After the interview, the principal researcher thanked the participants for participating, allowed them to ask further questions, and discussed the follow-up protocol. Once the interview was completed, the principal researcher transcribed the audio, sent it back to the participant for member checking, and sent the participation gift card. After all interviews, the identifying information was removed from their interview transcripts and protocol documents.

Due to the issues in recruiting through social media and then with snowballing sampling, the sites for this study were two Christian higher education institutions, one in the Southwestern region of the United States and the second in the Southeastern region of the United States. These sites will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

This phenomenological research study collected data through virtual personal interviews with online part-time faculty members. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were utilized to conduct the research needed to answer the research question and supporting questions. The interviews focused on semi-structured questions on the part-time experiences with engagement and inclusion by their program deans. Semi-structured interviews consist of several guiding questions for the interview and help define the areas to be explored by the researcher and participant. These types of interviews allowed the researcher or participant to deviate from the initial questioning to pursue an idea or response in more detail (Gill et al., 2008). The interviews were conducted via Zoom. The researcher requested to take notes and record the discussions with all participants.

Before conducting interviews, the researcher was guided by Griffee's (2005) research tips for the interview process and Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis process for the data collection. The researcher reflected on the following concerns and decisions in the preparation for the interview process:

1. Decide whom to interview.
2. Choose when to stop an interview and when enough interviews have been conducted.
3. Select a place for the interview to take place.
4. Decide which questions to ask.
5. Consider how the data will be collected.

Before interviews were conducted, the researcher requested permission from the participants for the interviews to be audio/video recorded and transcribed and for the researcher to take notes during the interview. The researcher completed a contact data

summary form once approval had been obtained and the discussion had occurred.

According to Schutt (2019), "the data for a qualitative study most often are notes jotted

down in the field or during an interview, from which the original comments,

observations, and feelings are reconstructed, or text transcribed from audio recordings"

(p. 420).

Once interviews had been conducted, the researcher began the tedious data

analysis process. For the current study, the researcher utilized the following process to

analyze the interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

1. Familiarize self with data.
    a. Transcribe data, read, and re-read data, noting initial ideas and thoughts.
2. Generate initial codes.
    a. Code, interesting features of the data in a systemic way across all data sets, arranging data relevant to each code.
3. Search for themes.
    a. Cluster codes into potential themes and gather all data relevant to initial themes.
4. Review themes.
    a. Check if the themes work in relation to the coded excerpts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2).
5. Define themes.
    a. Continue ongoing analysis to refine themes and generate definitions of each theme.
6. Produce the report.
    a. Final opportunity for analysis. The researcher selects rich, compelling excerpts from the data relating back to research questions and literature.

For data storage and confidentiality, data was stored on the researcher's personal

computer within encrypted folders. Any printed transcripts were stored in a locked filing

cabinet at the principal investigator's home. Participants were assigned an ID number as

well, which has been associated with their data materials within the current study. Additionally, images in this document are presented in color.

Significance of the Study

This study aimed to contribute to the academic literature on the disconnection and alienation prominent within part-time faculty populations in higher education institutions. This research hopes to fill a gap in the literature by adding knowledge about the lived experiences of online part-time faculty engagement and inclusion experiences. Kahn (1990) and May et al. (2004) noted that supportive leaders positively influence the engagement and support of part-time faculty. Focusing on the perspectives and experiences of online part-time faculty toward their leaders' strategies of engagement and inclusion allowed for conversations to begin on the disconnection between what is perceived and what is transpiring.

Uniqueness and Compatibility of the Research

Within the literature on contingent faculty, topics include faculty needs, motivations, and challenges. Additionally, many studies of engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty members are geared toward the faculty perspective via questionnaires, surveys, and quantitative data. However, more needs to be identified on the insights and experiences of online part-time faculty on the strategies their program deans utilize to foster engagement and inclusion. Even less literature on engagement and inclusion within a Christian higher education environment has been identified. The current study aimed to address the disconnect and detachment of online part-time faculty in higher education institutions by reviewing their perceptions of their program deans' leadership and specific engagement strategies.

Contribution to Knowledge, Theory and Practice

This study aimed to contribute to the knowledge of effective leadership practices with online part-time faculty by assessing the experiences of online part-time faculty with engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their program supervisors. Online part-time faculty have reported disconnection and a lack of belonging within their organizations. Part-time faculty are valuable members of higher education institutions. However, they are not typically set up to succeed. They need more training, leadership support, benefits, adequate working spaces, and other tools to serve their students effectively (Anthony et al., 2020). If higher education institutions are to carry out their overarching mission of serving students, leaders must determine how to engage effectively and include part-time faculty in the principal culture and mission of the institution. Organizational socialization could increase if online bachelor-level programs' higher education leaders convey effective strategies to increase online part-time faculty engagement and inclusion (Anthony et al., 2020). Thirolf (2016) suggested that intentional engagement and integration of part-time faculty would develop a more inclusive model. Anthony et al. (2020) noted that there are numerous ways to achieve a more inclusive climate in higher education institutions. Still, the processes are complex because "higher education administrators are tasked with changing both individual and organizational behavior" (Anthony et al., 2020, 8).

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The American Journal Experts (2022) define the scope of research as "the domain of your research. It describes the extent to which the research question will be explored in

your study" (para. 6). Therefore, the scope of research studies can be seen as what the research will explore. In this phenomenological qualitative study, the scope of research was to examine the perceptions of online part-time faculty revolving around their experiences of engagement and inclusion by their program deans.

The American Journal Experts (2022) define research delimitations as "factors or aspects of the research area that you'll exclude from your research. The scope and delimitations of the study are intimately linked" (para. 10). For the current study, online leader perspectives and experiences and perceptions are excluded. The current study intended to focus on the online part-time faculty perspective to identify appropriate leadership strategies instead of the perceptions of their leader. Many studies outline the disconnection online part-time faculty feel from their institutions as a whole. However, there are minimal views on how online part-time faculty perceive engagement from leadership specifically.

According to Ross and Zaidi (2019), "study limitations represent weaknesses within a research design that may influence outcomes and conclusions of the research. Researchers are obligated to the academic community to present complete and honest limitations of a proposed study" (p. 261). There were limitations to the current study. First, within the design of the study, the focus was primarily on the perspectives of online part-time faculty experiences of engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their program deans. Additionally, experiences were limited to online part-time faculty teaching at a Baptist/Southern Baptist denominational, CCCU school with a minimum of two years of teaching experience. The experiences of program deans fostering

engagement were excluded. Additionally, the perspectives of online students were excluded. There were also limitations/challenges with the trustworthiness of participants. Participants for the current study self-reported their status of working as an online part-time faculty member, meeting the requirements of the current study. Upon data collection, concerns arose that questioned the trustworthiness of the selected participants. The parameters and sampling selection had to be revised after the first week of data collection when it was determined that imposter participants were enrolled in the study. To ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the current study's findings, the participants who were identified as imposters were excluded from the data analysis.

Assumptions

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), assumptions are perceptions of the researcher as thought to be true regarding their research. Assumptions guide the conduct of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This research assumed part-time faculty would be available and willing to participate in the interviews to discuss their experiences with engagement and inclusion by their program deans. This researcher also assumed that online part-time faculty members would be knowledgeable about engagement and inclusion strategies their program deans utilize in their departments. Furthermore, this researcher assumed that potential participants would be trustworthy and open about their experiences with engagement and inclusion as current online part-time faculty members.

Parameters

For the current study, the researcher focused on the online part-time faculty perspectives, with a minimum of two years of teaching experience, currently teaching at a

bachelor level at a CCCU-affiliated, Baptist denomination, Christian higher education institution in the United States.

Parameters were implemented during the data collection process after there were concerns about the trustworthiness of the participants identified. It was determined that verification of the participant's employment as part-time faculty needed to be completed instead of relying on the self-reporting of participants. The researcher added parameters to Zoom where only people from the United States could utilize the Zoom link, and they had to have a valid Zoom registered account and not just a guest. The researcher also contacted each of the interviewees who had completed the interview and asked for their faculty email for verification. All participants were asked to verify their employment status as an online part-time faculty by supplying their current faculty email address. If this was not able to be supplied, they were removed from the study and interviews were not completed.

Definitions of Terms

The definitions identified for the current study assisted the researcher in attaining a comprehensive view of the phenomenon of disconnection among online part-time faculty in higher education and, therefore, examining online part-time faculty's personal experiences with engagement and inclusion by their program deans. This section provides the vocabulary that was utilized to gather a richer understanding of components of the engagement and inclusion relationship between online program leaders and their online part-time faculty.

Areas of Specialized Vocabulary

For consistency of interpretation, the following terms are defined:

Higher education leader: Saroyon, Getahun, and Gebre (2011) identified higher education leaders as an individual who "establishes and communicates vision and direction, inspire, support, and guide their team towards achieving a common purpose" (p. 4). These individuals could include program leaders, program coordinators, department heads, deans, adjunct coordinators, or senior administrators. For the current study, the program deans will be identified as the higher education leader in review.

Part-time faculty (also known as adjunct or contingent faculty): Higher education faculty who are non-tenured/nonpermanent, paid per course or yearly contract, receive little or no benefits from their hiring institution, lack advancement opportunities at their institutions, have little say in governance, and may have a doctorate, master, or bachelorette degree (Caruth & Caruth, 2013).

Online Education: Online education is also referred to as distance education. Kentnor (2015) defined online education as a "method of teaching where the student and teacher are physically separated. It can utilize various technologies, including correspondence, audio, video, computer, and the Internet" (p. 22).

Operational Definitions

Engagement: Kahn (1990) defined engagement through two dimensions: personal engagement and personal disengagement.

Person engagement is the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's preferred self in task behaviors that promote connections to work

and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full-role performances (p. 700).

Personal disengagement is the simultaneous withdrawal and defense of a person's preferred self in behaviors that promote a lack of connections, physical, cognitive, and emotional absence, and passive, incomplete role performance (p. 701).

Kahn (1990) outlined three conditions that impact engagement which are as follows:

- Meaningfulness: A sense of return on investment of self in role performances.
- Safety: A sense of being able to show and employ self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career.
- Availability: A sense of possessing the physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary for investing self in role performances (p. 705).

Inclusion: The Cambridge Dictionary defines inclusion as "the act of including someone or something as part of a group, list, etc., or a person or thing that is included" (para.1).

Summary and Forecast

Higher education institutions have significantly increased their use and reliance on part-time faculty in the past 30 years. Many part-time faculty lack the experience, resources, training, or support to fully engage with their students, leaders, and institutions (Henkel & Haley, 2020.). For any higher education institution to thrive, support its mission, and meet the ever-changing needs of 21st-century students, it must have exceptional performance and fully engaged faculty. There continue to be gaps in the

literature about the needs, interests, and experiences of part-time faculty in higher education institutions (Meixner et al., 2010).

Current research noted that many higher education leaders assume that technological advances have positively influenced online part-time faculty engagement. Conversely, technology may open communication channels but only partially create fulfilling inclusive work experiences (Helms & Raiszadeh, 2002; Dolan, 2011; Tipple, 2010). If faculty have a high sense of belonging, they are more motivated in their teaching and research endeavors. If feelings of isolation are reduced, retention will likely rise, allowing universities to "retain the precious knowledge and skills of good workers" (Dolan, 2011, p. 63). Higher education leaders are the frontrunners who can pave the way for the engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty in higher education institutions. Focusing on the experiences and perceptions of the online part-time faculty will allow leaders to identify the needs of their faculty and tailor strategies that foster engagement and inclusion toward their constituents.

This chapter presented an overview of the study by describing the research's background, purpose, approach, significance, delimitations, limitations, and vocabulary.

Forecast for Chapter Two

The following chapter will review the literature addressing research and theory related to the study in Christian higher education, online education, part-time faculty, leadership strategies, leadership strategies that support online part-time faculty, and hospitable online cultures. A summary analysis of prominent themes and findings within the reviewed literature will also be presented at the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study aimed to discover the experiences of online part-time faculty members with engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their program deans. The research questions/hypotheses were: How do online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans? The supporting questions included: How do online part-time faculty members perceive their role in their respective online programs? How does the Christian university culture cultivate an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning? How do online part-time faculty members perceive their leaders' ability to foster trust and respect toward remote, online part-time faculty?

Organization of the Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature addressing research and theory related to the study in Christian higher education, online education, part-time faculty, leadership strategies, leadership strategies that support online part-time faculty, and hospitable online cultures. A summary analysis of prominent themes and findings within the reviewed literature is presented at the end of the chapter.

Theoretical Framework

Review of Research and Theory about Christian Higher Education

Learning has been central to humanity since the beginning of time. Throughout history, theories, hypotheses, experiments, and curiosity about the unknown have pushed people to search for further knowledge on subjects. According to Ambrose et al. (2013), "learning is a process, not a product. Learning is a change in knowledge, beliefs,

behaviors, or attitudes. Learning is not something done to students, but something students have done to themselves" (p. 3). Throughout history, higher education has evolved to be at the forefront of the act of learning. The editors of Encyclopedia Britannica (2024) noted that higher education institutions include universities and colleges, professional schools, teacher-training schools, junior colleges, and technical schools. Historically, higher education institutions have been closely affiliated with faith, specifically Christianity (Bowles, 2023). For example, Harvard College, founded in 1636, was established to educate clergy and advance the Kingdom of God while meeting academic needs in the United States (Flick, 2023). Christian higher education institutions have a unique placement in the landscape of higher education institutions. A primary distinction of Christian higher education institutions is the integration of faith and learning (Esqueda, 2014). Christian higher education involves a distinct approach to teaching, learning, engaging in scholarship, leading, governing, and view towards subject matters. Morgan (2018) noted,

> Christian educators recognize that the Christian faith is more than a moral faith of warmhearted devotional practices, for the Christian faith influences not only how we act but also what we believe, how we think, how we teach, how we learn, how we write, how we read, how we govern, and how we treat one another (p. 18).

Christian higher education is rooted in the understanding that all knowledge is anchored in Jesus Christ. Faith allows Christians to view the world and every dimension by understanding what our Lord, Jesus Christ, has done and who he is. This biblical

worldview is the guiding principle for Christian higher education institutions (Esqueda, 2014).

The overarching mission for Christian higher education institutions is to integrate biblical truth into all facets of the university: teaching, learning, scholarship, administration, governance, student life, and service (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, 2018). Secondly, Christian higher education institutions strive to develop students' morals and spirituality. "Education that instructs the mind without deepening the soul is not true learning" (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, 2018, p. 1). Finally, Christian higher education institutions share a mission to contribute to service and community engagement (Daniels & Gustafson, n.d.). Morgan (2018) discussed connecting with communities and local congregations. Morgan (2018) noted, "Evangelical institutions, while not churches, are an extension of the churches, the academic arm of the kingdom of God" (p. 26). Holy scripture identifies the call by God for his followers to steward and serve others: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10).

The mission to be Christ-centered and service-focused institutions should be theologically rooted and foundational for Christian higher education institutions; there should be no distinction between faith and academic endeavors (Morgan, 2018; Rine 2023). Glanzer, Alleman, and Ream (2017) and Morgan (2018) noted the importance of a foundation of theology in Christian higher education institutions. According to Christianity Today (2009), theology is derived from the Greek words Theos, God, and

Logos, speech, or reason. In the simplest form, theology means logical discussion about God, or in plainer terms, words about God. The traditional goal of Christian theology is to understand God better so that people can speak accurately about God within the context of a life directed by faith in Christ and discipleship to Him in community with others (Morgan, 2018). Morgan (2018) argues that the knowledge and understanding of God, guided by Scripture, should be the ultimate authority for all disciplines within the Christian higher education institution.

> In all other sciences, man observes and thoughtfully investigates the object and subjects it to himself, but in theology, the object is active; it does not stand open but gives itself to be seen; it does not allow itself to be investigated but reveals itself; and employs man as an instrument only to cause the knowledge of its Being to radiate (Kuyper, 1904 as cited in Morgan, 2018).

The most important reason for the existence of Christian higher education institutions is to exemplify God by seeking knowledge of who He is and then obeying Him; it is the soul of the university and must be nourished through discipleship and servanthood (Esqueda, 2014; Morgan, 2018; Glanzer, Alleman, & Ream, 2018). Colossians 1:17 clarifies this understanding that all knowledge is grounded in Jesus Christ. "And He is before all things, and in Him, all things hold together" (Colossians, 1:17). Morgan (2018) stressed that the world is seen through the lens of Christian faith and that through faith, believers strive to understand every element of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Christian higher education institutions offer similar rigorous and relevant education experiences, student life experiences, and high academic standards to their secular counterparts. Specific Christian higher education elements contribute unique value for students and communities, such as integrating worship, love, and the study of God throughout the educational experience (Brown, 2021). According to Christianity Today (2020), "Our work is our witness, meaning that the quality of our work is a way we represent who Jesus is to others" (p. 7). Christian higher education institutions offer a presence of humility, a spirit of service, a mindset of stewardship, and an opportunity for holistic personal and spiritual formation (Brown, 2021; Morgan, 2018; Otto & Harrington, 2016). Brown (2021) noted that Christian higher education institutions must aspire to be a true university, meaning "unity out of diversity" (p. 5). Hunt (2021) noted that many higher education institutions have become "a group of independent franchisees all doing their own thing. Universities tend to be highly decentralized organizations with a tremendous penchant for working in silos" (para. 1). Brown (2021) suggested higher education institutions lose their capacity to confront larger questions they are facing such as their meaning, purpose, truth, and reality when they are fragmented due to siloed departments. According to Glanzer, Alleman, and Ream (2017), universities have morphed into a group of communities and activities held together by a common name, commitment, and governing body. They identified this concept as "multiversity" (Glanzer et al., 2017). Researchers argue that institutions become fragmented and conflicted through the development of multiversity, ultimately losing their sense of meaning and direction (Brown, 2018; Glanzer et al., 2017). Christian higher education

institutions must continue to lean into their central evangelical identity, focusing on the proclamation of the gospel and developing grace-filled communities (Hammond, 2019).

Christian higher education is founded on the knowledge that God is central to every facet of life and creation. "For by Him, all things were created, …all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things and in Him all things" (Colossians 1:16-17). Christian institutions are a unique academic body that extends discipleship to others. Christian higher education institutions must also continue to lean into their mission to develop students, faculty, and staff to love God, love their neighbor, and finally go out to make disciples of others (Morgan, 2018). The Christ-centered focus and whole-person development sets Christian higher education institutions apart.

Review of Research and Theory about Creating a Hospitable Cultures

Few factors contribute more to organizational success than culture. Culture has been observed to shape behaviors within organizations. Higher education institutions strive to form meaning, portray values, and distinguish their institution through the cultural perspective of their institution (Tierney & Landford, 2018). Tierney (2008) noted that culture relates to the morals, norms, and beliefs created, formed, and sustained in any organization. Many elements are associated with the concept of culture, including observed behavioral homogeneities, climate, rituals, values, norms, symbols, shared meanings, and shared cognitive frames (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Higher education institutions are complex entities with many moving components and interactions (Fidan & Balci, 2017). They are rooted in traditions with longstanding and distinct cultures. According to Tierney and Lanford (2018), "As faculty and staff

endeavor to ascribe meaning to their work…the topic of institutional culture has taken on a special relevance in higher education" (p. 1). Detachment and possible resentment will occur if one feels disconnected from the organization's culture. Higher education leaders are encouraged to examine their institution's culture to determine how welcoming and hospitable it is to all employees. When members of an organization come together believing in their institution, its mission, and what it represents, participants feel they are contributing to a common good (Tierney, 1988). This can grow a connection, a sense of belonging, and dedication to an organization. One group within higher education institutions that can be seen as "invisible" is online part-time faculty. Leaders in higher education institutions should determine strategies and practices to engage, support, and encourage online part-time faculty. One specific area for leaders to consider in this endeavor is creating a hospitable culture for all stakeholders.

Hospitable Cultures

"One of the problems with the current state of hospitality studies is that different disciplines and sectors frame hospitality in quite distinct ways" (Lynch, Molz, McIntosh, Lugosi, & Lashley, 2011, p. 4). Those in the social sciences view hospitality differently than those in the managerial sciences. "Hospitality is constructed as much by the disciplines that engage it as by the cultures and societies in which it is practiced and made meaningful" (Lynch et al., 2011, p. 4).

Hospitality can be viewed as focusing on an institution's guests, and the host's position is decentered (Imperiale, Phipps, & Fassetta, 2021). According to Derrida (2001),

Hospitality is culture itself and not simply one ethic amongst others. Insofar as it has to do with the ethos, that is, the residence, one's home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, ethics is hospitality, ethics is so thoroughly co-extensive with experience of hospitality (pp. 16-17).

Derrida (1998) also suggested that being hospitable is about being open to others and stretching or extending the self to welcome others by sharing and receiving resources and insights. Brotherton and Wood (2007) contributed to the literature on hospitality in the social sciences sector. The authors focused on two significant themes defining hospitality: hospitality as a means of social control and hospitality as a form of social and economic exchange.

A significant dimension of hospitality as a means of social control focuses on hospitality as a way to control others or, as noted in the literature, "the stranger." "The stranger can be defined as "People who are essentially alien to a particular physical, economic, and social environment" (Brotherton & Wood, 2007, p. 40). Through this dimension of hospitality, hospitality is focused on controlling encounters between strangers and institutions and making them feel welcome. The goal of hospitality with strangers, according to Selwyn (2000), is to convert "strangers into familiars, enemies into friends, friends into better friends, outsiders into insiders, and non-kin into kin" (p. 19).

The second dimension identified by Brotherton and Wood (2007) of hospitality focuses on hospitality as a form of social and economic exchange. Lashley and Morrison (2000) described this concept of hospitality as,

> A set of behaviors which originate with the very foundation of society. Sharing and exchanging the fruits of labor, together with mutuality and reciprocity, associated originally with hunting and gathering food, are at the heart of collective organization and communality. While later developments may have been concerned with fear of the need to contain strangers, hospitality primarily involves mutuality and exchange, and thereby, feelings of altruism and beneficence. (p. 4).

In this dimension, the host-guest relationship is at the heart of the hospitality encounter (Lynch et al., 2011). It involves an action by the "host," an attitude, and a principle.

Guidara (2022) furthered the literature on social exchange within hospitality. Guidara (2022) identified key factors to envisioning, developing, and maintaining a hospitable culture. In the book *Unreasonable Hospitality*, Guidara (2022) critiqued the differences between service and hospitality. According to Guidara (2022), "service is black and white, and hospitality is color" (p. 3). Service focuses on doing a job efficiently and competently, and hospitality focuses on making people feel great about the job. Guidara (2022) stated hospitality is rooted in intentionality, purpose, partnership, and collaboration. To develop a hospitable culture, one must thoughtfully identify the desired outcome and methodically detail how to achieve the result. For warm cultures to flourish, creating partnerships and collaborations with all parties is imperative for growth.

Guidara (2022) also discussed the importance of casting the organization's vision. Ultimately, these factors identified by Guidara (2022) demonstrate the importance of the inclusion of all members of the team to foster trust and a sense of belonging.

Academic Hospitality

Within higher education, the concept of academic hospitality emerged in the 2000s with the work of John Bennet, Alison Phipps, and Ronald Barnett (Imperiale et al., 2021). These authors noted how academic hospitality involves critical and celebratory conversations in the academy. Within the literature on hospitality in higher education, many scholars have revitalized the Derridean hospitality-as-ethics framework, focusing on a less metaphorical view of hospitality and proposing a view that focuses on emotions, direction, and relations that encompasses everyday activities and practices (Zembylas, 2019; Sinha, 2018; Rasheed, 2018; Imperiale et al., 2021). In higher education, Ruitenburg (2015) created a hospitality-as-ethics framework for and within education that stemmed from Derrida's framework. She explained that "hospitality in education can only be invented anew each time in a particular context, with a particular host and a particular guest" (p. 70). Through analysis of Derrida's definition of hospitality, Ruitenburg (2015) suggested that hospitality is caught between unconditional hospitality, the acceptance and embracing of the stranger without condition or question and attending to the material and to the daily practices that unfold in a particular moment and in a specific place. She also expressed the importance of the spatial dimension of hospitality. "Hospitality has to do with residence, with places, with dwellings, merging the theory-practice divide" (Imperiale et al., 2021, p. 638).

According to Bennett (2000), "A key virtue for the academy is hospitality, the extension of self in order to welcome the other by sharing and receiving intellectual resources and insights" (p. 23). Phipps and Barnett (2007) identify several forms of academic hospitality: material form, epistemological form, linguistic form, and touristic form. Material form refers to the hosting of academics and academic travelers. Epistemological form refers to the welcoming of new ideas. Linguistic form refers to the translation of works into other languages. Touristic form refers to the welcoming and generosity of academic visitors. These four forms focus on the modes of the "host," be it the institution as a whole, leader, student, staff, or other representatives (Phipps & Barnett, 2007). The current literature on higher education hospitality notes that hospitable institutions display an indispensable characteristic of healthy learning communities (Bennett, 2000; Phipps & Barnett, 2007; Imperiale, 2021). Hospitality helps establish healthy communities where members support one another (Bennett, 2000). Bennett (2000) argued that hospitality in higher education institutions does not come naturally and must be intentionally developed and nurtured. Bennett (2000) pressed the importance of hospitality within higher education in his article, *The Academy and Hospitality*.

> I do not think that hospitality comes easily to many. It must be learned and worked at. But practicing hospitality does correspond to a deep human need; it reflects the interdependence of things; it enriches relationships and makes possible new ones; and it undergirds the very reason for the academy (p. 35).

Christian Hospitality

Christian higher education has the unique opportunity to develop a hospitable culture in its institutions. Biblical hospitality is a sacred responsibility to treat guests and friends alike, welcoming others into our homes, churches, and lives. God commands believers to be hospitable. After Paul has listed the spiritual gifts in Romans 12, he discusses biblical hospitality. Romans 12:13 states, "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." Biblical hospitality is a gift; it is commanded and mirrors the gospel (Rimi, 2023). Newman (2003) also suggested hospitality is a gift. "To practice this kind of welcome, we must see our own condition as a gift, as something we did not simply create or construct, nor something essentially oppressive" (p. 84). Christian hospitality is rooted in the belief that all humans are created in the image of God. For Christian higher education, creating hospitable cultures and institutions is not about creating a brand or an image but about being faithful to God (Newman, 2003). The exclusive reason to practice hospitality as a Christian higher education institution is to be faithful to God's commands and allow the works of hospitality to glorify Him.

Leadership Role in Creating Hospitable Cultures

Hospitable cultures are fostered by their leaders. For organizations to effectively welcome, support, and encourage their members, leaders must constantly teach the culture to their followers. Strong cultures are strengthened by a strong commitment from top leaders to the organization's cultural values. This is exceptionally apparent in higher education institutions rooted in traditions and culture. According to Schein and Schein (2017), "the beliefs, values, and actions of the founder are the biggest determinants of

how the culture will evolve" (p. 178). If leaders want their organization's culture to be

hospitable, they must act on it daily. Wood (2020) noted that leaders visibly model their

commitment to the organization's mission. Kouzes and Posner (2011) also stated

leadership's role in developing and maintaining hospitable cultures. According to Kouzes

and Posner (2011), people must trust their leaders to follow them. Credibility is how a

leader influences people to trust and follow them.

> Credibility is about how leaders earn the trust and confidence of their
>
> constituents. It's about what people demand of their leaders as a prerequisite to
>
> willingly contributing their hearts and minds to a common cause, and it's about
>
> the actions leaders must take in order to intensify their constituents' commitment
>
> (Kouzes & Posner, 2011, p. xi).

According to Kouzes and Posner (2011), for a leader to be credible, they must embody

the characteristics of honesty, competency, and inspiration. When leaders demonstrate

these characteristics, they inspire loyalty and commitment in their members. For Kouzes

and Posner (2011), there are six disciplines needed by leaders to earn and sustain

credibility:

- Discover yourself: Leaders must internally explore and review their leadership styles and values.
- Appreciate constituents: Leaders must lean into the relationships with their members and develop an understanding of their members' collective values and desires.
- Affirm shared values: Leaders must honor diversity, identify a common ground of agreement, unite others in a common cause, and build a sense of community.
- Develop capacity: Leaders must educate members, allow more discretion, and keep them informed.
- Serve a purpose: Leaders must serve and set an example for those they lead by showing what is important for themselves and the organization.

- Sustain hope: Leaders must be there for their members in times of need. They must recognize and reward members, foster feelings of appreciation, and reinforce shared values.

For higher education leaders, fostering trust and demonstrating credibility is critical for forming relationships with their online part-time faculty and supporting and engaging them in the institution and programs.

Online Hospitable Cultures

Organizational culture is commonly viewed as steady and stable, particularly in higher education institutions. With technological advancements and increased demand for online learning, higher education institutions have had to reassess how the traditions, culture, and welcoming face-to-face environment can transcend into the digital realm. Another emerging trend that has impacted organizational cultures is remote work. Higher education institutions were forced to stop face-to-face classes and move learning online abruptly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Increased remote work has propelled higher education institutions toward new organizational arrangements and virtual community environments (Abrams, 2019; Bichsel, Fuesting, & McCormack, 2021). Almost all higher education institutions had to move to remote work or close their doors during the pandemic (Nworie, 2021).

Online work settings bring challenges and barriers that physical work settings do not have. It is often impossible to share real moments of commensality and gifts. These two acts have increased connection, collegiality, a sense of belonging, and gratefulness (Imperiale et al., 2021). Imperiale et al. (2021) assessed these concepts not typically seen in online environments. The authors conducted a virtual workshop with participants and

surveyed their experiences with practices of commensality, eating together, and the gift of a poem. Participants expressed their enjoyment of participating in an online meal with one another even though they were all eating different things within their household. In physical settings, colleagues can share gifts of time, space, food, education, words, and many others. In an online setting, this is only sometimes feasible. In the workshop and research conducted by Imperiale et al. (2021), participants could share gifts among each other that reflected moral recognition. Gifts had to be non-monetary and had to carry profound symbolism. Allowing for sharing experiences and gifts amplifies hospitality and the sense of connection among participants. Being intentional about connection, creating meaning, and sharing experiences can increase hospitality in online settings, thus increasing engagement and inclusion of those not present in the physical settings of an institution.

According to Distribute Consulting and Zoom Video Communications (2020), there are five specific signs of a healthy virtual culture: intrinsic motivation, external visibility, employee behavior, workforce loyalty, and personal experience. Dennison (2022) noted that workplace culture is a vital indicator of an organization's health and growth potential. When an organization's culture is flourishing and dynamic, it's easier for leaders to attract and keep talent, achieve objectives, innovate, and grow regardless of location. Remote work is rapidly changing the landscape of the workforce. Leaders must create a culture defined by meaningful work, engagement, position fit, organizational fit, and strong leadership (Smith, Peters, & Caldwell, 2016).

Like an individual's character, an organization's culture drives its reputation. Organizations whose culture honors their members, customers, and other vital stakeholders regularly have excellent reputations with all three groups. "These organizations recognize the importance of a strong culture in the competitive marketplace, a strong culture that everyone believes in, understands, and supports" (Wood, 2020, p. 119). All organizations have a culture, whether anyone worries about it, shapes it, or teaches it. Leaders who do not effectively manage their organizations' culture encourage weak organizational cultures. When leaders do not address their organization's culture, they give weak and unreliable direction to their members on what the organization needs them to do, why, how, and when.

On the other hand, influential, welcoming, and hospitable leaders understand the value of a strong culture and do whatever they can to reaffirm and support the organization's values and beliefs (Wood, 2020). Hospitable cultures offer a place of connection, growth, and warmth. Bennett (2000) argued that "genuine hospitality recognizes a multiplicity of persons and gifts; it is a witness to contemporary pluralism; it acknowledges the provisional character of knowledge, that through the help of the other the best today may be replaced by a better tomorrow" (p. 2).

Review of Research and Theory about Online Education

Online education, also called distance education, is no longer just a trend in higher education. It is now a mainstream option in most higher education institutions. (Kentnor, 2015). According to The National Center for Educational Statistics (2023), "Distance education is education that uses one or more types of technology to deliver

instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously" (para. 1).

Distance education has expanded opportunities for both learners and institutions. The Department of Education (2020) noted that millions of Americans who otherwise would not have been able to attend a traditional campus setting degree program were offered the opportunity to attend college because of distance education. The Department of Education (2020) also noted how expanding distance education programs has allowed higher education institutions to partner with other organizations, increase course offerings, and implement innovative learning models that offer learners more flexibility. Data reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (2023) noted as of the 2018-2019 academic year, 79% of all higher education institutions offer either a stand-alone online course or entire distance education programs. Additionally, 54% of private nonprofit institutions offer some form of online distance education as of the 2018-2019 academic year. Data is still emerging from the post-COVID-19 era. As of the fall of 2021, 46.3% of all students enrolled in a private nonprofit higher education institution had at least one online course (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023).

Distance education is a concept that has been introduced previously in higher education. It has been traced back to the 18th century at the University of Chicago (Kentor, 2015; The Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 2001). Distance education has evolved from parcel posts, radio, television, and internet-based education classes. Recently, advancements in technology, global pandemics, and market

demands have amplified the opportunities for growth in this learning platform. Distance education and online learning are now viewed as parallel learning modalities instead of an alternative to traditional face-to-face learning (Jett & Pearson, 2023). Kentnor (2015) stated, "It is far from a new phenomenon, but it continues to reach new heights as the developments in technology advance" (p. 22).

Community of Inquiry (CoI) Framework

As online education continues to evolve and grow, educators are primarily concerned with developing a sense of community among students, staff, and faculty in online learning environments (Linder & Hayes, 2018).   Several theoretical frameworks unique to online learning identify concepts geared toward engagement, collaboration, and community (Picciano, 2017). There has been a shift in the interests of theorists and theory developments in online education from organizational barriers to teaching and learning (transactional) concerns. "This transformational shift results from advances in communication technology coupled with a focus on collaborative-constructivist learning theories" (Garrison & Akyol, 2013, p. 104). Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000) developed the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework for online education. This framework focuses on three essential elements in online learning environments: social, cognitive, and teaching (Cleveland-Innes, Garrison, & Vaughan, 2018).

The developers of the CoI focused on the interactive potential of online learning, creating conditions for higher-order learning, and creating conditions to encourage collaborative inquiry. Garrison et al. (2001) assumed that for an educational experience to achieve profound and meaningful learning outcomes, it must be rooted in a

collaborative community of inquiry. According to Garrison (2017), "The goal of an educational community of inquiry is to collaboratively engage in discourse and reflection with the intent to construct personal meaning and confirm mutual understanding" (p. 2). Akyol and Garrison (2008) noted that the three elements in the framework must be developed in balance for an effective inquiry process and a sense of belonging to transpire in an online learning environment.

In the CoI, social presence is "the ability of participants to identify with the group or course of study, communicate purposefully in a trusting environment, and develop personal and affective relationships progressively by way of projecting their individual personalities" (Cleveland-Innes, Garrison, & Vaughan, 2019, p. 68). This element of the framework focuses on the importance of establishing relationships, creating a sense of belonging among participants, and creating a climate of inquiry.

Cognitive presence in the CoI framework is defined as "the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse in a critical community of inquiry" (Garrison et al., 2001, p. 4). The cognitive element is grounded in the research on critical thinking, specifically Dewey's (1933) reflective thinking model. The reflective thinking model focuses on five phases of reflection:

- Suggestions
- Problem
- Hypothesis
- Reasoning
- Testing

Dewey (1933) suggested reflective (critical) thinking is a core educational aim because it deepens our understanding of experiences. Critical thinking is essential to

higher-order reflection. The cognitive presence of the CoI is operationalized by the

Practical Inquiry Model, derived from Dewey's (1933) reflection phases.There are four

phases to the practical inquiry model: triggering event, exploration, integration, and

resolution (Cleveland-Innes, Garrison, & Vaughan, 2019). Phase one focuses on an event

that launches the conceptualization of a problem. Phase two focuses on a person

beginning to understand the identified problem and searching for applicable information

and explanations. Phase three focuses on constructing the meaning of the problem. The

final phase focuses on identifying and settling on a solution to the problem

(Cleveland-Innes, Garrison, & Vaughan, 2019). According to Cleveland-Innes, Garrison,

and Vaughan (2019), "cognitive presence is at the core of a community of inquiry and

requires engaging students in all phases of practical inquiry" (p. 71).

The third element of CoI is teaching presence. Cleveland-Innes, Garrison, and

Vaughan (2019) argued that teaching presence is key to social and cognitive presence

during inquiry activities. Teaching presence is defined as "the design, facilitation, and

direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally

meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes" (Anderson, Rourke,

Garrison, & Archer, 2001, p. 5). Within the teaching presence element are three

categories: design and organization, facilitating and discourse, and direct instruction

(Cleveland-Innes et al., 2019). In online educational environments, teaching presence is

imperative for structure, leadership, and inquiry.

The CoI offers a comprehensive framework for engaging, enhancing, and

envisioning a rich online educational experience. According to Garrison et al. (2000), all

three elements are crucial for a quality learning experience and outcomes. Grounded in a collaborative-constructivist perspective, the CoI can create a collaborative educational community to construct meaning and knowledge in a virtual setting (Garrison et al., 2000).

Review of Research and Theory about Part-Time Faculty

Higher education institutions are often seen as comprised of departments, administration, faculty, and staff, but for students, the faculty is the institution. Faculty are the face of the institution. They design the learning experience for students and walk alongside them in their educational journeys (Liu, 2023). Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) also identified faculty as the most valuable asset of an institution. "The effective functioning of universities depends on faculty expertise and collective efforts, requiring members who are invested in their work and committed to its maintenance and enhancement" (p. 5).

The demand for higher education and post-secondary degrees has accelerated for several decades without increases in public financial assistance. Institutions have responded by increasing class sizes, raising tuition costs, cutting programs, and other measures to decrease costs and improve institutional efficiency (Ran & Xu, 2017). One measure to reduce costs for higher education institutions, increase course offerings, and satisfy institutional missions has been increasing reliance on contingent, specifically part-time, faculty. Mandernach, Register, and O-Donnell (2015) also assert that part-time faculty positions are valuable to higher education institutions because of their lower salaries and contractual agreements based on enrollment.

Part-time faculty, also classified as contingent faculty, are indispensable to higher education institutions. The American Association of University Professors (2023) defines contingent faculty as "faculty positions that include both part-time and full-time non-tenure-track appointments" (para. 1). Non-tenure-track faculty account for more than 70 percent of instructional positions in American higher education institutions. Research has suggested the upward trend of hiring part-time faculty is attributed to deflating budgets, few full-time positions, and investments in facilities and technologies while cutting spending for instructional services (Danaei, 2019; American Association of University Professors, 2023; Ott & Cisneros, 2015; Spinard, Relles, & Watson, 2022). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2023), "In fall 2020, of the 1.5 million faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 56 percent were full-time, and 44 percent were part-time" (para. 2). Part-time faculty decreased by seven percent between the fall of 2009 to the fall of 2021. Research noted this decrease coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). Even with the recent decrease, higher education institutions continue to rely heavily on part-time faculty.

Challenges and Barriers for Part-Time Faculty

There has been comprehensive research on issues related to part-time faculty, including lack of inclusion and engagement in their respective institutions. According to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce (2014) report, "The Just-in-Time Professor," Part-time faculty have almost no job stability. "Many are hired on a semester-by-semester contract, with their assignments the last to be confirmed and the

first to be changed at the last moment" (House Committee on Education and the Workforce, 2014, p. 21). In the survey conducted by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce (2014), ninety-five percent of the 264 respondents believed they had little to no job stability and were uncertain if they would teach courses from semester to semester. Layou et al. (2022) noted that most part-time faculty have limited, unclear, or inconsistent access to the institution's orientation, professional development, administrative support, technological support, office space, and areas for student meetings. Layou et al. (2022) also suggested that part-time faculty have limited interactions and opportunities to interact with peers about their teaching and learning experiences. Part-time faculty are also commonly excluded from important institutional decisions that impact student learning, outcomes, and academic progress. Danaei (2019) also noted that part-time faculty are frequently left out of discussions pertaining to learning goals, textbook adoptions, course assignments, evaluations, professional development, and feedback. Anthony, Brown, and Fynn (2020) stated institutional structures do not provide a platform for part-time faculty to have a voice on matters impacting the classroom, teaching practices, professional development, or departmental decisions. Kezar and Sam (2010) proposed that many institutions still operate as though these faculty members are a supplementary workforce, despite the significant increase in part-time faculty in higher education institutions.

The *Invisible Faculty* by Gappa and Leslie (1993) focused on the working conditions of part-time faculty in higher education institutions. Their findings uncovered the disparities part-time faculty face in the institution. Thirty years later, the literature

still indicates the subpar working conditions of part-time faculty (Bickerstaff & Chavarin, 2018; Rhoades, 2020; Sam, 2021l Leslie & Gappa, 2002). Sam (2021) states that part-time faculty have reported feeling unsupported, underappreciated, and isolated within their institutions. It has been shown that these negative working conditions can impact student outcomes and institutional missions. Fuller, Brown, and Smith (2017) further discussed the working conditions and issues facing part-time faculty. They noted that hiring practices, access to basic resources and teaching support, and part-time faculty voices in governance are lacking (Fuller et al., 2017).

Part-time faculty members are typically hired right before classes start, denying them time to prepare for upcoming courses (Rhoades, 2012). Part-time faculty hired right before classes start are not given proper time to orient themselves to the learning management system, textbook, course content, or institutional orientation (Fuller et al., 2017). According to Kezar and Maxey (2014), the most unfavorable effect of "just-in-time" hiring is that part-time faculty are inadequately positioned to integrate innovative pedagogical approaches into their classrooms and teaching models. Part-time faculty also have voiced concerns about the lack of access to basic resources needed to perform their jobs, such as email access, library privileges, software, technology support, and curriculum standards (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). Campaign for the Future of Higher Education and the New Faculty Majority Foundation surveyed 500 part-time faculty members about working conditions within their organizations. The study found that 45 percent of faculty only gained library privileges two weeks before the start of classes, 34 percent received a syllabi sample two weeks before the start of classes, 32 percent

received guidelines for curriculum less than two weeks before the start of classes, 21 percent never received guidelines, and 21 percent never gained access to office space (Street et al., 2012). Also, part-time faculty may be denied professional development opportunities. Kezar and Gehrke (2013) conducted a study of 278 college deans researching policies of higher education institutions to promote mentoring or professional development opportunities for part-time faculty. Kezar and Gehrke (2013) found that almost half of the institutions did not have policies promoting mentoring or professional development for part-time faculty. Another issue impacting part-time faculty is their lack of representation in governance decision-making (Fuller et al., 2017). "A lack of representation in department or institutional decision-making may also inhibit adjuncts from performing their job effectively by disconnecting them from their college or university" (Fuller et al., 2017, p. 23). Due to this lack of inclusion in departmental and institutional decision-making, part-time faculty members feel invisible within their institutions (Fuller et al., 2017).

Benefits of Utilizing Part-Time Faculty

Despite the barriers and challenges faced by part-time faculty and their respective institutions, there are institutional benefits to employing part-time faculty. Kezar and Maxey (2016) also suggested part-time faculty's work is immensely important for higher education institutions' overall teaching and research missions. They teach a large portion of students enrolled in courses and are often dedicated to their field of study and students' success. Research shows that there are pedagogical benefits to part-time faculty. These instructors are working professionals who bring an applied perspective, real-world

experiences, and critical expertise to their classrooms (Berry, 1999; Cowley, 2010; Lyons, 2007; Mandernach, Register, & O'Donnell, 2015). Kezar and Maxey (2016) also concur with other research on part-time faculty characteristics, motivations, and backgrounds. According to Kezar and Maxey (2016), "Individuals may have very different reasons for taking non-tenure-track jobs, and the nature of their work and working conditions can vary substantially, even on the same campus" (p. 5).

The part-time faculty cohort is not a homogeneous group. They have many motivations and backgrounds that influence the desire to teach part-time. Wagoner (2007) identified two types of part-time faculty: highly skilled specialists who work full-time in a professional field outside of higher education and less-skilled academics with backgrounds in teaching who are seeking full-time appointments. These differentiations by Wagnor (2007) are still significantly broad categories. Gappa and Leslie (1993) narrow the generalization of part-time faculty even further. Gappa and Leslie (1993) focused research on part-time faculty on their backgrounds, work experiences, teaching motivations, and satisfaction or dissatisfaction with work environments. They determined that part-time faculty are a diverse group with many motivations and reasons for teaching part-time. Gappa and Leslie (1993) identified several employment profiles of part-time faculty:

- Career Enders: individuals at the end of their careers, retired, or soon to retire.
- Specialists, Experts, and Professionals: individuals currently working in their profession and are more concerned with serving students and communities.
- Aspiring Academics: individuals who are hoping to become full-time academics. These faculty often work at more than one institution.
- Freelancers: individuals who decide to have more than one part-time vocation.

Tipple (2010) agreed with Gappa and Leslie's (1993) categorization of part-time faculty and their motivations for teaching in a part-time role. He noted that part-time faculty are frequently intrinsically motivated to teach. "Adjunct faculty are highly motivated to succeed and derive their principal satisfaction from the intrinsic rewards of teaching" (Tipple, 2010, p. 2). Marandernach et al. (2015) further assessed the motivations, characteristics, and backgrounds of part-time faculty who teach online. Marandernach et al. (2015) conducted an online survey with 603 part-time faculty teaching online to examine their personal demographics, motivations, and backgrounds. According to their study results, 62.6 percent of respondents were female, the mean age of part-time faculty was 46.32 years, 64.2 percent indicated the highest degree achieved was a master's degree, the average years of teaching experience identified was 6.83 years, 88 percent noted teaching solely online, and 48 percent noted they taught for two or more universities simultaneously. Marandernach et al. (2015) found that 55.2 percent of part-time faculty surveyed were satisfied with their part-time role and preferred to continue their current standing. Research conducted by the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (2012) stated that nearly three-quarters of part-time faculty members have requested a full-time position and would accept it if offered at the institution where they presently teach.

Part-Time Faculty Impacts on Student Learning Outcomes/Successes

The increased use of part-time faculty in higher education institutions offers universities opportunities to balance budgets and invest in other programs; however, heavy reliance on part-time faculty impacts student learning and outcomes. According to

Kezar and Maxey (2014), part-time faculty face obstacles and challenges that limit their

ability to offer high-quality learning experiences for students. Research suggests

increases in the use of part-time faculty, the lack of support provided to this group, and

their working conditions are adversely impacting student success (Benjamin, 2003;

Bettinger & Long, 2010; Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Jacoby, 2006; Mueller, Mandernach, &

Sanderson, 2013). Mueller et al. (2013) conducted a study to compare student outcomes

in online classrooms with instruction by part-time faculty and full-time faculty. They

utilized archival data through the learning management system. The researchers

collected measurements on successful completion, failure rate, withdrawal rate,

failure-withdrawal rate, course grade, grade variance, continued enrollment rate, and

end-of-course satisfaction rate. The researchers found a significant main effect for all

variables when the two semesters were analyzed in the study. "A comparison of the

means on each student outcome variable favored the performance of full-time online

faculty members over the adjunct online faculty" (Mueller et al., 2013, p. 344). Students

enrolled in full-time faculty members' online courses were more likely to complete

successfully, less likely to withdraw, receive a higher grade, and more satisfied with the

course experience. Mueller et al. (2013) suggested that the effectiveness of learning

experiences is attributed to the teaching faculty's choices, behaviors, and actions and not

the curriculum or online course design. Kezar and Maxey (2014) noted student success

measures such as graduation rates, retention rates, transfer rates from two to four-year

institutions, grade point averages, and education persistence were all adversely impacted

by the rising number of part-time faculty, their working condition, and the lack of support

faculty receive. Additional research has also been conducted on how the negative

working conditions of part-time faculty (lack of support, lack of office space, lack of

training/professional development) negatively impact student retention, transfer ratios,

graduation rates, and completion rates (Bettinger & Long, 2010; Eagan & Jaeger, 2009;

Jacoby 2006; Gross, Booker, & Goldhaber, 2009).

Shift in Faculty Models

Since the late 1970s, there has been a definitive shift in the employment model

used by higher education institutions in the United States (Brennan & Magnes, 2018;

Magruder, 2019; Maxey & Kezar, 2015; Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Kezar and Maxey

(2016) noted the part-time faculty model expanded in higher education to bring

practitioner expertise into the classroom within community colleges. Before the

expansion of part-time faculty in US higher education institutions, the "traditional"

employment model in higher education was represented by full-time, tenure-track faculty

focusing on teaching, research, and service (Finkelstein, Conley & Schuster, 2011; Kezar

2013). "Tenure is the primary means of protecting academic freedom and exists not only

to protect individual faculty members but also to benefit students and serve the common

good by ensuring the quality of teaching and research in higher education" (Colby, 2023,

p. 2). Presently, 24 percent of faculty in higher education institutions hold full-time

tenure-track positions (Colby, 2023). Four main conditions contributed to the changes in

the faculty model:

- Massification of higher education: opening educational opportunities to the
  masses instead of just the elite, which increased enrollments and accelerated the

development of new institution types to meet a diverse student population and their needs.

- Market fluctuations: variations in enrollment, which have provoked greater demand for instructor flexibility.
- Economic concerns: government funding, budgets, and other financial factors impact how college is paid for, which impacts institutional decisions to hire at-will employees to reduce expenses.
- Corporatization of higher education: there has been an uptick in corporate values linked to higher education institutions, which alter expectations for faculty and institutions (Kezar & Maxey, 2016).

The adjunct or part-time faculty model is currently the most prevalent model of higher education faculty. Conversely, the continued growth and reliance on part-time faculty in the instruction of courses in higher education institutions has shifted the field to reconsider traditional faculty models. Research has suggested that the growing reliance on part-time faculty negatively impacts the profession (Kezar, Maxey, & Holcombe, 2015; Zitko, & Schultz, 2020; Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Yakoboski, 2010; Pyram & Roth, 2018). "In short, the contingent model, particularly the adjunct model, is detrimental to student learning and outcomes" (Maxey et al., 2015). Kezar et al. (2015) surveyed key stakeholders to enhance insights into their perspectives on the future of faculty models in higher education. This study found that stakeholders agreed on a core set of issues impacting faculty development, status, evaluation, and promotion for the future of the faculty. The researchers identified several components that should be a part of any faculty model regardless of type.

- Ensure equal rights and protections.
- Provide equitable compensation.
- Permit all faculty to participate in shared governance.

- Provide access to all institutional information (i.e., policies and evaluation criteria) and tools (office space, technological materials, instructional resources).
- Provide all faculty with opportunities for promotion.
- Clearly define performance expectations and evaluation criteria.
- Ensure all faculty receive contract renewal and termination policies/procedures.
- Engage all faculty in professional development opportunities.
- Include involvement in professional development as part of promotion and evaluation.
- Create a rigorous and scheduled process for evaluation (Kezar et al., 2015).

Participants of the study noted the importance of these components. One participant stated, "I think the challenge overall is that academic institutions, and academics themselves, are not generally open to change…Change is hard" (Kezar et al., 2015, p. 8). However, change will be needed to address the impacts the over-reliance on part-time faculty has on the institution, students, and the profession. Several researchers have been addressing the need for change in faculty models for higher education.

The part-time faculty model for online faculty members makes more use of technology and unbundles the teaching role, focusing on the objective of maximizing cost-effectiveness (Kezar & Maxey, 2016). If there are tasks or roles that technology can compete with staff members, they will be removed from the teacher's roles for the sake of cost savings. According to Lechuga (2006), the online faculty model is characterized by the majority of faculty being hired as part-time, limiting full-time faculty being hired for course development and administrative duties, little to no faculty governance involvement, service, or research, faculty may not have ties to the disciplines and are usually hired on performance-based contracts/annual contracts measured by student

evaluations. In the online realm of education, the functions of course development and delivery can be broken down into eight functions: instructional design, subject matter, development, delivery, interaction, grading, improvement, and advising (Kezar & Maxey, 2016; Smith, 2008). A study conducted by Neely and Tucker (2010) assessed the cost-effectiveness of unbundling the faculty model. The researcher found that there is difficulty in identifying and assigning costs associated with instructional functions, especially between traditional and unbundled models. Neely and Tucker (2010) stated this difficulty could be associated with the hidden costs of faculty functions.

Adrianna Kezar and Daniel Maxey (2016) have developed a Model of Consensus surrounding four identified themes of influence that must be considered and incorporated into the future of faculty.

The four themes represented in this model are mission/goals/roles, responsiveness to external forces, reprofessionalization, and critical values. According to Kezar and Maxey (2016), faculty roles must be flexible and customizable, aligned to the institution's mission, diverse to meet complex needs and value the contribution of all faculty members. Faculty roles must be designed and developed to adapt to external forces such as student demographics and technology integration. Kezar and Maxey (2016) also suggest that faculty contribute to their success, institution, discipline, and students. Under this theme, the authors argue the need for shared governance, professional development, support structures, and equitable compensation for all faculty types. Finally, Kezar and Maxey (2016) suggest faculty roles should be developed around key

values held in higher education and the historical values of the institution. This could include collaboration efforts toward faculty work and supporting diverse roles.

Review of Research and Theory about Leadership Strategies for Engagement and Inclusion

Leadership is fundamental to engaging and supporting part-time faculty (Matos, 2021). Vicent-Hoper, Muser, and Janneck (2012) noted, "Supervisors are supposed to make a big contribution to obtaining and maintaining healthy, well-trained, and efficiently working employees on a long-term basis by defining an environment in which employees can thrive and experience well-being" (p. 664). Research has identified several effective strategies leaders can use to engage, include, and support their part-time faculty in both program-level and institutional community involvement (Dailey-Herbert, Mandernach, & Donnelli-Sallee, 2021; Lyons, 2007; Kezar & Maxey, 2016; Morton, 2012).

Engagement

Kahn (1990) defined employee engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (p. 694). Engagement is an individualized experience. According to Kular, Gatenby, Rees, Soane, and Truss (2008), the cognitive aspect of engagement focuses on employee beliefs about an organization, its leaders, and working conditions. The emotional aspect of engagement focuses on an employee's feelings about an organization, its leaders, and working conditions and whether the employee has a positive or negative attitude toward the

institution and leaders. The physical aspect of engagement focuses on the physical

energies individuals apply to fulfill their role duties.

One of the most significant engagement studies was directed by Kahn (1990).

Kahn (1990) conducted a qualitative study on the psychological conditions of personal

engagement and disengagement. In his research study, Kahn (1990) interviewed summer

camp counselors and staff at an architecture firm to evaluate their instances of

engagement and disengagement at work. Kahn (1990) defined disengagement as "the

uncoupling of selves from work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend

themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances" (p. 694).

Kahn (1990) found three psychological conditions associated with engagement or

disengagement in a work environment: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Kahn

(1990) suggests that the identified domains of meaningfulness, safety, and availability are

significant to understanding why a person would become engaged in their professional

work. Kahn (1990) defined each domain as follows:

- Meaningfulness: A sense of return on investment of self in role performances.
- Safety: A sense of being able to show and employ self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career.
- Availability: A sense of possessing the physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary for investing self in role performances (p. 705).

Kahn (1990) found that employees were more engaged in situations with more

psychological meaning and safety. Employees also identified being more engaged when

they were more psychologically available.

Effective Leadership Strategies to Engage and Include Part-Time Faculty

Lyons (2007), a key researcher in leadership strategies to engage part-time faculty, outlined effective initiatives to support the needs of part-time faculty, including orientation opportunities, teaching, classroom management training, creating a sense of belonging, professional development opportunities, and recognition for quality work. Lyons (2007) advised that supporting and engaging part-time faculty would only benefit student learning outcomes, retention, persistence, stakeholder expectations, and the institution's overall image. Tipple (2010) also contributed to the literature on effective leadership strategies for online part-time faculty. Focusing on the motivations of online part-time faculty to teach, Tipple (2010) created a conceptual framework for effective leadership. Tipple's (2010) conceptual framework of effective leadership focused on leadership styles that would create an environment where part-time faculty feel inspired to reach the institution's vision while having the skills and support to meet this challenge (Tipple, 2010).

Tipple (2010) identified transformational leadership and situational leadership as the foundational frameworks, stating that transformational leadership motivates and inspires part-time faculty to achieve the institutional vision while extending themselves more in their positions to create exceptional learning experiences for students. Situational leadership focuses on the radically changing environment of distance education. Leaders who integrate situational leadership skills will be able to integrate the needs of online part-time faculty and organizational processes/systems to complete the mission (Tipple, 2010).

Tipple (2010) identified several effective leadership strategies focusing on three key areas: attracting, supporting, and retaining faculty. He identified empathetic communication as an overarching strategy for effective leadership. Other effective strategies noted by Tipple (2010) are effective hiring and recruiting, orientation and initial training, departmental integration, evaluation, assessment, and development, ongoing faculty training, and allowing for growth and broadened roles (Tipple, 2010).

Researchers have continued to expand from Tipple's (2010) work of effective leadership strategies for engaging, including, and supporting online part-time faculty. From the research, several critical themes for effective engagement of online part-time faculty emerged, including belonging, professional development, mentoring, orientation, and recognition, which provide opportunities to nurture the relationship between part-time faculty and their respective institutions. Figure 2 represents the key strategies identified that will be analyzed for the current study.

Figure 26: Part-Time Faculty Engagement Strategies

Empathetic Communication.

Along with the five key strategies for effective engagement, empathetic communication is the foundational strategy that guides and directs effective engagement and support of part-time faculty (Tipple, 2010; Weber, Barth, McGuire, Swindell, Davis, 2022; Sam, 2021). Tipple (2010) suggested,

> Communication with faculty who are located all over the world requires education leaders who can effectively evoke passion, encouragement, stimulate and direct operations through telephone calls, emails, and other asynchronous and synchronous technologies. Empathetic communication is based on an emotional appreciation for another's feeling, invoking a feeling of personal connection and trust (p. 6).

Working remotely and in isolation from their peers has been found to impact online part-time faculty job performance and experiences of disconnect from their institutions, program leadership, and other faculty (Dolan, 2011). Research has found that when leaders intentionally create a community of belonging, members can bring their authentic selves to their work to improve engagement and performance (Cornell, 2023; Dolan, 2011). Baumeister and Leary (1995) defined a sense of belonging as "a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships" (p. 497), and is generally regarded as part of the human condition (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Lee & Robbins, 1995; Maslow, 1962). The driving force of a sense of belonging is the human need to form and maintain strong and stable relationships (Lee & Robbins, 1995; Gailliot & Baumeister, 2007; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Wojcik, 2017). Weir (2023) validated the perception that people are made for community with others. "It is instinctual to look for and connect with others" (Matthews, 2021, p. 493). A sense of belonging in the organizational sense can be defined as "the extent to which individual members of the organization are included (or considered themselves to be included in) opportunities available to all members of the organization" (Merriman, 2010, p. 29).

Belonging.

Leadership is vital in creating a sense of belonging among their followers, specifically toward online part-time faculty. However, leaders need additional support and clarity in creating a sense of belonging in the ever-changing environment of higher education. According to Gappa and Austin (2010), "today's challenge is to provide an

environment where, regardless of appointment type or demographics, all faculty members are treated fairly, have opportunities to grow professionally, and are respected members of their academic communities" (p. 8). From their research, Gappa and Austin (2010) identified essential elements all faculty need to contribute their best work to their institutions and students: respect, employment equity, academic freedom and autonomy, flexibility, professional growth, and collegiality. The authors argued that leadership must identify how these essential elements apply to their faculty and institution. Still, all elements must be present to contribute to the strength and quality of the institution (Gappa & Austin, 2010). Present literature continues to support Gappa and Austin's (2010) argument that leadership is responsible for providing opportunities for faculty to connect and build community (Dolan, 2011; Ferencz, 2017; Weber et al., 2022).

According to Ferencz (2017), part-time faculty desire opportunities for collaboration, communication with colleagues, and connection to their institutions. Ferencz (2017) also identified part-time faculty's considerable impact on student learning and how a sense of belonging can impact the outcomes part-time faculty have on student learning. Holbeck, Palese, and McKay (2021) argued that "because online adjunct faculty influence student learning outcomes, it is important they feel supported and safe for them to have a high sense of community with their university" (p. 43). All faculty profit from involvement in respectful academic communities and are more presumably to thrive where they feel cared about and valued for their unique contributions (Blankenship, 2021; Gappa & Austin, 2010; Gappa et al., 2007).

Dolan (2011) noted academic leaders are increasingly aware of the probable alienation online part-time faculty can face due to the physical distance of remote work. The author also suggested that many leaders believe that technological advancements that have created opportunities to increase dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange should be sufficient to cultivate loyalty among part-time online faculty (Dolan, 2011). Dolan (2011) interviewed 28 part-time faculty to explore how periodic face-to-face meetings with their leader impacted role motivation and the quality of educational experiences provided to their students. The researcher found that many issues illustrated part-time faculty's lack of motivation/satisfaction: compensation, sense of disconnection, lack of belonging, feelings of being taken for granted and undervalued, and leadership communication usually stemmed from "negative performance" (Dolan, 2011). The researcher noted these findings can offer insights to leaders to improve relationships with part-time faculty. Dolan (2010) argued that from his findings, part-time faculty are more committed to their students' success rather than their institution. "The school merely serves as the means for these instructors to satisfy their love of teaching" (Dolan, 2011, p. 73). Ultimately, part-time faculty are devoted to teaching their students, but improving communication and engagement among leaders and part-time faculty could increase loyalty and motivation because part-time faculty could increase skills to serve their students better.

There is an extent of literature on how faculty can engage students in online learning environments, but more needs to be known about how higher education leaders can foster a sense of community and belonging for online part-time faculty. In a review

of the literature, part-time faculty engagement is closely linked to developing a sense of community and belonging. There are two emerging models for engaging faculty: the orientation and engagement program and the part-time faculty integration model (Ridge & Ritt, 2017; Roeuche et al., 1996).

Ridge and Ritt (2017) implored that higher education institutions continue to expand distance education offerings due to the demands of students. Because of these two factors, the need for qualified faculty has increased. In their article, *Adjunct Faculty Key Stakeholders in Distance Education*, Ridge and Ritt (2017) outline an online orientation and engagement program (OEP) at a mid-sized faith-based institution. The program aimed to promote key stakeholders' role among part-time faculty in an online nursing degree program (Ridge & Ritt, 2017). The authors identified the program's core content based on a comprehensive review of faculty development, engagement, and distance education literature. Ridge and Ritt (2017) stated the program intended to dimension geographical isolation that part-time faculty may experience teaching in an online setting.

"Establishing disciplinary and teaching competence, promoting effective communication, creating opportunities for intentional collaboration, and fostering sustainable collegiality emerged as frequent best practices and served as the foundation for the development of the OEP" (Ridge & Ritt, 2017, p. 58). The authors argue that the four components of the OEP are vital to retaining a dependable and engaged team of part-time faculty.   The first component of the OEP is establishing disciplinary and teaching competence. This program component was conducted via online conferencing

between the program director and part-time faculty. The purpose of this component was to allow the part-time faculty member to identify their professional development needs, begin to engage as a key stakeholder within the program and ask any questions. The second component of the OEP is to promote positive communication. This component focused on institutional-specific information, policies, communication of institutional culture, expectations, and the importance of transparent communication. Part-time faculty were to complete two asynchronous online orientation modules. The first focused on familiarization of the learning management system. The second focused on an overview of the institution's mission, vision, and values. In the program, a course coordinator was developed to facilitate communication and allow the coordinator to serve as a mentor. The third component of the OEP is to create intentional collaboration. Part-time faculty engage with full-time faculty to discuss and collaborate on decisions impacting the nursing program. The fourth component of the OEP is to foster sustained collegiality. "Collegiality underpins cooperative relationships, fosters a sense of belonging, and acknowledges all faculty contributions" (Ridge & Ritt, 2017). For this program component, ongoing contact and professional guidance are provided to cultivate collegial relationships, foster trust, and diminish a sense of isolation. According to Ridge and Ritt (2017), the development, implementation, and ongoing enhancement of the OEP have led to cohesive faculty committed to the success of their students, their program, and the institutional mission.

Roueche, Roueche, and Milliron (1996) developed the part-time faculty integration model (PTFIM) which focused on improving the integration of part-time

faculty within their respective organizations. According to their research, Rouche et al. (1996) reported that part-time faculty feel like the invisible faculty and underclass compared to their full-time counterparts. "Part-time faculty tend to experience a different community college than do full-timers" (Roueche et al., 1996, p. 33). According to Roueche et al. (1996), the PTFIM was developed using research focusing on organizational integration as the primary theory of organizational integration. They also researched part-time faculty job satisfaction and employment. From their research, they developed strategies for organizational integration for community colleges. When looking at the diagram model of the PTFIM, it is meant to be read from left to right. According to the PTFIM, the part-time faculty bring their unique history, motivations, and expectations to the institution. The personal characteristics of the part-time faculty act and are acted upon by the organization's use of or lack of concertive strategies. The three concertive strategies in the PTFIM are socialization, communication, and participation. Depending on the organizational culture, these three strategies hinder or reinforce integration within the institution. The subsequent identification with the organization can be witnessed through personal outcomes, including feelings of belongingness and loyalty, and organizational outcomes, including organizational decision-making (Roueche et al., 1996).

Rouche et al. (1996) conducted a two-stage quantitative and qualitative descriptive analysis using the PTFIM. The study investigated the strategies leaders used to integrate part-time faculty in the cultures of community colleges. In stage one, the researchers utilized a survey distributed to a broad-based stratified random sample of

institutions in the American Association of Community Colleges (Roueche et al., 1996).

According to the researchers, stage one results were used to create a purposive sample for

analysis towards stage two. In stage two, a qualitative analysis was conducted with a

goal-directed sample of institutions with strong programs and policies toward integrating

and using part-time faculty. The results suggested few higher education leaders within

the study are "aggressively and systemically directing" their institutions' efforts to

integrate part-time faculty effectively. The authors offered several implications and

recommendations from their study, including the concept that integration is possible, the

PTFIM emerged as a useful framework, integration strategies must be institutional-wide

and supported at the highest levels, and allow for focused efforts to socialize and include

part-time faculty.

Additional research and studies have expanded on the concepts of engagement

and integration of part-time faculty since the inception of these two models. Weber et al.

(2022) created a "playbook" for online academic leaders to support online part-time

faculty. Their report offers suggestions and strategies for creating opportunities for

connection and community. Weber et al. (2022) noted online part-time faculty often

juggle multiple roles with other job responsibilities and provide high-quality learning

experiences for their students. The authors suggested that creating flexible ways to create

community and connect with other colleagues is fundamental to the success of online

part-time faculty and their students (Weber et al., 2022). Weber et al. (2022) offered

strategies for executive leadership and departmental leadership in higher education

institutions to create and maintain a sense of belonging with online part-time faculty, they are as follows:

- Invest in communities of practice.
- Support cross-collaboration initiatives where part-time faculty can connect and create community key areas of student success.
- Develop a culture of inclusivity, valuing what part-time faculty bring to the university and their influences on student learning.
- Develop a part-time faculty advisory board to better assess the concerns and needs of part-time faculty.
- Create a mentoring program to link experiences online faculty with new online part-time faculty.
- Develop synchronous meetings for all departmental faculty.
- Develop an asynchronous space where part-time faculty can communicate and collaborate with others.

Creating belonging and community among online part-time faculty is imperative to student learning and the organization's mission. As noted in the research on belonging, this process can be done with institution-wide support, active and intentional socialization of part-time faculty, and rich communication connections. Gappa and Austin (2010) sum up the strategy of creating a sense of belonging well by stating belonging and collegiality can be promoted in "simple and modest" ways, such as recognition, appreciation, and regular communication (p. 18).

Orientation.

Another key strategy of higher education leaders to effectively engage online part-time faculty is the orientation process. Orienting part-time faculty to the higher education institution and their respective teaching roles has been a recommended leadership strategy for over 25 years (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Orientation has also been considered an initial step to making part-time faculty feel welcomed and connected to

their program and institution (Green, 2007; Tipple, 2010). Research has continued to identify faculty who work in online environments typically feel disconnected and isolated. Orienting part-time faculty can reduce the vulnerability toward disconnection and is essential to preparing for their teaching roles and integrating into the institution (Tipple, 2010).

For orientation to operate smoothly, institutions must first assess the policies and procedures of the university. According to Weber et al. (2022), "One of the most important things institutions can do to support quality online teaching is to collaboratively create well-designed policies that assist faculty at all levels in determining and guiding tenets of quality instruction for their institution" (p. 13). To achieve this, Weber et al. (2022) suggest leadership create a cross-institutional team to examine practices and expectations of online faculty, collaborate to create institution-wide online minimum expectations and teaching qualifications, create institution-wide online teaching policies, and communicate the expectations of online teaching. In two recent surveys of higher education leaders, Magda and colleagues noted that most institutions require onboarding or training before teaching their first course (Magda, 2019; Magda et al., 2015). Weber et al. (2022) also identified the importance of utilizing effective onboarding and training experiences for online part-time faculty. "Adjunct faculty need and want training to improve their pedagogical practices. Still, they often have tight schedules, time constraints, and competing work obligations that restrict their ability to receive the technical and pedagogical resources available to other faculty" (Weber et al., 2022, p. 18). Weber et al. (2022) suggested that effective onboarding and training

opportunities provide online part-time faculty with a solid foundational knowledge of the institution, department, and pedagogical practices that better allow them to drive student learning with their content knowledge. Weber et al. (2022) offer strategies for implementing effective onboarding and training, including, setting strategies and expectations for appropriate onboarding and training opportunities for online part-time faculty, resource instructional and technological support teams, limiting the number of training and time commitment online part-time faculty will have to complete, consider opt-out options for members who can demonstrate competency, set expectations of onboarding and training during hiring processes, prioritize time for professional development and training during contracting, design onboarding and training that emulates teaching experiences through the institutions' learning management system.

Vaill and Testori (2012), developed and implemented the Excellence in Online Education Initiative for their respective institution. In their case study, the authors discuss the three-tier approach to online faculty development: orientation, mentoring, and ongoing support. The orientation component focused on teaching in an online learning environment incorporating pedagogical and technical content (Vaill & Testori, 2012). Vaill and Testori (2012) indicated

> This combination of providing pedagogical and technical training is essential to ensure that faculty are ready to enter the online classroom. It provides them with the technology skills they need to use the online learning environment to its full potential and provides them with an understanding of how online education works and how it is different from face-to-face learning experiences (p.113).

The second component of the Excellence in Online Education Initiative is mentoring. Viall and Testori (2012) argued that mentoring is a vital part of the online faculty development process. The relationship formed during the orientation phase with the instructional designer fosters support for part-time faculty. According to Vaill and Testori (2012), access to a mentor provides online part-time faculty with a connection to an experienced colleague who can share their experiences about what works and doesn't in online classrooms. The third component of the Excellence in Online Education Initiative focuses on ongoing support services for online part-time faculty members. In this component, leaders offer additional support and resources as needed. This allows for ongoing professional development, technical assistance, and relationship connections (Vaill & Testori, 2012). The Excellence in Online Education Initiative offers an exemplary model of how higher education institutions can engage and support their online part-time faculty and develop high-quality online learning experiences for students. The orientation to online education in this model provides faculty with competency in online education while pairing them with supportive relationships to assist in pedagogical experiences and adjustment to the online environment. The ongoing support ensures that faculty receive timely assistance. A well-trained and supported online part-time faculty is an important online education component for student success.

Magda, Poulin, and Clinefelter (2015) surveyed 202 deans, provosts, and directors at two and four-year higher education institutions that were familiar with their institution's online learning practices. The survey aimed to gather information on the expectations, hiring practices, policies, and support services for online part-time faculty.

After the survey, the researchers interviewed eight participants to gather successful

practices from which others might learn (Magda et al., 2015). The researchers' survey

found that more than half of the institutions involved in the study reported their online

part-time faculty population had grown over the past year. Specifically focusing on the

orientation data from the study, Magda et al. (2015) found that most institutional leaders

surveyed noted that their institutions offered some orientation training for their part-time

faculty new hires. Sixty-two percent of respondents required training on academic and

student policies, sixty-one percent required training on institutional support services,

forty-seven percent required self-paced training on technology, and thirty-one percent

required instructor-led technological training. Regarding effective online teaching

methods, thirty-five percent of respondents reported instructor-led training and only

twenty-six percent required self-paced training. Nine percent of respondents stated they

did not offer orientation or training for new online part-time faculty. This data

demonstrates the possibility of potential concerns in the preparation of online part-time

faculty at the surveyed institutions (Magda et al., 2015). From the research, the authors

concluded the following conclusions:

- Part-time faculty serve a substantial number of students.
- There are many advantages associated with the use of part-time faculty.
- Employment for online instruction is stable.
- The demand for part-time online faculty roles continues to grow.
- Recruiting of part-time faculty is often locally attributed to the institution.
- There are large variances between institutions in their interactions with online part-time faculty.
- Written policies for student/instructor interactions are non-existent in some institutions.

- There is a high variation of philosophies used for course design by online part-time faculty.
- Pedagogical training is limited at many institutions.

Along with conclusions, Magda et al. (2015) identified several recommendations based on the findings from their survey.

- Choose a model of course design and fully develop it.
- Set clear faculty/student engagement expectations.
- Use best practices in hiring new part-time faculty and provide comprehensive orientation/training about student services, online pedagogy, and institutional policies.
- Provide an ongoing professional development system, training, and performance reviews.
- Systemically include part-time faculty in governance systems of the college and university.
- Assess and understand internal and external policies that impact online part-time faculty.

Magda et al. (2015) concluded that there is an irony in leader concerns that online instruction is not the same quality as face-to-face learning. When online part-time faculty do not receive proper training, support, or orientation, it is unsurprising that students struggle if online part-time faculty are not adequately supported.

"Online education can be every bit as good as face-to-face education. If institutions continue to use adjunct faculty in large proportions, then the proper tools to recruit, orient, and support these faculty are needed" (Magda et al., 2015, p. 25). Orientation is an essential strategy higher education leaders can utilize to engage new online part-time faculty, acclimate them to the institution, and familiarize them with resources (Madga et al., 2015; Herdklotz & Canale, 2017; Vaill & Testori, 2012). "A welcoming, engaging orientation program can help faculty members feel comfortable in

their new surroundings and prepare them to confidently begin their important role as teachers, researchers, and scholars at the university" (Herdklotz & Canale, 2017, para. 1).

Mentoring.

Mentoring has long provided a rich, flexible, affordable leadership strategy for higher education leaders to engage and support part-time faculty. Faculty mentoring is common among full-time faculty but only sometimes for part-time faculty. Waddell, Martin, Schwind, and Lapum (2016) suggested that when experienced faculty mentors collaborate and mentor new faculty, there is an increased probability that the new faculty will seamlessly adjust to their new role. Waddell et al. (2016) also noted that new faculty members felt supported and connected to their institutions due to the mentorship opportunity. Hanover Research (2014) reported on effective faculty mentoring and emphasized how mentoring supports new faculty's personal and professional development.

> Mentorship programs attempt to address several types of common needs among new faculty, such as professional development, emotional support, intellectual community, role models, safe space, accountability, sponsorship, access to opportunities, and substantive feedback" (Hanover Research, 2014, p. 5).

For academic leaders, utilizing mentoring as a strategy to engage and support online part-time faculty relieves some of the pressure of being the sole contact for online part-time faculty. Mentoring as a strategy to engage online part-time faculty can also create a more cohesive department and promote greater collegiality among colleagues (Arieff & Adams, 2019).

According to Weber et al. (2022), part-time faculty struggle to provide high-quality learning experiences for students and maintain other work/life responsibilities. Weber et al. (2022) suggested offering flexible opportunities to connect and create a community revolving around teaching excellence for part-time faculty to be successful in their teaching role and with their students. One way the authors suggested leaders could create this teaching excellence community is by mentoring an experienced online faculty member and a new online part-time faculty member. This provided online part-time faculty opportunities for connection, engagement, support, and feedback. Hanover Research (2014) examined effective faculty mentor models and provided effective practices and approaches to implement and support these strategies. The report found that there is not one format for mentor models. Still, many models share certain characteristics, including support from senior leadership, integration within professional development, voluntary participation policy, participant involvement in the mentor pairing process, resource availability, and establishing clear goals and frameworks for the mentoring relationship. The National League of Nursing's (NLN) mentoring program also conducted a self-study and identified additional best practices, including matching pairs, establishing clear mentorship goals, solidifying the pair relationship, providing opportunities for the mentor to advocate for and guide the mentee, integrating the mentee into the academic culture, and assembling institutional resources to support the mentor relationship. The goal of mentoring is to orient the faculty, socialize within the institutional community, develop teaching, research, and service skills, and facilitate growth (Nick et al. (2012). According to Nick et al. (2012), "best practice is

operationally defined as those actions that produce the most desirable faculty outcomes,

based on evidence of real-life experiences" (p. 7). Thus, the model of best practices in

academic mentoring strives to guide in creating a structure for mentor programs or guide

outcome measures for mentor programs. An underlying assumption of this model is that

relationships play a key role in the success of any mentorship experience. The themes of

this model focus on ways to initiate, build, solidify, advocate, or integrate the mentor

relationship (Nick et al., 2012).

Arieff and Adams (2019), conducted a study to survey how best to assist

department chair leaders in developing and implementing maintainable, customizable,

and responsive mentoring programs. The researchers surveyed part-time faculty about

their interests and concerns and the department leaders' challenges in engaging and

supporting part-time faculty and then examined practical approaches. The researchers

focused on department-level mentoring programs and found that this eased the

responsibility of all communication from the department chair for all part-time faculty.

They also found that mentoring addressed some inequity in professional development

typically seen in part-time roles that teach in isolation. The use of departmental-level

mentoring programs increased collegiality and cohesion among department faculty. The

researchers also found that the mentoring relationship encouraged the free flow of ideas

and teaching best practices. Well-designed mentoring programs offered integration

strategies for part-time faculty into the department. Additionally, the researchers found

that mentor relationships offered part-time faculty opportunities to participate, share

information, collaborate, and lead that might not have emerged otherwise. The

researchers also found that faculty mentoring promoted commitment and buy-in to

department goals. Finally, the researchers found that all parties benefit from mentor

programs, including the mentor pair, institutions, students, and community (Arieff &

Adams, 2019). Arieff and Adams (2019) identified several planning and best practices

leadership strategies for departmental-level mentoring programs:

- Maintaining a manageable scope for the program
- Explore offerings for compensation
- Design backwards
- Define the eligibility of mentors and mentees
- Choose mentors carefully
- Set clear limitations for time invested and program expectations
- Incorporate program evaluation and program review
- Be mindful of the contract
- Offer recognition to the mentors and mentees
- Offer support for mentors
- Let the mentees lead
- Maintain confidentiality
- No evaluation of the mentoring relationship

If mentoring of online part-time faculty is only considered at the program level,

the potential for imbalanced mentoring opportunities across departments can cause

challenges. There could be some departments providing excellent mentoring experiences

and other departments providing none. University-wide mentoring programs offer

several advantages for the institution. Phillips and Dennison (2015), offer several

suggestions for advantages to a university-wide mentoring program: recruiting and

retaining qualified and diverse faculty, efficiency of management, establishment of a

formal and consistent mentoring structure, and an expanded sense of community across

the institution. Phillips and Dennison (2015) noted that visibility is a key component of

the successful development and support of a university-wide mentoring program. "Such

a program must have the visible support of the higher administration; this support comes

not only from formal reports and updates to deans' council but also from informal

conversations wherever possible" (Phillips & Dennison, 2015, p. 36). Additionally,

financial support for a university-wide mentoring program must be strategically

considered. There must be support for a director, seed money for mentee projects, and

marketing support. Providing space, in person or virtually, demonstrates administrative

commitment and support for the program. Developing and implementing new programs

in higher education can produce challenges. University-wide mentoring programs are not

immune to challenges as well. Phillip and Dennison (2015) noted that funding sources

could pose challenges. They suggest splitting costs among colleges, teaching/learning

centers, and the provost's and president's offices. This shows commitment across the

university. A second challenge is attaining the commitment from participants to adhere

to the departmental workload, evaluation methods, and reward systems used in mentoring

programs. Phillip and Dennison (2015) stated, "Administrative expectations must be

clear. It is helpful for the units and the university to institute an Excellence in Faculty

Mentoring Award to give visibility to a reward system and to faculty mentoring on

campus" (p. 39). Another challenge identified is weak support from program-level

administrators. This can be addressed with strong proposals outlining the benefits of a

university-wide mentoring program versus a program-level mentoring program (Phillip &

Dennison, 2015).

Mentoring programs have many benefits and have improved faculty morale, career satisfaction, and self-confidence in professional development (Nick et al., 2012). Faculty in an effective mentorship program have published more, obtained more grants, and been promoted more quickly. Utilizing these strategies to engage and support online part-time faculty also allows higher education institutions to deepen employee retention and an improved sense of community (Nick et al., 2012). For online part-time faculty, isolation is a reality of their everyday teaching experiences. Support is crucial to their success in the classroom and their students. With the inclusion of mentoring to engage and support online part-time faculty, leaders can better support, engage, and retain these faculty (Dennis, Halbert, & Fornero, 2022).

Professional Development.

Professional development and instructional support are essential for ensuring that online part-time faculty have the resources and support to effectively and successfully instruct students (Online Learning Consortium, 2023). According to Kezar and Maxey (2016), several studies have identified faculty development and training as key issues facing the profession. Higher education institutions continue to attach significant importance to faculty development. Historically, though, professional development has been focused on tenure-track professors. Faculty development opportunities must also adjust as faculty models shift to a contingent-heavy faculty presence (Kezar & Maxey, 2016).

Research has noted that part-time faculty make up a large percentage of higher education faculty members. Professional development initiatives offer many advantages

for higher education institutions because of their overall presence in institutions and

impacts on students' learning. According to Conway (2023), strategically designing and

providing professional development with part-time faculty in mind is one of the most

cost-effective investments institutions can make to ensure effective instruction and

increased student success. Conway (2023) shared several suggestions to consider when

creating professional development opportunities for part-time faculty:

- Research the demographics and needs of part-time faculty.
- Incorporate part-time faculty voices in the design of the professional development program.
- Design professional development programs with flexibility in mind, allowing for various learning modalities.
- Design professional development programs with connection, consistency, and innovation.
- Obtain funding for part-time faculty stipends for professional development opportunities.

These suggestions allow leaders to tailor professional development to the needs of

part-time faculty and show the institution's investment in their work. Conway (2023)

noted, "when a college allocates resources and offers institutional support to adjunct

faculty, the college is investing in the continued success of its students" (para. 2). Weber

et al. (2022) also identify specific strategies tailored toward engaging and including

part-time faculty in professional development opportunities in higher education

institutions. Based on survey and interview findings of 119 two and four-year US

institutions assessing support of online part-time faculty, Weber et al. (2022)

recommended several best practices, including offering professional development

opportunities that extended beyond traditional business hours, incentivizing professional

development opportunities, and tailoring content to address top challenges faced by online part-time faculty.

Magda et al.'s (2015) survey on best practices for recruiting, orienting, and supporting online part-time faculty identified several factors associated with effective training and support for online part-time faculty. In their study, the researchers surveyed 202 deans. They found that most institutions required online part-time faculty to participate in some training, mainly onboarding training, but not ongoing professional development opportunities (Magda et al., 2015). The researchers noted many institutions identified issues in maintaining contact with online part-time faculty for professional development opportunities. Magda et al. (2015) stated professional development focused on pedagogical training is significantly limited at the institutions represented in their survey. "When training is provided, it is typically in a workshop format with remote faculty having access to recordings of the live event" (Magda et al., 2015, p. 22).

Ongoing professional development is difficult to offer to online part-time faculty due to multiple barriers, such as distance and schedule variability. Professional development varies across institutions. Face-to-face sessions, online courses, and workshops are a few examples of efforts toward professional development. One common characteristic of these professional development opportunities is the top-down approach to presenting content material (Packer, 2019). "Top-down or presentation-based approaches to educational development are those where participants listen to or watch a presentation with little to no interaction among colleagues" (Packer, 2019, p. 9). Packer (2019) suggested a different approach to professional development, focusing on

facilitating participant interaction about relevant topics. "Participant-centered models of faculty development are closely akin to high-impact practices" (Kuh, 2008, p. 21). Participant-centered professional development fosters meaningful interactions between colleagues, encourages collaboration, and values participants to voice and share their experiences. Dolan (2011) suggested that professional development experiences should emphasize peer-to-peer interactions. Specifically, for part-time faculty, Dolan (2011) noted, "learning from their peers' knowledge and experiences would provide inspiration that could make them better teachers and assist them in developing their skills in a more effective, efficient and inspiring manner" (pp. 72-73). Packer (2019) conducted a case study examining a participant-based faculty development model used to train part-time faculty in pedagogical strategies and providing opportunities for networking and connection with other faculty. Thirty-one part-time instructors at a four-year, large, public university attending an annual part-time faculty retreat completed a survey focusing on part-time faculty attitudes towards instructional strategies, creating connections, and retreat format. The participants were also asked three open-ended questions focused on retreat strengths, areas for improvement, and additional support needed for part-time faculty (Packer, 2019). Packer's (2019) findings suggest that part-time faculty prefer participant-centered professional development models over presenter-centered models. Additional benefits of the participant-based model highlighted teaching techniques that could be easily adapted for their classrooms and increase a sense of connection.

A key issue impacting professional development opportunities for part-time faculty is accessing the courses/workshops (Cassidy, 2019). Part-time faculty do not always have the option to attend training during traditional business hours due to other professional responsibilities, teaching schedules, or personal constraints. Additionally, many professional development opportunities in higher education focus on more than just teaching online or on the technical aspects of online teaching. One exemplary program of best practices for online part-time faculty professional development is the Adjunct Faculty Training Institute (AFTI) at DuPage College. Because of the access issues facing part-time faculty in higher education, the College of DuPage Continuing Education Department and the Office of Adjunct Faculty Support Department created the AFTI to provide comprehensive professional development opportunities for part-time faculty from regional institutions (Cassidy, 2019). AFTI sought to offer online part-time faculty a place to learn best practices in online teaching modalities while creating a collaborative and inclusive environment. The program offers four modules focusing on best practice teaching models, increasing student achievement, and decreasing attrition. The program has positively impacted the access experiences of professional development for online part-time faculty.

Every higher education institution strives to offer high-quality professional development opportunities. However, research by Gappa and Leslie (1993) indicated that professional development is targeted at full-time rather than part-time faculty. The research has noted that part-time faculty have different needs and are less integrated into their institutions than their full-time colleagues (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Maxey,

2015). McQuiggan (2012) conducted a qualitative study focusing on action research to

develop an adult learning model/framework aimed at professional development for online

part-time faculty. McQuiggan (2012) argued that faculty professional development

models should not be a one-size-fits-all option but should be tailored to the faculty's

learning environment, experiences, needs, and uniqueness. Since faculty are adults

utilizing continuing education experiences, McQuiggan (2012) suggested the importance

of viewing faculty as adult learners. "As we approach faculty development from the

perspective of the adult learner, we need to consider their characteristics, the context in

which their learning is occurring, and the process we plan to use to deliver the education

and training" (McQuiggan, 2012, p. 34). McQuiggan (2012) assessed fourteen faculty

development models and identified key attributes specific to online teaching:

- Recognition of the faculty's needs, goals, and concerns.
- Importance of individualized plans.
- Utilization of faculty experiences.
- Development of a learning environment where faculty feel accepted, respected, and supported.
- Fostering active participation.
- Reflection.
- Collaborative inquiry.
- Observation of online courses.
- An authentic context in which to experiment and apply new skills.
- Creation of an action plan.
- Ongoing support.

When these attributes are present in professional development programs, faculty noted a

higher sense of collaboration, preparation, and professional reflection (McQuiggan,

2012). McQuiggan's (2012) professional development framework offers leaders a model

that engages and supports their part-time faculty to increase their online teaching knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Technology has forever changed the landscape of higher education through enriched learning environments; because of this, online faculty need specific tools and resources to help them successfully facilitate learning in an online learning environment (Mohr & Shelton, 2017). Online teaching brings different challenges and opportunities for professional development. Mohr and Shelton (2017) stated, "Key professional development practices that enable faculty to develop their online role include visibility, intentionality, and active engagement (p. 124). Mohr and Shelton (2017) conducted research to identify best practices for higher education teaching and learning centers, specifically toward best practices for online faculty. The researchers utilized the Delphi Method to conduct their research. According to Mohr and Shelton (2017), "The Delphi Method is a procedure designed to have a panel of experts research consensus on a particular topic without face-to-face interaction" (p. 126). The model uses qualitative methods for data collection through expert perceptions to achieve consensus and then relies on quantitative techniques to rank the areas related to the issues (Mohr & Shelton, 2017). Researchers conducted four rounds and analysis of expert panel discussion and participation. The data yielded 41 best practices for professional development considerations and 16 institutional best practices (Mohr & Shelton, 2017). The professional development considerations were divided into four categories: faculty roles, online classroom design, learning processes, and legal issues. Mohr and Shelton (2017) noted that even though their study focused on best practices for online faculty

development, there is still a significant impact that the institution plays in supporting online faculty and programs. They identified several best practices that help reinforce the importance of support for online faculty and programs, including a supportive campus climate for online learning, institution-specific expectations for online learning, and staffing support (Mohr & Shelton, 2017). Mohr and Shelton (2017) argued that from their research, a strategic plan could be developed for higher education institutions to develop professional development opportunities instead of random collections of activities/topics for online faculty professional development. The researchers summarized their findings by stating, "Higher education organizations need to align goals of administration, faculty, and the institution to promote the success of online programs" (p. 135).

As higher education institutions continue to weave part-time faculty into the fabric of their institution, the importance of effective professional development must be considered (Packer, 2019). Part-time faculty engage with many first- and second-year students in the courses they teach; thus, effective pedagogical practices must be utilized for the success and retention of students. Packer (2019) noted, "In a climate focused on student success, the adjunct faculty who interact with these students must understand the teaching and learning process, good teaching practices, and methods to increase student engagement in the classroom" (p. 16). Despite the importance of ongoing teacher support and development for all faculty types, little information is known about the current state of professional development for part-time faculty (Kezar & Gehrke, 2013; Packer, 2019; Fuller et al., 2017). Kezar (2013) argued that the administrative support of

professional development opportunities is a critical indicator of the full integration of part-time faculty into the institution's life. In their research, Packer (2019) indicated that online higher education administrators identified a concern with the lack of professional development for online part-time faculty. Kezar (2013) argued that professional development programs for part-time faculty must consider the importance of fostering identification with the institution, specifically, the academic departments they are associated with.

Professional development signifies an investment in people's future abilities (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Program leaders for online part-time faculty must strategically assess the needs of their part-time faculty and develop meaningful professional development opportunities that support their future growth. Unfortunately, there is no universal model for faculty development for full or part-time faculty. However, research has identified key strategies and practices leaders can apply for developing, administering, and supporting professional development programs for part-time faculty (Packer, 2019; Conway, 2023; Weber et al., 2022; Fuller et al., 2017; Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Throughout the literature on professional development for online part-time faculty, providing support to online part-time faculty is the central theme associated with professional development for this population. Mohr and Shelton (2017) suggested three main support strategies at the institutional/administrative level: a supportive campus climate for online learning, institution-specific expectations, and staffing support. Focusing on these strategies can allow administrators to tailor the tools faculty need to lead their classrooms, foster the desire to improve teaching skills and demonstrate the

need to improve student learning (Pink, 2011). The literature noted that institutions should provide professional development to meet online part-time faculty's perceived needs, which can increase their intrinsic motivations toward teaching and supporting students (Mohr & Shelton, 2017; Kezar & Maxey, 2016; Kezar, 2013; Velez, 2015; Weber et al., 2022).

Recognition.

The final effective leadership strategy identified in the literature for engaging, including, and supporting online part-time faculty is recognition of online part-time faculty's quality work. Gallup (2023) noted, "One powerful tool leaders have to drive engagement and performance remains untapped in the majority of organizations: employee recognition" (p. 2). Robins (2019) stated recognition is about giving positive feedback based on the results or performance of an employee. Recognition involves timely, formal, and informal acknowledgments of a person's exemplary behaviors, actions, efforts, and results that support the institution's goals, mission, and values (Harrison, 2005). Recognition is a beneficial response and reflection on a member's contribution to their performance, dedication, and engagement (Amoatemaa & Kyeremeh, 2016). Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh (2016) noted, "The aim of employee recognition is to allow individuals to know and understand that their work is valued and appreciated, provides a sense of ownership and belongingness, improves morale, enhances loyalty and increases employee retention rate in the organization" (p. 1). The literature noted that recognition offers an avenue of motivation, appreciation, and

commitment for employees in all sectors of work (Amoatemaa & Kyeremeh, 2016; Harrison, 2005; Nyakundi, Karanja, Charles, & Bisobori, 2012).

Not only do online part-time faculty need the tools to support their students successfully, but they also need meaningful recognition of their work. According to Weber et al. (2022), when online part-time faculty feel valued, they are more likely to feel vested and continue at the institution for extended periods, bringing departmental consistency. Weber et al. (2022) suggested best practices for leadership to foster and provide recognition for online part-time faculty:

- Use a quality teaching evaluation tool to identify exemplary online part-time faculty.
- Nominate exemplary online part-time faculty for institutional-level awards.
- Spotlight exemplary online part-time faculty at department or college venue events.
- Take the time to reach out to online part-time faculty to recognize their work and achievements.
- Make a point to regularly recognize online part-time faculty for teaching successes (informal and formal).
- Support monetized teaching awards targeted toward online part-time faculty.

These suggestions can improve the engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty at the program and institutional level. Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh (2016) also studied employee recognition in higher education institutions. They found that when higher education leaders consistently and frequently apply formal and informal recognition, the institution is provided with a powerful tool for influencing its members to live out the institution's values, mission, and goals. Recognition also allows leaders to highlight exemplary behavior and actions, which, in turn, creates role models for others.

Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh (2016) identified several recommendations for higher

education leaders to improve practices of recognition successfully:

- View recognition as an investment rather than a costly or non-essential practice for faculty.
- Leader support is needed for recognition opportunities/programs.
- Promote a culture of recognition.
- Provide meaningful and value recognition.
- Evaluate recognition programs.
- Develop an effective communication plan that communicates all aspects of recognition programs.
- Develop appropriate policies and procedures for recognition programs.

The authors suggested that recognition effectively motivates employees and creates a

respectful and supportive environment (Amoatemaa & Kyeremeh, 2016). Additionally,

Brun and Dugas (2008) stressed the importance of the mutual relational influence

recognition can offer. "The act of recognition needs to be considered from an

interactional perspective that encompasses the notion of reciprocity and thus takes into

account the bidirectional nature of all human relationships" (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p.

724).

In a report on an exemplary online part-time faculty toolkit conducted by

Wuetcher (n.d.), the author offered a snapshot of the transformation and best practices

identified for an online part-time faculty recognition program. Wuetcher (n.d.) stated,

"Employee recognition is a communication medium that rewards and respects the

contributions that help make the university a great place to work" (p. 3). Wuetcher (n.d.)

identified the importance of creating an institutional foundation of recognition through a

culture of appreciation. The author stated this could transpire by promoting a culture

where formal and informal recognition became part of leaders' leadership philosophy.

Wuetcher (n.d.) also emphasized the importance of a simple thank you toward faculty work, which can make them feel valued and respected. The resulting sense of appreciation through being recognized can increase online part-time faculty's sense of belonging and trust. Monetary incentives are appreciated by faculty, but Wuetcher (n.d.) suggested ongoing, meaningful recognition and rewards can provide a productive, low-cost way of improving morale and boosting higher levels of performance. Wuetcher (n.d.) also suggested the importance for leaders to "unwrap" online part-time faculty's potential and assist faculty with the development of their careers. Finally, Wuetcher (n.d.) advised that faculty recognition should start on day one. "Employee recognition starts day one by orienting new employees in an appropriate manner" (Wuetcher, n.d., p. 16). Leaders can create a supportive and engaged working environment by incorporating these strategies to recognize online part-time faculty.

Review of Research and Theory on Leadership Theories Aimed at Supporting Online Part-Time Faculty Engagement and Inclusion

Dunning (1990) conducted an in-depth literature review of management in distance education, concluding that this area had attracted little attention compared to other dimensions of distance education, including the use of technology, student successes, and teaching pedagogies. The current literature still shows a need to focus more on specific leadership theories geared directly toward the management and leadership of distance education (Moore & Diehl, 2019; Abrams, 2019; Fullan, 2001). Moore and Diehl (2019) noted, "It should be recognized that there is a significant body of literature covering a broad spectrum of leadership, application to varied settings and

situations, much of which can be appropriately applied to the domain of distance education" (p. 326).

The influence of technology and an increase in remote workplace opportunities have heightened the awareness of effective leadership styles required to engage and support online part-time faculty (Busay, 2018). As technology and higher education market demands for online educational programs continue to prosper, higher education leaders must look to new styles and strategies to lead online part-time faculty to "harness their motivations and specialized skills…while addressing their concerns to maximize both educational quality to students and institutional effectiveness" (Tipple, 2009, p. 15). According to Tipple (2009), through role modeling, higher education leaders who inspire and lead their online faculty to be innovative and creative will provide a learning environment where faculty and students succeed. Many leadership theories have emerged to encourage higher education leaders to engage and support their online part-time faculty in online environments. The two identified for this literature review are transformational leadership and followership.

Transformational Leadership

Northouse (2019) noted, "Transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people" (p. 163). The theory focuses on understanding followers' emotions, goals, values, and ethics. It also assesses the motives, needs, and treatment of followers. A leader grounded in transformational leadership can influence followers to go above and beyond what is expected of them in their job responsibilities. The theory developed from the work of Burns in 1978. Burns (1978) noted in his research "that

transforming leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" (p. 20). He argues that leadership is inseparable from the needs and goals of followers. Transformational leadership strives to motivate and support their followers to reach their fullest potential. Burns (1978) noted that transforming leadership nurtures substantial change in the lives of people and their organizations. The theory restructures the perceptions and values of both leaders and followers. It also changes the expectations and goals of followers. Transforming leadership is not based on a give-and-take relationship but on how a leader role models, influences, engages and encourages their followers.

Transformational leadership theory has evolved since Burns developed it. In 1994, Bass and Avolio built on Burns' research, noted leadership characteristics and developed the Multifactor Questionnaire (MLQ) (Sun, 2017). Bass and Avolio also considered transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership a continuum. This is demonstrated through their Full Range Leadership Model (FRL) concept. The transformational component focuses on four aspects of leadership, identified as the four *I's*: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration. The second component of the FRL model is transactional leadership. Bass and Riggio (2006) stated that leaders who lead through a social exchange demonstrate transactional leadership. The final factor of the FRL model is laissez-faire leadership, or the non-leadership/non-transactional factor (Northouse, 2019). Laissez-faire leaders demonstrate avoidance or complete absence of leadership.

Further development of the transformational leadership style transpired through the work of Kouzes and Posner. In their extensive research, Kouzes and Posner (2003) offered five practices of exemplary leadership. The five practices of exemplary leadership are to model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart.

In the Model the Way practice, Kouzes and Posner (2003) discuss credibility as the foundation of leadership. Behavior is what will make a leader earn respect. A title may be a status symbol in an organization, but a leader's behavior will determine if followers respect the leader. In this practice, a leader must be clear about their guiding principles and clarify their values. "When people described their personal-best leadership experiences as times when they imagined exciting and meaningful futures for themselves and others" (Kouzes & Posner, 2021, p. 12).

In Inspiring a Shared Vision of Exemplary Leadership outlined by Kouzes and Posner (2021), leaders should be driven by their clear image of possibilities for what their project, department, and/or organization can become. It is future-focused and seeing successes before they happen. Leaders should be enthusiastic about their visions for the group and enlist others in a shared vision.

In the Challenging the Process practice, this practice focuses on seeking and accepting challenges. "Every single personal-best leadership case involved some change from the status quo" (Kouzes & Posner, 2021, p. 13). Leaders must be pioneers, willing to step out into unknown areas and take risks. Leaders must learn from experience, constantly experimenting and improving their endeavors. According to Kouzes and

Posner (2021), leaders need others in their corner to make changes, complete tasks, and encourage relationships. Kouzes and Posner (2021) discussed the importance of leadership as a team effort to enable others to act in exemplary leadership. Collaboration is the foundation of this practice of exemplary leadership.

The fifth and final practice of exemplary leadership outlined by Kouzes and Posner is Encouraging the Heart. In this practice, leaders must be able to encourage followers, recognize contributions, and show appreciation for individual excellence. These changes to the concepts of transformational leadership theory by Kouzes and Posner (2021) have resulted in the current characteristics of the theory today.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership originated with Robert Greenleaf. Greenleaf (1970) stated, "The servant-leader is servant first…It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 15). This leadership theory sets itself apart by challenging beliefs about leading and influence. The theory focuses on the person and not the organization. "Servant leadership is a theory and philosophy that an effective leader develops from a desire to help and serve others" (Busay, 2018, p. 31). Servant leadership focuses on empowering others, helping followers develop to their full capacities, and being attentive to the needs of their followers. Characteristics of servant leaders include being empathic, ethically driven, and service to others for the greater good of all. Additionally, Spears (2010) identified ten characteristics of a servant leader: "listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion,

conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, building community" (pp. 27-29).

Potential products identified in this construct are essential to note: follower performance and growth, organizational performance, and societal impact. Furthermore, servant leadership can impact a follower's realization of their full potential and how followers complete their assigned duties and could also impact followers to become servant leaders.

Laub (1999) probed deeper into the concept of servant leadership. He suggested categorizing dimensions of servant leadership by "behaviors, attitudes, values, and abilities" (Laub, 1999, p. 44). He identified six dimensions: values, people, developing people, building community, displaying authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership (Baqai, 2020). Laub created the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA), which asks employees at all levels of an organization to rate their leaders. Laub's (1999) focus was on organization-wide servant leadership and classified organizations into six orientations of servant leadership cultures: absent of servant leadership, autocratic organization, negatively paternalistic organization, positively paternalistic organization, servant-oriented organization, and servant-minded organization (Baqai, 2020).

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) theorized five servant leadership factors: altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship. Altruistic calling represents a leader's "deep-rooted desire to make a positive difference in others' lives" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 318). Emotional healing defines a leader's

"commitment to and skill in fostering spiritual recovery from hardship or trauma" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 318). Persuasive mapping portrays the "extent that leaders use sound reasoning and mental frameworks" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 319). Organizational stewardship describes the "extent the leaders prepare an organization to make a positive contribution to society through community development, programs, and outreach" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 319).

Servant leadership influences organizational performance as well. Research noted this construct can impact how team members function and complete tasks together (Varney, 2016; Sokoll, 2014; Patterson, 2003; Spears, 2010). This unique theory focuses on altruism as the main idea for the servant leadership process (Greenleaf, 1970). Influence is seen differently for this theoretical construct because leaders give up control rather than try to gain control.

These theories reveal different styles that could be effective for online higher education leaders to engage and support online part-time faculty. Many seminal models are influential theories applicable across settings and situations (Moore & Diehl, 2019; Abrams, 2019). Transformational and servant leadership offer foundational concepts, practices, and perspectives for leaders in online higher education settings.

Effective Online Leadership Styles

Leaders inspire and motivate followers, desire followers to reach their full potential, and nurture genuine relationship-building. Leaders of online part-time faculty must address challenges that impact the engagement and inclusion of their online part-time faculty. Identifying and utilizing effective leadership styles to engage and

support online part-time faculty is crucial as online learning grows (Tipple, 2009). As online components of higher education continue to advance, leaders will be challenged to interact with their followers more effectively. When a leader in higher education utilizes the transformative leadership perspective, they will inspire the organization to a shared vision (Basham, 2012). According to Basham (2012),

> Transformational leadership is essential within higher education so that adaptation can be completed to meet the constantly changing economic and academic environment. Leaders who encourage and support transformational leadership share power, are willing to learn from others, and are sensitive to each team member's needs for achievement and growth. (p. 344).

Research has demonstrated the perspectives of transformational leadership theory effectiveness in navigating the challenges and transformations impacting higher education. According to Fourtane (2022), the current model within higher education was built on hierarchal principles. However, with the rapid changes, leaders must consider shifting their leadership focus to inclusivity, respect, and acceptance. According to Cetin and Kinik (2015), leadership has been essential in expanding quality in higher education into the 21st century. Cetin and Kinik (2015) also suggested that leaders' behaviors significantly influenced their faculty development. Transformational leaders in higher education can be seen as quiet leaders (Fourtune, 2022). "They tend to use rapport, inspiration, and empathy to engage followers. Transformational leaders are known to possess courage, confidence, and the willingness to make sacrifices for the greater good" (p. 2). This study by Fourtane (2022) noted the importance of the relationship between

leader and follower in higher education. DeLotel and Cates (2017) also supported that

the transformational leadership style connects with the relationship variable in the

leader/follower interaction. DeLotell and Cates' (2017) research study suggested that

transformational leadership characteristics within leaders contributed to building a

trusting relationship between academic leaders and online faculty. In his research,

Basham (2012) found that higher education presidents acknowledge the importance of

dedicating time to clearly communicate a vision, purpose, and values with all

stakeholders to create transformational change. Basham (2012) also concluded that

academic leaders identified challenges to transformational leadership in higher education

due to institutional traditions, historical structures, and culture.

Henkel (2012) researched transformational leadership styles and their influence

on engagement and perceptions of teaching online higher education courses. He

conducted a quantitative correlation study using the Multifactor Leadership

Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-17). The

participants included thirty online part-time faculty from multiple institutions. Henkel

(2012) found five transformational leadership styles to effectively promote engagement

and improve perceptions of online learning among online part-time faculty. Additionally,

Henkel (2012) found that the concept of inspirational motivation by transformational

leaders seemed to be the most effective in increasing the engagement of online part-time

faculty.

According to Beaudoin (2019), "Regardless of a leader's repertoire of attitude and

attributes, it is the process of transformative change that ideally guides one's practice" (p.

331). Beaudoin (2019) noted transformational leadership is a compelling model for online education leaders precisely because of the long-entrenched practices in academia that will require reshaping to adapt to new modalities.

Like transformational leadership, servant leadership is also a practical theory to guide leaders in addressing the challenges of engaging and supporting online part-time faculty. "The servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first, and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible" (Greenleaf, n.d., para. 4). Servant leadership is not as comprehensive as transformational leadership but allows leaders to focus on collaboration, engagement, and support of their online part-time faculty. There are many similarities between transformational and servant leadership. However, Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2003) suggested key differences,

> The principal difference between transformational leadership and servant leadership is the focus of the leader. While transformational leaders and servant leaders both show concern for their followers, the overriding focus of the servant leader is upon service to their followers. The transformational leader has a greater concern for getting followers to engage in and support (p. 4).

Varney (2017) conducted a quantitative study examining the impact between faculty leaders' demonstration of servant-leadership behaviors and the engagement of online part-time faculty. The researcher utilized the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ). Results indicated five conceptually and empirically distinctive servant leadership behaviors: emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, altruistic calling, and organizational stewardship (Varney, 2017). The researcher noted that wisdom and

organizational stewardship of the higher education leaders were the highest reported characteristics for the sample.

Russell (2012) conducted a literature review to assess how online higher education leaders could utilize the practice of servant leadership to improve the overall academic experience. Russell (2012) identified isolation issues for online faculty as a challenge for leaders. The researcher noted a correlation between servant leadership, building community within online higher education, and professional development programs. "Existing literature identified building community as an essential component to improving online faculty experiences, as well as a servant leadership characteristic" (Russell, 2012, p. 18). He noted that the literature review identified the need to incorporate servant leadership into online leadership strategies, but that further research was required. Russell's (2012) research was not conclusive that servant leadership was the most effective for online higher education but offered a pathway for further exploration.

Barnes and Fredericks (2021) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study focusing on factors that positively or negatively affect the retention and satisfaction of part-time faculty. The researchers focused on identifying institutional factors that influence the satisfaction and retention of part-time faculty. The researchers interviewed part-time teaching adjunct faculty with at least ten years of experience. The researchers stated they were looking for key themes, patterns, and categories during their research. Barnes and Fredericks (2021) identified six themes: career direction, number of students in the class, satisfaction with the college, enjoyment of higher education, work for a

servant leader, and leadership styles of their boss. For theme five, participants focused on referencing their perspectives with their deans, chairs, or supervisors. Participants noted they preferred to be led by servant leaders. Theme six, the boss's leadership style, also supported that part-time faculty preferred to work as a servant leader. The three top leadership styles identified by participants were transformational, transactional, and servant. Barnes and Fredericks (2021) suggested that "adjunct faculty make note of administration and faculty interaction with them and garner perceptions of respect and inclusion in initiatives. Leadership style is one factor influencing satisfaction and retention" (p. 94). Implications of this study suggested that part-time faculty prefer to work for a leader who uses transformational, transactional, servant leadership, or a combination of the three.

"Every day, academic leaders make decisions that fly in the face of conventional management models. Rather than seeking greater efficiency and order, they are guiding their institutions toward activity that seems disorderly and hard to direct" (Frost & Pozorski, 2006, p.1). Leadership in higher education is a complex entity. "Leadership is vital for academia. But you're not a good academic leader just because you think you are" (Clark & Sousa, 2018, para. 1). A strong leader will recognize and develop their approaches to best serve and motivate those who follow them (Basham, 2012). Ultimately, when a collective purpose guides leadership, institutions flourish. Relationships are forged for a common goal. There is a sense of belonging and purpose. According to Kezar and Holcombe (2017), focusing on collaboration and relationships

between leaders, faculty, and other critical organizational stakeholders allows for better learning, innovation, and performance.

<div style="text-align: center">**Summary of Findings and Themes within Reviewed Literature**</div>

The above literature review represents the theoretical framework related to the research questions addressed by the study. This final chapter section summarizes prominent themes and findings within the framework. This summarization will serve as a base for comparison of study findings to relevant literature in Chapter Five.

Summary of Themes/Findings about Christian Higher Education

Christian higher education has a unique placement in the landscape of higher education. Christian higher education institutions are charged with disseminating knowledge and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Faith and learning are central to Christian higher education institutions (Bowles, 2023; Flick, 2022; Morgan, 2018). The main concepts of being Christ-centered and focusing on whole-person development set Christian higher education institutions apart (Morgan, 2018).

Summary of Themes/Findings about Creating a Hospitable Culture

Culture is seen as an integral part of the general functioning of an organization (Coman and Bonciu, 2016). Additionally, leaders must nourish the element of hospitality for it to flourish. Traditions and long-standing distinct cultures are prominent features of higher education institutions (Fida & Balci, 2017). Higher education can be seen as a service industry focusing on the product of knowledge. A key attribute of service industries is a hospitable culture. A welcoming, warm, hospitable environment can foster a sense of belonging and connection to the institution. This need for connection and a

sense of belonging is especially true for the "invisible" online part-time faculty who often feel detached from their institution's culture (Tierney, 1988; Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Creating a hospitable culture for faculty, staff, and students is imperative in online higher education, where online part-time faculty may never come to the physical campus. Shared hospitality/virtual academic hospitality offers an opportunity to open avenues to foster and engage in hospitable encounters with others in a virtual environment (Imperiale, Phipps, & Fasssetta, 2021). Identifying hospitable rituals that are significant to an institution and tailoring them to an online setting can foster hospitality in an online setting. Leaders must be intentional in developing a warm and hospitable culture. For Christian higher education institutions, hospitality is not just a marketing strategy; it is ingrained into the culture and beliefs of their institution and people. If Christian higher education institutions are to be grounded and guided by the teachings of the Bible, then a hospitable culture should be an act of faith in God and his Word (Newman, 2003).

Summary of Themes/Findings about Online Education

Online education has become a mainstream course delivery option in most higher education institutions. It has expanded opportunities for both learners and institutions. Within online education, the concept of building virtual communities among students, staff, and faculty continues to grow (Linder & Hayes, 2018; Kentor, 2015; Picciano, 2017; Garrison & Akyol, 2013). Several frameworks have been identified for online education environments that focus on engagement, collaboration, and community. The framework examined in this literature review was the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework for creating an online educational experience. Developed by Garrison,

Anderson, and Archer (2000), the CoL focuses on online learning environments' social,

cognitive, and teaching elements. This framework's fundamental concept elaborates a

sense of community and collaboration development in online environments. This

framework allows virtual community members to construct meaning and knowledge in a

virtual setting, which is vital to feeling engaged and included in the institution (Garrison,

Anderson, & Archer, 2000).

Summary of Themes/Findings about Part-time Faculty

Faculty are often seen as the face of the institution by their students and are often

noted as the most valuable asset of an institution (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Liu,

2023). However, part-time faculty are often portrayed as second-class or dispensable due

to their contingent work arrangements. Part-time faculty face issues related to lack of

inclusion and engagement, including low wages, lack of appropriate resources, no office

space, little to no health benefits, low job stability, and lack of representation on

governance committees (House Committee on Education and the Workforce, 2014;

Layou et al., 2022; Danaie, 2019). There are many benefits to utilizing part-time faculty,

including cost-effective ways to balance budgets and being able to invest in other

programs. Part-time faculty also bring real-world experiences to the classroom (Berry,

1999; Cowley, 2010; Lyons, 2007; Mandernach, et al., 2015). Additionally, part-time

faculty are seen as devoted to their students' learning and dedicated to teaching. They are

intrinsically motivated despite their many challenges and barriers (Kezar & Maxey,

2016).   Student learning and outcomes can suffer when resources or strategies are not

adequately implemented to support, engage, and include these members.

Employment models have shifted in higher education from tenure-track, full-time positions to significant increases in the part-time/contingent faculty model. Because of this shift, a call has been made for "rethinking the profession" and redeveloping a more inclusive faculty model (Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Kezar and Maxey (2016) developed a Model of Consensus to guide the future discussion and development of a new faculty model that includes part-time faculty members. Creating a more inclusive faculty model could foster a more profound sense of collegiality, belonging, and collaboration among all faculty.

Summary of Themes/Findings about Leadership Strategies for Engagement and Inclusion

Leadership is fundamental to engaging and supporting part-time faculty (Matos, 2021). The literature identified several key leadership strategies to engage and support online part-time faculty: belonging, professional development, mentoring, orientation, and recognition (Tipple, 2010; Tipple 2009; Kezar & Maxey, 2016; Lyons, 2007). Furthermore, an overarching theme in the literature was the importance of empathetic and open communication (Tipple, 2010; Weber et al., 2021).

Summary of Themes/Findings about Leadership Theories Aimed at Supporting Online Part-Time Faculty Engagement and Inclusion

The literature noted that more attention should be paid to leadership theories specific to online education (Moore & Diehl, 2019; Beaudoin, 2019; Fullan, 2011; Dunning, 1990). Much research has been conducted on other dimensions of online learning, including technology, student learning outcomes, and teaching pedagogies. Still,

minor research has been identified toward specific online education-focused leadership strategies. There are seminal theories that transcend settings and situations that have shown effectiveness for leaders working with part-time faculty in online education environments. Transformational and servant leadership offer opportunities for leaders to engage, include, and support their online part-time faculty. Both transformational and servant leaders produce high levels of trust with their followers, act as role models, show consideration for others, delegate responsibilities, empower others, teach, communicate, listen, influence others, and are seen as people-oriented leadership theories (Stone et al., 2003). All these aspects and strategies are needed to support online part-time faculty best.

Forecast Chapter Three

In Chapter Three, the methodology of the research study will be discussed. The research design will be identified. The research plan will be discussed, including the site, population, and sample for the research study. Additionally, data collection for the study will be reviewed. Finally, data analysis will be evaluated for this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Higher education institutions have progressively increased reliance on part-time faculty to fulfill course loads and program offerings over the past several decades as public demand and competitive pressures have reshaped the landscape of higher education. Research has noted that part-time faculty are necessary to accomplish higher education institutions' everyday work and mission and allow for flexibility within faculty models (Kezar & Maxey, 2016; Bettinger & Long, 2010; Tipple, 2010; Murray, 2019; Thedwall, 2008). Part-time faculty have filled the gap in meeting the higher demands and competitive pressures while allowing institutions to implement cost-savings and resource efficiency. Additionally, part-time faculty bring an area of expertise to the classroom with their use of professional real-world experiences (Wickun & Stanley, 2000).

Another facet that has restructured higher education opportunities and practices is the evolution of technology (Barnett, 2018). Technology has increased access to higher education for students who may not have had the opportunity otherwise. Akour and Alenzi (2022) noted that communication has improved between faculty and students, institutional missions have advanced, and persons who might otherwise not be able to access college courses have been allowed to access higher education because of technological advancements.

With the continued movements of online education and increased use of part-time faculty, higher education leaders are faced with challenges on how to best support, engage, and include online part-time faculty within their respective programs and institutional culture (Tipple, 2010). Research has noted that many online part-time faculty members feel disconnected from their higher education organization and do not feel recognized for their contributions to students, the institution's mission, or higher education as a whole (Dolan, 2011; Kezar & Maxey, 2015; Lyons, 2007; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Layou et al., 2022). The current study called attention to the overreliance of part-time faculty, their disconnection from their respective institution, and the lack of support part-time faculty face in higher education that denote underlying issues that warrant investigating reasons impacting the experiences for online part-time faculty and the need for implementing effective leadership strategies to best support, engage, and include online part-time faculty (Maxey, 2015; Lyons, 2007; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Layou et al., 2022); Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Mandernach et al., 2015). Results from this study seek to promote value in online part-time faculty's voices and shift higher education leaders from awareness to action to effectively support, engage and include online part-time faculty.

This chapter presents the methodology for a phenomenological research approach, employing the method of interviewing. Sections of Chapter Three include the research purpose, research design, research plan, and a discussion of the coherency of the research design.

Research Purpose

This phenomenological qualitative study aims to discover the experiences of online part-time faculty members with engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their program deans. A phenomenological qualitative approach was utilized for this study to understand in what way online part-time faculty perceive how their leaders personally engage and include them to create a sense of connection, support, and appreciation. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2019), researchers utilizing a phenomenological perspective focus on finding commonalities between all participants. Van Manen (1990) noted that the primary purpose of phenomenology is to "reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (as cited in Bloomberg and Volpe, 2019, p. 54). Additionally, Creswell (2018) noted that phenomenology describes the common meaning among several persons instead of a single individual or story. Therefore, the current study reduced online part-time faculty's individual experiences and perceptions to attribute meaning to their program deans' inclusion and engagement strategies. This research study addressed the disconnect and detachment of online part-time faculty in higher education institutions by reviewing their perceptions of their program deans' leadership and specific support strategies.

The research question guiding this study was: How do online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans? The related questions were:

1. How do online part-time faculty members perceive their role in their respective online programs?

2. How does the university culture cultivate an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning?
3. How do online part-time faculty members perceive their leaders' ability to foster trust and respect toward remote, online part-time faculty?

Research Design

The research methodology employed to resolve the question of how online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans adopted for the study was phenomenology. This research approach used the method of interviewing.

Nature of the Methodology

Phenomenology is a research method that intends to make meaning of a concept/phenomenon through the lived experiences of a group of individuals (Creswell, 2018). Within phenomenological research, data is typically gathered through interviewing (Creswell, 2018). For the current study, the researcher aspired to understand the phenomenon of disconnection among online part-time faculty in higher education and therefore examined online part-time faculty's personal experiences with engagement and inclusion by their program deans.

"Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2018, p. 8). Phenomenology has often been used as an approach to research within the social sciences, healthcare, and education (Creswell, 2018). According to Dowling (2007), phenomenology is a research method and a philosophy. Creswell (2018) also

stressed that phenomenology has a robust philosophical component. Dowling (2007) emphasized that the work of Husserl, one of the main contributors to phenomenology, regarded experience as the fundamental source of knowledge. For Husserl, the intention of phenomenology is the laborious and unbiased study of "things as they appear" to arrive at an essential understanding of human consciousness and experience (Valle et al., 1989, as cited in Dowling, 2007). Even though many perspectives of phenomenology differ, the philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology focus on shared assumptions, including the study of lived experiences and the development of descriptions of the essences of experiences, and not explanations or analyses of the experiences (Creswell, 2018).

The current study focused on a psychological lens to explore individual experiences instead of group experiences of a phenomenon. This allowed the researcher to narrow in on the individualized meaning of the phenomenon of the study. Additionally, aspects of transcendental phenomenology will be utilized in this study. Through elements of transcendental phenomenology, the researcher will emphasize the notion of "bracketing out one's experiences and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon" (Creswell, 2018, p. 78).

For this phenomenological study, the researcher followed the systematic steps outlined by Creswell (2018). First, the researcher must set aside previous experiences to take a fresh perspective on the phenomenon (Creswell, 2018). This is known as epoche or bracketing out biases. Next, the researcher determined if phenomenology was the best research approach to examine the study. The current study aimed to explore the lived

experiences of online part-time faculty and their experiences with engagement by their program deans. This study is suited for phenomenology because the research aim is to understand several individuals' shared experiences on engagement. The next step by Creswell (2018) in procedures for conducting phenomenological research focused on identifying a phenomenon of interest and describing it. For the current study, the researcher sought to write a research question that attempted to uncover the lived experiences of online part-time faculty's engagement and inclusion by their program deans, including their sense of belonging within their institution, experiences with hospitality, and trust among leaders. Another step identified by Creswell (2018) focuses on collecting data from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon being studied. For the current study, the researcher collected data by interviewing twelve participants who self-reported that they were online part-time faculty teaching in a bachelor's level program at a Christian higher education institution. However, due to issues with the trustworthiness of some of the initial participants of the study, only eight participant's data was utilized in the data analysis. This will be discussed further in the challenges section of this chapter. After the data was collected, the researcher generated themes, developed textural and structural descriptions, reported the "essence" of the phenomenon, and presented the understanding in a final written report (Creswell, 2018).

As with any research exploration, several challenges can arise when conducting phenomenological research. Creswell (2018) noted that one challenge of phenomenological research is that a researcher must have at least some broad understanding of the philosophical assumptions that need to be identified in their study.

To paraphrase, a researcher must understand that the research design is created to uncover

and expound on why the phenomenon is occurring. Second, Creswell (2018) noted

participants in a phenomenological study must be carefully chosen. In this current study,

the participants needed to meet the criteria of currently teaching as an undergraduate

online part-time faculty at a CCCU-affiliated Christian higher education institution, with

a Baptist/Southern Baptist denominational association, and a minimum of two years of

teaching experience. The third challenge identified by Creswell (2018) focused on

bracketing out personal predispositions/biases to the phenomenon. The researcher of the

study remained conscious of this challenge due to her personal experience as a previous

part-time faculty member and current program coordinator overseeing many online

part-time faculty members. Finally, Creswell (2018) discussed the challenge of including

personal experiences and understandings in research studies.

Appropriateness of the Methodology to the Research

Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) stated that phenomenologists focus on uncovering

what all participants have in common. "The basic purpose of research is to reduce

individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence"

(Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 54). The essence, or commonality, identified for the

current study is the phenomenon of online part-time faculty experiences with engagement

and inclusion by their program deans. A phenomenological approach was applied to this

present study because it seeks to understand a problem from the experience and

perspective of the study participants. The goal of using a phenomenological method for

this study was to provide readers with a better understanding of what online part-time

faculty experience as they attempt to engage and connect to their respective teaching institutions. Subsequent findings can be beneficial to develop policies, procedures, and initiatives to effectively serve online part-time faculty who may not feel connected to their teaching institutions.

Research Plan

This section details how resources and procedures were organized into a coherent plan for collecting and interpreting data that responds to the research questions. The theoretical framework outlined for this study was influential in aiding the researcher in engaging in a profound analysis of literature associated with the research questions. The theoretical framework was developed to determine if participants met the criteria of the study for being motivated in their endeavors for teaching online in higher education, to identify engagement and inclusion experiences in their teaching role within their institution, and to determine their perception of belonging within their program/institution. The design of the research tool allowed the researcher to gather data that addressed the research questions while enabling them to share their perceptions and experiences without leading them toward a particular answer or belief.

Site, Population, and Sample

Site

The site for this study was two private Christian higher education institutions. The first was in the Southwestern region of the United States (identified as University 1), and the second institution was in the Southeastern region of the United States (identified as University 2). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2023),

approximately 4,000 degree-granting higher education institutions currently operate in the United States, and around 900 are religiously affiliated. Of these 900 institutions, 54% of private nonprofit institutions offer online distance education as of the 2018-2019 academic year.

University 1, located in the Southwestern region of the United States, is a private Christian university founded in 1950. Academically, the university offers two Associate's programs, 108 Bachelor's programs, 40 Master's programs, and seven Doctoral programs. Their current student enrollment is 11,580. The school website states that 100% of faculty and staff identify as Christians.

University 2, located in the Southeastern region of the United States, is a private Christian university founded in 1911. Academically, the university offers fifty major bachelor's degree programs, 29 concentrations, 48 minors, 18 Master's and Doctoral degrees, and eight certification programs. The university's current student enrollment is approximately 3500 students.

Population

The population for this study will consist of online part-time faculty, with a minimum two years of teaching experience, presently teaching in a CCCU-affiliated, Baptist denomination, and Christian higher education institution. The participants will need to be teaching in a bachelor-level program as well. Research noted that seventy percent of faculty employed at non-profit higher education institutions are contingent (both non-tenure and part-time) faculty, making them the majority among faculty (Kezar & Maxey, 2014), with part-time representing approximately 44%, currently.

Sampling

The researcher used purposeful sampling, specifically criterion sampling, to identify participants in the study. According to Creswell (2018), "Criterion sampling works well when all the individuals studied represent people who have experienced the same phenomenon" (p. 187). Snowball sampling was also utilized for the current study after challenges that arose from the first round of participant recruitment. Snowball sampling allows researchers to utilize their social networks to establish initial links to potential participants (Parker, Scott, & Geddes, 2019).

Selection and Description of Site

For this study, one specific site was not utilized/identified due to the research design. The researcher posed a question on a social media forum for part-time faculty, asking the members who teach in a Baptist/Southern Baptist denominational, CCCU-affiliated institution in a part-time capacity, online, and at the bachelor level if they are willing to participate. Once participants had been selected, sites were identified and described. Participants were associated with two institutions that met the criteria of the current study. The two universities identified are described further in Chapter Four

Christian higher education institutions can be defined as those dedicated to integrating Christian faith and learning in an academic setting (Morgan, 2018). Additionally, the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (2023) identified three educational commitments of Christian higher education institutions: "integration of biblical truth throughout the academic setting…commitment to the moral and spiritual formation of students…commitment to graduating students who make a difference for the

common good as a redemptive voice in the world" (p. 3). According to the statistical data provided by the National Center for Educational Statistics (2023), as of fall 2019, enrollment in religious-affiliated higher education institutions was 1,857,158. The average student population at religious-affiliated higher education institutions was fewer than 5,000 (Campus Explorer, 2023). Tuition averages were $38,800.

As of 2021, 44% of faculty at private nonprofit institutions were employed part-time. Fifty-one percent of these faculty were female, and 49.9% were male. The demographic breakdown of this population is one percent American Indian/Alaska Native, five percent Asian female, five percent Asian male, three percent African American male, four percent African American female, four percent Hispanic female, three percent Hispanic male, 39% Caucasian female, 34% Caucasian male, and two percent two or more races. Salary data for part-time faculty was challenging to identify due to minimal reporting/research. Zippia (2022) noted the average per-course payment for part-time faculty at four-year institutions is $3500. "The range in pay per course does vary depending on the university - starting from as little as $2,000 to as much as $7,000 a year. An adjunct professor averages between $20,000 and $25,000 a year, compared to the average salary of $80,000 for full-time professors" (Zippia, 2022, para.1).

Communication with Site

For this study, the researcher initially posed a question on multiple social media forums for part-time faculty, asking members to respond to an invitation if they were interested in participating in the research study. Once initial respondents reacted to the invitation, an email with specified requirements was sent to the inquirers.

Two social media groups were identified for initial contact: The Adjunct Lounge and The Adjunct Network groups. The Adjunct Lounge is a private support network on Facebook with 2,900 part-time faculty members. The Adjunct Network is a professional forum on Linkedin to share experiences, insights, concerns, and successes. This group has 10,214 members.

Challenges arose with participants from the first round of recruitment. Because of this, revisions to communication had to be implemented to recruit additional participants for the current study. The research utilized snowball sampling to reach out to administrators over online part-time faculty and requested to have the recruitment/study information shared with potential participants or if they were willing to provide names of potential participants. This form of communication allowed the researcher to reach out individually to confirmed online part-time faculty.

Selection and Description of Population

This study intended to focus on a smaller sample size of approximately 15 participants who all taught in an online capacity at a CCCU institution at the bachelor level, with at least two years of teaching experience. After recruitment and interviewing, a total of 12 participants were interviewed for the current study. Four participants' data was excluded from data analysis due to trustworthiness and reluctance to confirm their current online teaching status. Eight final participants were utilized for the current study because saturation had been met.

Part-time faculty, also known as adjunct or contingent faculty, comprise a large percentage of faculty in the field of higher education. According to the American

Association of University Professors (2023), contingent faculty is "faculty positions that include both part-time and full-time non-tenure-track appointments" (para. 1). Non-tenure-track faculty account for more than 70 percent of instructional positions in American higher education institutions. Part-time, adjunct, or contingent faculty positions are often characterized by low wages, little to no benefits, lack of professional development opportunities or promotion, exclusion from curricular decisions, faculty retreats and governance, and often a lack of adequate support for their roles in their institutions.

Selection and Description of Sample

Once the recruiting statement was posted to two social media sites, inquiry forms were collected through Google Forms. During the first day of the post, only two potential participants responded. The researcher found out that the form was not working properly and had to adjust. The recruitment post was revised and reposted. Within one day of the reposting, 85 inquiry forms had been submitted. The researcher closed the inquiry form. Sample participants were selected by self-reporting through the initial inquiry form. Once an initial group was identified, a second form was sent to the initial respondents. The second Google form was to narrow down those respondents who self-reported to be online faculty and to determine if potential participants taught in a CCCU school within the United States, within a Baptist/Southern Baptist-affiliated school, taught online at the bachelor level, and had two years of teaching experience. The 85 initial inquiries were contacted with the second Google Form for verification and self-reporting. Of the 85, 44 responded within 24 hours. The researcher then conducted

random sampling to identify 22 participants (20 initial and two backups) for the study, and each was contacted via email to confirm their participation as a research participant. Of the 22 contacted, 17 signed up for interviews. Five interviews were successfully completed using this recruitment strategy, but only one was determined to be valid.

Due to challenges with the trustworthiness of initial participants, the researcher had to reassess parameters, which will be discussed further in the unique challenges section, during the data collection process and switched to snowballing sampling recruitment. The researcher contacted several leaders of CCCU-affiliated schools and requested if the leaders would share the researcher's recruitment statement or identify any part-time faculty that met the requirements. From snowball sampling, 14 potential participants were identified, and seven verified participants responded and participated in the interview process.

Participants for the current research study were verified to currently work at a Baptist/Southern Baptist denomination CCCU-affiliated school, in an online capacity, at the bachelor level, and having a minimum of two years of teaching experience in higher education.

Communication with Sample

There were two types of communication with participants in this research study. The first group of participants were contacted via a social media post asking for participation, which included an inquiry form. After initial responses, additional email communication was conducted once participants completed the inquiry form to explain the study and their involvement further.

The second group of participants that were identified via snowballing were contacted directly via email, stating they had been identified as potential participants and asking for interest in the researcher's study.

Response Rate.

"Subject selection in qualitative research is purposeful; participants are selected who can best inform the research question and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study" (Sargeant, 2012, p. 2). Within qualitative research, the sample size is not generally predetermined. According to Sargeant (2012), the number of participants depends on the number required to fully inform the researcher about the phenomenon being studied, an endpoint called data saturation. Data collection can be discontinued when saturation has been met (Saunders et al., 2017). Data saturation was met after eight verified participant interviews for the current study.

The researcher cast a broad net across two social media networks for the current study to allow for diversified sites. The two networks totaled 13,114 part-time faculty initially contacted regarding the present research study. Participants who responded to the inquiry self-identified that they met the research participation criteria of teaching online as a part-time faculty member at a Baptist-Southern-Baptist affiliated CCCU Christian higher education institution at the bachelor level. Eight-five initial inquiries were collected from the social media post. Of the 85, 44, or 51.76%, of respondents self-identified as meeting all requirements. Of the 44 self-identified respondents, 22, or 50%, of respondents were randomly selected to participate in the interview process. Seventeen, or 77.27%, of the 22 contacted agreed, completed the informed consent and

signed up for an interview. Five (29.41%) of the 17 interviews were conducted, but only one (5.88%) was determined to be a valid interview meeting all the requirements for the research study.

From the snowball sampling recruitment, 14 verified participants were identified and contacted. Seven, or 50%, of the 14 contacted via snowball sampling agreed, completed the informed consent, signed up for an interview, and completed the research participation process.

Unique Challenges in Data Collection

During the data collection process through social media recruitment, the researcher began questioning the trustworthiness of the participants selected for the interview study. After the initial posting of the recruitment question did not get a response and the revised Google form was resubmitted on the social media sites, inquiries began to come in quickly. The researcher was excited to see the response rate and believed part-time faculty were intrigued to share their experiences. In the initial Google form, the researcher asked for their name, number, email, and if they taught at a Christian higher-education institution. Due to the number of initial responses, the second verification Google form was created to narrow down respondents. In this Google form, the researcher asked if the respondents worked at a Christian university within the United States, if they worked for a Baptist/Southern-Baptist denominational CCCU-affiliated school, and if they had a minimum of two years of teaching experience. Forty-four responded; of the 44, 38 respondents self-identified as meeting all the research requirements. Once random sampling was conducted to identify potential participants

from the respondents, 22 were selected. Once the 22 potential participants were emailed about the selection to the research study, responses, and interview bookings happened quickly. Within 24 hours, 17 interviews had been scheduled within a two-week period.

On the first day of the interviews, the researcher began to question the trustworthiness and validity of the participants because of the unusual situations and similarities of the interviews. The first three interviews were with females; none would turn on their cameras even being asked if they would be willing to do so. Each participant had a noticeably similar foreign accent. There were similar background noises in the audio of the interview as well, such as birds chirping and cars going by. Of the first three interviews, when asked what institution they worked at, it was notable that each listed universities on the first page of the CCCU website for Baptist denominational schools. The next interview was similar, with a male participant. He would not turn on his cameras and had a similar foreign accent. For all the interviews in question, there was a delay in communication and difficulty with audio. Additionally, when questioned about experiences, each participant was vague, and it was difficult to probe for specifics.

After the interviews were conducted, the incentive was sent out to each participant with a thank you for their participation in the study. Immediately, emails commenced to the researcher about how the participant had not received their incentive gift card, and they were extremely upset about this. The researcher verified that the incentives had been sent. One participant stated, "Is this a joke? Where is my incentive?" and another stated

I have sent countless messages. I have been looking out my incentive since you
said you sent it out. I haven't received any. I haven't been hearing from you. If I
don't receive my incentive before the end of today. I will be going ahead, tagging
your profile on LinkedIn and labeling it a scam, and I will be coming with all the
evidence at my disposal. To be honest, you can waste hours of my precious time.
I have to leave work so early because of this session. Best Regards. God Bless
America.

This email correspondence solidified the researcher's concerns about the trustworthiness of the participants interviewed. Due to the nature of the email, the concerns in the interviews, and the lack of professionalism noted right after the interview, the researcher believes these participants were imposters attempting to scam the researcher for the research participant incentive.

During the second day of interviewing, the researcher asked where the participants had seen their recruiting posts; one identified a social media site that was not used. The interview continued but soon ended because the participant could not identify the program they taught in. They logged off the Zoom call when they were not able to answer the question in a timely manner. It was almost as if they were caught off guard by the question and could not come up with a reasonable response. Another interview was dissolved due to the participant not providing their faculty email address. The researcher asked for the faculty email address during the interview for verification, and the participant stated that it was confidential information and that they would not be able to

provide that. The researcher thanked them for their time but informed them the interview would not be able to move forward.

After the second day of interviewing, the researcher determined more parameters needed to be put into place, and verification of the participant's employment as part-time faculty needed to be completed as well instead of relying on their self-reporting of being an online part-time faculty member meeting all requirements of the current study. The researcher added parameters to Zoom where only people from the United States could utilize the Zoom link, and they had to have a valid Zoom registered account and not just a guest entering Zoom with a link. The researcher also contacted each of the interviewees who had completed the interview and asked for their faculty email for verification. None of the participants were able to produce this. One participant stated he would not provide this because he had not received his incentive, which had been sent and verified by the researcher two days prior. The researcher did not engage in a back-and-forth confrontation with the participant, who was verbally becoming aggressive in their email correspondence. The other scheduled participants were also contacted before interview day to verify their faculty emails. If they were unable to verify the email, the interview was canceled. One participant did send an email address but was determined to be invalid and not a CCCU school. That interview was canceled as well.

The researcher had not started coding the interviews in question for suspicions of trustworthiness, so the four interviews were excluded entirely from the data. According to Flicker (2004), when suspicions of fraudulent data are in question, there are three approaches qualitative researchers could use to determine what to do with the data. The

cynic approach is the first option. In this, the researcher assumes that the entire interview was fictitious, and consequently, the entire transcript is excluded from the data analysis. The skeptic approach is when the researcher assumes that parts of the participant's story are fabricated. With the skeptic, data is included in data analysis but carefully compared to more trustworthy participant responses. The third approach offered by Flicker (2004) is the seeker approach. In this approach, the researcher assumes that because the participants are self-selected, their story warrants to be heard, so the data should be included in the analysis. For this research study, it was determined the cynic approach would be the most appropriate approach for the four interviews considered to be imposter participants.

After the issues with the first round of recruitment, the researcher and dissertation chair determined that snowball sampling could be used to recruit additional participants. Once snowballing had been implemented, no issues arose with participant validation and trustworthiness. Each participant from this recruiting approach was open, honest, and appreciative of the opportunity to participate in the interview.

Data Collection

This study employed interviewing techniques within the phenomenology research methodology to generate data relevant to the research questions/hypotheses.

Nature of Interviewing

Interviewing is one of the most versatile data collection methods in qualitative research. Creswell (2018) noted that interviews depend on both parties being willing to discuss the topic of interest in depth. Kvale and Brinkman (2015) suggested an interview

is "an exchange of views between two persons" (as cited in Creswell, 2018, p. 193). The purpose of interviewing in qualitative research is to explore the experiences, views, beliefs, and motivations of individuals regarding a specific focus (Gill, Steward, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008).

Within the design of interviewing, a researcher must be skilled at developing, asking, and actively interpreting participant responses. According to Gill et al. (2008), a researcher must ask questions that will yield as much information as possible about the phenomenon being studied. Creswell (2018) also noted that interviewing gives the researcher an opportunity to probe for additional information and clarify statements.

There are three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Structured interviews are verbally administered questionnaires. There is little to no variation and no follow-up questions to warrant clarification (Gill et al., 2008). Unstructured interviews do not reflect any preconceived ideas or are supported by theories. There is also little to no organization in these types of interviews. Semi-structured interviews consist of several guiding questions for the interview and help define the areas to be explored by the researcher and participant. These types of interviews allow for the researcher or participant to deviate from the initial questioning to purse an idea or response in more detail (Gill et al., 2008).

For the current study, the researcher will utilize the semi-structured interview. When using this technique, the researcher uses the interview questions as a guide and can tailor/probe additional questions based on the participants' responses. There is an essence of flexibility in this type of interview technique. According to Gill et al. (2008),

semi-structured interviewing allows for the discovery and elaboration of information that the participant feels is important to share and the researcher may not have thought about or found relevant to the study.

Appropriateness of the Technique.

The most common method of data collection in qualitative research is interviewing. "Interviews represent a deceptively familiar social encounter in which people interact by asking and answering questions" (Knott, Rao, Summers, & Teeger, 2022, p. 1). It can potentially extract rich and thick descriptions of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2018). According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), interviewing allows researchers to capture a participant's perspective of an event or an experience (as cited in Creswell, 2018). Gill et al. (2008) noted that interviewing is believed to provide a deeper understanding of social phenomena as compared to quantitative techniques such as questionnaires.

The use of interviewing for the current study was appropriate because it was the most direct approach to learning participants' perspectives about their experiences with engagement and inclusion by their program deans. The study aimed to gain access to the participants' experiences, feelings, and views toward engagement and inclusion within an online setting as a part-time faculty member. Interviewing allows participants to explain, in their own words, how they understand and decipher the world around them (Knott et al., 2022).

Development of Reliable/Valid/Trustworthy Materials/Instrument(s).

The interviews for the current study comprised a series of open-ended questions designed to allow participants to describe their experiences with engagement and inclusion within their respective positions. Questions were derived from the theoretical framework that guided the study to frame the experiences and perspectives of part-time faculty teaching at the bachelor level in an online capacity at Christian higher education institutions. The questions were developed to allow for discussion and divulgence of part-time faculty's personal engagement or disengagement based on the leader's strategies for engagement and inclusion. The questions were categorized into three main sections based on Kahn's (1990) employee engagement theory, concepts of Christian higher educational cultural hospitality, and Lyon's (2007) and Tipple's (2010) concepts of effective strategies to support the needs of part-time faculty: section one; personal motivations such as behaviors that promote connections to work and others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full role performances; section two; experiences with Christian higher education culture and hospitality; section three; experiences with leadership strategies to support the needs of part-time faculty. The researcher prepared guiding questions and will adjust as necessary throughout participant interviews (see Appendix C). Flexibility within the interview was crucial to allow for the divulgence of new themes and for participants to feel open to sharing their experiences and perspectives (Gill et al., 2008).

Peer evaluation, audit trail, and triangulation of sources and theory were conducted to establish dependability for the current study to test the interview questions

and process (Creswell, 2018). According to Creswell (2018), "Dependability refers to the stability and consistency of data over time. In addition, the implication is that data are dependable in the sense that they are answering your research question" (Creswell, 2018, p. 204).

The peer evaluation sent interview questions to the researcher's dissertation chair, dean, and IRB committee. This allowed for assessing and evaluating the questions based on the dependability to address the current research question. Both positive and negative feedback were given, and questions were revised to better capture the participants' lived experiences and perspectives for the study.

Audit trails are processes in research that include detailed and thorough explanations of how data will be collected and analyzed and maintaining clear records of all field notes/transcripts (Lincoln & Gubba, 2000). For the current study, not all data will be in the findings chapter, but it will be noted that the data will be available for review as requested.

Multiple theories were evaluated within the current study, and many sources were assessed in the literature review to produce an understanding of the current phenomenon being studied.

Procedure.

Prior to conducting interviews, the researcher was guided by Griffee's (2005) research tips for the interview process and data collection. The researcher reflected on the following concerns and decisions in the preparation for the interview process:

- Decide whom to interview.

o   For the current study, each participant must currently be teaching at the bachelor level in an online capacity as a part-time faculty member at a Christian higher education institution and was willing to participate in the study and interview.

- Choose when to stop an interview and when enough interviews have been conducted.
    o   For the current study, the researcher will determine when enough interviews have been conducted with participants when saturation has been reached.
- Select a place for the interview to take place.
    o   For the current study, the researcher selected Zoom as the location for the interview and will describe the setting so that the reader can understand the final report.
- Decide which questions to ask.
    o   For the current study, each question was strategically created and worded, and in which order they would be asked to participants.
- Consider how the data will be collected.
    o   For the current study, the researcher will record the interview in audio and transcription formats.

Data Analysis

Data generated by previously described techniques were interpreted through the analysis techniques/procedures of transcribing the interviews and coding the themes.

Application to the Data

Interview analysis within qualitative research focuses on moving large amounts of raw data within the transcripts and field notes and reducing it to the meaning of what participants have said (Griffee, 2005). Griffee (2005) stated that interviews are jointly created between the researcher and the participant. Thus, the analysis aims to give concrete meaning to the words, assumptions, biases, questions, and raw interview data. Researchers must become highly familiar with the data during the data analysis (Giffee, 2005). This interpretation process will be conducted by reviewing the data thoroughly by

reviewing the field notes, repeatedly listening to the audio files, and reading and

rereading the interview transcripts. Griffee (2005) noted that through this interpretation

process, "slowly but surely categories emerge and become apparent" (p. 36). It is

through this intricate process of data interpretation that categories emerged for the current

study. Additionally, Braun and Clarke (2006) stated thematic data analysis is a method to

identify, analyze, and report patterns within data. Braun and Clarke (2006) introduced a

six-step method for researchers utilizing qualitative methods of research. For the current

study, the researcher utilized the following process to analyze the interview data (Braun

& Clarke, 2006):

- Familiarize self with data.
  - o Transcribe data, read, and re-read data, noting initial ideas and thoughts.
- Generate initial codes.
  - o Code, interesting features of the data in a systemic way across all data sets, arranging data relevant to each code.
- Search for themes.
  - o Cluster codes into potential themes and gather all data relevant to initial themes.
- Review themes.
  - o Check if the themes work in relation to the coded excerpts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2).
- Define themes.
  - o Continue ongoing analysis to refine themes and generate definitions of each theme.
- Produce the report.
  - o Final opportunity for analysis. The researcher selects rich, compelling excerpts from the data relating back to research questions and literature.

Coding

Coding is a critical element for researchers, specifically with the use of qualitative

methods (Basit, 2003). Coding consists of segmenting data into groupings to label for

rich meaning. After deep connection and engagement with the data and the initial notes taken, coding took place to start to identify interesting ideas in the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), "codes identify a feature of the data that appears interesting to the analyst, and refer to the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (p. 88). Additionally, as the researcher began to familiarize with the data, it was determined that inductive analysis, focusing on themes closely linked to the data of the current study, would be the most appropriate thematic data analysis method for the current study (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the current study, the researcher read through the transcripts and listened to the audio files numerous times to familiarize with the data. Once initial codes began to appear in the data, the researcher began writing memos and annotations on the transcripts and highlighting areas to code. After the first round of coding was completed using a line-by-line coding process, the researcher utilized NVivo to code and sort the data digitally. NVivo allowed the researcher to manually code the data sets while still housing the data in the software program to assist in developing reports and maps after the data analysis was completed. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), "NVivo helps analyze, manage, shape, and analyze qualitative data" (p. 213). It is considered to be user-friendly and provides security by storing data in single files. The current researcher did not utilize all the features of NVivo and opted to manually code initial ideas and cluster codes to identify themes and refine them to the finalized themes. NVivo was used to move through the digital files easily and create codes and themes in one document source.

Validity/Trustworthiness/Triangulation

"Without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction, and loses its utility" (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002, p. 13). Within quantitative research, validity and reliability are clearly demonstrated in the numerical data represented. However, there can be challenges to the rigor of the qualitative research process (Morse et al., 2002; Creswell, 2018). Rather than illuminating how rigor is achieved in qualitative, leading qualitative researchers argued that reliability and validity were terms more pertinent to quantitative research. Several researchers suggested the need to adopt new criteria for determining validity and reliability, thus confirming rigor, in qualitative research (Morse et al., 2002). According to Creswell (2018), "Criteria for evaluating qualitative research differ from those used in quantitative research in that the focus is on how well the researcher has provided evidence that their descriptions and analysis represent the reality of the situation and persons studied" (p. 202). Within quantitative research, "validation standards" focus on trustworthiness to reassure the validity and reliability of a study (Creswell, 2018).

For the current study, standards of quality were established by utilizing the concepts of trustworthiness outlined by Creswell (2018) and Lincoln and Gubba (1985). Lincoln and Gubba (1985) suggest that the trustworthiness of a research study is important to evaluate the study's worth. Lincoln and Gubba (1985) identified four terms that establish trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The current study will utilize the following six verification techniques as

well: triangulation, peer debriefing, member-checking, thick description, external inquiry audit, and reflexivity.

Verification/Trustworthiness Standards

Credibility.

Credibility is a criterion within the trustworthiness standard that establishes internal validity through confidence in the truth of a research study's findings. Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules (2017) suggested that credibility speaks to the fit between participants' views and the researcher's representation of them. According to Creswell (2018), "Credibility refers to whether the participants' perceptions match up with the researcher's portrayal of them" (p. 202). For the current study, credibility will be enhanced by employing three strategies: triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking.

Triangulation addresses the trustworthiness of a study in various ways. Creswell (2018) stated that triangulation allows researchers to build "cross-checks" into their study and research process. It involves using multiple sources during investigation to produce an understanding of a phenomenon. In the current study, triangulation will be achieved by investigating multiple theories, sources, and methods and including multiple participants' experiences through interviewing.

"Peer debriefing is a process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytical session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only within the inquirer's mind" (Lincoln & Gubba, 1985, p. 308). Peer debriefing allows for biases, assumptions, and perspectives of the

researcher to be uncovered through analytical probing by a peer debriefer. For the current study, the researcher recruited three peer debriefers to review the interview transcripts.

Within qualitative data analysis, researchers should request interpretation feedback from members of the study to further indicate credibility (Creswell, 2018). Member checks allow participants to evaluate that what they meant to portray in their responses has accurately been captured by the researcher. The checks also allow participants to correct errors or challenge wrong interpretations of the researcher. For the current study, member checks were conducted with interview participants to verify the researcher's interpretation of their experiences and responses.

Transferability.

Transferability refers to the generalizability of analysis (Nowell et al., 2017). Within qualitative researcher, transferability is not concerned with a representative sample. According to Creswell (2018), transferability "is about how well the study has made it possible for readers to decide whether similar processes will be at work in their own settings and communities by understanding in depth how they occur at the research site" (p. 205). The current research study does not intend to generalize to all online part-time faculty teaching at the bachelor level at Christian higher education institutions, because each participant will bring their own experiences and perceptions related to engagement and inclusion by their program deans. Purposeful sampling and thick description will provide a depth of contextual detail that allows the reader to gain an understanding of the contextual factors, participants, and experiences (Creswell, 2018).

To enrich transferability within this study, the researcher will provide a thick description of the data gathered to bring depth and context to online part-time faculty engagement experiences.

Dependability.

Creswell (2018) noted that dependability "refers to the stability and consistency of data over time" (p. 204). Nowell et al. (2017) stated that to achieve dependability, a researcher must ensure the research process is logical, traceable, and documented. An inquiry audit will be used within the current study to synchronously determine dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Gubba, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017). Dr. Pamela Larde will serve as the inquiry auditor by examining both the process and the product of the current research study.

Confirmability.

"Confirmability is concerned with establishing that the researcher's findings and interpretations are clearly derived from the data, requiring the researcher to demonstrate how conclusions have been reached" (Creswell, 2018, p. 204). For the current study, in addition to inquiry audit, confirmability will be achieved through reflexive journaling. According to Nowell et al. (2017), a reflexive journal can be used to record and document the daily logistics, methodological decisions, rationales, and personal reflections of the researcher regarding their values, interests, and insights.

Role of the Researcher

Qualifications

The researcher is a doctoral-level student who has completed all coursework requirements for a degree in Business Leadership, including courses in statistics, research, and methodologies. The researcher is employed as a lecturer in an online human services and program coordinator for competency-based education programs at a private, residential, Christian-affiliated university in the Southeast region of the United States. This current role places the researcher in the position to work professionally with the online part-time faculty population identified for the present study. The researcher holds a master's degree in Social Work and is a Licensed Master's Social Work professional. She has 12 years of experience in higher education, with four of those serving as a part-time faculty member. The researcher is a member of several professional organizations, including the National Organization of Human Services, the National Organization of Social Workers, the American Council on Education, the Christian Adult Higher Education Association, and the Competency-based Education Network. In addition to higher education teaching and administration experience, the researcher has previous experience and expertise in clinical therapy, which includes skills in active listening, interviewing, probing, and building rapport as a practicing licensed master social worker.

Biases

Biases, commonly understood as any influence that distorts the results of a study, transpire in all forms of researchers (Galdas, 2017). Galdas (2017) argued that

Those carrying out qualitative research are an integral part of the process and final

product, and separation from this is neither possible nor desirable. The concern

instead should be whether the researcher has been transparent and reflexive about

the processes by which data have been collected, analyzed, and presented (p. 2).

For the current study, the researcher intends to reduce biases by intentionally approaching

each interview with the same framework and following the processes and procedures

outlined in the research design. This researcher has previous experience as an online

part-time faculty member and oversees several online part-time faculty members. With

the background of the current researcher, it can be easy to assign assumptions, judgments,

and correlations to experiences with potential participants of the present study.

Precautions will be taken to reduce researcher biases because of her experiences. For this

reason, laborious data analysis will be conducted for the current study using triangulation,

peer debriefing, member-checking, thick description, external inquiry audit, and

reflexivity.

Responsibilities

The researcher was responsible for facilitating all components of this study. She

created all social media recruiting posts and contacted all participants. The researcher

conducted all the participants' interviews and was responsible for analyzing and reporting

all collected data.

Timeline

The current study intended to conduct this report's research protocol and

procedures within a two-to-three-week timeframe. However, due to the challenges, the

protocol and procedures was conducted in a three-to-four-week span. The researcher

posted recruiting questions to two online part-time faculty forums to initiate the inquiry.

Once inquiries came in via Google Survey forms, the researcher contacted potential

participants with further research study information, informed consent, and pre-interview

content. Interviews were scheduled with eight to ten for one week and eight to ten the

following week. Additional interviews were scheduled with four participants from the

snowball sampling during one week and three more during the following week.

Time Span

The research protocol and design were completed within a three-to-four-week

period. Data analysis was conducted within a four-to-six-week period.

Chronology of Events and Procedures

The following is a chronological list of events and procedures for the current

research study:

- Complete comprehensive essays and research proposal
- Complete the oral exam with the dissertation chair and two additional evaluators
- Complete revisions from recommendations of the oral exam committee
- Conduct literature review research and create an outline for chapter two
- Study, write, and finalize methodology based on literature review findings
- Submit IRB proposals
- Conduct research procedures
- Complete data analysis from the interviews and report findings
- Complete chapter 5
- Complete final revisions and submit a research report

Summary/Coherency of Design

Validity/Trustworthiness

The current study's design is trustworthy because it is a phenomenological study, and interviewing is identified as the most recommended data collection technique for this methodology.

Triangulation

In the current study, triangulation was achieved by investigating multiple theories, sources, and methods and including multiple participants' experiences through interviewing.

Limitations

Limitations exist in all research. According to Creswell (2018), "limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings from your research" (p. 207). Dukes (1984) identified two overarching limitations to the methodology within phenomenological research. The first is that phenomenology is not a method in the sense of an explicit formula for how to do unblemished research. Phenomenology is seen as a perspective on what constitutes knowledge rather than a method. It demands the researcher to be flexible, ingenuine, and conduct continual self-checks. Additionally, Dukes (1984) suggested that due to the rigorous bracketing of genuine particulars of participants' responses, the method cannot make "factual statements" about phenomena. Instead, phenomenology produces knowledge that is considered "in principle" (p. 202).

For the current study, potential limitations include a lack of generalization and not capturing all aspects of participants' experiences as online part-time faculty. The present research cannot be generalized to all online part-time faculty working at the bachelor level in Christian higher education institutions or all online part-time faculty in higher education. The study is designed to further the scope of knowledge about this population but cannot be generalized to all online part-time faculty. Additionally, for the current study, it is impossible to deduce all factors attributed to the participants' lives that have contributed to their experiences and perceptions of engagement and inclusion by their program deans.

Forecast Chapter Four

This chapter presented the methodology for a phenomenological research approach, employing the method of interviewing. The population identified for the present study are part-time faculty actively teaching in an online setting at the bachelor level within a Christian higher education institution. Within chapter three, the research purpose, research design, research plan, and a discussion of the coherency of the research design were discussed. Chapter four will describe the results and findings from the interviews and data collection with online part-time faculty.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

This study aimed to discover the experiences of online part-time faculty members

with engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their program deans. The research

question guiding the study is: How do online part-time faculty experience engagement

and inclusion by their program deans? The related questions were:

1. How do online part-time faculty members perceive their role in their respective online programs?
2. How does the university culture cultivate an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning?
3. How do online part-time faculty members perceive their leaders' ability to foster trust and respect toward remote, online part-time faculty?

The study's design was a phenomenological methodology employing the data

collection methods of semi-structured interviewing. The study also conducted a literature

review of related research and theory in the areas of Christian higher education, online

education, part-time faculty, leadership strategies, leadership strategies that support

online part-time faculty, and hospitable online cultures.

This chapter presents a summary of data generated by the study design as follows:

A concise depiction of the site of the current study. A brief description of the eight

participants in the research study will allow the reader to better understand each part-time

faculty member's unique perspective and experiences with engagement and inclusion by

their program dean. Sharing the descriptions of each participant also allows for their

voices to be heard and to acknowledge and honor their contributions to the current

phenomenological research. Following each participant's descriptions, the current study's emergent themes will be discussed in detail, using quotes from participants to support the rationalization for the theme. A summary of the main points will conclude this chapter.

<div align="center">**Presentation and Summary of Data**</div>

Description of Site and Sample

Descriptive Data About Site(s)

Due to the nature of the recruiting process, the parameters of the study participants, and the unique challenges encountered during the data collection, the current study sites were limited to two Southern Baptist denominational, CCCU-affiliated schools: one within the Southwestern region of the United States and the other in the Southeastern region of the United States.

University 1, located in the Southwestern region of the United States, is a private Christian university founded in 1950. Academically, the university offers two Associate's programs, 108 Bachelor's programs, 40 Master's programs, and seven Doctoral programs. Their current student enrollment is 11,580. The school website states that 100% of faculty and staff identify as Christians.

University 2, located in the Southeastern region of the United States, is a private Christian university founded in 1911. Academically, the university offers fifty major bachelor's degree programs, 29 concentrations, 48 minors, 18 Master's and Doctoral degrees, and eight certification programs. The university's current student enrollment is approximately 3500 students.

Descriptive Data About the Research Sample

"Phenomenology is a project of sober reflection on the lived experience of human existence-sober, in the sense that reflecting on experience must be thoughtful, and as much as possible, free from theoretical, prejudicial, and suppositional intoxications" (van Manen, 2007, p. 11). Due to the phenomenological approach to the current study, the participants' contributions were vital to the research process (Smith, Flowers, & Larkins, 2009). Creswell and Poth (2018) noted that in phenomenological research, sample sizes can range from one to 325. There are general guidelines laid out when determining sample size, however. According to Creswell and Posh (2018),

> One general guideline for sample size in qualitative research is not only to study a few sites or individuals but also to collect extensive detail about each site or individual studied. The intent of qualitative research is not to generalize the information but to elucidate the particular; the specific (p. 158).

The following discussion is intended to provide background information for each of the eight participants to allow the reader greater insight into who they are as individuals and as online part-time faculty members at Christian higher education institutions.

Respondents

For the current research study, a total of 12 participants were interviewed. However, four participants were determined to be considered imposter participants, as identified and discussed in Chapter 3. These four participants were not able to be verified as online part-time faculty through disclosure of their faculty email. These four participants were not included in the data analysis, and their demographics will not be

included in the description of this study. Eight verified participants meeting all of the

research study requirements and parameters were included in the current study for data

analysis. Appendix E provides demographic information for the eight participants. The

participants were given ID numbers and pseudonyms to protect their privacy.

Participant Demographic Information

The participant demographic information for the current study is listed in Table

One. The following are narrative descriptions of the participants from the current study.

Table *1:* Participant Demographic Information

ID	Gender	Age	Race	Ed. Level	Other Employment	Program	Courses/Term	Years Taught
P5	M	29	AA	Masters	Programmer	Computer Science	2	4
P6	F	39	C	Ed.D.	2nd Grade Teacher	Education	1	5
P7	F	48	C	MBA	FT Faculty (Public University)	Communications English	2	10
P8	M	64	C	Ph.D.	Retired	Psychology	2	25
P9	F	52	C	Ed.D.	Retired	Education	1	7

P10	M	49	C	Ph.D.	FT Faculty (Private University)	Business	1	10
P11	F	36	C	MBA	Healthcare Mgmt.	Business	2	6
P12	F	40	H	MBA	Human Resources	Business	1	7
Note: AA=African American; C=Caucasian; H=Hispanic								

Participant 5: Marcus

"The way he treats me, it really boosts my morale…it uplifts my spirits"

Marcus is from the Southwestern region of the United States. He is of African American descent and is 29 years of age. He has four years of teaching experience as an online part-time faculty member at a Southern Baptist denominational, CCCU-affiliated school. Outside of teaching as a part-time faculty member, Marcus is a computer programmer. His educational background includes a Bachelor's in Software Engineering and a Master's in Communication Sciences. Marcus currently teaches two courses per semester in the Department of Computer Sciences at his respective university. Marcus has considered teaching full-time but would like to complete his Ph.D. first and get more experiential practice in the field of programming. Marcus identified his motivation for teaching as a "love of sharing knowledge." He stated, "I love to expand, and I love to put

knowledge out there. I love to prepare younger ones to be even better than I am Marcus views his role as an educator as one who mentors and motivates his students. He stated, "I play a pivotal role because I teach a crucial course, and with the evolving level of the world, an introduction to coding, AI, or computer sciences is something every student out there will have to have an in-depth beginner's knowledge for. It is actually for a better future to raise better leaders." Marcus stated engagement as being active at work and inclusion is fully participating. He stated that when he feels most engaged, he is given autonomy to run his classrooms with his personal spin on the assignments.

Participant 6: Kay

"It makes me feel like he values me as a person and as a teacher."

Kay is from the Southeastern region of the United States. She identified her ethnicity as Caucasian and is 39 years old. She has five years of teaching experience as a part-time higher education faculty member. She currently teaches at one private Christian university and has plans to teach part-time at another university. Kay is currently a second-grade teacher. Her educational background includes a Bachelor's in Elementary Education, a Master's in Education, and an Ed.D. She would love to work with student teachers in the higher education capacity. Kay identified her motivations for teaching as additional income, making a connection for the opportunity to teach, and having other experiences outside of the K-12 landscape. Kay viewed her role as an educator as the facilitator, central contact, and "go-to person" for her students. She noted she feels more student-focused in her role than she does as one who is a complete part of the institution. Kay stated, "I don't know if I consider myself as a professor. I don't

really feel that involved like that…I'm constantly answering emails from my students…I'm here for that." Kay felt engagement is about collaborating with others and being a part of the community. She stated inclusion was being communicated with regarding teaching schedules.

Participant 7: Mary Ann

"It makes me feel supported."

Mary Ann is from the Southeastern region of the United States. She identified as a Caucasian female who is 48 years old. She has ten years of teaching experience as a part-time faculty member and recently began teaching in a full-time capacity at a public university in the Southeastern region of the United States. She has a professional background in marketing and fundraising. She currently teaches communications and professional business writing. Her educational background includes a Bachelor's in Journalism and a Master's in Business Administration. Mary Ann stated her motivations for teaching in a part-time capacity began when she was looking to get her foot in the door. She stated she had a connection to the current university and was able to obtain a part-time position. She stated that her additional motivations for teaching are because "I wanted to teach, and I wanted to be able to use my skill set that I have." Additionally, she stated she wanted to share her knowledge and passion for communication and writing. "Communication and writing in English. I think it is critical to our society and something that the public education system isn't focusing on much anymore." Mary Ann felt most engaged and included by her direct supervisor but not her program dean.

Participant 8: Arron

"She's given me some very high compliments, which is nice."

Arron is from the Southeastern region of the United States. He identified as a Caucasian male who is in his mid-60's. Arron has 25 years of teaching experience in a part-time capacity at several universities. Arron is retired, but his professional background was as a mental health Psychologist. Arron's educational background includes a Bachelor of Psychology, a Master of Clinical Psychology, and an Ed.D. in Educational Psychology. He currently teaches two courses per semester in the Psychology department at his current institution. Regarding his motivations for teaching as a part-time faculty, Arron stated he enjoyed learning. Arron's parents were both teachers, and he felt drawn to teaching. He also stated he teaches for supplemental income. When he began teaching at his current university, he "had a connection through a colleague," which led to him getting a part-time position at the university. Arron noted that he knows there is a difference between remote workers and those who are on campus every day, but he finds his connection and engagement sufficient. "I could tell it was not as engaged as full-time because they have faculty meetings and luncheons, and they're down the hall from each other. So, it obviously is not as much with many situations, as much contact as a full-time faculty. But I find it to be sufficient."

Participant 9: Lucy

"If I need something, I can call him up; I can make that contact if I need to."

Lucy is from the Southeastern region of the United States. She identified as a Caucasian female who is 52 years old. She has seven years of teaching experience as a

part-time online faculty member at a Christian institution. Outside of teaching, she has worked in the public education system for 29 years and recently retired from her K4 teaching position. Lucy's educational background includes a Bachelor of Education, a Master's in Education, and an Ed.D. She would like to increase her course load as a part-time faculty but does not intend to teach full-time due to family obligations. She currently teaches one course per semester in the College of Education. Pertaining to her current employment at her respective institution, Lucy stated it is a special place, and she enjoys teaching there because she has family connections and a history with this institution. Additionally, Lucy stated she enjoys the flexibility of her part-time position. For example, she stated, "My mom is having surgery, so it's like, you know what? I just can't do it this semester. It's not working with my schedule." As a part-time faculty member, Lucy views her role as the facilitator of content and the one who takes charge of the classroom. "As a teacher, you just take command of your own classroom whether it's online or whether it's in the physical space."

Participant 10: Mark

"It makes me feel as though I'm not part of a team, or at least not an important part of the team."

Mark is from the Southeastern region of the United States. He identified as a Caucasian male who is 49 years old. Mark has ten years of teaching experience in higher education. Outside of his part-time teaching role, he recently began teaching full-time at a Christian University in another area of the Southeastern region of the United States. Mark is additionally a lawyer and taught in a public law school. His educational

background includes an undergraduate degree in law, a Juris Doctorate, a Master of Theology, and a Ph.D. in Ethics. Mark stated that he only teaches one class per year at his current part-time university. Stating, "Well, it used to be two a semester, then it went down to one a semester, and right now it's probably one a year, actually." Mark stated his motivations for teaching are sharing his gift of communication, being in the classroom and interacting with his students, and making education enjoyable. He also stated he views his role as an educator as one who mentors his students. Mark stated he does not feel a sense of belonging currently in his online part-time faculty position and attributed this to a change in leadership. "My experience has been a little disappointing. And I think it really depends upon who your supervisor is. So, I've had two experiences at the university because I've had two associate deans, and they have been significantly different experiences."

Participant 11: Anna

"He's always made me feel very comfortable coming to ask but has also kind of let it make it my own."

Anna is from the Southeastern region of the United States. She identified as a Caucasian female who is 36 years old. She has six years of teaching experience as a part-time faculty and has only taught at one university. Professionally, Anna works in healthcare management at a large local hospital system. Anna's educational background includes a Bachelor's in Business Administration and a Master's in Business Administration. She currently teaches two classes every semester. Anna has a passion for sharing her knowledge of healthcare management and enjoys bringing her

professional experiences into the classroom. She also feels she is a mentor and model for female students to see that they, too, can be an asset to the field of healthcare management. She voiced her passion for mentoring by stating,

> Being a female in finance is not seen very often. The majority of the finance/healthcare world are males. So, given that the university has a very high female presence, my motivation now is to show females and males that women can have careers in finance as well and show them we have a place here.

Participant 12: Gloria

"It made me feel a lot less invisible."

Gloria is from the Southeastern region of the United States. She identified as a Hispanic female who is 40 years old. She has seven years of teaching experience as an online part-time faculty. Professionally, she is the chief people officer (human resources) at a large corporation. She has 20 years of human resources experience. Gloria's educational background includes a Bachelor's in Human Resources and a Master's in Business Administration, and she is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Leadership. Gloria viewed herself as a servant to her students. She stated, "I consider myself to be responsible for their learning…I fundamentally believe I am there to be of service to them and to educate them." When discussing her motivations for teaching, Gloria stated she has always wanted to teach and has a passion for learning. When she first began teaching at her current university, she stated she had a connection with a previous colleague who also worked at the university. The connection and professional relationship led to her obtaining a part-time position at the School of Business. When

discussing engagement, Gloria noted that to be engaged means to be invested. She also stated, "There are different ways engagement happens. Some of it happens through programming brought to you by a university or an employer, and some of it is intrinsic. So, some of your engagement is just your self-motivation."

Findings Related to Research Question(s)/Hypotheses

Analysis of the research data and successive theme development yielded seven themes related to the research questions and the specific areas of focus for the current study. The seven themes were extracted from the tedious thematic data analysis process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Inductive analysis was identified as the most appropriate thematic data analysis method for the current study. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), "An inductive approach means the themes identified are strongly linked to the data themselves" (p. 83). Contextual information, including excerpts from participants' data sources and reflexive journal notes, are included to support each theme.

The seven main themes related to the research questions include:

1. Sense of Belonging
2. Authentic Leader/Follower Relationship
3. Autonomy and Empowerment
4. Consistent Communication and Support
5. Recognition
6. Passion for Teaching
7. Leadership Strategies Representative of Institutional Culture

The following narrative of each research question presents a detailed description of the thematic findings as determined through an in-depth analysis of the participants' interviews. A finding was considered a theme if at least 50% of participants identified it as an experience. For the current study, that was four out of eight participants.

Finding(s) From Research Question One

Research question one asked, "How do online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans?" Engagement Theory, as identified by Kahn (1990), suggests that the identified domains of meaningfulness, safety, and availability are significant to understanding why a person would become engaged in their professional work. Kahn (1990) defined each domain as follows:

- Meaningfulness: A sense of return on investment of self in role performances.
- Safety: A sense of being able to show and employ self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career.
- Availability: A sense of possessing the physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary for investing self in role performances (p. 705).

To better understand the participants' knowledge of engagement, each participant was asked to define employee engagement in their own words. This question was interpreted in various ways, and the participants' answers reflected their own experiences of being engaged and the general definition of engagement. Marcus, for example, stated, "Being engaged as an employee, you have to be at work, you have to be at work, and you have to do the work…Being engaged as an employee makes you relevant in your workplace, makes you a thing of importance." Lucy felt engagement was harder to define because, as a teacher, "you take command of your own classroom." She noted, "Engagement for me is knowing who I need to contact, who I need to be with…just knowing I have the support and I have that contact anytime I need it." According to Mark, engagement to them means "the institution trying to connect with me in a way that I feel part of a team." Gloria noted that employee engagement is

Someone who is invested, strongly invested in the work that they're doing, and brings a degree of energy and excitement to the work that they do…but I do think that there are different ways engagement happens. Some of it happens through programming brought to you by a university or an employer, and some of it is intrinsic. So, some of your engagement is just your self-motivation.

Participants also defined engagement regarding how connected they felt to the institution. Mark stated,

As an adjunct personally, my experience in being connected is very poor. I don't feel that I have ever been reached out to beyond, "Will you teach this course?" I think it's a shame because, obviously, I see it from the other side as well because I'm a full-time faculty member elsewhere. So yeah, I think my experience as an adjunct at University 2 is that we're a necessary addition but somewhat of a convenient afterthought.

Anna felt leadership impacted engagement significantly stating,

So really it's I guess the complete span of how engaged to us as employees feel, whether it's directly from our leadership or that we feel like we can in return, go back to our leadership and really feel like we're making a difference on a daily basis.

Kay also felt a sense of disconnect due to a lack of communication, stating,

I don't really feel that involved, I guess, as far as things that happen there. I don't really feel engaged, but I don't know what applies to me. Because they're like, come to this meeting here. Am I supposed to go to that? I don't know."

Arron also stated that he sensed a difference between part-time faculty and full-time faculty.

>I could tell it was not as engaged as full-time because they had faculty meetings and luncheons, and they were down the hall from each other. So, it's obviously not as much as with many situations, as much contact as a full-time faculty. But I find it to be sufficient.

Anna expressed her personal barriers to engagement, stating,

>Not in any fault from University 2, but probably just due to my schedule. I have a very high-demand regular job, and so a lot of their faculty get-togethers, or it's during the day, and I have a lot of meetings. So, I feel like, as an adjunct, there's always going to be some disconnect from not feeling really part of the faculty because you don't have an office there.

Gloria focused her discussion of engagement on her interactions with her students and how they make her feel, noting

>Yeah, I mean, I would say that the university is pretty hands-off with me, and I like it that way. I like the autonomy that is given to me. I think that the university trusts me. My guess is a number of the reviews that I've gotten have been, I've always gotten very, very positive reviews from my students. So, I do believe that I am seen as the expert, and I appreciate that. And that autonomy and trust goes a long way. I'm a little unique because I have a personal relationship with the Dean of the School of Business, who knows what I know, partially because he taught

me what I know. And I think that that adds probably an additional layer of trust as well.

Based on the understanding of Engagement Theory, the participants seem to have broad knowledge and perceptions of engagement. According to Kahn (1990), the domains of engagement are essential to understanding why a person would become engaged in their work. In other words, meaningfulness, safety, and availability determine if the employee's engagement conditions have been established. For some, meaningfulness was limited in that they did not feel connected to their institution. For others, safety was noted as being trusted in their work and management of their classrooms. Finally, their views of the availability focused on how connected they were to their students, the number of classes allotted, and their perception of their role as part-time faculty.

Based on the analysis of data collected by the participants of the current study, it was noted that leadership played a vital role in how online part-time faculty perceived their engagement and inclusion at their respective institutions. The themes that emerged from research question one: "How do online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans?" included (a) a sense of belonging, (b) authentic and caring leader/follower relationships, and (c) consistent communication and support.

Theme One: Sense of Belonging.

Belongingness represents a connection with other people or places (Herbert, 2022). Kennedy (2021) noted that people seek connection in all aspects of their lives, including workplaces.

Belonging is a fundamental human need, so deeply woven into the fabric of our

being that it occupies a central place in psychologist Abraham Maslow's cluster of

human needs as the key element after such basic requirements as food, water,

shelter, and safety, that is required to achieve one's full potential" (Kennedy,

2021, p. 46).

The opposite of belonging is "othering, " a set of undercurrents, practices, or structures

that produce marginality and persistent inequity based on group identities (Kennedy,

2021). As the people who shape the cultures of their organization and are its most visible

representatives, leaders play a crucial role in building belonging among their followers.

How leaders act daily is central to making followers feel supported, engaged, included,

seen, and connected (Kennedy, 2021).

From the participants' data, the theme of a sense of belonging was identified with

participants when leaders made them feel engaged and included both at the program and

institutional levels. According to Gloria,

I always feel like I belong to the university. I would say that the friendships that

I've developed with different deans and different professors, which is interesting,

because sometimes they're my professors now but they were also people that I

work with on a professional level, is just really fascinating.

The best example, and this is a personal example, is when you're an online

adjunct faculty, you can be a bit invisible because no one sees you every day.

They just kind of expect you to do your job and you do your job. But one of the

things that I've loved so much is when my brother passed away, that was the

hardest semester for me. I was finishing up a course while he was in hospice, and

it was probably the semester where I probably had some of the rougher reviews.

And I remember Dean S. specifically reaching out to me just to tell me how much

he was praying for me and praying for my family. And it just definitely, it made

me feel a lot less invisible. These people don't know me. I haven't had tons of

interaction with them, but I felt very connected to them because they cared

enough to reach out and talk about, "We know you're going through this; we love

you, and we're praying for you." Dean S. has always been a champion for me, so

I think that that's always been great.

Marcus noted an experience where he was included in the preparation of a part-time

faculty meeting, which made him feel a sense of belonging. He stated,

I was chosen by the dean to lead; I was to lead the workers on a staff call. It was

something that we were supposed to organize and not just a phone hangout. It

was started at our school. Yeah. Our head of faculty actually chose me as the head

organizer of the whole event. I was a bit proud of myself, and I felt really

included because I think he overlooked my race and allowed me to take on the

responsibility of capturing for the phone and the hangouts of other staff members.

I felt really included, and it was a blissful moment.

Additionally, from the analysis of the current study participants' experiences,

different variables, including leader/follower relationships, communication, and personal

motivations, supported or undermined a sense of belonging. According to Mark,

As an adjunct personally, my experience in being connected or engaged is very poor. I don't feel that I have ever been reached out to beyond, "Will you teach this course?" I think it's a shame because, obviously, I see it from the other side as well because I'm a full-time faculty member elsewhere. So yeah, I think my experience as an adjunct at University 2 is that we're a necessary addition but somewhat of a convenient afterthought.

Kay also reflected on how her lack of relationship with her dean impacted her sense of belonging to the university. She noted, "I don't really feel that involved, I guess, as far as things that happen there. I'm included in the courses I teach. I'm asked every semester if I mind teaching a course."

Mary Ann stated she has a supportive relationship with her dean and identified a strong sense of belonging. She expressed that coming to meet with her dean in person allowed her to feel engaged and included. "Coming and meeting with Dean 7 on campus, or meeting with others and having those conversations makes me feel the most engagement and belonging."

Anna stated due to her high-demand professional role, she does not always have a sense of belonging because her experiences are different from full-time faculty who are on campus regularly.

I do not have a strong sense of belonging, but not in any fault from University 2, but probably just due to my schedule. I have a very high-demand regular job, and so a lot of their faculty get-togethers, or it's during the day, and I have a lot of meetings. So I feel like as an adjunct, there's always going to be some disconnect

from not feeling really part of the faculty because you don't have an office there. So, the daily conversations that happen while you're walking to the restroom or pop in an office, I'll never have that. But it hasn't been because I feel like University 2 has left me out to dry. It's more or less been. I have a full-time job, and I'm not able to be with a lot of the other professors on a daily basis to build those relationships and to really feel like part of the faculty. I still very much feel like I'm in and out, and it's a small part of the day. So I would say due to the nature of my situation, there's definitely some disconnect, but again, nothing that they have necessarily done.

Lucy also expressed her experiences with disconnection and lack of sense of belonging due to her role as an online part-time faculty, stating, "I do not feel very connected, and only because my role is part-time and there's just a difference there. Even working in a brick and mortar it's different when you have your full-time people versus somebody that just comes in back and forth on a part-time basis. So, I've never really felt that way."

Theme Two: Authentic and Caring Leader/Follower Relationships.

The essence of leadership revolves around how leaders influence followers to achieve a common goal and build a shared vision. At the heart of this concept is the relationship between leaders and followers. The leader/follower relationship needs to be healthy and reliable to achieve the goals and vision of an organization. This relationship develops the mutual efforts of both the leader and the follower. When the relationship between leaders and followers is close, research shows there is an increase in followers'

sense of belongingness, satisfaction, and positive attitude towards their leader and the

organization (Tyagi & Puri, 2017). For the current study, authentic and caring

leader/follower relationships appeared as a theme in the data. All eight participants

identified experiences that the relationship between their leader and themselves had on

their perceptions of engagement and inclusion at their respective universities.

Anna expressed that her relationship with her dean is very supportive, and she

considers him her mentor.

> I've had the luxury of Dean 11, who again is the professor of finance and
>
> economics since I think he took me under his wing in 2016 and has shown me the
>
> ropes. He has always made me feel very engaged. So, whether that's meeting with
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> me for weeks before I ever taught my first class to make sure, hey, teach me back
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> chapter one, teach me back chapter two. Take the chapter two test so that you can
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> get a feeling that you feel like you have taught this information enough that your
>
> students would be able to adequately take this test. So, I have felt very engaged at
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> University 2, but specifically because really of Dean 11. I feel like he's taken the
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> time to really make sure every single semester I feel taken care of. I feel like I
>
> have everything I need. So, it's really been one person being intentional about
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> checking in. We meet after every single semester, so we look at the student eval
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> scores, their comments, how can we make the class better? How can we make the
>
> students get more out of it? So, I know that's a lot of examples, but I guess I
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> would summarize that on a very high level I have had a mentor and a leader really

be intentional with me to make sure that I have always felt engaged with the
students and the faculty.

Additionally, Anna stated that her leader makes sure that she feels comfortable with what she is teaching and sees their relationship as "two-way…where he makes me feel comfortable and I make him feel comfortable." She expanded on this statement by stating,

Even though just this semester we both taught Finance 310, he probably taught it very differently than I did. So, our relationship is very open. I feel very comfortable coming to him for anything. We also feel comfortable with feedback, meaning if he comes to sit in on one of my classes, there is no lost feelings on, "Hey, I would take that out. I would describe that a little bit different way." So, I am very open to getting better and hearing that feedback. But basically, anything that I need, he's always made me feel very comfortable coming to ask but has also let it make it my own, so to speak.

Gloria discussed the dynamics of her relationship with her dean, stating that they have a "long-standing relationship." "He's known me since I was 24 years old. So, I would say that professionally, we have a wonderful relationship." Marcus also felt that his relationship with his dean was open and caring. He stated, "He treats me as a friend and less of a subordinate."

Several participants identified "professionalism," "supportive," and "helpful" when describing their relationship with their deans. Arron expressed that his dean is "Professional. I don't have any complaints." And "Accommodating and supportive."

Kay stated that her relationship with her dean is "open, professional, easy to talk to, helpful."

Other participants discussed challenges and barriers related to their relationships with their deans and how it impacts their engagement and inclusion. According to Mary Ann, her relationship with her dean is "Non-existent." However, she identified another person as her "go-to contact."

> The most that I do feel is when Mr. H., who is my go-to person, he's my main connection. And so, he always reaches out to me and always communicates gratitude for my willingness to teach in the department. So, I would say that would be... and checks in to make sure that I don't need anything. Our relationship is wonderful, supportive, professional, and friendly. It makes me feel supported that if I needed... if there was a problem, I feel like I could go to him, and he would help me.

Lucy also explained how her relationship with her dean is not as welcoming and accommodating. She stated their relationship is "more of a formal feeling." She expressed that her dean does try to engage and interact, but the feeling is not authentic or caring.

> So, he does try to keep that contact going. But as far as me just picking up the phone and calling him, I will if I need to, like I did with the issues we were having with students not having access to a classroom, but it is a different level than it is with like I said, say Ms. B. She's just my automatic, I'll call her up. Hers is more

of a we're not really, I would say, co-workers on the same level, but she's the one

that I will call. She's just very easy to speak with and has that good rapport.

Lucy clarified that she felt that if she ever needed anything from her dean she was

able to do so. "He has always presented himself in such a way that I know if I need

something I can call him up, I can make that contact if I need to." She further stated,

And I know that sounds like a corny answer, but I've received it anytime I have

ever needed support for something. There has never been a time where I have

gone to Dr. W. and said, "I'm concerned about such and such." Or "How do I

handle..." I had a student who was flat-out plagiarizing very obviously, and okay,

"I haven't had this situation; how do I handle this?" And he was there to give me

guidance on how to handle it. So, something as major as that versus something as

minor as what do you think about this assignment? It's always been open and

supportive and being able to give guidance and feedback. So, I really don't think I

need anything else. So, it's there, or at least in my department, it's there.

Other participants had different views on their current relationship with their deans.

Mark expressed concern about the impacts of his relationship with his current dean.

I would say the past one, I felt that I was seen, I felt that I was supported, and I

felt that I had a personal connection, so that would be direct access to my

supervisor. So, I suppose I really felt as though I was a valuable member of the

team.

I don't feel that these days at University 2. I feel I am not seen. The role is

perceived as a necessary inconvenience, and the adjunct, the online role, is

definitely second-class.

One example would be at the start of the fall semester. I had an email letting me

know that the course shell had been created for a business ethics course. Well, that

was news to me. I hadn't been asked to teach. And University 2 usually asks you

the semester prior. So, my experience since 2017 has been that if they want me to

teach in an upcoming semester, they'll ask me the prior semester. And I went into

the learning management system, and sure enough, there was a shell there. There's

a, what is it? It's a 7-week semester, so the first part of the semester shell.

And so, I reached out to my contact, who's the associate dean in the College of

Business, and said, "Do you want me to teach?" And the response was, "Oh, yes,

did I not ask you?" For me, that would sum up my experience over the last couple

of years, so since 2019, I would say. And that's just a change of leadership.

Theme Three: Consistent Communication and Support.

Research has indicated that communication is foundational to guiding and

directing engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty (Tipple, 2010; Weber,

Barth, McGuire, Swindell, Davis, 2022; Sam, 2021). "Leadership communication refers

to an effective leader's method of communicating and socializing with their team

members and their company's executives" (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022, para. 1).

Additionally, research has indicated that online part-time faculty need more support

(Weber et al., 2022). For the current study, the data supported the need for consistent

communication and support for online part-time faculty to feel engaged and included in their role as instructors at their respective universities.

Communication.

All of the current study participants stated that communication was important for their perceptions of engagement and inclusion as online part-time faculty. Several participants noted that communication is frequent and respectful of their role. For example, Arron, when asked about his experiences with communication with his dean, stated, "She's very clear; she's very detailed in her instructions and communications. So, there's not much room for misunderstanding, which is very good. Clarity is good." He further stated, "It's very professional. But it's not too rigid, either. She has thrown some humor in there occasionally, as I do, too; I like humor." Kay noted that having consistent and professional communication makes her feel valued and important. Specifically, she stated, "he took notes but remembered what we talked about... it makes me feel like I'm important." Lucy also indicated that communication was positive between her and her dean, stating, "I've got plenty of communication." She further expanded by discussing a specific experience with communication,

> When I was struggling with some of the assignments with one of the Capstones
> because the students in my class needed access to students to complete part of the
> assignment, and I spoke to Dr. W. about it, and he made sure that the upcoming
> class, everyone would have their own placement so that they would have access to
> students because it was a mixture of students that did have the same that you
> assume everybody else does. So, the fact that he would take that and understand

the issues that we were having for them to complete the work made me feel I'm

somebody that they're listening to because he helped solve that problem.

Anna also expressed how the communication with her dean makes her feel, stating,

"He has made sure I have felt comfortable with every single chapter, whatever class we're

teaching, he gives me plenty of heads up…asking… "Hey, are you comfortable? What

questions do you have?" Additionally, Marcus appreciated the open communication and

care that his dean showed, noting, "What do you feel?" These are his words now. "What

do you feel is necessary for you to perform, to upgrade, in your services? What are the

vital tools you need?" Gloria reiterated how communication is important to her as an

online part-time faculty, stating,

> For instance, last week, right before I turned in my grade, I was struggling with
>
> making a decision on a student who hadn't turned in an assignment because I didn't
>
> want to give anyone a bad grade. I want everyone to feel good about it. But I picked
>
> up the phone, he answered the phone, I talked through the situation with him, I
>
> asked him, and I honestly also believe that because of my relationship with him, he's
>
> honest with me. So, I can always go to him and say, "Am I being crazy?" And I
>
> know he'll tell me if I am. So, we were able to talk through it.

Other participants identified the challenges and issues they faced with inconsistent

communication and how it impacted their perceptions of engagement and inclusion as an

online part-time faculty. When asked about the communication experiences with his

current dean, Mark stated, "Terrible." He further explained that comment by stating,

I think if I had felt valued, and if I felt that my role was being appreciated, I

would probably be thinking, "It's working out for me. There's no reason why I

should bring this to an end." But the communication or lack thereof, and I think the

lack of support, is discouraging. There you go.

The only time I receive an email from my immediate supervisor is to ask me either

if I would be willing to teach a course or in response to an email that I have sent

with a specific inquiry. Other than that, I don't receive anything.

Mary Ann also noted the impacts of inconsistent communication with her dean,

expressing that there is a disconnect sometimes, "I really haven't honestly met or talked

to Dean 7 at all since I interviewed, which was a few years ago. Emails are the primary

form of communication." However, she has an additional point of contact at her

respective university who does support and communicate with her on a regular basis, and

that communication was identified as supportive. Specifically, "It makes me feel

supported that if I needed... if there was a problem, I feel like I could go to him, and he

would help me." She further expressed how communication impacts her engagement and

inclusion by noting, "I mean, he just always checks in with me at the end of the semester

and sees how things are going."

Kay identified the inconsistency in communication with a lack of clarity in

expectations, stating, "I need more specific emails, I guess, so I know what's expected of

me.

Support.

For seven of the eight participants of the current study, the sense of support was expressed in their experiences impacting engagement and inclusion. Lucy expressed how support as an online part-time faculty impacts her, stating,

If you've got that support that if you need something or have a question, then you can get your job done more efficiently, whereas if you know there's going to be either a dead end, or nothing's going to happen or somebody's going to complain about the fact that you have a question, especially being part-time. So that would impact my joy and love for the job, impacting my stay here.

Arron noted how support is a means of positive reinforcement and that makes him feel supported and appreciated in his role as an online part-time faculty. Specifically, he stated, "They keep us informed, and the technology and rules and regulations and staff and student dashboards and so forth that have announcements. So, from an online part-time person, I get everything I need." Anna also noted that support from her dean is positive and impacts her sense of engagement and inclusion, stating, "So, he's given me all the tools and helped me succeed, but has also empowered me and allowed me to make my class my own... I wouldn't say that the institute as a whole has offered a lot of ongoing education, but Dr. S. definitely has for me."

Many other participants noted that there is a lack of support for online part-time faculty. Mark felt that support for online part-time faculty is mainly "self-taught," clarifying by stating,

I had experience teaching online, so I was familiar with the learning management

system, for instance. But I think had I not been, yeah, it could have been a

challenge.

I haven't had even the slightest help or indication that, "Hey, we may need to look at

redesigning some of the ways you're presenting your questions. Can I support you in

that? Here are some support services. You could reach out to the support services,"

for instance. Just nothing. It's crickets. And I think that's appalling because

without... If I was just facilitating the course that I wrote in 2017, I rewrote it in

2019; if I was just rolling that back out this past semester, it would just be like

handing out credits to students because it's a form of assessment that now is just so

outdated in the wake of AI. So, I've been astonished that nothing has come down

about that. And I'm thinking, "Well, I'm assuming that I'm in the same situation as

other online adjuncts." Now, I've been proactive, and I have completely changed the

course. But yeah, just nothing at all. So that would've been a very specific example.

Gloria also felt that support was lacking and referenced having more guidance as support.

"Guidance, I would say sometimes, but I think that's more a function of how invisible

adjuncts can feel." To further her experience on support, Gloria stated,

I do believe that the standards are high for the adjunct faculty, and as such, it's

always felt fine, but there are times when I do feel like there's a lack of knowledge. I

don't think that it's probably the best mechanism to throw an online course called

"Adjunct Faculty" for training and say, "Have fun." I don't think that that's

necessarily the best mechanism, but I consider myself to be a pretty independent

person, so it's worked.

Kay also felt that support was lacking as an online part-time faculty. She noted that she

has not had any specific support services at her current institution.

Zero. I probably took an orientation course when I first started. I don't remember it,

but I probably did. Other than that, I've never taken a course pertaining to University

2. I've taken a lot of college-level classes for education, but not for online part-time

faculty.

Finding(s) about How Online Part-Time Faculty Members Perceive Their Role in

Their Respective Online Programs.

Research question two asked, how do online part-time faculty members perceive

their role in their respective online programs? Engagement Theory recognizes that

people can use varying degrees of their selves in their work roles and performances,

physical, cognitive, and emotional (Kahn, 1990). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivators play a

significant role in engagement, as outlined by Kahn (1990). Gappa and Leslie (1993)

found that for part-time faculty, intrinsic motivations seemed to be stronger than

economic motives when determining to enter part-time teaching occupations. The theme

of passion for teaching emerged during the data analysis of the interviews with the

current participants. Passions for teaching included motivations for teaching in higher

education, connections to the university, and role perceptions as an online part-time

faculty.

Theme Four: Passion for Teaching.

Tipple (2010) noted that part-time faculty are frequently intrinsically motivated to teach. "Adjunct faculty are highly motivated to succeed and derive their principal satisfaction from the intrinsic rewards of teaching" (Tipple, 2010, p. 2). In the current study, motivations for teaching were expressed by all eight participants and were referenced 29 times. Part-time role perceptions were expressed by seven of the eight participants and were referenced 11 times. Finally, connection to the university was identified by seven of the eight participants and referenced ten times.

Motivations for Teaching.

Participants expressed their intrinsic motivations for teaching, including words such as "passion," "enjoyment," "joy," and "love of sharing knowledge." Marcus stated, "It was a passion right from the days of my first degree. Teaching has been something I've loved." Mary Ann stated, "I wanted to teach and I wanted to be able to use the skillset that I have." Arron noted, "My parents were teachers, and my first job out of my master's program was teaching autistic children. So I just kind of enjoyed that." Mark expressed that he loves interacting with his students, stating, "I enjoy being in the classroom." Anna expressed her enjoyment in building relationships, stating, "I've made such good relationships with the students." She continued stating that her motivation is to give back to her students and be a good role model for them. She continued by stating,

> So, really, the motivation now is being a female in finance is not, I guess, seen too
>
> often. The majority of the finance majors, the finance professors, even in the
>
> healthcare world, a lot of the finance, your CFOs of the world are male. So, given

that University 2 has a very high female presence, my motivation now is to show females and males, but I do have a lot of females, that women can have careers in finance as well, and to just show them we have a place here.

Connections to the University.

Another aspect of their passion for teaching, specifically at their present university, was the connections they had with their respective university. Lucy stated that her current university was very special because of family connections. She stated, "It had a special place for multiple reasons." She continued, stating, "First, my husband went there way back in the day, and then my daughter showed interest in it not really because of my husband, but because of the programs that were offered." Arron noted that he had a friend who taught at the university and jumped at the opportunity, stating,

> I had just started teaching and I enjoyed it after hours. Of course, every extra little bit of money always helps in life, know about that. It was a combination of supplemental income, but also it is enjoyable and I get the meaning and purpose of it and satisfaction and hopefully passed on knowledge to the next generation.

Mary Ann also expressed her connection to the university through a family member and her desire to teach, stating, "Well, my husband works there. So, I was familiar with it, and I was looking for opportunities to teach, and they'd advertised a position. I wanted to teach, and I wanted to be able to use the skillset that I have." Mark also expressed his connection to the university,

> My son was touring University 2, and I was starting my doctoral work; needed some additional income, so I sent an email to the associate dean of the College of

Business saying, "This is who I am; here's my resume. Do you need any help?" And they said, "Yeah." It was just very much making the right connection at the right time.

Role Perception.

The participants of the current research study seemed to be student-focused in their role as online part-time faculty. They expressed their love of teaching and interacting with their students. They also expressed their love for teaching. Gloria noted, "I consider myself to be a servant to them. I consider myself to be responsible for their learning." She clarified by stating,

I fundamentally believe I'm there to be of service to them and to educate them. I start every class that way. I'm not as crazy a grader because my vision is I want them to learn. I want them to learn as much as possible. So if that means I've got to go through their paper five times with them before I grade it, I'm okay with that. That's the kind of professor I want to be. I don't want to be the "Gotcha" professor.

Mary Ann stated, "I want to be the kind of mentor and adult that, one, I'm a tough-love parent and professor." She continued by stating,

I mean, I am empathetic but I'm also... When you're making the same mistakes or you're making the same excuses, then the end of the road comes quickly. But I care about young people and I want them to have the things that maybe I didn't always... I was a first generation, well, kind of a first generation, half of my family are first-generation students, and I didn't have much guidance. I didn't have

somebody helping me figure out the ways of the world. And so I think there's an

opportunity to not just be like, hey, here's how you write something. Well, but

also, here's how you be a good adult.

Lucy also expressed her desire to be available to her students and be engaged with them

as their instructor. She stated,

I view my role more like probably a facilitator. I present the material. I do have a

few videos depending on the class that I do because I really don't like my cell

phone video, but I like to present the material I'm very involved with; even though

it's online, I'm very involved with the students through phone calls, lots of phone

calls, and then through messaging so, like I said, more like a facilitator of their

learning process.

Mark stated he views himself as a mentor to his students. He stated,

I ultimately see my role as a mentor. I believe one of my gifts is communication.

And I feel that part of that gift is explaining concepts and topics in a contextually

appropriate way and, entertaining is the wrong word, and engaging. So, I think

education ought to be enjoyable. So it is, on the one hand, it's utilizing a gift that I

believe that I have. It's an interest of mine. I teach law and ethics, which are two

areas I am very interested in.

I enjoy being in the classroom. So, although I have had experience with online

education since 2017, I would say that my greatest joy is interacting with students

personally.

Additionally, Mark discussed his experience as an instructor in his class and how he mentors his students, stating,

> In online education, there are virtual barriers. One of the things that I try to do is to intentionally break down those virtual barriers. And I think there's a couple of ways that we can do that.
>
> First of all, I try to upload short videos. I like the students to be able to see me and to hear me. I especially now encourage students to submit video posts rather than just written posts, because then I get to see students, I get to hear them, and I think that... So, video interaction. So I've used, over a number of years, I've used what was Flipgrid, it's now Flip. So, for discussion posts, video interactions, because those break down virtual barriers.
>
> I keep track of students who either aren't participating or whose grades seem to fluctuate significantly. And I'll reach out to them one-on-one, and I'll say, "Hey, I'd like to touch base with you. I noticed that you didn't participate this past week, or I noticed that there was a variance in your grades. Is everything okay? Is there something that I need to be aware of?"
>
> In weekly announcements, I will invite the students to contact me if they have not just any academic-related concerns but if there's any way that I can pray for them. In the feedback I give, so in online grading, especially in online courses, I try to go above and beyond expectations. So, rather than say, "Great, well done," I usually will try to bring several paragraphs. Some of it is; hopefully, the students aren't aware of, but some of it is generic from student to student, but it's easily

personalized. But then some of it, I make sure that I always identify something specific that the student has written or spoken about, so that, and again, I'm assuming the students read feedback and not all of them do, but so that they see something from me that acknowledges, oh, I was paying attention. I read that specific thing that you wrote, or I heard that specific thing that you said. These are all, I call them digital touches. They're ways to touch a student that you only see in a virtual environment. In a classroom, we do it in a slightly different way. You have to be much more intentional in an online teaching environment.

Finding(s) about How the University Culture Cultivates an Environment of Hospitality and Collegiality in Online Learning.

Research question three asked, how does the university culture cultivate an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning? Engagement theory notes that employees engage both through behaviors and attitude. The culture of an organization can influence how engaged an employee feels. According to Herbert (2022), employees who buy into the organization's values and mission have a higher sense of belonging and engagement. Additionally, leaders play a pivotal role in representing an organization's culture. Kennedy (2021) argued that "It requires a sustained commitment from leaders to audit the dynamics of belonging at their organizations and to better understand who has easier access to belonging" (p. 51). The participants of the current study demonstrated their perception of how the university culture cultivates an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning, and

that was evident through them of the leader being representative of institutional culture. Within this theme, hospitality and institutional-level communication were prevalent.

Theme Five: Leadership Strategies Representative of Institutional Culture.

Leaders can simultaneously reinforce an organization's values and influence followers to perform at their best. According to Williams (2019), leaders can positively and negatively shape an organization's environment, impacting how employees perceive their levels of engagement and inclusion. The current study's participants echoed this sentiment. The idea of hospitality was identified by all eight participants and was referenced 23 times. Institutional-level communication was noted by six participants and referenced ten times.

Hospitality.

In the current study, participants were first asked to define hospitality and then to identify experiences related to their perception of hospitality. The definitions included concepts such as "welcoming," "home-like feeling," "kind," "nice and caring," and "tightly bonded." Additionally, many participants felt hospitality was linked to the Christian culture of their current institutions, noting perceptions as "Christ-centered," "Intentionally Christian," and a "serving institution." Mark expressed that he felt hospitality "has a couple sides."

> Okay. I would say that there are a couple of sides to this. From the very obvious side, I think there's student hospitality, which is creating a learning environment that is welcoming, that is inclusive, that helps the students to acclimate to a campus and to their classes. So, it's forming a community around them. From a

faculty perspective, it's a little different, but it still incorporates elements of those. So, it would be the institution paying intentional focus to creating a community that faculty felt that they were able to make connections, that they were able to thrive in their subject matter. But as well as get to know their peers, their colleagues, and to build relationships, to build professional relationships.

So, if I can give you an example, at my current full-time institution, one of the things that I was asked to do was to work on that because our dean when he came in, he felt that that was lacking. And so, I designed, specifically within the College of Business, I designed a concept, that focused on community, academics, recognition, encouragement, and support, not only for students, but also for faculty and staff. So that when we recognize there's a need, let's say, among faculty members, that that need is met. That support is offered, that we are organizing regular events for faculty to attend to simply get to know one another and to talk.

I've not had that experience at University 2. As much as I admire and respect University 2, as an adjunct, that experience isn't there.

Anna identified hospitality as a "family feel." She expanded her thoughts and experiences on that by stating,

The culture at University 2 is very welcoming. I felt welcomed from the start. The students welcomed me from the start. I feel like it is a tight-knit group. I don't know a perfect word to complete that, but from the start, the class sizes are small enough where I can make a relationship with every single student. So, you don't

have that. I went to a bigger college before I finished up at University 2, and you

don't always have that family-type feel. Maybe it's family type, maybe that's the

word I was looking for. Very family feel to I can name every student and I feel

like I know something about them, whether they have shared it or we talk. So, it's

just a very close family feel at University 2, and I think that's where you start

making a difference versus class sizes of two and 300. So, it's been a cool

experience every single semester getting to build those relationships. But yeah, I

guess I'd tie it off with a bow and say the family feel.

When asked to expand on how the culture impacts her engagement and inclusion as an

online part-time faculty member, she stated,

Having a hospitable environment makes me comfortable and it makes the students

comfortable. At the end of the day, sometimes school can be very overwhelming

if it's a subject that someone has to take because it's in their major, but it's really

not in their wheelhouse. I think when you have a close family feel that students

feel much more at ease coming to the teacher and saying, "Hey, I need a little

help." I think when you get to these bigger universities, there's probably plenty of

students that could use a little extra help, but there's not the culture there to even

be able to feel like they can even come to their professor. So, I feel like that

makes the students feel more comfortable, not only asking questions around their

peers during class time but also feeling comfortable reaching out to the professor

at any given time, specifically me, in this situation. I feel like that's what has

allowed the students to succeed and for me.

She continued stating that her leader has continued to show her hospitality and a feeling of being welcomed in their interactions, stating,

> Dr. S. has really been that for me. He has made sure I have felt comfortable. Dr. S. has never made me feel like any question I can't ask, he's ten times smarter than me, and he probably knows that, but he has never made me feel that way. It has always been come to me with any question. He's also made me feel very empowered to change anything that I needed to. Each class that I started to teach it was, "Hey, here's kind of the framework, and then you put your spin on it. If you feel like you need to teach it this way or this way or update these notes." So he's given me all the tools and helped me succeed, but has also empowered me and allowed me to make my class my own.

Gloria identified her current institution as "It's the kindest university I've ever been a part of." She continued by stating,

> It's always been a very kind, I've never met someone at University 2 where I was not so happy to meet them and so happy to know them. They're just the kindest, sweetest people, and I do believe they have the most genuine interests of the students at heart.

 She noted that hospitality is felt throughout the institution and through the interactions with her dean. She clarified that she has never felt a time when hospitality was not displayed. She also noted how here dean exemplifies Christian hospitality through his welcoming demeanor and constant communication. However, she noted that guidance

was an issue. "No, not hospitality. Guidance, I would say sometimes, but I think that's more a function of how invisible adjuncts can feel."

Marcus identified hospitality as giving someone a "homelike feeling." For his experiences at his current university, Marcus stated he felt the most perceptions of hospitality when he was first starting his teaching position. "My experience when I first was employed into the staff office. When I was employed in the faculty, I met a few friends that made the place hospitable to me." Additionally, he stated his dean always is hospitable and welcoming to him, stating,

> He calls me and try to check up on me. A few times after work, we have hung out somewhere to catch up and stuff like that. He gave me that friendly and only treatment as a friend.

> The way he treats me, it really boosts my morale. It tells me and shows me that there's more to this and it tells me to ... He gives me that. It kind of uplifts my spirit, understand?

Kay stated that hospitality is when people are "just being open and nice and caring and willing to help you and not just, hey, call this person. They help you figure it out instead of just sending you on down the line." She stated that her dean demonstrates hospitality through his communication and listening to her needs and desires in teaching. Specifically, when she was hired and first began teaching at the institution, her dean was very hospitable, she stated,

> He was very sweet and very kind. I told him that I love technology stuff, and that's where he put me. I can teach anything, it doesn't matter. But he listened and

did what I asked and I'm sure he took notes, but remembered what we talked

about. So, at the end of the summer, I hadn't heard from him, so I emailed him and

said, "Hey, will I be teaching this fall?" And he was like, "Oh, I forgot, but yeah,

here's you a course." So, he forgot, but he made up for it, if that makes sense. So

very nice. Anytime I email him, I'm nobody. And I think it's very sweet that he

will respond to me. He emails back quickly, so he is kind, courteous, respectful,

and caring. I have always felt like emailing the dean is okay because he will

answer me.

And when I wanted more classes to teach, it's like, "Absolutely, here you go. Let

me know if you want more." So very, very helpful. I really, really enjoy working

for them.

Institutional Level Communication.

Under the theme of leadership strategies being representative of the institutional

culture, the concept of institutional-level communication was a significant topic

discussed by the participants of the current study. Communication directly from the

deans of the participants seemed to be more focused, consistent, and relevant toward the

online part-time faculty. Several of the participants noted how there is a disconnect in the

institutional-level communication and would like to have more clarity in communication,

either at the institutional level or from their respective deans. Kay stated her experience

with institutional-level communication is overwhelming, which impacts her engagement

and inclusion with the university. Specifically, she stated,

> We get bombarded with emails, and I really don't know what's considered for me
> and what's not. And I know they invite people to come do this and that, but it says
> you have to show your ID. I don't have a faculty ID. I don't know where things
> are. I've been to the campus one time, and that was when I got interviewed. So, I
> don't know.

She continued by stating, "I get emails, but I just don't know what applies to me. Because
they're like, come to this meeting here. Am I supposed to go to that? I don't know.
Communication is just not clear."

Mary Ann also expressed the lack of clarity in the institutional-level communication
stating,

> Well, I mean, I'm not on campus. And so in that sense, I guess I feel like, oh, I'm
> not a real employee, and so I'm like, this shouldn't apply to me. I shouldn't have to
> do all these trainings, that kind of stuff. I get all the emails as everybody else. So I
> get the department emails of, oh, there's this event, or this person died, and I don't
> know all those people. So, there's a disconnect, for sure, there. And I would say
> that's just because I'm not on campus. I'm not there.

Lucy also reiterated the lack of clarity in communication through the institution, stating,

> Sometimes if I get an email and I have no idea what it's talking about because it's
> for meetings that people are really on campus, so to speak. So, it's not really
> applied to me, but when they were changing over some of the systems recently, I
> felt kind of... I was a little nervous about some of the changes because I felt like I
> was going to do it wrong because I wasn't in person to do that, which again, I

made some phone calls and had clarification, but it's just that was one point

during some of the crossover with changing the systems. And before that, I had

never really felt it, but it was more or less the I'm afraid I'm going to do

something wrong, and then that would hamper the students because I'm doing my

end incorrectly and then that would impact them.

However, Lucy stated that her dean has open communication, and her expectations of her

role make up for the confusion throughout the university. For example,

He does try to keep that contact going. But as far as me just picking up the phone

and calling him, I will if I need to like I did with the issues we were having with

students not having access to a classroom, but it is a different level than with my

go-to contact. Like I said, he does send encouraging messages out all the time.

And like I said, he will try to do the personal notes like I said, with sending a song

or a scripture verse. He does encourage us to have communication with our

students. But like I said, my expectation because I am part-time is not that I would

have the same type of communication as he would for full-time faculty.

Finding(s) about How Online Part-Time Faculty Members Perceive their Leaders' Ability to Foster Trust and Respect Toward Remote, Online Part-Time Faculty

Research question four asked, "How do online part-time faculty members

perceive their leaders' ability to foster trust and respect toward remote, online part-time

faculty?" Trust and respect are under the safety domain of Kahn's (1990) engagement

theory. He noted that people who perceive safety "feel situations are trustworthy, secure,

predictable, and clear" (p. 705). Additionally, interpersonal relationships are part of the

safety dimension of Kahn's (1990) engagement theory. People who have ongoing relationships that offer trust and respect have demonstrated more engagement. For the current study, the participants seemed to also perceive this concept of trust and respect as impacting their perceptions of engagement and inclusion. Participants noted the ways that trust and respect through their dean's leadership strategies were through acts of empowerment, offering opportunities for autonomy, and recognition. All participants identified experiences of autonomy and empowerment and were referenced 22 times. Recognition was identified by four of the eight participants and referenced 12 times.

Theme Six: Autonomy and Empowerment.

Autonomy allows for freedom of creativity, ownership, and taking control of how tasks are completed. Empowerment can mean different things for different people. However, empowerment increases a sense of belonging, feeling supported, and security in job roles (Phillips, 2021). For the current study, participants demonstrated the impacts of autonomy and empowerment on their perceptions of engagement and inclusion, as well as trust and respect as an online part-time faculty member.

Anna stated that her dean is very empowering, noting, "He's also made me feel very empowered to change anything that I needed to." Additionally, she stated, "So he's given me all the tools and helped me succeed but has also empowered me and allowed me to make my class my own." She expanded with an example of a specific experience where she was empowered by her dean, stating,

> So, I guess he empowers me to continue to pour as much into University 2 as I
>
> want and that I can do. Use my own experience to do it, so him not bring me a

class and say, "Hey, I need you to teach this." It's, "Hey, we want you to continue to teach and we want you to teach something that you feel passionate about." So just giving me the opportunity to do that I thought was really cool.

Gloria discussed how autonomy and empowerment impact her experiences with engagement, inclusion, trust, and respect, stating,

I mean, I would say that the university is pretty hands-off with me, and I like it that way. I like the autonomy that is given to me.

Autonomy cuts both ways. So sometimes there is incredible amounts of autonomy and sometimes there's, I guess, questioning on my behalf where I'm like, "Ooh, is this okay? I'm going to do this. I'm going to do this. Is that okay?" And it's always been okay. And I actually think that they expect you to have a bit of a moral compass and a bit of a need to rise to a higher standard.

She went on to discuss a specific experience where she felt trusted and respected through autonomy and empowerment, stating,

I mean right before I took on the strategic HR course, which was the first time I would be teaching with it, we all met together, we all talked through the syllabus. We talked through how I could take some ownership over that course. That course had been taught by someone before, someone with a different background. I like to put my stamp on things, so I came with ideas and I was like, "I'm going to do this and we're going to change it this way. We're going to do this." And I'm also not afraid of reading 900 papers, so I don't love group work assignments, so that was changing a lot of the way the course had been done. And they were just really

open to it. They were very open to ideas. They were very open to suggestions I

had. Overall, it was a great experience.

Other participants noted that the lack of autonomy and empowerment takes away

from their feelings of trust and respect as online part-time faculty. Mark stated he did not

feel empowered due to the lack of experience he has had to foster trust and respect by his

dean. He stated,

> I do not have experiences. It makes you feel as though you're not part of the
>
> team, or at least not an important part of the team. That there isn't a great deal of
>
> support or care. I have been on the verge, the last year and a half, of sending an
>
> email saying, "Look, it's not working out, or it's not worth it." And in fact, now
>
> that both of my children have graduated, there really isn't any need for me to...
>
> Because it was a way for me to stay in touch with what was happening at the
>
> school.

Theme Seven: Recognition.

Another theme that was relevant for participants in the current study was the

concept of recognition of their work and contributions to the university. Marcus shared

an experience where he was chosen to lead a group call for other peers. He stated,

> I was chosen by the dean to lead; I was to lead the workers on a staff call. It was
>
> something that we were supposed to organize and not just a phone hangout. It
>
> was started at our school. Yeah. Our head of faculty actually chose me as the head
>
> organizer of the whole event. I was a bit proud of myself, and I felt really
>
> included because I think he overlooked my race and allowed me to take on the

responsibility of capturing for the phone and the hangouts of other staff members. I felt really included, and it was a blissful moment…It makes me feel that my good work is being seen and appreciated.

Kay stated her dean sends a communication to show appreciation for her work and what she does for her students. She stated, "He will send emails to thank us for what we do and how we do it and that kind of stuff. That makes you feel good."

Mary Ann also voiced her experiences with recognition, specifically through her main point of contact, stating, "He always reaches out to me and always communicates gratitude for my willingness to teach in the department. So, I would say that would be... and checks in to make sure that I don't need anything."

Summary of Results

Based on the preceding presentation and summary of data generated by the study, a summary of findings/conclusions is as follows:

Findings/Conclusion One

Participant data is clear on several points for research question one: how do online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans? Participants were clear in their need for belonging, engagement, and inclusion. The participant noted how important an authentic caring relationship between themselves, and their leaders impacted their sense of belonging, engagement, and inclusion. Additionally, all participants noted the impacts of consistent communication and support on their perceptions of engagement and inclusion as an online part-time faculty member. Participants clearly perceive that leaders impact their engagement and inclusion when

they feel they belong to the organization and their respective programs and have a leader who is genuine in their relationship. Additionally, communication, or the lack thereof, significantly impacted how participants perceived their experiences with engagement and inclusion. Table Two demonstrates the frequency of the three themes related to research question one.

Table 2

Sense of Belonging: Frequency of Theme

Code Related to Theme	# Of Participants who related to the theme	# Of References
Sense of Belonging	8	19
Sense of Engagement	8	28
Sense of Inclusion	8	20

Finding/Conclusion Two

From the participant data, one main theme was identified for research question two: how do online part-time faculty members perceive their role in their respective online programs? Participants expressed how passionate they were to be in the classroom and be able to share their knowledge, expertise, and skills with students. Participants seemed intrinsically motivated to teach, thus impacting their perceptions of their role as online part-time faculty. Participants seemed extremely student-focused in their role perception, focusing on descriptions of their roles such as mentors, facilitators of

knowledge, and servants. Three main codes emerged in the data analysis for the theme of the participants' passions for teaching: motivations for teaching, role perception, and connections to the institution. Table Three demonstrates the frequency of the theme and related codes for research question two.

Table 3

Passions for Teaching: Frequency of Theme

Code Related to Theme	# Of Participants who related to the theme	# Of References
Personal Motivations for Teaching	8	29
Perception of Role	7	11
Connection to the Institution	7	10

Finding/Conclusion Three

From the participant data, one main theme was identified for research question three: how does the university culture cultivate an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning? The theme of leadership strategies being representative of the institutional culture indicated that how a leader demonstrated hospitality was significant as to how they perceived and experienced the institutional culture at their respective universities. Additionally, the communication of the leader was noted as being

more important to the participants than the institutional level communications. When participants relied on their perceptions of engagement and inclusion at the institutional level, many were left disconnected, isolated, second-class, or invisible. The leaders' hospitality and communication strategies impacted their sense of belonging more significantly than the institution. Table Four is representative of the frequency of the theme related to research question three.

Table 4

Leadership Strategies Representative of the Institutional Culture: Frequency of Theme

Code Related to Theme	# Of Participants who related to the theme	# Of References
Hospitality	8	23
Institutional Communication	6	10

Finding/Conclusion Four

From the participant data, two themes were recognized for research question four: how do online part-time faculty members perceive their leader's ability to foster trust and respect toward remote, online part-time faculty? When leaders demonstrated strategies that increased part-time faculty members' autonomy and empowerment in their roles, participants noted an increased feeling of engagement and inclusion as well as a positive sense of belonging. Additionally, when part-time faculty were recognized for their

contributions to the institution, program, or knowledge of students, they felt a sense of joy, morale boost, happiness, and connection. Table Five is representative of the frequency of the theme related to research question four.

Table 5

Autonomy, Empowerment, & Recognition: Frequency of Theme

Code Related to Theme	# Of Participants who related to the theme	# Of References
Autonomy & Empowerment	8	22
Recognition	4	12

Forecast Chapter Five

Chapter four presented the findings from the data analysis of the current study. Seven themes were identified for the study's research questions: a sense of belonging, authentic and caring leader/follower relationships, consistent communication and support, passion for teaching, leadership strategies representative of institutional culture, autonomy and empowerment, and recognition. From the data analysis, the evidence from the participant interviews demonstrated how significant it is for a leader to foster a sense of belonging for online part-time faculty through their relationship and communication. Online part-time faculty appear to be extremely intrinsically motivated to serve students

and rely on their program dean to support and encourage them by fostering a sense of

belonging with them. Based on the findings from all four research questions, the data

clearly demonstrates that several levels of experiences of online part-time faculty impact

engagement and inclusion. The overarching theme expressed by the participants in the

current study was a sense of belonging, which in turn is impacted by experiences faced

by the participant relating to leader/follower relationships, intrinsic motivation, and the

culture of the institution. Figure 3 visually represents these relationships identified in the
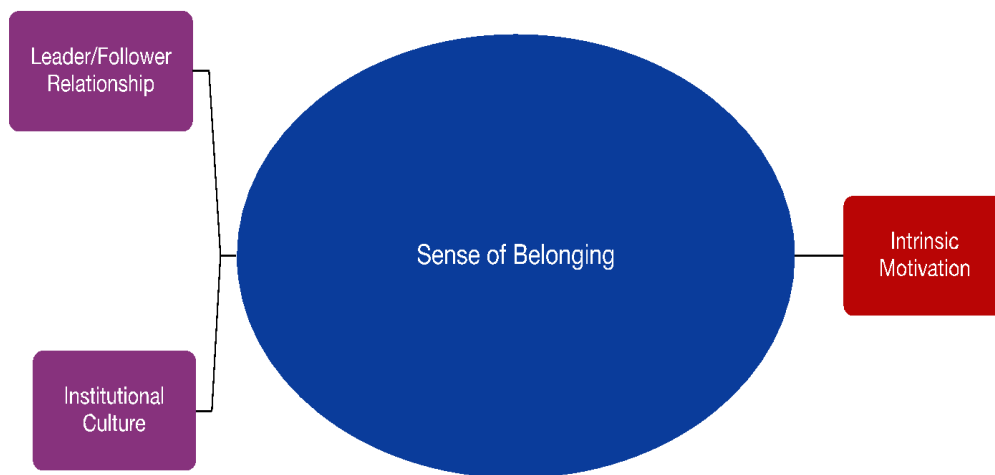
data analysis.

Figure : Factors Impacting Participants Sense of Belonging (Created by the Researcher)

Chapter five will provide a discussion of the current study's themes with

implications for further research and practice.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Overview

This study aimed to discover the experiences of online part-time faculty members

with engagement and inclusion strategies utilized by their program deans. The research

question that guided the study is: How do online part-time faculty experience engagement

and inclusion by their program deans? The related questions were:

- How do online part-time faculty members perceive their role in their respective online programs?
- How does the university culture cultivate an environment of hospitality and collegiality in online learning?
- How do online part-time faculty members perceive their leaders' ability to foster trust and respect toward remote, online part-time faculty?

This chapter presents a discussion of findings and conclusions related to the

purpose of this research.

Summary of the Study

This study investigated part-time faculty members' engagement or disengagement

in their online part-time faculty member role based on how they perceived their leader's

strategies for engagement and inclusion. Chapter One introduced the research through

the description of the background, purpose, approach, significance, delimitations,

limitations, and vocabulary of the study.

Chapter Two reviewed literature about theory and research related to the study of

Christian higher education, online education, part-time faculty members, effective

leadership strategies, leadership strategies that support online part-time faculty, and hospitable online cultures.

Chapter Three detailed the study's design through the description of the phenomenological research approach, employing the method of interviewing. Chapter Three also detailed the research purpose, design, plan, and coherency of the research design.

Chapter Four presented and summarized data generated by the study design in alignment with the study research questions/hypotheses.

This final chapter will discuss a summary of the findings related to the research purpose and reviewed literature. This chapter's content will also discuss the conclusions and implications of the study for practice and leadership for the advancement of learning, service, and research.

Summary of Major Findings

This study transpired as a response to the disconnection and feelings of isolation many online part-time faculty members experience in their roles as educators. The themes that developed from the data provided insight into the current research study's questions. The study's major findings demonstrated that three facets impact online part-time faculty members' overall engagement and inclusion in their roles, leading to their overall sense of belonging within their organization. First, online part-time faculty felt that teaching was meaningful, demonstrating their passion for teaching through intrinsic motivations. Even when their sense of belonging was low due to a lack of community or communication by the institution or their leader, all participants

demonstrated their desire and passion to teach. Each participant was overwhelmingly

concerned with their students' well-being and growth in learning. Many participants

identified themselves as a "mentor," "servant," or "supporter" to their students. Second,

online part-time faculty voiced how the relationship with their leader impacted their

experiences and perceptions of engagement and inclusion in their role as online part-time

faculty. This leader/follower relationship was articulated as their foundational perception

of engagement and inclusion as an online part-time faculty member. When online

part-time faculty members perceived their relationship with their leader as authentic and

caring, their perceptions of their experiences around engagement and inclusion

flourished. Third, overwhelmingly, the part-time faculty members of this current study

did not feel engaged or included at the institutional level at their respective institutions.

Many expressed their feelings as being "an after-thought," "invisible," or "not a real

employee." However, how their leader demonstrated the values and vision of the

organization impacted their overall perception of being engaged and included in their

role. When leaders demonstrated hospitality and consistent, clear communication,

participants perceived positive experiences with engagement and inclusion.

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Conclusions Related to Research Purpose

</div>

Study Findings/Conclusions About How Online Part-Time Faculty Experience

Engagement and Inclusion by Their Program Deans.

For research question one, three themes were developed from the current study's

data: a sense of belonging, authentic and caring leader/follower relationships, and

consistent communication and support. According to the participants in the current study,

a sense of belonging was the overarching theme that was a driver of their feelings and perceptions of engagement and inclusion. A sense of belonging, or the human need to form and maintain strong and stable relationships, was vital for participants in this study. When they felt valued in their role as an online part-time faculty member, their perception of engagement and inclusion was higher.

Participants noted that to experience a sense of belonging, they needed an authentic caring relationship between themselves and their leaders. This feeling of being part of a team, being able to openly approach their leader, and having worth in their role also supported positive perceptions of engagement and inclusion. Participants who did not have an authentic and caring leader in their relationship voiced their feelings of a lack of engagement and inclusion. Mark noted when discussing his relationship with his current leader, "I feel I am not seen. That the role is perceived as a necessary inconvenience, and that the adjunct, the online role, is definitely second class."

Consistent communication and support was the third theme identified as impacting online part-time faculty's perceptions of engagement and inclusion. When leaders communicated and supported openly, clearly, and consistently with participants, their perceptions of engagement and inclusion seemed to be higher. Engagement and inclusion seemed less when they were unclear on their roles due to their leaders' lack of communication or support. Participants of the current study clearly perceived that their leaders impacted their engagement and inclusion when they felt they belonged to the organization and programs, had a leader who was genuine in their relationship, and had experiences with clear and consistent communication.

Comparison of Findings/Conclusion About This Question/Hypothesis to Literature

For research question one, the current research study presents some noteworthy confirmations and differences from the current literature on online part-time faculty. One of the main findings from Chapter Two was the identification of key leadership strategies utilized to engage and support online part-time faculty, including belonging, professional development, mentoring, orientation, and recognition (Tipple, 2010; Tipple, 2009; Kezar & Maxey, 2016; Lyons, 2007). Gappa and Austin (2010) argued that leaders face challenges in providing an environment where all faculty are treated fairly, can grow professionally, and are respected in the academic community. Additionally, the literature identified specific elements all faculty need to contribute their best work to their institutions: respect, equity, academic freedom, autonomy, flexibility, professional growth, and collegiality. The findings from research question one supported the leadership strategy of belongingness as an effective strategy to engage and include online part-time faculty. Participants noted that their leaders increased their sense of belonging through actions such as regular communication, recognition, empowerment, support, autonomy, and authentic relationships.

Communication was another key finding from the literature review. Research noted that empathetic communication was a foundational strategy to guide and direct effective engagement and support of online part-time faculty (Tipple, 2010, Weber et al., 2022, Sam, 2021). Notably, the current study's participants supported their need for consistent and clear communication from their leader to have a higher sense of engagement and inclusion.

This study gave rise to a distinction in the literature: the importance of the leader/follower relationship. The literature on effective strategies to engage part-time faculty seemed to focus on specific strategies a leader could implement to improve engagement and inclusion but underestimated the importance of the leader/follower relationship in impacting online part-time faculty engagement and inclusion. In the current study, focusing on how participants felt about the relationship with their dean seemed to be more significant than the actions or strategies implemented to foster engagement and inclusion.

From the literature, many researchers outlined key strategies to support, engage, and include online faculty, including belonging, professional development, mentoring, orientation, and recognition (Tipple, 2010, Tipple, 2009, Kezar & Maxey, 2016, Lyons, 2007, Matos, 2021, Weber et al., 2021). While these strategies are imperative to engage and support online part-time faculty, the current study's participants noted the importance of their relationship with their leader and themselves in positively or negatively impacting their feelings of being engaged or included in their current programs.

Study Finding/Conclusions about how online part-time faculty members perceive their role in their respective online programs.

One main theme emerged for research question two: the passion for teaching. All participants demonstrated intrinsic motivation when discussing their role as an online part-time faculty member and their role in their respective programs. Intrinsic motivation, the human tendency to engage in something because of enjoyment, demonstrated one aspect of the theme of passion for teaching. Many participants

expressed how passionate they were to be in the classroom and be able to share their knowledge, expertise, and skills with students. The participants' intrinsic motivation for the current study seemed to impact their perception of their roles as an educator. Regardless of whether the participants did not feel fully engaged or included as an online part-time faculty, they did feel a sense of pride, worth, and passion for their roles with their students. Participants seemed extremely student-focused in their role perception, focusing on descriptions of their roles, such as mentors, facilitators of knowledge, and servants.

Additionally, when identifying passions for teaching, another concept emerged in discussions with participants: connection to the university. Many participants felt a connection to their organization and a sense of being a part of that community. This perception seemed to increase their passion for teaching and belonging in their role as an educator.

Comparison of Finding/Conclusion about this question/hypothesis to Literature

The literature review in Chapter Two suggested that part-time faculty members have numerous variations in their reasons and motivations for teaching in a part-time capacity. According to Gappa and Leslie (1993), part-time faculty fall into the categories of career-enders, specialists, aspiring academics, and freelancers. Additionally, Tipple (2010) discussed the motivations of part-time faculty, focusing on their intrinsic motivations. Tipple (2010) stated, "Adjunct faculty are highly motivated to success and derive their principal satisfaction from the intrinsic reward of teaching" (Tipple, 2010, p. 2). The current study participants were compared in their variations of reasons and

motivations for teaching in a part-time capacity. The current study focused on online part-time faculty with a minimum of two years of teaching experience.

When comparing the demographics of the current study's participants to the employment profiles of part-time faculty of Gappa and Leslie (1993), the current participants fit into the profiles of career enders (two participants), specialists (four participants), and aspiring academics (two participants). The categorization of part-time faculty seems to connect back to the motivations of the participants as well. Many of the current study's participants were working professionals desiring to share their knowledge and expertise with students. The current study's participants appeared to be intrinsically motivated to share their knowledge and expertise and give back to academia and not solely after part-time teaching for financial gains.

Even though there is a lack of understanding revolving around the perceptions of part-time faculty motivations, as noted in the literature review, research has noted predominant themes for part-time faculty motivations to teach (Layou et al, 2022; Lyons, 2007). The current study's findings also support these predominant themes in the literature on the motivations of part-time faculty. Participants noted their passions for teaching and motivations to share in the development of knowledge for their students. These intrinsic motivations, outlined by the current study's participants, seemed to offset the feelings of isolation and disconnection they felt at the institutional level in their roles as online part-time faculty. Their motivations appeared to arise from their students and contributed to their growth in knowledge and as a whole person.

Additionally, as noted in the literature review, part-time faculty are notoriously hired for economic purposes for the institution, including cost-effectiveness, flexibility, and budgetary constraints (Kezar & Sam, 2010; Murray, 2019). The research noted that many institutions still operate as though these faculty members are a supplementary workforce (Kezar & Sam, 2010). The current study participants acknowledged this feeling of isolation, disconnection, and being "second-class" in their roles as online part-time faculty. However, this did not deter their motivation to continue teaching.

Study Findings/Conclusions About How the University Culture Cultivates an Environment of Hospitality and Collegiality in Online Learning.

For this research question, one main theme emerged: leadership strategies are representative of institutional culture. Leaders act as role models representing an organization's ideals, values, and visions. Leaders can embody their organizations' values to represent the organization as a whole (Matos, 2021). In the current study, the theme of leadership strategies being representative of the institutional culture indicated that how a leader demonstrated hospitality was significant as to how online part-time faculty perceived and experienced the institutional culture at their respective universities. When assessing the culture of institutions in the current study, all institutional values were not included in the analysis. The concept of the value of hospitality was the main value assessed within the current study. Many of the current study participants voiced a disconnect to the overall culture of the institution, mainly because of their remote, part-time role. However, the hospitality of their dean seemed to have a distinctive impact on their sense of engagement and inclusion. The participants expressed experiences of

hospitality and collegiality that stemmed from their interactions with their leaders. Leaders can both positively and negatively shape the environment of an organization, and for the current study, participants noted both ends of this spectrum in their experiences with how leaders cultivated hospitality and collegiality. Those who felt leaders were detached and distant felt hospitality was lacking from their deans. Those who felt leaders were authentic and caring felt hospitality from their deans was energetic.

Additionally, at the institutional level, online part-time faculty felt communication was confusing, daunting, and overwhelming at times. Many felt that they did not know what pertained to them. Kay stated, "We get bombarded with emails, and I really don't know what's considered for me and what's not." The participants noted that the leader's communication was more important to the participants than the institutional level communications. When participants relied on their perceptions of engagement and inclusion at the institutional level, many were left disconnected, isolated, feeling second-class, or invisible. The leaders' hospitality and communication strategies significantly impacted their sense of belonging to the institution.

Comparison of Findings/Conclusion About This Question/Hypothesis to Literature

From the literature review findings in Chapter Two, the current study appears to support the literature on the leader's role in creating hospitable cultures. Derrida (1998) noted that hospitality is about being open to others and stretching or extending the self to welcome others by sharing and receiving resources and insights. The current study participants also felt that to experience hospitality, their leaders had to be welcoming.

Culture can impact how members feel toward and within their organization. Part-time faculty, specifically online faculty who are not on campus regularly, do not experience the organizational culture daily like their full-time face-to-face faculty colleagues. The literature noted that part-time faculty can feel disconnected from their institutions. Leaders play a vital role in how online part-time faculty perceive connections to their institution. When an institution has a cultural value of hospitality, leaders of online part-time faculty should represent this value to allow for connection, a sense of belonging, and dedication from the part-time faculty to transpire.

There were some distinctions from the literature within this current study pertaining to the cultural aspects of hospitality. Regarding the literature focusing on academic hospitality, it was noted that hospitable institutions display an indispensable characteristic of healthy learning communities and help establish communities where members support one another (Imperiale et al., 2021). Within the current study, online part-time faculty do not feel connected to the institution as a whole and, therefore, are not included in the overarching community within their institutions. They lack institutional experiences, support, and connection with others. This can impact the overall experience of engagement and inclusion that online part-time faculty experience as an educator. Layou et al. (2022) supported this issue of online part-time faculty experience, suggesting that online part-time faculty have limited experiences and interactions with peers to collaborate and grow in their profession.

Furthermore, the literature review findings in Chapter Two focused on the importance of communication by leaders and not the impacts of institutional-level

communication experiences (Tipple, 2010). In the current study, participants noted the

confusion and a sense of being overwhelmed by institutional-level communication.

Participants stated communication is unclear as to what pertains to their role as a

part-time faculty member. Mary Ann stated, "I'm not a real employee, and so I'm like,

this shouldn't apply to me." The literature noted the challenges and barriers faced by

online part-time faculty but did not identify a lack of clarification in institutional-level

communication. Kezar and Maxey (2014) state that part-time faculty have voiced

concerns about insufficient access to resources, support, and curriculum standards.

According to the literature noted in Chapter Two, there are disparities concerning how

institutions across higher education view and interact with online part-time faculty.

There is no set standard, policy, or program that the field of higher education utilizes to

guide them in engaging and including online part-time faculty (Kezar & Maxey, 2016).

This current study confirms that institutional-level communication can also amplify

part-time faculty perceptions of disconnection, isolation, and role confusion.

Study Findings/Conclusions About How Online Part-Time Faculty Members

Perceive Their Leader's Ability to Foster Trust and Respect Toward Remote, Online

Part-Time Faculty

Two themes developed from this research question: autonomy/empowerment and

recognition. When leaders demonstrated strategies that increased part-time faculty

members' autonomy and empowerment in their roles, participants noted an increased

feeling of engagement and inclusion as well as a positive sense of belonging. This was

demonstrated by allowing online part-time faculty to take ownership and leadership in

their classrooms, allowing them to make changes to the curriculum and make decisions on challenging experiences with students. When online part-time faculty felt entrusted to make the right decisions for their classroom and with their students, it seemed to increase their sense of trust and respect for their leader as well as their sense of belonging, engagement, and inclusion.

Moreover, when part-time faculty were recognized for their contributions to the institution, program, or knowledge of students, they felt a sense of joy, morale boost, happiness, and connection. Recognition by the participants' deans for their achievements and work was noted as a significant theme from the current study that impacted engagement and inclusion.

Comparison of Findings/Conclusion about this question/hypothesis to Literature

In the current literature, there is consensus across research pertaining to strategies to engage and support part-time faculty (Dailey-Herbert et al., 2021; Lyons, 2007; Kezar & Maxey, 2016; Morton, 2012; Tipple, 2010). Tipple (2010) outlined effective initiatives to support the needs of part-time faculty, and researchers have continued to expand on his work. The key strategies identified in the literature review from Chapter Two are recognition, mentoring, belonging, orientation, and professional development. Additionally, the literature noted that transformational and situational leadership styles helped create environments where part-time faculty felt inspired, trusted, and respected (Tipple, 2010).

The essence of effective online adjunct faculty leadership consists of education leaders creating an environment that combines inspiring and motivating online

adjunct faculty towards a compelling vision (transformation leadership) while

helping them collectively and individually achieve their task (situational

leadership) (Tipple, 2010, p. 4).

The current study supported the research finding on recognition being an effective

strategy to engage and include online part-time faculty. The participants noted that when

leaders recognized their efforts, they felt valued, trusted, and respected in their role.

When participants were given positive feedback, it clearly impacted their perceptions of

engagement and inclusion by their deans. The opposite perception transpired when they

did not feel seen in their role as online part-time faculty. When online part-time faculty

did not have strong relationships with their deans who offered recognition for their

efforts, they felt disconnected, devalued, and irrelevant. Recognition offers an avenue of

motivation that leaders must tap into to impact perceptions of engagement for online

part-time faculty positively.

A key distinction between the literature findings and the current study's findings

on effective strategies to engage and support online part-time faculty was the finding of

autonomy and empowerment. Participants voiced their experiences around having

autonomy over their classrooms, decisions with students, and curriculum. They felt

empowered and respected when leaders allowed them to take charge of their roles.

Gloria noted, "I actually think that they expect you to have a bit of a moral compass and a

bit of a need to just rise to a higher standard." Having the autonomy and empowerment

to guide herself in her role allowed for increased perceptions of trust and respect from her

program dean. Gappa and Leslie's (2010) research supported this notation of how

autonomy can be influential toward faculty to contribute their best work. Autonomy and empowerment allow online part-time faculty to take ownership of their roles, thus improving their perception of engagement and inclusion.

Discussion of Findings

The current study offered many findings consistent with Chapter Two's literature review. Leadership is imperative to how online part-time faculty perceive their experiences of engagement and inclusion. It was noted from the findings of the current study that a sense of belonging was the overarching theme that emerged from the data. Baumeister and Leary (1995) defined a sense of belonging as a "pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships" (p. 497). The driving force of a sense of belonging is the human need to form and maintain strong and stable relationships (Lee & Robbins, 1995; Gailliot & Baumeister, 2007; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Wojcik, 2017). The current study's findings supported the notion pertaining to the need to form and maintain relationships to perceive a sense of belonging. Overwhelmingly, the participants discussed how the leader/follower relationship impacted their sense of belonging. From the current findings, it was not necessarily the strategies utilized by their leaders that impacted their sense of belonging and engagement, but how connected and cared for they felt through the relationship with their dean. Additionally, online part-time faculty seemed to experience a high sense of belonging when communication was consistent, open, and reciprocal.

The current study's findings demonstrated that a sense of belonging was impacted by three simultaneous factors: intrinsic motivations, leader/follower relationships, and institutional culture. Through the research of, Dolan (2011), he noted that part-time faculty seem more committed to their student's success rather than the institution. The current study's findings also appeared to point to this impression. All eight of the current study's participants were intrinsically motivated to serve their students. They voiced their perceptions of teaching as a passion that was as driver for them. This allowed internal drivers to continue in their role as educators even when they felt disconnected and isolated from the institution.

Another key finding of the current study revealed through the experiences shared by the participants that the relationship with their leader was a foundational driver for an increased sense of belonging. How a leader interacted with the current study participants significantly impacted how they perceived being engaged and included as an online part-time faculty. This relationship was noted to be characterized by genuineness, authenticity, and caring to positively impact the participants' sense of belonging and engagement.

Additionally, the culture of the organization also appeared to impact online part-time faculty's perception of engagement and inclusion. The participants of the current study were aware of the culture of their organizations but did not always feel connected to the institution. There were perceptions of disconnection, isolation, supplementary faculty roles, and not real employees. Even though the participants stated these perceptions, how their leaders represented the values of the organization seemed to

impact their overall sense of belonging, separate from the disconnect to the institution as a whole.

One of the focus areas of the current study revolved around the concepts and culture of Christian higher education. Even though a theme was not identified from the data analysis of the current study, participants voiced their experiences and perceptions of working in a Christian higher education environment. Participants stated they enjoyed being able to share their faith in their classrooms, share God and fellowship with other believers in the work that they do, and belong to an institution that is truly "Christ-centered." Mark noted he chose Christian higher education because it stands apart from other institutions stating, "Because Christian higher ed, the vision is more than academics, it's mentoring." He felt that in his role as an online part-time faculty member, he was a mentor, and he was able to use his gift of communication to further the educational experiences of his students as well as mold them in their spiritual walks. Additionally, other participants stated they felt drawn to teach in Christian higher education because they, too, were Christians, and they could share their values and expand the kingdom of God through their vocation. According to Gloria, "I fundamentally believe I'm there to be of service to them and to educate them…my university is based on Christian principles while not being overbearing… We're here to serve and we're going to serve in Jesus' name and come along." When discussing the impacts of their program deans on engagement and inclusion, participants noted aspects of Christian leaders that impacted their experiences. Lucy stated, when discussing her dean, "His Christianity stands out. He sends out very encouraging messages and he'll

send out some Bible verses or maybe a positive song or whatever that relates to the season or the beginning of the semester or as you're wrapping up a semester." Mary Ann noted that her program dean exemplifies Christian hospitality, making her feel warm and welcome in her role. "He makes me feel like he values me as a person and as a teacher. Because he didn't know me when I started." This demonstrated the participants' intentionality in working within Christian higher education to (1) be able to share their faith in their role as an educator, (2) serve their students, and (3) surround themselves in an intentionally Christian environment.

Relationship to Literature

The current study's findings demonstrated that even though strategies for engagement are essential, the importance of an authentic relationship and the need to belong drives engagement and inclusion of the current study participants' perceptions of being engaged and included. The findings of the current study were in alignment with two of the identified leadership strategies outlined in Chapter Two: belonging and recognition. The mentoring, orientation, and professional development strategies were not significant for the current study participants. Participants seemed to be self-motivated to educate themselves on best practices, pedagogy, and technology. The desire to collaborate with other faculty was also noted in the data from the interviews but was not significant in producing a theme. This self-motivation aligned with research noting that part-time faculty will seek professional development outside of the institution due to their conflict in schedules and other extenuating factors that keep them from participating in institutional-level professional development (Weber et al., 2022).

Additionally, the current participants seemed to align with the literature in regard to fulfilling the overarching mission of Christian higher education institutions to "advance the cause of Christ-centered higher education and to help our institutions transform lives by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical truth" (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, 2018, p. 1). The participants seemed to be intentional in their reasons for teaching in a Christian higher education institution and appreciated the overall missions and values of their respective institutions. Furthermore, the participants of the current study aligned with the research on the importance of Christian hospitality, specifically when looking at their program deans. The hospitality offered by deans significantly impacted participants. Christian hospitality is rooted in the belief that all humans are created in the image of God. When leaders serve through biblical hospitality, they are being faithful to the commands of the Lord. As Paul notes in Romans 12:13, "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." Leaders in Christian higher education are called to lead and serve their followers and practice hospitality. For leaders to effectively practice the gift of biblical hospitality, they must intentionally exercise this daily. "To practice this kind of welcome, we must see our own condition as a gift, as something we did not simply create or construct, nor something essentially oppressive" (Newman, 2003, p. 84).

Due to the nature of the parameters of the study on the length of employment for online part-time faculty, the participants of the current study seemed knowledgeable and dedicated to teaching. They sometimes faced feelings of disconnect but appeared to be student-focused on their role perception as an online part-time faculty. This aligns with

the research on the intrinsic motivations of part-time faculty members who are devoted to

their students' learning (Kezar & Maxey, 2016); Gappa % Leslie, 1993; Lyons, 2007).

Conclusions

This study aimed to gain insight into the perceptions and experiences of online

part-time faculty around engagement and inclusion by their program deans. The study

was framed around Kahn's (1990) theory of employee engagement. Engagement Theory,

as identified by Kahn (1990), suggests that the identified domains of meaningfulness,

safety, and availability are significant to understanding why a person would become

engaged in their professional work. Kahn (1990) defined each domain as follows:

- Meaningfulness: A sense of return on investment of self in role performances.
- Safety: A sense of being able to show and employ self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career.
- Availability: A sense of possessing the physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary for investing self in role performances (p. 705).

Due to the study's focus on engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty, which

includes internal and external experiences, phenomenology was the chosen methodology.

This framework and methodology allowed for rich descriptive data to emerge from the

experiences of online part-time faculty at Baptist/Southern Baptist denominational,

CCCU-affiliated schools with at least two years of teaching experience. Data was

collected from semi-structured interviews with eight participants.

Analysis of the current study's data revealed several themes, which represented

data regarding online part-time faculty experiences as viewed through Kahn's (1990)

theory of engagement and the conceptual framework of the current study. Seven main

themes emerged that provided insight into the research questions for the current study: a

sense of belonging, authentic leader/follower relationship, autonomy and empowerment, consistent communication and support, recognition, passion for teaching, and leadership strategies representative of institutional culture. Upon further analysis of the data, the overarching theme expressed by the participants in the current study was a sense of belonging, which in turn was impacted by experiences faced by the participants relating to leader/follower relationships, intrinsic motivation, and the culture of the institution. These findings align with the current literature on part-time faculty engagement and inclusion. The findings also shed light on the desire for genuine, caring relationships above effective strategies outlined in the current literature.

These findings built on the current scholarship of online part-time faculty, focusing on the need to foster the relationship between leaders and followers and effective engagement strategies. Additionally, the findings suggested that despite feelings of disconnect, part-time faculty are intrinsically motivated to serve their students, self-motivated to learn about best practices for online teaching, and desire autonomy, empowerment, and recognition in their roles. Leaders must intentionally connect with online part-time faculty. They are representative of the institution and, at times, their only point of contact at the university.

This study emerged because of the increased reliance on part-time faculty and the continued shifts in higher education faculty models in the United States. There has been a shift in the "traditional" faculty model as represented by full-time, tenure-track faculty focusing on teaching, research, and service. Within the culture of higher education today, reliance on part-time faculty has grown significantly and does not seem to be slowing

down. This study does not suggest that part-time faculty should not be utilized in higher education, or that part-time faculty should replace full-time faculty. However, it does suggest the need to engage and support all faculty effectively to positively impact the organization's mission and the students being served.

Discussion of Implications

The findings of this study further inform fields of study and behavior associated with online part-time faculty and private, faith-based higher education institutions as well as their leaders. Study findings have particular implications for practice and research, as well as related leadership, learning, and service.

Implications for Practice

The findings of the current study have several implications for practice. As participants of the current study shared, fostering a sense of belonging among online part-time faculty requires intentional, authentic, and caring relational experiences between themselves and their deans to feel engaged and included. Additionally, engagement in the conceptual framework and Kahn's (1990) engagement theory also recognized the importance of institutional-level engagement and belonging. The implications of practice from the findings of the current study to engage and include online part-time faculty are (1) for the institution and senior leadership to offer more opportunities for online part-time faculty to participate and integrate with the institutional community, (2) for updated policies, procedures, and faculty models, and (3) streamline institutional-level communication directed toward part-time faculty to increase clarity and a sense of belonging.

Implication One

Research has noted that online part-time faculty feel disconnected and alienated from their institutions. The first implication from the current study focuses on the need for more opportunities for online part-time faculty to participate and integrate with the institution-level community. Data from the current study demonstrated that leaders influence online part-time faculty's perceptions of being engaged and included significantly. However, at the institutional level, they do not feel a sense of belonging to their respective universities. Data from the current study also noted how, due to the nature of the online part-time role and other outside obligations, many online part-time faculty are not able to attend regularly scheduled staff/faculty meetings, trainings, professional development, and other community-building opportunities. Developing specific and intentional opportunities to come to campus or meet virtually could impact their sense of belonging and connection at the institutional level.

Roueche et al. (1996) developed the part-time faculty integration model (PTFIM). This model would be suitable for institutions and senior leaders to replicate at their respective institutions to develop more opportunities for online part-time faculty to participate and integrate with the institution-level community. The model was developed out of research surrounding research on organizational identification, part-time faculty employment and job satisfaction. The model argues that part-time faculty bring their own unique history, motivations, and expectations to their respective universities. The model includes "concertive strategies" of socialization, communication, and participation. These three strategies are situated in the organizational cultural context.

Depending on the overarching culture of the organization, these strategies can hinder or reinforce integration within the institution. The identification of integration can be observed through their personal outcomes, such as feelings of belongingness, loyalty, and performance. Additionally, identification can be observed through organizational outcomes as well, such as organization-oriented decision-making (Roueche et al., 1996). According to the recommendations and findings from Roueche et al.'s (1996) research, integration of part-time faculty is possible, but strategies must be institutional-wide and supported at the senior administration level. Some of the strategies identified in their work focused on recruitment, orientation, development, evaluation, and integration of part-time faculty. The current study also identified several strategies that strengthen the value of socialization, communication, and participation as processes to foster a sense of belonging and connection, as outlined by Roueche et al.'s (1996) framework.

Implication Two

Research has noted the rapid and continued growth of part-time faculty within higher education institutions. Even though this population makes up approximately 44% of the current faculty in higher education, they are under-supported. According to Layou et al. (2022), most part-time faculty have limited, unclear, or inconsistent access to the institution's orientation, professional development, administrative support, technical support, and office space. The current study supported the lack of support, professional development, and orientation consistent with research. Implication two from the current study focuses on the need for updated policies, procedures, and faculty models to better support, engage, and include online part-time faculty. The research noted that

over-reliance on the part-time faculty model hinders student learning and outcomes due in part to their lack of adequate support and training to serve their students best (Maxey et al., 2015). Data from the current study also demonstrated the need to better support online part-time faculty at both the institutional level and the leader/follower relational level. Participants voiced little to no training, development, or support in their role as online part-time faculty. Participants also felt they did not know if they were allowed to do certain things because of their roles and needed more clarification on policies and procedures.

If part-time faculty will continue to be utilized to teach, it is in the university's best interest to offer more intentional support, engagement, and inclusion of this population. Institutions are missing out on a large knowledge base when they are excluding part-time faculty from curriculum development, shared governance, and strategic planning.

From the literature on updated faculty models in higher education, Kezar and Maxey (2016) developed a Model of Consensus surrounding four themes of influence that administrators and institutions must consider and incorporate for the future of faculty in higher education. The four themes include mission/goals/roles, responsiveness to external forces, reprofessionalization, and critical values. According to Kezar and Maxey (2016), faculty roles must be flexible and customizable, aligned to the institution's mission, diverse to meet complex needs and value the contribution of all faculty members. Findings from the current study support this theme, specifically autonomy and recognition. Participants voiced their experiences with being given recognition for their

contributions and how important that was for the sense of engagement and belonging. Additionally, participants noted how having autonomy and respect allowed them to tailor their teaching to meet their complex needs as online part-time faculty members.

Kezar and Maxey (2016) also discussed the importance of faculty roles being designed and developed to adapt to external forces such as student demographics and technology integration. Due to the lack of support online part-time faculty face, they are not always provided with up-to-date information on best practices for online teaching. The current study's participants voiced these concerns as well, focusing on the lack of clarification of whether what they were teaching needed revision, new integrations of materials, or updated technologies. The inconsistent communication and support at the institutional level obstructed the current participants from knowing what they could do to adapt to external forces in their teaching roles.

Kezar and Maxey (2016) also suggested that faculty contribute to their success, institution, discipline, and students. Under this theme, the authors argue the need for shared governance, professional development, support structures, and equitable compensation for all faculty types. In the current study, intrinsic motivations were a prevalent theme identified among the participants. They were all self-motivated to educate themselves on best practices and take the initiative to find support when needed. From the current study, participants did not seem concerned with being included in shared governance but did want to be recognized for their contributions to the institution.

Finally, Kezar and Maxey (2016) suggest faculty roles should be developed around key values held in higher education and the historical values of the institution.

The current study supported demonstrating cultural values to improve a sense of belonging, engagement, and inclusion. For the current study, hospitality was a value analysis. Having a welcoming environment significantly impacted the experiences of engagement and inclusion of the study's participants.

Another data source from the literature review by Weber et al. (2022) focused on suggestions and strategies for creating opportunities for connection and community. One key strategy identified by the researchers focused on developing inclusive policies and procedures for part-time faculty. According to Weber et al. (2022), "One of the most important things institutions can do to support quality online teaching is to collaboratively create well-designed policies that assist faculty at all levels in determining and guiding tenets of quality instruction for their institution" (p. 13). To achieve this, Weber et al. (2022) suggested creating cross-institutional teams to examine practices and expectations of online faculty, collaborate to create institution-wide online expectations and qualifications, create institution-wide online teaching policies, and communicate the expectations of online teaching. The current study's findings support the need for a similar strategy outlined by Weber et al. (2022). Participants noted confusion around their role expectations, what they were allowed to do in ethical situations, and who to reach out to when they did need support. With clear expectations, policies, and procedures, online part-time faculty could be better supported in their roles to serve their students, programs, and institutions effectively. Additionally, if leaders clearly lay out policies, procedures, and faculty models, as noted from the literature review and findings

from the current study, issues of inconsistent and vague communication could be resolved for part-time faculty.

Creating policies, procedures, and faculty models that are more inclusive of all faculty types could foster a more profound sense of collegiality, belonging, and collaboration among the faculty, thus allowing for more mission fit of the institution and better support of students.

Implications for Leadership

The findings of the current study and literature review have several implications for leadership. The participants of the study voiced the impacts the leader/follower relationship, as well as communication, had on their perceptions and experiences geared toward engagement and inclusion as online part-time faculty members. Leadership is pivotal in how followers perceive a sense of belonging to an organization. At the heart of leadership is the relationship and meaning one cultivates within their followers. For the participants of the current study, their relationship with their program dean determined significantly how they perceived their engagement at their respective institutions. Leaders who were warm, genuine, authentic, and caring fostered a positive sense of belonging and engagement with their online part-time faculty. On the contrary, leaders who were distant, unapproachable, crass, and only task-focused seemed to foster a negative sense of belonging. The implications of leadership from the findings of the current study to engage and include online part-time faculty are (1) improve leader education on effective leadership styles with online part-time faculty, (2) Increase leader awareness of the needs and desires of online part-time faculty.

Implication One

Online part-time faculty have different needs, desires, and motivations in their role as educators. They face barriers, challenges, and disconnections associated with their teaching, mainly due to the remote nature of the role. Many part-time faculty who teach online do not come to their institution's physical campus. They also have only engaged with a small selection of people or departments that interact with their respective programs. Additionally, online part-time faculty may not be aware of the support and resources available to them as an online part-time faculty. Participants of the current study echoed these barriers, challenges, and disconnections, stating comments such as "remote teaching is just different." Leaders have a responsibility to bridge the gaps associated with remote work versus face-to-face engagement. For the current study, one implication from the data suggested the importance of educating leaders on effective leadership styles that help foster a sense of belonging, engagement, and inclusion with online part-time faculty. The landscape of distance education is different from a physical organization where people come into the office daily. Creating a sense of belonging, engagement, and inclusion must be intentional by the leaders.

Research has noted a shift in interest in online education from organizational barriers to teaching and learning (transactional) concerns. "This transformational shift results from advances in communication technology coupled with a focus on collaborative-constructivist learning theories" (Garrison & Akyol, 2013, p. 104). Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000) developed the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework for online education. This framework focuses on three essential elements in

online learning environments: social, cognitive, and teaching (Cleveland-Innes, Garrison, & Vaughan, 2019). This framework focuses on creating conditions that foster collaboration in online environments by including social, cognitive, and teaching presences in an online environment. This allows for connection, engagement, and inclusion of not only students but faculty and leaders. Leaders working with online part-time faculty can utilize this framework to create environments of collaboration, connection, and belonging intentionally. The data from the current study supported the need for intentionality by the leader of an online program. When leaders were present, engaged, and supportive, they increased a sense of belonging among their online part-time faculty.

Research also indicated two leadership styles that were most effective in influencing online part-time faculty: transformational leadership and servant leadership (Tipple, 2010). Tipple (2010) identified transformational leadership as a foundational framework for engaging and supporting part-time faculty, stating that transformational leadership motivates and inspires part-time faculty to achieve the institutional vision while extending themselves more in their positions to create exceptional learning experiences for students. Servant leadership is a theory and philosophy that an effective leader develops from a desire to help and serve others" (Busay, 2018, p. 31). Servant leadership focuses on key elements and characteristics of leaders, such as empowering others, helping followers develop to their full capacities, and being attentive to the needs of their followers.

Transformational and servant leadership offer opportunities for leaders to engage, include, and support their online part-time faculty.   Both transformational and servant leaders produce high levels of trust with their followers, act as role models, show consideration for others, delegate responsibilities, empower others, teach, communicate, listen, influence others, and are seen as people-oriented leadership theories (Stone et al., 2003). The current study data supported the need for leaders who produce high levels of trust, show genuine care and concern for their followers, empower their followers, support and communicate openly, and are people-focused. It seems that online part-time faculty want leaders who are going to treat them with the respect and care that they demonstrate to their students. Transformational and servant leadership offer foundational concepts, practices, and perspectives for leaders in online higher education settings all while focusing on building up and supporting the follower.

Implication Two

As noted by the literature review in Chapter Two and from the experiences voiced by the current study's participants, online part-time faculty have unique needs and desires in their roles. According to McQuiggan (2012) leaders must tailor strategies to fit online part-time faculty's learning environment, experiences, needs, and uniqueness and should not be "one-size-fits-all." This type of leader must be intentional in their interactions with their followers, engaging with them on a level demonstrating care and compassion. Utilizing both transformational and situational leadership styles can improve leaders' awareness of the needs and desires of their online part-time faculty. Kouzes and Posner (2003) suggested that being a credible leader focuses on building and encouraging

relationships. For Kouzes and Posner (2011), there are six disciplines needed by leaders

to earn and sustain credibility:

- Discover yourself: Leaders must internally explore and review their leadership styles and values.
- Appreciate constituents: Leaders must lean into the relationships with their members and develop an understanding of their members' collective values and desires.
- Affirm shared values: Leaders must honor diversity, identify a common ground of agreement, unite others in a common cause, and build a sense of community.
- Develop capacity: Leaders must educate members, allow more discretion, and keep them informed.
- Serve a purpose: Leaders must serve and set an example for those they lead by showing what is important for themselves and the organization.
- Sustain hope: Leaders must be there for their members in times of need. They must recognize and reward members, foster feelings of appreciation, and reinforce shared values.

Focusing on the behaviors and actions associated with an appreciation of constituents can

help a leader better understand the desires and needs of their online part-time faculty,

ultimately leading to providing intentional, personalized support for them. The current

study's participants echoed the need to be appreciated, empowered, recognized, and

supported in their roles as online part-time faculty. They emphasized the desire to be

seen and recognized for their contributions to their students and the institution. When

people feel seen and heard, they will better serve in their role. Leaders must be mindful

and intentional in developing the relationship between online part-time faculty who are

often excluded from the day-to-day culture of the organization. When leaders are

cognizant of the unique needs and desires of their online part-time faculty, they can better

serve them, advocate for support and resources, put them into activities that will help

them thrive, improve student experiences/outcomes, and support the mission of the organization.

Implications for Research

As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the findings of the current study suggest several implications for practice, research, as well as related leadership, learning, and service. However, there are limitations to the current research.

Implication One

According to Van Manen (1990), the primary purpose of phenomenology is to "reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (as cited in Bloomberg and Volpe, 2019, p. 54). Due to the research design and phenomenological methodology of the current study, the findings cannot be considered generalized to all online part-time faculty or all online part-time faculty that teach in a Christian higher education institution.

Implication Two

The findings also cannot capture all aspects of participants' experiences as online part-time faculty. It is impossible to deduce all factors attributed to the participants' lives that have contributed to their experiences and perceptions of engagement and inclusion by their program deans. The current study focused explicitly on online part-time faculty with a minimum of two years of teaching experience at a Baptist/Southern Baptist denominational, CCCU-affiliated institution. It was beyond the scope of the current study to generate data from the deans that support the online faculty of this study, or other cohorts of part-time faculty. The perspectives of the program deans remain unknown as

to how they perceive they engage their online part-time faculty. Finally, this study did not assess how online part-time faculty's sense of engagement and inclusion impacts the student learning outcomes.

Future Research

Keeping the limitations of the current study in mind, the researcher suggests three areas for future research related to engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty: (1) compare perceptions of engagement and inclusion by different "types" of online faculty per Gappa and Leslie's (1993) identifying characteristics, (2) compare the perspectives of a sense of engagement and inclusion between online part-time faculty and the perceptions of fostering engagement and inclusion by their program deans, and (3) investigate online part-time faculty's sense of belonging with student outcomes.

Perspectives of Part-Time Faculty

The first suggestion for future research revolves around comparing perspectives of engagement and inclusion by different "types" of online faculty per Gappa and Leslie's (1993) identifying characteristics. Engagement is a personalized experience influenced by multiple facets both intrinsic and extrinsic. Future research is needed to understand the viewpoints of all online part-time faculty. Remember from Chapter Two's discussion on the characteristics of part-time faculty outlined by Gappa and Leslie (1993); career-enders, specialists, aspiring academics, and freelancers. Each of these categories of part-time faculty brings different backgrounds, experiences, and motivations for teaching. Their perspectives and perceptions of engagement and inclusion may differ. For example, online part-time faculty who work a full-time job outside of higher

education and only teach one to two classes a semester (i.e. specialist) may view the idea

of professional development inclusion/opportunities for online faculty differently than

those online part-time faculty that are looking for full-time work in higher education (i.e.

aspiring academics). Understanding what practices and strategies different types of

online part-time faculty find most meaningful can help leaders determine more suitable

support services, resources, and practices.

Perspectives of Part-Time Faculty versus Program Deans

Research has demonstrated the needs of online part-time faculty and their unique

challenges. However, further research is needed to compare the perspectives and

perceptions of engagement and inclusion between online part-time faculty and the

perceptions of fostering engagement and inclusion by their program deans. There seems

to be a disconnect in the research as to what is needed by online part-time faculty to feel a

sense of belonging and what program deans are utilizing to foster engagement and

inclusion. Future research could focus on conducting a study that offers both online

part-time faculty and their deans to share experiences of a sense of belonging and

fostering belonging. The focus could be to determine what is desired by online part-time

faculty, and what program deans feel they are doing to foster a sense of belonging and

then compare to see the gaps and disconnect. Research noted key leadership strategies

utilized to engage and support online part-time faculty, including belonging, professional

development, mentoring, orientation, and recognition (Tipple, 2010; Tipple, 2009; Kezar

& Maxey, 2016; Lyons, 2007). However, the current study findings did not recognize all

these as pertinent to a sense of belonging among the participants. Starting a dialogue

among online part-time faculty and their program deans can start discussions on how to best serve, support, and engage these members of faculty that are utilized frequently in higher education.

Impacts on Student Outcomes

Research has suggested that part-time faculty are student-centered and passionate about their interactions with students.   Additionally, research has noted that when part-time faculty feel disconnected and not receiving the support need, their students suffer (Sam, 2021). Including online part-time faculty more intentionally in the community of the organization can impact their teaching methods and assist them in fostering community and belonging among their students. Research has investigated the lack of support services that hinder teaching, but little is noted on how a sense of belonging by the part-time faculty impacts student outcomes. Suggestions for future research could focus on investigating how online part-time faculty's sense of belonging impacts student outcomes. According to Ferencz (2017), part-time faculty desire opportunities for collaboration, communication with colleagues, and connection to their institutions. Ferencz (2017) also identified part-time faculty's considerable impact on student learning and how a sense of belonging can impact the outcomes part-time faculty have on student learning. The findings of a study that focuses on investigating how online part-time faculty's sense of belonging impacts student outcomes could reveal if an online part-time faculty's sense of belonging impacts their ability to foster a sense of belonging in their online classroom ultimately impacting the outcomes of students in their

courses. A study like this could provide deeper insights into the realm of creating

community and belonging in the online learning environment.

Summary and Concluding Remarks

Chapter Five discussed the findings related to the research purpose and reviewed

the literature. This chapter also discussed the conclusions and implications of the study

for practice and leadership for the advancement of learning, service, and research as it

related to engagement and inclusion of online part-time faculty.

The findings of the current study shed light on the engagement and inclusion

experiences of eight online part-time faculty. From the interviews with the study's

participants, seven themes were identified which contributed to the study's major findings

that three facets, intrinsic motivations, positive and supportive leader/follower

relationships, and institutional culture, seem to impact online part-time faculty members'

overall engagement and inclusion in their roles, leading to their overall sense of

belonging within their organization.

The implications of practice from the findings of the current study to engage and

include online part-time faculty included (1) for the institution and senior leadership to

offer more opportunities for online part-time faculty to participate and integrate with the

institutional community, (2) for updated policies, procedures, and faculty models, and (3)

streamline institutional-level communication directed toward part-time faculty to increase

clarity and a sense of belonging. The implications of leadership from the findings of the

current study to engage and include online part-time faculty included (1) improving

leader education on effective leadership styles with online part-time faculty, (2)

increasing leader awareness of the needs and desires of online part-time faculty. The implications for research, or limitations of the current study, proposed that the current findings cannot be considered generalized to all online part-time faculty or all online part-time faculty that teach in a Christian higher education institution. Additionally, the findings also cannot capture all aspects of participants' experiences as online part-time faculty. Recommendations for future research included focusing on expanding on the perspectives of different types of part-time faculty as characterized by Gappa and Leslie (1993), comparison of engagement perspectives of online part-time faculty and their respective deans, and the impacts of online part-time faculty's sense of belonging on student outcomes.

Influential relationships are foundational in leadership. The current study demonstrated the need for support of a solid, caring relationship between online part-time faculty and their deans in order to perceive a strong sense of belonging and connection to their programs. As Mark stated about being engaged as an online part-time faculty, "It's part of the leader's responsibility. Let me help you become better in this area. Or even just the question, how could we better support you? Even just to be asked that question by a leader, is the leader saying to you, "I see you, I appreciate you." Online part-time faculty who participated in the current study believed that investing in taking the time to learn about their engagement and inclusion experiences and perceptions of belonging is worth the effort to move the needle for understanding and change to best support online part-time faculty.

APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT FOR
--- Leadership Strategies for Engaging Online Part-time Undergraduate Faculty in Christian Higher-Education Institutions ---

You are invited to participate in a research study to explore the lived experiences with engagement of online part-time faculty with strategies utilized by the program supervisor that they have perceived as impactful to engagement and inclusion within their institution. You have been identified as a potential participant due to your qualifications as a current online part-time faculty teaching in a Baptist denomination, a Christian higher education institution affiliated with the CCCU, and at least two years of part-time teaching experience. This study poses no health risks; however, we may ask you for confidential information about your work engagement experiences and your supervisor's leadership strategies. This information will help us learn about effective engagement and inclusion strategies for faculty working online. Your data will be anonymously reported and will be kept confidential.

This study is being conducted by Eleisha Garland, Ph.D. candidate at Anderson University in the Center of Leadership and Organizations, Business Concentration, under the supervision of Dr. Pamela Larde, Associate Professor of Leadership. You were selected as a possible participant because you identified as currently teaching in an online part-time capacity at a private Christian higher education institution.

If you decide to participate, I will conduct interviews with online part-time faculty to explore the lived experiences of engagement of online part-time faculty with strategies utilized by the program supervisor that they have perceived as impactful to engagement and inclusion within their institution. Your commitment would include participating in a remote interview for approximately 60 minutes, which will be at a time convenient to your schedule. After the initial interview, there will be up to two short follow-up phone meetings to confirm and clarify information from the original interview. The entire interview and follow-up process is to be completed over a 3–4-week period.

Your participation in this study may involve potential risks or discomforts. These include negative emotional responses to challenges towards engagement and inclusion in online part-time faculty positions.

This study's potential benefits to participants include sharing personal stories to understand better effective ways to engage and include online part-time faculty. The study intends to contribute benefits to higher education leaders' engagement strategies. I cannot promise that you will receive any or all the benefits described. An additional benefit for participants is a monetary Starbucks gift card for participating in the research study.

Any information obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain anonymous. Data collected through your participation may be used to fulfill a doctoral education requirement.

Data will be confidential, and information will be protected in encrypted files and locked files. Identifying data will be destroyed after the interviews will all participants are completed. Participants can withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, and can withdraw their data that has been collected, as long as the data is identifiable.

Your decision whether to participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Anderson University.

If you have any questions, I invite you to ask them now. If you have questions later, the principal investigator can be contacted at phone number, email, or, the faculty advisor, at email, will be happy to answer them. You will be provided a copy of this form to keep.

For more information regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee/Institutional Review Board by phone or e-mail.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.

_____   _____
Participant's signature   Date   Investigator's signature   Date

_____   _____
Print Name   Print Name

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT LETTER/EMAILS

Snowballing Recruitment Email to Leaders:

Hi,

My name is _____, and I am a Ph.D. candidate at Anderson University in the Center of Leadership and Organizations in the business concentration. I am conducting a phenomenological study on online part-time faculty engagement and inclusion experiences with at least two years of teaching experience at CCCU institutions. I am reaching out to see if you would allow me to interview members of your online part-time faculty who teach at the bachelor's level. The interviews would be all virtual and take approximately 45-60 minutes. I would also happily share my results with you when they're finished.

I appreciate your consideration in allowing me to gain insight into the experiences of your online part-time faculty.

Respectfully,

To Participant from Snowballing Sampling:

Hi,

My name is_____, and I am a Ph.D. candidate at Anderson University in the Center of Leadership and Organizations in the business concentration. I am conducting a phenomenological study on online part-time faculty engagement and inclusion experiences with at least two years of teaching experience at CCCU institutions. A fellow colleague identified you as a potential participant in my study.

I am reaching out to see if you would like to participate in my dissertation study. I will be conducting interviews with current online part-time faculty members who teach in Christian higher education with at least two years of experience. The interviews will take approximately 45-60 minutes and will be conducted via Zoom.

If you are willing to participate, I will send the informed consent form, meeting sign-up link, and information on the following steps.

I am excited to hear from you and appreciate your consideration in participating in my research study.

Thank you,

<u>Social Media Post:</u>

Hi! My name is _____, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Center of Leadership and Organizations in Leadership with a Business Concentration at Anderson University in Anderson, SC.

I am conducting a qualitative research study to address the research question: How do online part-time faculty experience engagement and inclusion by their program deans?

I am recruiting participants to participate in an interview about their engagement experiences as an online part-time faculty teaching at the bachelor level with two years of teaching experience at a Baptist/Southern Baptist Denominational Council of Christian Colleges and Universities affiliated school within the United States.

A small gift card of $15 to Starbucks will be given to those selected and who complete the interview process successfully.

If you are interested in participating, please fill out the short inquiry form.

I appreciate your consideration in participating in my research study. I look forward to learning more about the experiences and perspectives of online part-time faculty.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Part-Time Faculty Interview Protocol and Questions: Online Part-time Faculty
Experiences and Perceptions of Leadership Strategies for Engagement and Inclusion
    Participant ID:
    Interviewee:
    Interviewer:
    Date :
    Time:
    Location: Face-to-Face or Zoom

Part I: Introductory Question Objectives (5-10 minutes). Build rapport, describe the study,
and answer any questions (the informed consent form will be reviewed, and sure signed
copies have been received).

*Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today. You have been asked to do this interview
because you have been identified as an online part-time faculty member, the primary group
under investigation in this study. My research project focuses on instructors like you, who
teach part-time in higher education. For this study, I am focusing on part-time faculty with at
least two years of experience who teach online at a CCCU, Baptist denomination, or
Christian higher education institution. Through this study, I hope to gain insight into your
experience with engagement and inclusion as an online part-time faculty member.*

*Because your responses are important and I want to capture everything you say, I would like
to audio record our conversation today.*
Do I have your permission to record this interview? **(If yes, thank the participant and turn
on the recording equipment.)**
Response:

*I will also be taking written notes during the interview. I assure you that your responses and
any associated data will be kept confidential, and a pseudonym will be used when quoting
from the transcripts. In addition, every effort will be made to redact any personal information
that could be identifying, such as your current teaching institution, exact courses taught, or
other items shared. The audio files will be transcribed using a professional transcription
service using a pseudonym. The audio recordings will also be destroyed after they are
transcribed. Finally, you will be able to review the transcript to ensure your responses have
been accurately captured.*

Informed Consent
*To meet our ethics requirements at my university, you must sign the form I sent. Essentially,
this document states that (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation*

is voluntary, and you may stop participating at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) we do not intend to inflict any harm.
Do you have any questions about the interview process, this form, or how your data will be used?
<u>Response:</u>

I have planned this interview to last approximately one hour. During this time, I have several questions I would like to cover. I want to respect your time, but any additional responses are welcome if you have more to say on this topic.
Do you have any questions at this time? **(If no, proceed.)**
<u>Response:</u>

Part II: Objectives (30 - 40 minutes): Obtain the participant's insights, in his/her own words, into their experience as an online part-time faculty working in a CCCU, Baptist denominational Christian higher education institution.
Prefatory Statement: I would like to hear about your experiences in your own words. After gathering some brief background information, I will ask you some questions about your engagement and inclusion experiences as an online part-time faculty member at your university.

Background Information		
Question 1	● Where do you currently teach?	
Question 2	● What city and state is this located?	
Question 3	● What department do you teach in?	
Question 4	● On average, how many classes do you teach per semester?	
Question 5	● What led you to work in Christian higher education, ● Probe: Why did you become a part-time faculty member?	
Question 6	● What is your professional background?	
Question 7	● How many years have you been teaching? ● Probe: How many years have you been at your current institution?	
Question 8	● Have you considered becoming a full-time faculty member? ● Probe: Why or why not?	
Question 9	● What is your age?	
Question 10	● What is your ethnicity?	
Motivation and Engagement		

Question 11	• Tell me about your reasons for teaching.	
Question 12	• Tell me how you view your role as an educator at your university. • Probe: How secure do you feel as an online part-time faculty member?	
Question 13	• To clarify, in your own words, how would you define employee engagement? • Probe: Tell me about an experience where you have been most engaged in your current position. • Probe: When not?	
Question 14	• To clarify, in your own words, how would you define inclusion? • Probe: Tell me about an experience where you have felt most included in your current position. • Probe: When not?	
Impacts of Christian Culture and Hospitality		
Question 14	• Tell me about the culture of your current institution. • Probe: How does this impact your engagement and inclusion as an online part-time faculty?	
Question 15	• How would you define hospitality within a Christian higher education institution? • Probe: Tell me about a time you experienced hospitality at your current university. Describe it in as much detail as possible. • Probe: Tell me about an experience where you did not feel welcome or included at your institution. Describe it in as much detail as possible	
Question 17	• Tell me about your experiences with trainings, meetings, or support services you have engaged in at the institutional level that have made you, as an online part-time faculty member, feel a sense of belonging at your institution.	

Program Deans: Specific Leader Impacts on Engagement and Inclusion		
Question 18	- Tell me about your program supervisor's specific strategies that have positively impacted your engagement in the program. - Probe: negatively impacted?	
Question 19	- Tell me about your program supervisor's leadership strategies that have positively impacted your inclusion in the program. - Probe: negatively impacted?	
Question 20	Tell me about your experiences with program-level activities or practices, such as trainings, meetings, professional development, or support services you have engaged in that have made you, as an online part-time faculty member, feel a sense of belonging within your program.	
Question 21	- Describe your relationship with your program dean. - Probe: Tell me about your experiences with your program supervisor's communication. - Probe: How does your supervisor's communication influence your engagement and sense of belonging in your program?	
Question 22	- Finally, from your experiences with engagement and inclusion as an online part-time faculty member, if you could change or add something to your program supervisor's leadership strategies for engagement and inclusion, what would you change and why? - Probe: What do you think would be the impact of implementing that change?	

	Wrap up – That concludes the questions for today's interviews. Before we wrap up, do you have any questions or additional comments?	

Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this research study.

I will now end the audio recording and discuss the next steps.

Within the next two days, I will email you a copy of the interview transcript and a summary of the main points. Please read through it to inform me if you believe the interview and the transcript accurately captured your lived experiences or let me know if changes should be made.

I will email you your gift card today for your participation.

Again, before ending this interview, I would like to give you my email address and my cell phone number in case you want to contact me.

Thank you again for taking time out of your busy schedule for this interview. I sincerely appreciate it. Have a great day!

APPENDIX D: POST-INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT FOLLOW-UP CONTACT

Post-interview

Thank you again for your participation in my research study. Now that the interview has been completed, I would like to review the next steps with you.

Within the following week, I will email you a copy of the transcript for the interview. Please read through it to inform me if you believe the interview and the transcript captured your lived experiences accurately or let me know if changes should be made to the transcript.

Please read and respond within 48 hours of receiving the email with the transcript attached.

_____ Yes

_____ No (alternate timeframe if the answer is No)

I want to schedule a 15-minute follow-up appointment to review and make changes to your transcript.

_____ Yes

_____ No

Before ending this interview, I would like to give you my email address
and my cell phone number in case you want to contact me.

Thank you again for taking time out of your busy schedule for this interview. I sincerely appreciate it. Have a great day!

APPENDIX E: CODEBOOK EXCERPTS

Name of Theme	Key Code	Examples of Quotes from Transcripts
Sense of Belonging	Belonging Engagement Inclusion	- Positive influence and a difference and make relationships - So I feel like as an adjunct, there's always going to be some sort of disconnect from not feeling really part of the faculty because you don't have an office there. - Don't really feel connected - As an adjunct personally, my experience in being connected is very poor. - I do think that there are different ways engagement happens. Some of it happens through programming brought to you by a university or an employer, and some of it is intrinsic. So some of your engagement is just your self-motivation. - I don't really feel that involved, I guess, as far as things that happen there. I don't really feel engaged. - The way he treats me, it really boosts my morale. It tells me and shows me that there's more to this

		and it tells me to ... He gives me that. It kind of uplifts my spirit, understand? ● It makes you feel as though you're not part of the team, or at least not an important part of the team. That there isn't a great deal of support or care.
Authentic and Caring Leader/Follower Relationship	Relationship	● I don't feel that these days. I feel I am not seen. That the role is perceived to be a necessary inconvenience, and that the adjunct, the online role is definitely second class. ● I feel like he's taken the time to really make sure every single semester I feel taken care of, I feel like I have everything I need. ● He is a wonderful ally and he's also a wonderful partner in spearheading conversation. ● He treats me as a friend and less of a subordinate. ● Open, professional, easy to talk to, helpful. ● Non-existent. ● She's very helpful, accommodating, and supportive
Consistent Communication and Support	Communication Support and Resources	● From a part-time faculty perspective, a little disappointing.

		And I think it really depends upon who your supervisor is.
		• The only time I receive an email from my immediate supervisor is to either ask me if I would be willing to teach a course, or in response to an email that I have sent with a specific inquiry. Other than that, I don't receive anything.
		• But he has made sure I have felt comfortable with every single chapter, whatever class we're teaching, he gives me plenty of heads up.
		• For instance, last week right before I turned in my grade, I was struggling with making a decision on a student who hadn't turned in an assignment, because I don't want to give anyone a bad grade. I want everyone to feel good about it. But I picked up the phone, he answered the phone, I talked through the situation with him, I asked him, and I honestly also believe that because of my relationship with him, he's honest with me. So, I can always go to him and say, "Am I being crazy?" And I

		know he'll tell me if I am. So, we were able to talk through it. ● What do you feel?" These are his words now. "What do you feel is necessary for you to perform, to upgrade, in your services? What are the vital tools you need?" ● More specific emails, I guess, so I know what's expected of me. ● Communicate frequently. ● Send encouraging messages out all the time
Passions for Teaching	Connection to the Organization Perception of Role Personal Motivations for Teaching	● Making the right connection at the right time. ● I had a friend/mentor that currently is one of the associate deans or dean in the finance and econ department. So once I got my master's, honestly, he just gave me a call and said, "Hey, we're growing. We don't have enough teachers. ● And so he invited me to teach. ● I was familiar with it, and I was looking for opportunities to teach. ● First, my husband went there way back in the day… had a special place for multiple reasons.

		• So I ultimately see my role as a mentor.
		• Those relationships are very important to me and growing them and mentoring them.
		• I consider myself to be a servant to them.
		• want to be the kind of mentor and adult that, one, I'm a toughlove parent and professor.
		• I enjoy being in the classroom.
		• I would say that my greatest joy is interacting with students personally.
		• I've always wanted to teach. Teaching was always on the list.
		• I love learning and I love sharing that knowledge.
		• Passion right from the days of my first degree. Teaching has been something I've loved.
		• I wanted to teach and I wanted to be able to use the skillset that I have.
		• It is enjoyable and I get the meaning and purpose of it and satisfaction and hopefully passed on knowledge to the next generation.
Autonomy and Empowerment	Empowerment Autonomy	• I haven't had even the slightest help or indication that, "Hey, we may need to look at redesigning some of the way you're presenting your

		- questions. Can I support you in that? - He's also made me feel very empowered to change anything that I needed to. - So he's given me all the tools and helped me succeed, but has also empowered me and allowed me to make my class my own. - I mean I would say that the university is pretty hands-off with me and I like it that way. I like the autonomy that is given to me. - We talked through how I could take some ownership over that course. - There's ideas that I have, but because he teaches it, I can't change it. So I don't know. I've offered suggestions.
Recognition	Appreciation Recognition	- It makes me feel that my good work is being seen and appreciated. - Thank us for what we do and how we do it and that kind of stuff. That makes you feel good. - He always says nice things about me. - But she's given me some very high compliments. - Positive reinforcement.

| Leadership Strategies Representative of Institutional Culture | Culture in Higher Education Hospitality Institutional Level Communication | Forming a community. It's family type. It's the kindest university I've ever been a part of. My experience when I first was employed into the staff office. When I was employed into the faculty, I met a few friends that made the place hospitable to me. Goes above and beyond. Going above and beyond to meet the needs of the people. Tactics aren't always clear when you're not present. So, make sure you're checking in on your adjuncts so that they're not kind of on an island alone, I would say. We get bombarded with emails and I really don't know what's considered for me and what's not. Communication is not clear. I get all the emails as everybody else. So I get the department emails of, oh, there's this event, or this person died, and I don't know all those people. So there's a disconnect, for sure, there. And I would say that's just because I'm not on campus. I'm not there. |

		- I get general emails, announcements from the dean and the provost, and of course registrar for grades. So, I'm in the loop for all that. I don't feel alienated. - Sometimes if I get an email and I have no idea what it's talking about because it's for meetings that people are really on campus so to speak. So it's not really applied to me, but when they were changing over some of the systems recently I felt kind of... I was a little nervous about some of the change because I felt like I was going to do it wrong because I wasn't in person to do that.

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