

UNDERSTANDING SELF-EFFICACY OF REGIONAL UNIVERSITY

ADJUNCT FACULTY: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

by

Aletta Brook Purdum

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Liberty University

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APPROVED BY:

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at Colonial State University (CSU; a pseudonym). The theories guiding this study were Bandura's theory of self-efficacy and Maslow's human motivation theory since motivation-impacting self-efficacy was described as a dynamic that has definitive antecedents, but confidence in one's abilities and skills can change as a result of personal achievements, individual experiences, outside influences, and purpose. This qualitative research was conducted to improve understanding about the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty. There was a plethora of research available about adjunct faculty but none of that research focused specifically on adjunct faculty at regional universities. Regional universities are unique in that they have an exclusive culture and academic structure. The participants were adjunct faculty of varying genders and lengths of CSU service who teach no more than nine hours per regular semester and/or no more than six hours per summer semester at one or more of the CSU campuses. Data collection methods included individual interviews, focus groups, and participants' letters. Fifteen themes emerged during the data analysis process. The five predominant themes were (a) need, (b) confident, (c) positive, (d) experience, and (e) personality. The results of this study showed that certain events, personal characteristics, and level of support from peers have an impact on self-efficacy. These findings were in alignment with existing literature. Current literature maintains that adjunct faculty have generally low self-esteem but that was not the case in this current study. The present study found that regional university adjunct faculty were confident in their skills and abilities.

Keywords: self-efficacy, adjunct faculty, part-time faculty, higher education, regional university

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Dedication

This doctoral dissertation is dedicated to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Without Him, I am nothing, I have nothing, and I can do nothing . . . including this doctoral dissertation. I humbly lay this research project at the feet of Jesus. I owe it all to Him. “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord” (Zechariah 2:10). Thank you, Jesus, for your promises. You are always faithful!

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I want to thank my husband, Perry Purdum, for loving me through all of my craziness during this process. I love you! To my kids, Hailey, Hayden, and Hylton, thank you for being you. You're the reason I do so much of what I do. You are the best parts of me, and I love you to the moon and back! Thank you to my Dad, Curt Tuggle, for always believing in me more than I believed in myself. Thank you to my Mom, Linda Tuggle, for always loving me and praying for me. Thank you to my stepmom, Ladonna Tuggle, for always encouraging me. I love all three of you more than I can describe, and I am so very grateful for each of you.

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List of Abbreviations

Colonial State University (CSU)

Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Learning Management System (LMS)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

This single case qualitative study investigates the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at Colonial State University (CSU; a pseudonym), a regional university in the south-central region of the United States, to increase understanding of public university stakeholders regarding this matter. As the use of adjunct faculty has become more prevalent (Curtis, Mahabir, & Vitullo, 2016), the need to understand their self-efficacy has become more necessary. Chapter One of this study contributes a background portion which includes the historical, social, and theoretical context of the study, providing information about how the rate of adjunct faculty has increased, important variable surrounding adjunct faculty, and specific underpinnings encompassing the research. Situation to self, the problem statement, purpose statement, and significance of the study sections are included in this segment and give insight regarding the researcher's lens of interpretation, the reason and resolve of the research, and the importance of the investigation. The research questions are expanded upon and supported by research. Relevant definitions are listed as a resource guide, and the chapter concludes with a summary.

Background

Adjunct faculty are employed at a higher rate as financial limitations become a more significant concern at higher education institutions (Curtis et al., 2016). Unlike their full-time counterparts, adjunct faculty typically do not receive benefits like paid time off and health insurance (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). Also, adjunct faculty are customarily paid per credit hour for the classes they teach rather than a steady salary like full-time faculty (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). Regional universities are distinctive in that they are often situated in hometown settings with communities that are inviting and class rosters that are considerably

smaller than those of larger state schools (Docking & Curton, 2015). Even though research about self-efficacy of adjunct faculty is available, adjunct faculty specifically at regional universities has not been a focus.

Historical Context

From 1975 to 2011, the demand for adjunct faculty increased by roughly 20% (Curtis et al., 2016). Since 2011, that number has steadily risen (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). In a 2018 publication, The National Center for Education Statistics stated:

In fall 2016, of the 1.5 million faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 53 percent were full-time and 47 percent were part-time. Faculty include professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, assisting professors, adjunct professors, and interim professors. From fall 1999 to fall 2016, the total number of faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 51 percent (from 1.0 to 1.5 million). The number of fulltime faculty increased by 38 percent (from 591,000 to 816,000) from fall 1999 to fall 2016, an increase of 29 percent from fall 1999 to fall 2011 and 7 percent from fall 2011 to fall 2016. In comparison, the number of part-time faculty increased by 74 percent (from 437,000 to 762,000) between 1999 and 2011, and then decreased by 4 percent (from 762,000 to 733,000) between 2011 and 2016. (p. 1)

According to Bastedo, Altbach, and Gumport (2016), tradition has historically preserved the professoriate. Since the rise of academic unions in the 1970s caused adversarial relationships between administration and faculty, the position of faculty has become more fragile (Bastedo et al., 2016). For example, tenure is not as prevalent as it once was. “In 2013, 31.9 percent of all full-time faculty at all colleges and universities held a non-tenure-track position” (Altbach, 2016, p. 87). Over the years these aspects, coupled with budgetary issues that many higher education

institutions now face, has morphed the postsecondary faculty situation into a complex design that includes scores of part-time instructors.

Social Context

Socially, the employment status of adjunct faculty impacts many entities around them. The university experiences considerable cost benefits from hiring adjunct faculty over full-time faculty. Brennan and Magness (2018) found that full-time instructors receive \$51,000 in salary, lecturers receive \$57,000, and assistant professors receive \$71,000. However, adjunct faculty teaching a standard 4-4 load would earn only \$21,600 per year and receive no benefits (Brennan & Magness, 2018). Adjunct faculty in the workforce affect full-time faculty as they compete for the same jobs open in the higher education job market (Ott & Dippold, 2018). University students are impacted, positively or negatively, by adjunct faculty during their time spent in conjunction with requisite coursework under the adjunct faculty's directive (Mueller, Mandernach, & Sanderson, 2013). Mueller et al. (2013) found that students under the tutelage of adjunct faculty tend to learn less and are less satisfied with their learning experience. Student engagement with instructors is a critical component in degree completion (Price & Tovar, 2014).

Theoretical Context

Bandura (1977) hypothesized that self-efficacy had distinctive precursors and determinants. However, achievements, experiences, outside persuasion, and functionalities could impact behavior. This stirring of behavior could, ideally, adjust self-efficacy. Self-efficacy theory originated in Bandura's earlier work regarding social learning theory (Bandura, 1977).

Maslow's (1943b) theory of human motivation establishes a concept of motivation that is grounded in propositions from his earlier needs-based work. Maslow (1943a) concluded that

organisms are whole beings and must be treated as such when considering their motivations, man is incessantly in need and constantly reaching for more, motivation and behavior are not synonymous, and basic human needs are naturally in a hierarchy where the most basic need must be met first. This qualitative study used self-efficacy theory when analyzing motivation for adjunct faculty to understand better how adjunct faculty perceive their own teaching skills and abilities. Maslow's theory of motivation was utilized in the current research as the foundation for establishing the needs of adjunct faculty to develop an understanding about how deficiencies impact adjunct faculty self-efficacy.

Situation to Self

Based on my personal experiences, not every adjunct faculty member is concerned with or equipped for college student success. As a college student, I experienced college adjunct faculty who did not have the training necessary to properly administer the course materials in a manner that prepared me for assignments and exams. As a parent, I walked with my college-aged children as they dealt with adjunct instructors who were less than attentive. For example, my son received a failing final grade in a course when he, in fact, earned a high passing grade.

Coming fresh out of the private sector with absolutely no higher education training, I had very little self-efficacy as a college instructor during my first semester and found it challenging to keep up my confidence. Moving forward, I became more confident and found my footing. Soon I had built a network of solid relationships with students, and they confided in me about struggles they had with adjunct instructors. I am a full-time instructor and the lead instructor for the entry-level management course. I found that the adjunct instructor who taught one of the sections of the entry-level management course did not thoroughly grade written assignments and did not give appropriate feedback allowing for essential improvement. Our students deserve

better, and that is what led me to study the topic of adjunct faculty self-efficacy at the regional university level. My hope is that the information will be utilized by university stakeholders to implement orientation, training, integration, and other programs to equip adjunct faculty with the tools they need to be confident in their skills and abilities. We must shore up our resources to fulfill our university mission to educate students.

Certain assumptions must be addressed on my part as I am the researcher and, thus, the instrument in this research. Ontologically, I assume that because adjunct faculty are part-time, they are not fully invested in the university's mission and values. I believe that is the reality for adjunct faculty (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Further, I assume that adjunct faculty have other commitments that compete for their time and energy. My axiological assumption is that higher education holds a very high value (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and that adjunct instructors do not place the same value on higher education. My epistemological assumption means that I am interviewing my peers, asking for their viewpoint (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I must acknowledge that they are answering through the lens with which they see the world. I have to take that into consideration. A social constructivist paradigm is the essence of this qualitative case study because personal interviews are at the heart of this project (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Whereas the researcher desires to understand adjunct faculty self-efficacy and the context in which adjunct faculty undergo their employment related experiences, a social constructivist paradigm is fitting (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Problem Statement

At a four-year regional institution located in the south-central region of the United States, there is one adjunct faculty for every three full-time faculty members (Office of Accountability and Academics, 2019). Because of the course selection-instructor dynamic, roughly two thirds

of the student population take at least one class with an adjunct instructor every semester (Office of Accountability and Academics, 2019). There is a growing concern regarding the effectiveness and consequently the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are increasingly necessary (Curtis et al., 2016) and increasingly unsure of their place within higher education (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). The relationship between adjunct faculty and administrators and tenured faculty is often strained due to lack of communication and interaction (Bastedo et al., 2016). Kouzes and Posner (2017) maintained that self-efficacy for constituents is crucial for impactful organizational operations and culture. The propensity for achieving the organizational mission, vision, and goals is increased significantly when institution stakeholders feel connected to the organization, but this does not happen when stakeholders are uncertain of their organizational fit (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The problem is that there is insufficient literature on self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at regional universities. In reality, the understanding for self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at regional universities is widely lacking, in general, even though the interaction they have with students has been found to have a profound impact on student success (Mueller et al., 2013). By studying the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU, the researcher seeks to broaden the overall understanding of this phenomenon.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single instrumental case study (Yin, 2018) is to understand the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU. Self-efficacy is generally defined as the belief in one's skills and abilities (Bandura, 1977). The theories guiding this study are Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy and Maslow's (1943a, 1943b) human motivation theory because motivation-impacting self-efficacy is described as a dynamic that has definitive antecedents, but

confidence in one's abilities and skills can change as a result of personal achievements, individual experiences, outside influences, and purpose.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study for this qualitative single case study is a three-pronged concept. This single case study has empirical, practical, and theoretical significances which add to the current research. The findings from the current study could enlighten areas for adjunct faculty, allowing them to increase their self-efficacy further, provide insight for other faculty that broadens their ability to engage with adjunct faculty, and enhance knowledge of university administrators where adjunct faculty are concerned so that they may improve orientation, training, and employee development efforts.

Empirical Significance

The empirical significance of the current study adds to the current literature by providing consideration for adjunct faculty self-efficacy that is specific to regional universities.

Understanding the self-efficacy of a particular group of individuals enlarges general knowledge of the self-efficacy situation and, precisely, how outside impacts and personal experiences influence self-efficacy. This adds to the theories that have been identified as relevant through which to explore the topic of self-efficacy: Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) and Maslow's human motivation theory (1943a, 1943b).

Practical Significance

Multi-faceted practical significance is apparent in this case study. Through this research, university management can gain understanding about the assets and fragilities in their guidelines and strategies with regard to adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty's full-time counterparts will gain enhanced information about how to more effectively work with and help the adjunct faculty

members. Residually, this benefit also has the propensity to improve organizational culture. Analysis of an organization's strategic situation increases awareness, which allows for organization-wide improvements (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). There are many avenues for adjunct faculty at a regional university to benefit from this qualitative case study. Developments in specific university interests such as adjunct orientation, training, acclimation, integration, and support that are identified as deficient through the current research can be implemented, but only when stakeholders are made aware of their existence.

Practical significance involves how the current study benefits stakeholders. The administration gains information about the strengths and weaknesses in their policies and procedures about adjunct faculty. Full-time faculty benefit from increased knowledge about how to better collaborate with and assist their part-time counterparts. For adjunct faculty, the hope is that shedding light on the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU will lead to improvements in relative areas that are described as deficient such as orientation, training, acclimation, integration, or support (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018; Slade, Robb, Sherrod, & Hunker, 2017).

Theoretical Significance

While studies have been completed regarding self-efficacy of adjunct faculty, there is little to no research that focuses on adjunct faculty at regional universities. The theoretical significance of the current study is that it adds to Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) and Maslow's human motivation theory (1943a, 1943b). Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) and Maslow's human motivation theory (1943a, 1943b) were identified as relevant to explore adjunct faculty self-efficacy at CSU because the belief in one's abilities and skills to complete a specific task helps to drive motivation. The current study increases the understanding of the self-efficacy

of a subset of people, which increases overall knowledge of the self-efficacy dynamic and, specifically, how experiences and outside influences impact self-efficacy.

Research Questions

The research questions for the current study were created to explore the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at a regional university, CSU, in the south-central region of the United States. Qualitative research questions are open ended and advancing (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, the central question is a comprehensive question that focuses attention on the research problem as a whole. The central question was then divided into smaller sub-questions within the theoretical framework that guided the overall qualitative case study. The research questions were constructed to understand better the dynamic of adjunct faculty self-efficacy with the goal to utilize the findings for improvements at CSU and to share that understanding with various stakeholders.

Central Question

What is the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU, a regional institution in the south-central region of the United States? Research shows that the utilization of adjunct faculty is on the rise (Curtis et al., 2016) and overall adjunct faculty desire full-time appointment (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). The goal of this question was to understand adjunct faculty self-efficacy at CSU and the impact it has on student learning.

Sub-question 1

How do CSU adjunct faculty view their skills and abilities as educators? Carlson (2015) found that 45% of adjunct faculty do not attend faculty meetings, indicating that adjunct faculty may be disengaged from the higher education institution. There are individual proactive engagements that adjunct faculty can take part in as a measure to improve their self-efficacy.

The goal of this question is to learn what methods can be implemented to enable CSU adjunct faculty to self-improve.

Sub-question 2

To what do CSU adjunct faculty attribute their self-efficacy? Bakley and Brodersen (2018) found that adjunct faculty suffered low self-efficacy due to low communication with administration, lack of recognition, and lack of faculty mentoring. The goal of this question was to learn what mechanisms, policies, and aspects adjunct faculty feel their self-efficacy stems from.

Sub-question 3

How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of orientation, training, and professional development as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy? Adjunct faculty desire orientation, training, and faculty mentorship programs (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). In addition, Kouzes and Posner (2017) stated that orientation, training, and professional development are crucial components in a positive work environment. The goal of this question was to learn how adjunct faculty feel orientation, training, and professional development impact their self-efficacy.

Sub-question 4

How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of university administrators and full-time faculty as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy? Slade et al. (2017) found that communication between adjunct faculty and university administration was insufficient. Kouzes and Posner (2017) maintained that communication is key in every organizational relationship, especially between subordinates and their superiors. The goal of this question was to learn how to improve CSU adjunct faculty self-efficacy through administration assistance.

Definitions

1. *Self-efficacy* - The belief in one's skills and abilities (Bandura, 1977).
2. *Adjunct Faculty* – Educators at a higher education institution who teach part-time at a per-credit-hour rate without benefits (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018).
3. *Full-time Faculty* – Educators at a higher education institution who have attained instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor status and receive a regular annual salary with customary university benefits (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018).

Summary

At CSU, adjunct faculty are widely utilized as a cost-effective measure which is common practice in higher education institutions (Curtis et al., 2016). Adjunct faculty are typically not as educated as regular university faculty and have little to no higher education experience which causes great concern regarding the level of instruction that they can provide (Hardy, Shepard, & Pilotti, 2017). Research shows that low communication with administration, lack of faculty mentoring, and little acknowledgment are all contributors to low self-efficacy for adjunct faculty (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). For adjunct faculty at distinctive regional universities (Docking & Curton, 2015), where the use of adjunct faculty is customary, there is little to no research data available regarding their self-efficacy.

The purpose of this qualitative single instrumental case study is to understand the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU. Self-efficacy is generally defined as the belief in one's skills and abilities (Bandura, 1977). The theories guiding this study are Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy and Maslow's (1943a, 1943b) human motivation theory because motivation-impacting self-efficacy is described as a dynamic that has definitive antecedents, but confidence

in one's abilities and skills can change as a result of personal achievements, individual experiences, outside influences, and purpose.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at a regional university was thoroughly reviewed by researching various relative constructs and dynamics. This study is a qualitative single instrumental case study. Chapter Two is a review of literature regarding adjuncts in higher education. The following sections emerged as common themes in the research: understanding adjunct faculty, including the background of adjunct faculty and the impacts of adjuncts; adjunct faculty development, including adjunct hiring and managing mentorship within the context of higher education; benefits of mentoring adjuncts; and finally, the characteristics of a successful mentoring program. The literature review is based on these themes.

The first section discusses theories selected as relative to the study of self-efficacy of adjunct faculty. Utilizing self-efficacy theory, social cognitive theory, and human motivation theory creates a conduit to the theoretical framework for the current research topic. In the second section, the regional university is defined, and the features that make a regional university unique are discussed in an effort to provide a clearer understanding as to the necessity of the study. The effectiveness of adjunct faculty, as instructor effectiveness is paramount to student success, is unearthed. In addition, the feeling of job satisfaction for adjunct faculty is revealed because job satisfaction has been proven to have specific impact where teaching validity is concerned. Adjunct faculty effect on students is investigated in general. In addition, the impact of adjunct faculty on the university as it pertains to pedagogy and instructional methods is a focus because the situation surrounding adjunct faculty is considered unique compared to regular full-time faculty; thus, how adjunct faculty impact the university is distinct. Since adjunct faculty time with students is limited simply because of the nature of their employment, their

relationship with students is different than the relationships students are free to enjoy with full-time faculty. For this reason, adjunct faculty and student interaction outside of the classroom is also investigated. Unlike full-time faculty who typically have a long professional history based in higher education, adjunct faculty come from a wide range of professional backgrounds. Therefore, the way adjunct faculty handle professional situations is different than that of their full-time counterparts. The manner in which adjunct faculty professionally operate is influenced by many inputs which are incorporated into this section.

Many administrative aspects as they relate to the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty are realized. Organizational culture can have a positive or negative impact on adjunct faculty self-efficacy. In return, the way adjunct faculty members contribute to their respective departments impacts the organizational culture either positively or negatively. This cyclical dynamic between organizational culture and adjunct faculty is revealed. Without an obligation to orientation, training, and professional development of adjunct faculty, it is difficult for higher education institutions to promote self-efficacy for adjunct faculty. The responsibility for orientation, training, and professional development is discussed. Finally, managerial challenges are commonplace in every organization and higher education institutions certainly have their fair share of managerial challenges as well. The distinct managerial challenges that arise for department heads and deans when implementing the utilization of adjunct faculty are addressed. A gap in the literature materializes and perpetuates a need for further research in the area of regional university adjunct faculty self-efficacy.

Theoretical Framework

“Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). The theoretical framework has a significant place in qualitative research

as it helps to provide a basis for the current study (Creswell, 2013). The unique processes involved in narrative, phenomenological, ethnographic, grounded theory, and case study approaches utilize theoretical frameworks (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The current case study specifically employs self-efficacy, social cognitive, and human motivation theories because they are relative in the investigation of adjunct faculty and how they behave and interact with regard to the higher education environment. Denzin and Giardina (2016) reflected on the changing face of higher education in the prelude to their discussion about theoretical frameworks; adjunct faculty are part of the new face of higher education and are now included in the concept.

Self-Efficacy and Social Cognitive Theories as Integrated Models

Bandura hypothesized that certain antecedents and markers were the foundation on which self-efficacy is built. He theorized that certain activities, considerations, circumstances, and functioning trends could also steer behavior. Likewise, these same properties could affect adjunct faculty self-efficacy. Bandura (1977) deduced that motivation, goal setting, and efficacy expectations have a distinct bearing on the creation and development of self-efficacy.

Bandura's (1977) study discovered that four factors categorically impact self-efficacy. "Performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and verbal arousal are major sources of efficacy information and the principal sources through which different modes of treatment operate" (Bandura, 1977, p. 195). Performance accomplishment is based on the level of proficiency one gains in completing a task or skill (Bandura, 1977). When a person is successful at accomplishing a task, his or her self-efficacy is increased (Bandura, 1977). Likewise, when a person has trouble performing in a certain area, failing multiple times, his or her self-efficacy decreases (Bandura, 1977).

Through this finding, Bandura (1977) opened a door for extended research. Wood and Bandura (1989) developed a precept of organizational function grounded in social cognitive theory. Since fully effective operation of an organization depends upon the flow through the hierarchy, which includes every stakeholder (Kouzes & Posner, 2017), higher education institutions are impacted by the social cognition of adjunct faculty. Conduct, reasoning, individual characteristics, and aspects of one's surroundings relate and interact, creating a distinct model (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Rooted in this dynamic, self-efficacy is also impacted by continuing influences. The demands placed on administrators and employees reveal the complexity within which social cognitive theory is displayed in an organization. This disclosure offers important understanding about approaches for perpetuating self-efficacy in an institution, including self-motivation and self-management, which has severe implications in reference to adjunct faculty and their connection to the university.

Human Motivation Theory: Adjunct Faculty and Students

Clear ties to self-efficacy make human motivation a focus for the present study. Maslow's (1943b) study builds a theory of motivation on his earlier work in a needs-based hierarchy. His theory is relevant to the discussion of adjunct faculty because, as the needs-based hierarchy study concluded, people are whole beings and every aspect must be addressed: humans are continually searching for more, motivation and behavior are not synonymous, and the most basic need of any human must be met before consideration of further needs can be given (Maslow, 1943a). When the motivations and influences of adjunct faculty are addressed, the reason for their behavior becomes better defined, and administration is more equipped to assist them with their unique needs.

Tinto's (1975) study on college student attrition applies to the study of adjunct faculty self-efficacy because environmental and relational characteristics, both personal and academic, of the higher education experience have serious impacts on student persistence (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). Both personal and academic inputs affect the college student, implying that the situation is much more tenuous than a simple discussion about higher education institution dropout. Students need interaction with their instructors along with instructional guidance (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Spaulding, 2014). The current study applies Tinto's (1975) theory as a basis for investigation into the impact that self-efficacy of adjunct faculty has on college students, specifically their persistence to complete their degree, taking into consideration their needs as students and as humans.

Related Literature

The literature related to adjunct faculty is vast. However, there is little to no literature related to adjunct faculty specifically at regional universities. Through this single instrumental qualitative case study, my desire is to change that. The following literature was provided as a basis of information to allow for some insight into the various aspects of adjunct faculty and higher education.

History of American Higher Education

To fully analyze the plight of adjunct faculty, it is necessary to first understand the evolution of higher education. For an overall view of the history of American higher education, it is imperative to consider the work of Roger Geiger and how he defined the change through his ten generations of American higher education. "The key elements here are understanding the processes of change and aggregating such changes to discern fundamental transformations in the

entire system of higher education” (Geiger, 2016, p. 3). Change is inevitable; higher education is susceptible to the challenge that change brings and the advantages that change propels.

Geiger identified the following 10 generations delineated by distinct transformation:

- 1) Reformation Beginnings, 1636–1740s
- 2) Colonial Colleges, 1745–1775
- 3) Republican Education, 1776–1800
- 4) The Passing of Republican Education, 1800–1820s
- 5) The Classical Denominational Colleges, 1820s–1850s
- 6) New Departures, 1850s–1890
- 7) Growth and Standardization, 1890 to World War I
- 8) Mass Higher Education and Differentiation between the Wars
- 9) The Academic Revolution, 1945–1975
- 10) Privatization and the Current Era, 1975–2010 (Geiger, 2016, pp. 3–34).

Geiger’s 10 generations of American higher education are, essentially, a look into the undeniable shifts in curriculum, student involvement, effects of the college environment on students and faculty, type of institutions that arose and evolved, and the organizational structure of those institutions in the period between 1636 and 2010. Each generation is characterized by a very distinctive fundamental conversion and dynamic events that, over time, have come to form what we know today as higher education. To comprehend the advantages and hurdles associated with each generation, an in-depth investigation into each would be necessary.

Despite the destruction of the Civil War, American higher education institutions of various types were thriving (Lucas, 2006). “Nationally, there were an estimated 62,000 students enrolled in some type of collegiate institution in 1870; only twenty years later their numbers had

swollen to 157,000; and by 1910 the total would surpass 355,000” (Lucas, 2006, p. 146). This growth in enrollment was promising and showed a steady progression of the need and desire for higher education. It is interesting to note that, after the Civil War, criticism of higher education institutions demanded that programs be made available for individuals seeking employment in tradecraft to increase their knowledge and skills, thus making them more marketable in their chosen field (Lucas, 2006).

As in many facets of society, change has been an integral part of higher education in America. In the beginning, American higher education focused on facets considered traditional, such as pedagogy, curriculum, and learning (Thelin, 2019). Over time, American higher education transitioned into a vital element of socioeconomic wellbeing (Thelin, 2019). This transition of American higher education organizations from independent institutions into socioeconomic forces propelled the function and application of adjunct faculty as essential parts of colleges and universities.

The transition that took place in American higher education from its conception in 1636 (Geiger, 2015) to present day reflects a pulling away from government and religious control to a more autonomous ideal focused on academic freedom for professors and administrators and critical thinking processes for students (Thelin, 2019). The Morrill Act of 1862 was a catalyst in the United States becoming a socioeconomic superpower (Cook & Ehrlich, 2018) and provided a view into the amount of importance that the government placed on higher education as a mechanism of socioeconomic prowess (Thelin, 2019). The Morrill Act of 1862, also known as the Land Grant College Act, granted land for the establishment of higher education institutions for the purpose of educating people in pragmatic professions such as agriculture, domestic science, and careers centered around manual labor (Boyer, Moser, Ream, & Braxton, 2016). The

grants also allowed for building and curriculum expansion at existing higher education institutions. In 1890, a second Morrill Act was passed which implemented funding for even more development of existing institutions and helped to establish institutions for Black people seeking higher education opportunities (Collins & O'Brien, 2011). Over time, both acts were revised to include funding for higher education institution formation in U.S. territories and for Native American tribal areas (Collins & O'Brien, 2011).

In 1944, the Government Issue (GI) Bill was established to assist military veterans in reacclimating to society, in part, by developing job skills (Boyer et al., 2016). “By 1956, about 2.2 million veterans had attended colleges and universities” (Zhang, 2018, p. 82). The GI Bill significantly increased enrollment at higher education institutions, which strengthened the correlation between higher education and the socioeconomic climate (Thelin, 2019).

The commitment of the connection between government and higher education was also evident in a report by the President’s Commission on Higher Education that described college as “the means by which every citizen, youth, and adult, is enabled and encouraged to carry his education, formal and informal, as far as his native capacities permit” (Zook, 1947, p. 10). The report supported cultivating access to higher education opportunities for those previously incapable of seeking a college degree. The Higher Education Act of 1965 formed the Pell Grant program which provides funding for students from low-income families (Brewer & Picus, 2014), which further increased higher education enrollment numbers.

Historically, a college education has been linked to increased employability and higher wages (Clarke, 2018; Van Der Velden & Bijlsma, 2016). Clarke’s (2018) study showed that a college graduate’s level of employability was a compilation of skills, competencies, work experience, networks, social class, university ranking, career self-management, career-building

skills, personality variables, adaptability, and flexibility. The question then is, “Which of these components, if any, are the responsibility of higher education institutions?” Certainly, skills and competencies fall under the task performance mandate of higher education faculty and administration. Further, work experience by way of internships and placement as well as assistance in building networks and development of social standing may also fall under the responsibility of higher education institutions, depending on the degree program and the institution’s structure. When surveyed, 60% of employers feel it is crucial for college graduates to have knowledge and skills that apply to a specific field coupled with a range of knowledge and skills that span across a variety of subjects (“Falling Short,” 2016). The expectation from employers for skilled and knowledgeable graduates who are perfectly well-rounded combined with student need for networks and social standing is a heavy burden for higher education institutions. On top of that strain, government funding for higher education institutions has severely decreased, resulting in brutal tuition upsurges (Bérubé & Ruth, 2015). As college tuition rises, it is more important than ever to prove to potential students that the money they spend on college will provide the knowledge and skills they need to be employable upon graduation. With the recent amplified utilization of adjunct faculty, the study of adjunct faculty impact on higher education became more critical.

Higher Education Financial Crisis

Technology is ever increasing, and recruiting is more vital than ever. Enrollment, trying to meet standards set for demographics and diversity, is more crucial than ever (Johnstone, 2016). With components like these, and many others, escalating in focus and importance, it is no wonder that higher education costs are skyrocketing. It is important to note that overhead for universities fluctuates by college prestige, types of degrees offered, and academic nature of those

degrees. “Research universities, for example, tend to pay higher salaries and require student-faculty ratios that can accommodate research expectations and lower course loads in addition to expensive libraries, laboratories, computational power, and other research-related expenditures” (Johnstone, 2016, p. 319). Further, if a university offers a stellar engineering program, they must employ faculty that are well-trained and experienced in that area. The engineering instructor is going to get paid more than the instructor who teaches the principles of management course. It simply does not take the same rigorous training or detailed experience to teach principles of management as it does to teach engineering. This type of situation varies between colleges. Big state schools operate differently than regional schools.

One big issue with the higher education financial crisis is the burden it places on students. Some potential students give up the quest altogether because the financial fight seems unbearable. While the United States excels above other countries in assisting those from low socioeconomic backgrounds to afford higher education, “the larger American society is becoming not only more unequal, but less willing and less able, at either the state or the federal levels, to craft politically acceptable governmental solutions to higher education’s financial problems” (Johnstone, 2016, p. 339). Jeffrey Selingo in *College Unbound: The Future of Higher Education and What it Means for Students* (2013) reminded us of the promise that President Barack Obama made in his State of the Union address on January 24, 2012:

It’s not enough for us to increase student aid. We can’t just keep subsidizing skyrocketing tuition; we’ll run out of money. States also need to do their part, by making higher education a higher priority in their budgets. And colleges and universities have to do their part by working to keep costs down. Recently, I spoke with a group of college presidents who’ve done just that. Some schools

redesign courses to help students finish more quickly. Some use better technology. The point is, it's possible. So, let me put colleges and universities on notice: If you can't stop tuition from going up, the funding you get from taxpayers will go down. (p. 70)

The message was clear: Institutions of higher education must look for ways to make up the shortfall. American higher education institutions must seek new ways to increase funds whether that be through new markets, different student segments, innovative revenue streams, or cost-cutting measures (Johnstone, 2016). Governmental and institutional policies will continue to reflect the need for financial sustainability and student cost considerations where higher education is concerned (Johnstone, 2016). However, the fact is that allocation of limited resources remains a constant struggle for higher education institution administration and difficult decisions must be made (Toutkoushian & Paulsen, 2016).

The Regional University

The search for scholarly literature about regional universities yielded very little information. The distinction for a regional school is that, instead of a research focus like a larger state school would have, the focus is providing a relevant college education at roughly 25% less in tuition and fees (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2018). The regional university is also unique because it provides an opportunity for college students to seek a four-year degree with the comfort of a smaller, more inviting environment. Student enrollment for a regional university is roughly 23% of that of a research institution (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2018).

Smaller classes make students feel more comfortable to communicate during class, which leads to easier discussion with their instructors outside the classroom (Docking & Curton, 2015;

Wright, Bergom, & Bartholomew, 2019). With smaller class sizes as a standard feature of a regional university, faculty members and students have more opportunities for interaction (Docking & Curton, 2015; Wright et al., 2019). A smaller class size lends itself to discussion with more ease than in a large-sized class. According to Freire, Ramos, Macedo, and Shor (2018), conducting class in a discussion format where the instructor poses questions to the students, rather than in a lecture format where the instructor transports textbook and supplemental information to students, incites critical thinking. In a meta-analysis conducted by Fong et al. (2017), the promotion of critical thinking in the classroom led to increased overall student success in the long-term. At a regional university, there are more opportunities to get to know faculty members and other students because of the smaller community, which has also been shown to increase student success (Wright et al., 2019). Wright et al. (2019) maintained that not all prospective college students desire the atmosphere that a large research university offers. The regional university serves this population, and without the option of a smaller school, those students would likely drop out of college or not attend at all (Docking & Curton, 2015).

Even though smaller universities, like regional institutions, might serve a significant percentage of the college student population, the distinctiveness of higher education facilities of this nature is often overlooked. Brown and Hayford (2019) maintained that small colleges often have steeper traditions than their larger counterparts. “Educational researchers studying institutions of higher education typically study issues without historical context or concern for small institutions” (MacVie, 2017, p. 594). MacVie (2017) also suggested that regional universities may serve a more direct purpose than state schools because they have a stronger tie to the community in which they are located. Accountability holds the same standard between state universities and regional universities as assessment includes aspects regarding teacher

experience, module design, students, departmental culture, program structure, innovation and improvement, staff development, specific procedures and practice, policies, resources, recognition, and external context (Macdonald & Joughin, 2004).

Adjunct Faculty Defined

Bakley and Brodersen (2018) maintained that adjunct faculty are part-time instructors employed at higher education institutions like community colleges, regional universities, or research universities, and they have become an essential asset to the higher education paradigm as they represent a financially intelligent strategic move for university administrators. The insertion of adjunct faculty is deemed as a smart effort because the lower outstream of funds required for adjunct faculty offsets the tight university budgets which cause higher tuition, low faculty morale, and curriculum strain (Gluckman, 2017). Simply defined, adjunct faculty are temporary employees hired to teach one or more classes (Brannagan & Oriol, 2014). The rules vary from university to university about how many classes an adjunct faculty member is allowed to teach, and many adjunct faculty juggle multiple adjunct assignments at several universities (Brannagan & Oriol, 2014). Adjunct faculty are less compensated than full-time faculty in monetary pay, performance recognition, and public accolades by their superiors and colleagues (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). Benefits like health insurance, paid time off, and retirement plans are not typically available for adjunct faculty (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). While these decreased benefits for adjunct faculty lessen the financial burden on higher education institutions (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018), stress is heightened on the household budgets of adjunct faculty (Ott & Dippold, 2018).

One point that makes the higher education contribution of adjunct faculty different than that of full-time faculty is their level of private sector experience. Datray, Saxon, and

Martirosyan (2014) found that adjunct faculty typically have years of experience in the private sector and then, for a myriad of reasons, switch careers to higher education in mid-life. This higher education career path is much different than that of the adjunct faculty members' counterparts. Full-time faculty members often go into higher education as a first major profession. Also, compared to their full-time counterparts, adjunct faculty have less education with only a bachelor's or master's degree while full-time faculty typically have doctor of business administration degrees, doctor of education degrees, or doctor of philosophy degrees (Datray et al., 2014).

Some adjunct faculty were content in their part-time teaching positions, while some desired full-time employment in higher education (Kramer, Gloeckner, & Jacoby, 2014). Smith (2019) found that many adjunct faculty members feel called to teach and that this is the overall reason they seek college teaching positions. Sometimes, the call is so strong that adjunct faculty leave their higher-paying private sector positions so that they can keep adjunct schedules at multiple universities. In her study, Smith (2019) found five essential themes pointing to adjunct faculty motivation: enjoyment, alignment, significance, connection, and commitment. Adjunct teaching draws in those who find the profession fun and intellectually stimulating (Smith, 2019). In addition, teaching typically aligns with personal beliefs about self for those who seek adjunct employment (Smith, 2019). Adjunct faculty often feel a personal desire to lead and teach others and to help others grow (Smith, 2019). The desire to connect with people motivates adjunct faculty to reach out to their students, and students respond positively to this type of personal influence (Smith, 2019). A feeling of responsibility and obligation to their adjunct profession inspires adjunct faculty to contribute whole-heartedly to the higher education institution and, specifically, to their students on an individual level (Smith, 2019). Together, these five themes

implied that the reasons adjunct faculty are varied but profound. The increase in adjunct faculty and the vital role they play in the college student experience together amplified the importance of their self-efficacy.

Adjunct faculty effectiveness. University executives often relied on adjunct faculty to fill gaps in instructional needs at a budget-friendly expense (Rogers, 2015). Current literature varied as to whether or not adjunct faculty were effective (Datray et al., 2014). Since many adjunct faculty members lack a terminal degree, it was argued that they simply did not have the education necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of a higher education instructor (Datray et al., 2014). Contrarily, it was maintained that adjunct faculty have the same drive, if not more than their full-time counterparts to deliver a quality education (Datray et al., 2014). Other arguments were made that the real-world experience adjunct faculty possess in their discipline makes them even more valuable than full-time faculty because full-time faculty lose their passion for their work while adjunct faculty long for more involvement (Datray et al., 2014). It is this passion that drives adjunct faculty to connect with their students and commit their time and energy to curriculum advances, innovative teaching techniques, and progressive pedagogy. Kouzes and Posner (2017) maintain that passion often drives employee persistence and moxie.

Rogers (2015) held that, when debating the argument as to whether or not adjunct faculty members are effective in their role, all of the parts of the picture must be taken into account as a whole. While adjunct instructors may not have a terminal degree, their relative industry experience typically prepares them well to teach their subject matter (Rogers, 2015). Years of experience as an accountant serve an instructor well when teaching how to maneuver balance sheets and income statements. Regular university professors may participate in professional development, research, and other types of training to maintain and improve their skills and

abilities, but atypical instructors who spend years in the private sector practice their subject matter every day and are constantly learning new aspects in their field. In addition, university administrators must weigh the value of adjunct faculty as distinct for their particular institution because each college requires unique conditions to run smoothly (Rogers, 2015). Several factors must be considered including but not limited to student success, budgetary concerns, and university climate (Rogers, 2015). Each student population is different and has unique needs to support student success. When budgets are tight, adjunct faculty are more heavily utilized. Certain university climates are more fitting to incorporate adjunct faculty.

Self-efficacy, motivation, and adjunct effectiveness. The meta-analysis conducted by Klassen and Tze (2014) found that the relationship between self-efficacy and evaluated teacher performance is significant. Thus, adjunct effectiveness is directly related to adjunct self-efficacy. It is also important to note that instructors' feeling of subject matter expertise is directly related to self-efficacy (Hardy et al., 2017). The more instructors feel that their education and industry experience have given them the knowledge and tools they need with regard to their higher education discipline, the more they feel they can be effective in an instruction capacity. This is particularly interesting since some experts maintain that industry experience could be more beneficial than education when it comes to building the requisite skills and abilities necessary for higher education instruction (Datray et al., 2014).

Variances exist between the university characteristics that impact adjunct faculty and those that impact full-time faculty (Schutz, Drake, Lessner, & Hughes, 2015). For example, full-time faculty feel more pressure from university administration, but adjunct faculty feel influenced by individual student situations (Schutz et al., 2015). Full-time faculty feel pressured by administration to participate in committees and are typically held to a higher standard than

adjunct faculty when it comes to evaluations. Adjunct faculty are not as comfortable handling tense situations with students because they do not always have regular interaction with students that provides solid relationships which make working through tense situations helpful.

Differences such as these have a significant bearing on the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty as self-efficacy is developed through experiences (Bandura, 1977).

Job satisfaction and exploitation. If self-efficacy is to be presented as a construct that is associated with job satisfaction, recognition must be given to the relationships between job satisfaction and general self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and teacher self-efficacy (Hardy et al., 2017). While adjunct instructors typically enjoy their higher education job, a large percentage desire full-time instructional employment (Kramer et al., 2014). Some find such personal fulfillment in teaching that they keep multiple adjunct positions at different campuses or even completely different institutions so that they can make enough take-home pay to survive financially (Curtis et al., 2016). Numerous adjunct faculty hold full-time jobs in the private sector while teaching a part-time load for a community college or four-year university. Also, adjunct faculty are generally dissatisfied with the pay they receive and the lack of benefits that is commonly associated with part-time higher education instructor positions (Kramer et al., 2014). Thelin (2017) paints a vivid picture regarding the discrepancy in adjunct faculty pay:

How derelict was the low pay for the “invisible faculty”? The best-case scenario would be for an adjunct professor to teach four courses per semester, with another four courses during the summer session—for a total of 12 courses in a calendar year. At the stated rate of \$3,000 per course, this means that the optimal salary would be \$36,000 per year—without a pension plan, health benefits, or paid vacation. For comparison, in 2015 in

Kentucky—a relatively poor state—a county clerk in a remote, rural county received an annual salary of \$80,000 per year plus retirement and health plan benefits. (p. 119)

In addition, adjunct faculty were typically required to hold at least a master's degree while county clerk positions rarely required academic degrees of any type (Thelin, 2017).

While some research indicates that adjunct faculty might be exploited in some way, the 2018 work of Brennan and Magness found that roughly 24% of adjunct faculty are content in their part-time position and do not desire full-time higher education employment. Brennan and Magness (2018) maintained that adjunct faculty are fully capable of obtaining lucrative employment white-collar positions in their fields of expertise but choose to hold adjunct positions because it brings them personal fulfillment. However, many adjuncts are indeed somewhat unhappy with their lack of benefits and level of pay (Brennan & Magness, 2018). There is much deliberation regarding adjunct faculty and their level of job satisfaction.

Adjunct faculty risk: Grade inflation. Hiring adjunct faculty has many advantages, but there are also certain risks involved such as grade inflation. Receiving grades that are not earned deprives students of the necessary feedback to develop the skills they need to be successful in their desired field (O'Halloran & Gordon, 2014). In their study of a private business school, Kezim, Pariseau, and Quinn (2005) found that grades awarded to students by adjunct faculty were significantly higher than those awarded to students by full-time tenured faculty. Researchers discovered that adjunct faculty desire full-time status and award higher grades because they are striving for higher student evaluations to increase their chances for full-time employment (Kezim et al., 2005). Nikolakakos, Reeves, and Shuch (2012) suggested that inflated grades might be a symptom of low adjunct self-esteem or the need to meet enrollment demands. When adjunct faculty feel vulnerable in their part-time higher education position, they

might be inclined to inflate grades to increase their evaluation scores and better their chance for rehire (Nikolakakos et al., 2012).

Administrative Aspects

Staff development is important for organizational success (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). However, the environment is always changing as technology advances, learning methods develop, and the economy fluctuates. These changes make the job of administrator more challenging (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Fortunately, there are ways to improve staff development efforts in the face of these adversities. Kouzes and Posner (2017) maintained that analyzing the environment is a vital task which effective leaders must undertake. Higher education administrators, in leading their faculty and staff, must analyze the external and internal university environment in order to make the best decisions, for all stakeholders, with regard to many university aspects including staff training and development (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

External factors, such as pressures applied by managers and organizational culture, impact the self-efficacy of constituents (Bandura, 1977). Thus, it is crucial to identify and review administrative aspects that might be associated with the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty. Typically, organizational culture and university experience impact adjunct faculty negatively (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014). Adjunct faculty are often excluded from conversations at faculty meetings and are not invited to professional development opportunities (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014).

Administrative challenges are of concern because it is thought that addressing these challenges can improve the professional situation for adjunct faculty (Meyer, 2017). According to Meyer (2017), university administration professionals find it difficult to include adjunct faculty in standard department events such as faculty meetings and professional development

efforts simply because they are naturally more detached from the body of the organization.

Kouzes and Posner (2017) stressed that it is important for administration to take necessary action to ensure that all employees, including those that are remote, feel as though they are part of the organizational culture so that the organization's mission and vision remain the focus for the work that each employee does. Kouzes and Posner (2017) maintained that the relationship between administration and constituents has a direct impact on organizational culture and that improving the line of communication between administration and constituents improves constituent production. Following this line of thinking, improving the line of communication between university administration and adjunct faculty would improve adjunct faculty instruction.

Organizational culture effects. It is important to understand organizational culture and how it pertains to the different aspects of the higher education institution. Because adjunct faculty are included in the human capital of colleges and universities, understanding the impact they have on the organizational culture is paramount. Adjunct faculty are inherently distant from the university and the organizational culture because many never set foot on campus (Hardy et al., 2017). In addition, some adjunct faculty work across the country or even across the globe from their institution. Thus, it is difficult for college and university administrators to include adjunct faculty in the establishment of a positive organizational culture. Unfortunately, the difficulty of the task does not take away from the critical nature of the work at hand.

Morgan (1997) described organizational culture as a phenomenon in which tilling and developing must occur, much like in the agricultural industry where the land must be worked. Organizational culture takes work. Every stakeholder involved in the organization must put forth a certain amount of effort in order for the organizational culture to be at its best. Studies show that management impacts organizational culture, and organizational culture impacts performance

(Martinez, Beaulieu, Gibbons, Pronovost, & Wang, 2015). Organizational culture is more important than institutional arrangement (McCaffery, 2019); thus, it is necessary to foster a culture of collaboration. This can be especially challenging as each stakeholder, including adjunct faculty, has different perspectives and beliefs (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Even though, organizational culture is at the core of what makes an institution effectively integrate among the functional units (Kouzes & Posner, 2017), adjunct faculty generally feel as though they are overlooked by members of administration (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014). Creating a culture where stakeholders have a shared vision builds unity for the organization which would allow administrators to draw in adjunct faculty members, giving them a stronger sense of belonging (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Since associations normally increase motivation (Maslow, 1943b), acclimating adjunct faculty to a shared vision, university values, and organizational mission would prove beneficial to adjunct faculty and the university as a whole (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

University governance revolves around establishing the environment and constraints for university executives while holding them responsible for the functions of their role (McCaffery, 2019). Comprehending university uniqueness can be difficult (McCaffery, 2019). Each university has specific qualities and characteristics, such as community environment, student demographic, and budgetary situations, that make it different from counterparts. Establishing the vision and values for the institution while aligning goals is challenging (McCaffery, 2019). The administration must carefully examine the current status of the university and determine the direction for the future of the university.

Hiring the right administrators and balancing aspects of administrative positions are both complicated tasks that must be completed by the governing board (McCaffery, 2019).

Globalization is a relatively recent change manifestation that presents a multitude of challenges to university governance (McCaffery, 2019). The shift from local business to having students on the other side of the globe requires modification in many aspects of higher education. For higher education, there are different administrative entities to deal with specific kinds of issues (Birnbaum, 1988). Unfortunately, the business world does not typically think this way and this causes issues since the board members are often accustomed to the business world (Birnbaum, 1988). It then becomes the responsibility of the governing board members to change the way they think, which is where setting the culture comes into play.

Initial obligation to adjunct faculty: Orientation and training. Adjunct faculty feel separated from the university and the department in which they are professionally associated (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014). Unfortunately, faculty orientation and training are lacking (Carlson, 2015), which exacerbates the situation. The participants in a study by Carlson (2015) reported that they received less than five hours of orientation and more than half of the participants received less than two hours of training. Reports about communication and level of training were even more discouraging. “Respondents reported to be least informed about changes to course and school policies and changes to the curriculum” (Carlson, 2015, p. 6). Part of the issue, as reported by Sousa and Resha (2019), is that orientation and training initiatives are often designed by full-time faculty and administration who likely have little knowledge about the resources that adjunct faculty coming from the private sector need in the way of orientation and training.

Kouzes and Posner (2017) maintained that communicating policy and changes to crucial organizational aspects should be a top priority for administration and that omitting this process can be detrimental to an organization. Orientation and training could provide a distinct method

in which administration builds stronger associations to the university for adjunct faculty (Carlson, 2015; Slade et al., 2017). Solidifying the culture for constituents ties those employees to the mission and vision of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2017), which can only benefit the students.

Challenges of employing adjunct faculty. Faculty and higher education administrators do not always have the same goals (Birnbaum, 1988). Faculty are concerned with meeting course objectives, instruction, and curriculum (Burns, 2017) while administrators are more concerned with employee ability, institutional prospects, effective assessment, and meeting institutional goals (McCaffery, 2019). For university leaders to manage impactfully, they must try to minimize the discrepancy between their mindset and that of their constituents (McCaffery, 2019). Another issue that higher education administrators encounter is embracing their dual role as manager and leader (McCaffery, 2019). Managing is necessary because some structure and control is vital to establish direction and solve problems (McCaffery, 2019). However, it is also essential for higher education administrators to develop the organizational culture in a way that perpetuates the stakeholders' desire to fulfill the university goals, mission, and vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). University leaders must adapt to the modern management style which includes collaboration (Burns, 2017). When higher education institutions have long-standing traditions and directorial procedures, the evolution into contemporary university administration may be difficult. Managing is not just the job of the administrator. Instead, all university stakeholders have a part to play in the planning, strategizing, and development of the institution (Burns, 2017).

Technology advances at an accelerated speed requiring outflows of time and energy into staff development at an increasing rate (Brown & DiTrollo, 2017). When technology adds

components to everyday tasks or changes the way processes take place, staff must be trained with regard to the changes or upgrades so that operations remain efficient. The administration at the University of Florida has devised a program that provides a smooth transition into new technologies through effective staff development segregated into levels dependent on complexity of the training needs (Brown & DiTrollo, 2017).

Learning methods evolve and, over the past several years, online courses have become a readily available option for college degree completion (Mitchell & Delgado, 2014). Online course options allow students to finish coursework from anywhere they can access the Internet and at any time that is convenient for them (Mitchell & Delgado, 2014). While the addition of online options has advantages, it is necessary to acknowledge that the evolution of learning methods into the online realm has caused challenges for higher education staff development in that new training is required. Shattuck and Anderson (2013) ascertained, through their research, that training for online instructors should be conducted actively and with intent. “Training for online instructors should be designed using a situated learning perspective that positions instructors as students in an authentic learning environment that is similar to the targeted teaching environment” (Shattuck & Anderson, 2013, p. 196). Immersing instructors into a setting similar to the situation students will experience provides insight that cannot be attained otherwise, allowing educators to effectively adjust objectives and methods (Shattuck & Anderson, 2013). When economic downturn occurs that impacts the higher education industry, university budgets are strained. This strain encompasses staff training and development. It becomes the duty of university administrators to find methods of training and development delivery that are cost effective and still valuable.

Administration is faced with definitive challenges with regard to employing adjunct faculty (Meyer, 2017). University goals to operate efficiently mean low wages and little to no benefits for adjunct faculty, which makes hiring qualified adjunct faculty difficult (Meyer, 2017). When department heads are able to find qualified adjunct faculty candidates that are interested in taking the low-paying position with poor benefits, they usually lack higher education experience (Meyer, 2017). Coupled with lack of teaching experience, adjunct faculty typically do not understand the innermost workings of higher education simply because they lack experience in the higher education industry (Datray et al., 2014). In addition, adjunct faculty are not always taken seriously by students. All of these aspects complicate the task of hiring and maintaining effective adjunct faculty.

Faculty Impact on Students

Faculty, full-time and adjunct, have a fundamental influence on college students. Day-to-day interaction with students provides certain psychosocial contributions to student success (Fong et al., 2017). The methods of instruction that faculty members implement, coupled with the classroom culture created by instructors, offer vital inputs into the higher education experience for college students (Price & Tovar, 2014). Instructors' self-efficacy is a valid point of discussion in the context of student social interaction and educational circumstance (Hardy et al., 2017). The amount of interaction that students have with their instructors has a positive correlation to their overall success as a college student and has been shown to be a positive influence for retention and degree completion (Price & Tovar, 2014). When students are disengaged, their academic success is in jeopardy (Price & Tovar, 2014). Adjunct instructors must consistently present engaging courses in order to facilitate educational achievement for their students (Mueller et al., 2013). Online education increases the need for training and

mentoring for adjunct faculty because adjunct faculty typically teach online courses (Hardy et al., 2017; Slade, et al., 2017). With the rise of online higher education programs, it is crucial for online courses to be effective. Studies show that technological training for adjunct faculty is insufficient (Slade et al., 2017). An overconfident perception of part-time faculty is observed in online instruction. Adjunct instructors see the online dynamic as more adaptable and, therefore, self-monitoring is not important (Hardy et al., 2017). Lack of self-awareness and training deficiencies are detrimental to learning effectiveness for students, especially in an online setting.

Mueller et al. (2013) looked at the impact of instructor status on college student success. Students are more effective, diligent, and score considerably higher when they have a full-time faculty member as an instructor (Mueller et al., 2013). Part-time faculty are more disengaged compared to their full-time counterparts. For many reasons, part-time faculty were not adequately focused on their students. In addition, adjunct instructors were profoundly lacking in training and development (Rogers, 2015). The distractions part-time faculty manage and the lack of guidance they receive perpetuated an absence of involvement. When faculty are not involved, student learning is negatively impacted.

Psychosocial contributors to student success. Psychosocial contributors to student success, such as self-regulated learning, can increase persistence, which is influenced by motivation and self-efficacy (Fong et al., 2017). Self-regulated learning can be developed and enhanced through proper support channels, which include integrated methods initiated by instructors (Thomas, Bennett, & Lockyer, 2016). However, class attendance decreases when students do not have proper support, and decreased attendance negatively impacts engagement and overall student success (Hogan, Bryant, & Overmyer-Day, 2013). Self-efficacy of college instructors is crucial in pedagogy and curriculum construction, which has the propensity to build

student cognitive and metacognitive function (Thomas et al., 2016). The implications carry the weight of independent thought outside of the classroom and coursework as well (Thomas et al., 2016). In addition, student engagement through class contribution, interaction with faculty, partnership through internships, collaboration in study groups, and participation in campus support facilities is crucial to student success in higher education (Price & Tovar, 2014).

Instructional contribution. Faculty deliver course content to college students and then assess the college students to determine whether or not they have grasped the material. Price and Tovar (2014) suggested that “with regard to active and collaborative learning, faculty should consider incorporating or expanding the effective instructional and pedagogical practices” (p. 778) such as time for students to meet with faculty outside of class, explicitly, to discuss course material. Ideally, meetings between students and faculty would be held in the faculty member’s office. However, adjunct faculty do not usually have a private office and must share an office space with other adjunct faculty members (Kramer et al., 2014). Also, adjunct faculty have less time to offer for student meetings and extra activities because they have personal obligations and tend to hold employment outside of higher education (Mueller et al., 2013).

Influences on Adjunct Faculty

In this study about adjunct faculty self-efficacy, it is vital to develop an understanding of the many variables that influence adjunct faculty in some way (Maslow, 1943b). Adjunct faculty are influenced by personal commitments outside of their higher education responsibilities, the desire for students to succeed, level of job satisfaction, feeling of community, support from colleagues and administration, and collaboration with colleagues and administration (Ferencz & Western Governors University, 2017). Adjunct faculty are also influenced by their personal responsibilities and employment outside of the higher education institution (Mueller et al., 2013).

Another key impact on adjunct faculty is job-fit. “A discrepancy exists just when job status is incongruent with employee preferences” (Ott & Dippold, 2018, p. 192). Kouzes and Posner (2017) posited that when an employee is dissatisfied with their employment placement, their performance on the job is inherently unsatisfactory by industry standards. Additional obligations of adjunct faculty demand time and energy which means they have less time and energy to offer to their adjunct position.

Discounted and unsupported human capital. Adjunct faculty are typically assigned classes to teach only days before the course begins (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). In addition, orientation, training, professional development, administrative support, and appropriate setting for student interaction is nonexistent or inconsistent for adjunct faculty (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). Further, communication is not readily shared with adjunct faculty, so they remain unaware of necessary adjustments required of them concerning curriculum or instructional method (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). Adjunct faculty are rarely considered for full-time employment because they lack the requisite certification (Meyer, 2017) even though a high percentage yearn for the opportunity (Ott & Dippold, 2018) and often have extensive industry experience that provides them with extensive subject matter knowledge (Datray et al., 2014). These processes, policies, and practices are not conducive to building community within the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) which deteriorates self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). In the fall 2018 semester, there were 100 full-time faculty members and 135 part-time faculty members employed by CSU (“Institutional Fact Book,” 2019). The most recent data shows that, out of 1,487 sections of college courses taught at CSU in the 2018–2019 school year, adjunct faculty taught 32.7% of those sections (Office of Accountability and Academics, 2019). These statistics indicate that adjunct faculty make up a significant portion of the overall faculty body at CSU. In

addition, the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (2014) at CSU states that each faculty member holds certain responsibilities, but no distinction is made between adjunct and full-time. According to Grant (2012), self-assessment of one's beliefs and values for higher education employees is a vital component of establishing a proper vision for the institution. It is nearly impossible to grow self-awareness with respect to one's employment if one's role is not delineated (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Professional development and training. Adjunct faculty typically feel prepared to teach within their discipline because of their industry experience in the private sector (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018). In fact, research showed that adjuncts were overly confident when it comes to their teaching abilities and acquire even more self-efficacy with age (Hardy et al., 2017). The implication of overexaggerated self-efficacy is that the students suffer. Adjunct instructors believe that subject matter knowledge, prior teaching experience, and field experience makes them well-equipped for college instruction (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018). Training of employees shapes their perceptions of organizational administration (McCaffery, 2019). Faculty and staff who understand the field of leadership look to higher education administration to set direction, align people and groups, motivate and inspire, and produce change in addition to planning strategy, solving problems, and establishing order (McCaffery, 2019). Learning effectiveness is considerably deteriorated when faculty have false perceptions about their level of expertise.

However, adjunct faculty commonly lack higher education experience, and they do not have the pedagogical knowledge that full-time faculty obtain (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018). Further, for adjunct faculty, professional development and training during higher education employment are minimal at best (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018). The recruiting and hiring

process is the starting point for having a capable and well-trained body of adjunct faculty members who support the organizational mission and goals (Ridge & Ritt, 2017). Without the support of proper training, part-time instructors can do very little to improve learning effectiveness. Some adjunct faculty state they received very little orientation when hired and received extremely insufficient learning management system training (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018). Administrators must make greater effort to bring the level of adjunct faculty preparedness and ongoing training and development up to a standard that is acceptable for the benefit of all stakeholders, including students and other faculty who teach courses that demand the adjunct-taught courses as prerequisites (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Overall Organizational Benefits

Maintaining a certain level of formality when dealing with adjunct faculty is prudent. Kouzes & Posner (2017) maintained that there are distinguishing benefits to proper acclimation, acculturation, and grooming of an organization's human capital. As affiliates of the university's human capital, adjunct faculty orientation, training, professional development, and integration into the university culture and community should be a top priority for university administration (Kouzes & Posner, 2017; McCaffery, 2019). Setting a culture of inspiration helps to spur self-efficacy. The organization benefits when every constituent feels secure in his or her abilities (Kouzes & Posner, 2017; McCaffery, 2019). Wolter, Bock, Mackey, Xu, and Smith (2019) found that employee satisfaction is positively related to customer satisfaction. In times of budgetary trials, student satisfaction is important for enrollment and retention concerns. Kouzes and Posner (2017) suggested clarifying and communicating values, inspiring a shared vision, fostering collaboration, empowering others, and recognizing contributions as steps in boosting organizational culture and, thus, motivating constituents to fulfill organizational mission.

Summary

The utilization of adjunct faculty has been on the rise for the past decade. The regional university, being smaller with less funding than bigger state institutions, has an extraordinary dynamic when it comes to the use of adjunct faculty. Much debate occurs regarding the effectiveness of adjunct faculty. Therefore, the self-efficacy and motivation of adjunct faculty become a necessary focus. Administrative procedure impacts this paradigm as its members often set the university culture, have distinct obligations to adjunct faculty, and must deal with the complications that come with employing adjunct faculty. With the high percentage of adjunct faculty at regional universities, the impact on students has certain implications. Because of these implications, studying the factors that influence adjunct faculty is vital.

Little to no research has been conducted concerning the impacts of the adjunct faculty phenomenon on regional universities, creating a gap in the literature. Considering the increase in adjunct faculty, along with the special dynamic of a regional university, more attention to the importance of self-efficacy and motivation for adjunct faculty at regional universities is necessary. Educators, including adjunct faculty, have a responsibility to guide the learning of their students. In that, they build approaches and strategies to reach student learning outcomes (Englund, Olofsson, & Price, 2017). As revealed in the research, increased communication between adjunct faculty and administration is crucial. Previous studies also reveal that augmented applicable training expands adjunct faculty self-efficacy and effectiveness. Further, formal professional development enhances the adjunct experience and perpetuates adjunct connection with the university. These inputs lead to amplified adjunct faculty job satisfaction and multiply student fulfillment and success. Higher job satisfaction for employees and increased fulfillment for customers both benefit the institution (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

Chapter Three outlines the design, setting, role of the researcher, data collection process, and data analysis process of this research project. The research questions are restated. As case study research has beginnings in anthropology and social science (Creswell & Poth, 2018), understanding people is the appropriate focus methodology for the current study as well. Information about the research participants is provided and how they were chosen is discussed in detail within the participant section. Trustworthiness and ethical considerations as they pertain to this research project are also surveyed.

Design

“Case studies allow you to focus in-depth on a ‘case’ and to retain a holistic and real-world perspective” (Yin, 2018, p. 5). A qualitative case study research method is chosen for this investigation because the overall goal is to explore, describe, and understand (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at a regional university in the south-central region of the United States, CSU, which will provide a real-world perspective about the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty (Yin, 2018). In addition, a qualitative case study is appropriate for this research because it provides the researcher with an opportunity to delve into the self-efficacy matters of regional university adjunct faculty to increase overall understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). Asking “how” or “why” case study research incorporates certain types of research questions, specific propositions, a case or cases, reasoning that links the data to the propositions, and the criterion for interpreting the results (Yin, 2018).

“The essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result” (Schramm, 1971, p. 6). The current case study asks several questions about “how” adjunct faculty members feel and “how” they perceive their role. Case study design is appropriate as depth over breadth of understanding (Patton, 2015) is desired for this investigation that focuses on adjunct faculty in one target institution rather than the general self-efficacy of all adjunct faculty. A single instrumental case study design approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018) is specifically chosen because self-efficacy of adjunct faculty, the issue, is investigated at one specific institution, CSU, the bounded real-life concrete situation (Yin, 2018). “The questions, propositions, and case(s) lead research design into identifying the data that are to be collected” (Yin, 2018, p. 34).

As part of case study research, Yin (2018) subscribed rationality connecting the information to the propositions as crucial. “The actual analyses will require that you combine or assemble your case study data as a direct reflection of your study propositions” (Yin, 2018, p. 33). Other prominent researchers often associated with case study research are Stake for his relation to bounded system and Denzin and Lincoln for their view of case study as a strategy of inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case study research has roots in anthropology and sociology dating back to the 1920s (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, Yin (2018) states that the conditions necessary to rationalize case study design over other methods is “how” and “why,” no control over behavioral events, and focus on contemporary events. While there are no perfectly delineated barriers between the design choices, case study suits the current research project because the overarching questions are aligned and the focus is on a contemporary event. Case study design is relevant when striving for a deep “description of some social phenomenon” (Yin,

2018, p. 4). The researcher's goal for the current case study was to provide a deeper understanding about the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty.

Research Questions

The research questions for the current study were created to explore the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at a regional university. The case, or cases, to be examined in case study research must be outlined, and this usually occurs through the research questions (Yin, 2018). The researcher strove to understand better the dynamic of adjunct faculty self-efficacy in an effort to utilize the findings so that improvements can be made at higher education institutions and to share that understanding with stakeholders.

Central Question

What is the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU, a regional institution in the south-central region of the United States?

Sub-questions

1. How do CSU adjunct faculty feel about their skills and abilities as educators?
2. What do CSU adjunct faculty attribute their self-efficacy to?
3. How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of orientation, training, and professional development as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy?
4. How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of university administrators and full-time faculty as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy?

Setting

Every qualitative case study must have a case or cases, a bounded system (Yin, 2018). The bounded system for this project is Colonial State University (CSU) which includes all three campuses that are located in diverse cities. CSU is a four-year higher education institution in the

south-central region of the United States, primarily serving students in the tri-county area (“Institutional Fact Book,” 2019). The faculty headcount changes often and the two remote campuses each have a director overseeing daily functions. CSU grew from humble beginnings, established in the early 1900s as a preparatory school (“Institutional Fact Book,” 2019). The institution that is now CSU has had many names and many organizational structures that enveloped different strategic goals, but the overall mission has never deviated from educating human capital (“Institutional Fact Book,” 2019). CSU is governed by the Board of Regents of a state university (“Institutional Fact Book,” 2019). The President of the University, Dr. Harry Brice (a pseudonym), has been at the helm since 2008 and served as Executive Assistant to the President for four years prior to his presidency. There are three vice presidents at the University with different roles and duties, two school deans, and four department heads.

CSU offers associate and bachelor's degrees in many disciplines (“Institutional Fact Book,” 2019). In addition, CSU offers an online Master of Business Administration degree that is set up in an 8-week format and provides prospective students with an entrance opportunity six times per calendar year (“Institutional Fact Book,” 2019). CSU is a relatively small university. Published documents show that 3,729 students were enrolled in the fall 2017 semester (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, n.d.). In comparison, the top-ranked same-state university for enrollment in the same semester had 27,964 students (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, n.d.). CSU is a regional university that hires adjunct faculty. This provides the boundaries for the case (Yin, 2018) as it is constrained by the university and the number of adjunct faculty contained therein (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants

The participants of this qualitative research project consisted of adjunct faculty teaching

on all three campuses of CSU at the time the research took place. Specific procedures were followed for participant collection. Because criterion sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018) was utilized, participants for this qualitative case study were adjunct faculty who taught no more than nine credit hours per regular (fall or spring) semester and/or no more than three credit hours per summer semester at CSU. Further, the CSU Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (2014) defined adjunct faculty as instructors who teach no more than nine credit hours. Convenience sampling was conducted by retrieving lists of adjunct instructors who met the criteria from the deans of the university (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) which provided different types (gender, experience level, etc.) of participants. Emails were sent to all who were considered as meeting the adjunct faculty status requirement of teaching no more than nine credit hours, asking for volunteers. The researcher gathered adjunct faculty volunteers from each department and each campus until thematic saturation (Patton, 2015) was met, as long as the Liberty University School of Education 12-participant minimum was satisfied. The researcher obtained informed consent from each adjunct faculty volunteer participant.

Procedures

Qualitative case study must occur in explicit steps. These steps must be carried out in a specific order for effective research development. The researcher gained setting approval (see Appendix B) from the Vice President of Academic Affairs of CSU. For the current study, the appropriate university authority was the Vice President of Academic Affairs of CSU to ensure the university and the participants are protected. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix A) from Liberty University and CSU were attained as the next step in the process to assure that the researcher followed necessary university, regulatory, and legal protocols. Lists of adjunct faculty members were obtained from each academic department as they were the

potential participants for the current study. Emails were sent to potential participants asking for volunteers for the study (see Appendix C). The next step was to obtain informed consent (see Appendix D) from those that volunteered. Data collection from participant interviews, focus groups, and participant letters to prospective adjunct faculty occurred next. Data were then analyzed looking for themes. Data were coded, and trustworthiness and ethical issues were considered. Finally, the research results were revealed, and findings discussed.

The Researcher's Role

Since this qualitative case study consists of personal interviews with adjunct instructors at CSU, a constructivist worldview is the epistemological paradigm in which the research project is rooted (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument gathering and interpreting the information (Pezalla, Pettigrew, & Miller-Day, 2012). As the researcher, I recognize that I have certain assumptions and biases that impacted the way I approached the current study. In an effort to maintain validity of the research findings, I brought these assumptions and biases to the forefront of the research, bracketing them out. The first assumption was that, for personal and professional reasons, adjunct instructors do not effectively take into consideration the quality of education that students receive. The second assumption was that adjunct instructors are most likely too preoccupied with other commitments, like family and primary employment, to spend an appropriate amount of time and energy on their instructor responsibilities.

I did not hold any position of authority over the participants. However, I am a full-time instructor at the research site and understand that this inherently causes certain biases. In addition, I often receive complaints from students about adjunct faculty, which also instigates biases. The challenges my son faced when instructed by an adjunct also impact my perception.

However, it is my duty as a researcher to bracket out these assumptions and biases in order to produce valid research with integrity.

Data Collection

“Qualitative researchers seek data that represent personal experience in particular situations” (Stake, 2010, p. 88). Six sources of evidence are prescribed by Yin (2018) as valid for case study research. Documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation, and physical artifacts are complementary to one another, each having strengths and weaknesses (Yin, 2018). In order to achieve data triangulation, which requires at least three sources of evidence (Yin, 2018), data collection methods included extrapolating relevant data from audio recorded independent interviews with 14 participants, a focus group, and letters written by 14 participants to prospective adjunct faculty describing their self-efficacy experience. Individual interviews and focus groups prompt participants to give their views and opinions about the questions asked and help the researcher manage the line of questioning (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Written letters allow participants to give attention to the questions being asked and are efficient for the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Individual Interviews

Interviews are a valuable source of information when the researcher probes for detailed information that provides a deep perspective about the experiences of the participants (Patton, 2015). As part of the current research, interviews were conducted either in person or via teleconference with adjunct faculty of the focus university. With the participant’s permission, the interview was audio recorded to provide a more accurate rendition than notes (Yin, 2018). Asking relevant open-ended questions gives the participant an opportunity to fully divulge their experience (Patton, 2015).

Open-Ended Interview Questions:

1. How long and in what capacity you have been involved in higher education as an adjunct instructor?
2. Please walk me through the general tasks you perform as an adjunct instructor.
3. How do you feel about your ability to achieve the goals you have set for yourself as an adjunct instructor?
4. How do you feel about your ability to overcome challenges?
5. How certain are you that you can accomplish difficult tasks when faced with them?
6. How confident are you that you can effectively perform your adjunct instructor duties?
7. How do you think your abilities as an adjunct instructor compare to those of your peers?
8. How do you feel about the orientation you received for your current adjunct position?
9. How do you feel about the training you received when you started your current adjunct position?
10. How do you feel about the professional development you have received during your current adjunct employment?
11. What has been your experience regarding interactions and relationships with other adjunct faculty?
12. What has been your experience regarding interactions and relationships with full-time faculty members?
13. What has been your experience regarding interactions and relationships with your department head and dean?
14. What changes would you like to see regarding adjunct faculty support at your university?

15. What else do you think would be important for me to know regarding your experience as an adjunct instructor at this institution?

Questions 1 and 2 were knowledge questions to obtain information (Patton, 2015) about the participant as an adjunct instructor. Through these questions, the researcher created a rapport with the participant (Patton, 2015). In addition, the researcher sought to understand better the lens through which the participants viewed their adjunct instructor position and employment situation. Having some knowledge about the time the participants had spent as an adjunct instructor proved valuable. In addition, this was an opportunity for me to probe deeper to find out what they did before they became adjunct instructors or whether or not they were still employed elsewhere. These facts have impactful bearing on their self-efficacy as an adjunct instructor (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018).

Questions 3 through 10 were feeling questions designed to elicit statements regarding how the participants felt (Patton, 2015) about their experiences and abilities as adjunct instructors and about the orientation, training, and professional development they received as adjunct instructors. Through these questions, I strove to ascertain whether or not the participants felt confident in their abilities and experiences as adjunct instructors. In addition, I took this opportunity to discern whether or not the orientation, training, and professional development the participants had received made them feel more confident in their abilities as adjunct instructors. Slade et al. (2017) and Carlson (2015) maintained that confidence in the orientation, training, and professional development process is vital for adjunct instructor success.

Questions 11 through 13 were designed to “elicit behaviors, experiences, actions, and activities” (Patton, 2015, p. 444) in the participant’s role as an adjunct instructor. These questions provided valuable insight into the everyday processes and procedures that an adjunct

instructor conducts, adding to the overall understanding about the amount of time adjunct instructors spend in their role on a daily basis, the kind of assignments adjunct instructors administer to students, and the timeliness with which adjunct instructors answer student emails and grade assignments. There is argument that adjunct faculty are not effective in their role (Brennan & Magness, 2018), but there is equal argument that adjunct faculty are overworked (Curtis et al., 2016). Information of this nature served a dual purpose, allowing me a look into the effectiveness and plight of adjunct faculty.

Questions 14 and 15 were opinion and values questions that were “aimed at understanding the cognitive and interpretive processes of people” (Patton, 2015, p. 444). When the participants answered these questions, I gained perception about what the participants thought about the dynamics of their role as an adjunct instructor and desired within the context of that role. This was especially important as Bakley and Brodersen (2018) found that some adjunct faculty desire full-time instructor employment while others are content in their part time role.

Focus Groups

“Focus groups can provide insights into attitudes and beliefs that underlie behavior and by providing context and perspective that enable experiences to be understood more holistically” (Carey & Asbury, 2016, p. 17). One focus group was held with the participants. The participants were gathered in one room and those that could not attend physically because they live far away or had other commitments that restricted them from doing so joined via video conference. If any participant did have video conferencing capability, they were allowed to join via phone conferencing. I moderated a one-hour focus group interview to discover more about

how the group members felt about adjunct faculty self-efficacy, attempting to extract perceptions of each group member (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Ryan, Gandha, Culbertson, & Carlson, 2014).

Open-Ended Focus Group Questions:

1. Why did you become an adjunct instructor?
2. What impacts your confidence as an adjunct instructor?
3. What kind of orientation would help improve your self-efficacy?
4. What kind of training would help improve your self-efficacy?
5. What kind of professional development would help improve your self-efficacy?
6. What kind of change in faculty relationships would help improve your self-efficacy?
7. What kind of change in administrative policies or procedures would help improve your self-efficacy?

Questions 1 through 7 were opinion and values questions “aimed at understanding the cognitive and interpretive processes of people” (Patton, 2015, p. 444). When the participants answered these questions, the researcher gained perception about what they thought about the dynamics of their role as an adjunct instructor and desires within the context of that role. The researcher asked each participant to respond to each of the Focus Group Questions starting with the first question first. The focus group was kept no longer than two hours as prolonged focus group meetings pose a threat to reflexivity (Yin, 2018). Following, the researcher analyzed the focus group data.

Participants’ Letters to Prospective Adjunct Faculty

Individual participants were asked to write letters to a prospective adjunct faculty telling about their perceptions regarding their adjunct faculty experience, specifically about self-efficacy. The letters were written in the participants’ own setting and in their own timing,

presenting a rich personal set of data from which I extracted meaning to search for themes. The participants were asked to include the following points in their letters:

1. Explain adjunct faculty experience.
2. Explain their self-efficacy perception.
3. Explain their higher education experience.
4. Explain their experience with college students.
5. Explain their experience with other faculty and administration.

The participants' letters served as a place for participants to express their feelings about their experiences as adjunct faculty, self-efficacy, higher education experience, experience with college students, and experience with other faculty and administration.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted for all data collected, "searching for patterns, insights, or concepts that seem promising" (Yin, 2018, p. 147). Interviews, the focus group, and letters were all data that, when analyzed, coded, and synthesized, provided valuable information that added to the current research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I used these findings to understand how adjunct faculty at a regional university ascribed meaning to self-efficacy and how other inputs impacted their self-efficacy. I selected to peruse the data from the ground up, analyze explanations that would most likely prove contrasting, and pursue the theoretical propositions that steered to the case study conforming to a certain framework (Yin, 2018). I initially considered using Nvivo computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software but decided that I would rather manually conduct the analysis of all data because I prefer a more hands-on approach. By manually sorting the themes, coding the data, and comparing interview responses

with focus group responses and meaning from participant letters, a greater understanding of CSU adjunct faculty self-efficacy emerged.

Individual Interviews

Audio recorded independent interviews with adjunct faculty participants were transcribed with the online service, “Temi,” and then edited manually by the researcher ensuring 100% accuracy. Each transcription was given to the corresponding participant for member checking to further ensure 100% accuracy. The researcher coded the data and then looked for significant statements to sort into themes and sub-themes. Additionally, the researcher utilized themes and sub-themes as a basis on which to “build additional layers of complex analysis” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 194), interconnecting those themes into cohesive findings. During the analysis of the individual interviews, the researcher began to recognize themes and repetitions that seem relevant (Yin, 2018).

Focus Group

For a focus group, “analysis begins during the group session as the facilitator processes the comments, follows up to clarify or further explore them, and summarizes main ideas for the group to review” (Carey & Asbury, 2016, p. 79). An audio recorded focus group with adjunct faculty participants was transcribed utilizing the online service, “Temi.” After the transcription was complete, I requested participants to check for accuracy as necessary. Member checking gave me the opportunity to confirm responses and correct any errors in the transcript (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The data were then coded. Utilizing a subjective narrative analysis (Carey & Asbury, 2016), the researcher searched for themes and subthemes to enter into the matrix that began with the analysis of the individual interview data. Narrative coding, a pattern matching technique, was implemented as it was “appropriate for exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal

participant experiences and actions to understand the human condition through story, which is justified in and of itself as a legitimate way of knowing” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 146). This pattern matching technique aligned, or contradicted, propositions which provided the researcher with valuable insight and thus added to current research (Yin, 2018).

Participants’ Letters to Prospective Adjunct Faculty

Participants’ letters to prospective adjunct faculty were analyzed and narrative coding was utilized to provide open-ended exploration of the data (Saldaña, 2013). I conducted thematic content analysis in an iterative manner developing categories. To triangulate data for credibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), I utilized the transcribed and coded data from the interviews and focus group to compare with the data from the participants’ letters looking for themes and subthemes. Again, narrative coding, a pattern matching technique, provided me with insight adding to the current research (Yin, 2018). At this stage, I conducted peer debriefing and additional member checks as necessary to increase the credibility of the project (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an all-encompassing term for validity, reliability, dependability, confirmability, and credibility (Frederick, 2008). Patton (2015) maintained that establishing trustworthiness is crucial in efforts to instill credibility to findings. In addition, dependability, confirmability, and transferability have a distinct impact on the validity of the research. Since “the value of qualitative research lies in the particular description and themes developed in the context of a specific site” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 202), the trustworthiness of the researcher discerning those descriptions and themes is vital. One benefit to case study research is that it provides the opportunity to use various data resources (Yin, 2018). Multiple data points

help to build in-depth descriptions of each participant's feelings and perceptions which reinforces the trustworthiness of this qualitative case study (Carnine, 1985).

Credibility

To improve credibility, the researcher engaged with the adjunct faculty over a period of time, connecting with each as individuals, throughout the data collection and analysis process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher also triangulated the data from the interviews, focus groups, and participant letters to "build a coherent justification for themes" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 200). In addition, I conducted peer debriefing with an experienced researcher to ensure that the current research "will resonate with people other than the researcher" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 201). Finally, the researcher performed member checks, allowing research participants to verify the accuracy of the transcriptions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Dependability and Confirmability

To solidify dependability and confirmability, I grounded questions in the literature and allows participants to review the transcription of their interview for accuracy. I created an audit trail and utilized an external auditor to objectively assess the project (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Researcher notes provided detail about what I did as the researcher throughout the research process. Finally, I consulted with independent experts in the fields of higher education, qualitative research, and adjunct faculty to ensure that the processes and procedures utilized in the current research are applicable and practical for use in their respective fields. When a study is dependable, it is also inherently transferable (Saldaña, 2013).

Transferability

Yin (2016) states that transferability is defined as a generalizability of the study in which the study can be replicated. To guarantee transferability, the researcher provides thick, rich

narrative that allows others interested in a similar topic to transfer the research to a different setting. The researcher also provides the individual interview questions and thorough notes and instruction with regard to the data collection methods. Finally, the researcher includes the maximum variation in participant types (age, gender, ethnicity, experience level, etc.) for the sample within the matrix from the information gathered from the archival university and state records.

Ethical Considerations

The purpose of this investigation was not to dissect CSU adjunct faculty behavior or performance. Rather, the purpose was to understand adjunct faculty self-efficacy in an effort to possibly assist CSU adjunct faculty in performing their duties with more ease. The participants were not put into any danger and participation in the interview process presented only minimal risk. Interviews were held at CSU campuses when applicable, but teleconferencing was an option for those CSU adjunct faculty who were not local residents. Having face-to-face interviews in somewhat familiar surroundings assisted in minimizing anxiety linked to participation.

Ethical issues can arise in different stages of the research project including preparation, foundation, data collection, data analysis and reporting, sharing, and storing data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To avoid ethical issues, the researcher for this qualitative case study attained Liberty University IRB and CSU IRB approval. Also, since adjunct faculty are adults, informed consent was acquired. To maintain the privacy and security of participants, the researcher used pseudonyms for participants' names, password protected all electronic files, kept all paper files in an existing locked cabinet, and will destroy all files after three years. In consideration of information sensitivity, potential Title IX violations will be reported to the proper authorities.

Summary

Qualitative research strives to explore and understand how individuals make meaning of specific situations or circumstances (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Through the collection of data utilizing the individual interviews, focus group, and participant letters, the current study improved understanding regarding the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at a regional university. The data analysis method attended to all project sources, examines all reasonable opposing explanations, tackles the most important features of the case study, and displays an understanding of present knowledge on the subject (Yin, 2018). Providing detailed description of the research design, research questions, setting, participants, procedures, role of the researcher, data collection methods and analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations in the context of the current study, this Chapter Three submission offered an extensive overview of the research project.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

In this chapter, the researcher presents the results of the data analysis. This chapter includes a chapter overview, a detailed participant description, and a results section that delineates the data by themes. The purpose of this qualitative single instrumental case study (Yin, 2018) is to understand the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU. Self-efficacy is generally defined as the belief in one's skills and abilities (Bandura, 1977). The theories guiding this study are Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy and Maslow's (1943a, 1943b) human motivation theory because motivation-impacting self-efficacy is described as a dynamic that has definitive antecedents, but confidence in one's abilities and skills can change as a result of personal achievements, individual experiences, outside influences, and purpose. Using the research questions as a guide, the researcher used themes to organize the data and tables for the visual representation of those themes.

Participants

I asked the department heads of nine academic departments for contact information for all adjunct faculty for their department. One department never responded to my request. I had a list of 111 adjunct faculty potential participants. I sent emails, which explained the necessary criteria of teaching no more than nine hours per regular semester and/or no more than six hours per summer semester at one or more of the CSU campuses, to potential participants by department asking for volunteers. I received 18 responses indicating a willingness to participate but only 14 participated because four stopped responding to me after their initial interest. All 14 adjunct participants taught no more than nine hours per regular semester and/or no more than six hours per summer semester at one or more of the CSU campuses. All 14 adjunct participants

willingly signed a consent form to participate in the study prior to investigative research. See Appendix C for the adjunct participant consent form.

The demographics of the 14 adjunct participants included 10 female and 4 male CSU adjunct faculty members. The number of years of adjunct teaching experience varied from 1 year to 25 years. The demographics of the adjunct faculty participants are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Adjunct Faculty Member	Gender	Years of Adjunct Service at CSU
Linda	Female	12
Jennifer	Female	2
Ann	Female	3
Susan	Female	3
Ron	Male	10
Paul	Male	25
Jane	Female	19
Sarah	Female	1
Emily	Female	1
Kevin	Male	9
Jessica	Female	1
Steve	Male	17
Karen	Female	6
Melinda	Female	5

Linda

Linda had 12 years of adjunct teaching experience at CSU. She also had eight years of experience at a local junior college. From the beginning of the individual interview, it was clear that Linda was passionate about teaching. Linda stated that she spent roughly 10–15 hours per week preparing, planning, administering and grading for each 3-credit-hour class she taught. In general, Linda was very confident in her ability to achieve the goals she has set for herself as an

adjunct instructor. However, she felt very frustrated by the difficulty she faced when trying to obtain full-time college instructor employment. Linda felt confident about her ability to overcome everyday life challenges and adjunct instructor challenges. She expressed that because of the level of students she dealt with, she faces many challenges. Specifically, Linda was very certain about her ability to accomplish difficult tasks and effectively perform her adjunct instructor duties. Although she saw the bureaucracy and politics as obstacles to her professional performance, she was still “able to climb over most of them” (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020). When asked how her abilities compared to those of her peers, Linda said that she was most likely more flexible, more qualified, and more passionate than other adjunct faculty and some full-time faculty. Linda said that not only did she not receive orientation at the onset of her employment at CSU, but she also did not even have a supervisor. As a result of having no training when she began adjunct teaching at CSU, she had to “wing it” (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020). In the individual interview, Linda stated that after 12 years of service at CSU, she was invited to participate in a conference held on campus for the first time. Up until then, she had no university-driven opportunity for professional development. Linda did not have much chance to create relationships with other adjunct faculty because her office is located at a significant distance from the building where most of that department’s classes are held. This distance is a barrier to much-needed adjunct faculty support, according to Linda. Also, Linda had little to no interaction with her department head or dean since she started at CSU. When asked what changes she would like to see regarding adjunct faculty support, Linda stated,

I would like to see them urge to be, um, included in things like convocation and professional development. I would like us to be able to be participating in committees

the same as the community college allows. I would like to be encouraged to take steps to become full-time. I would like to feel like something other than someone on a payroll in another world because I feel very disassociated from the rest. (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020)

Linda also considered adjuncts at CSU overlooked regarding what they offer and suggested that it is in the best interest of the university to include adjunct faculty in discussions so that they can be on the same page. Her frustration became evident when she said, “I just think that they’re really missing out on a valuable asset and they consider it disposable instead of it something to grow” (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020).

Jennifer

Jennifer had been adjunct teaching in the area for a little over 20 years and at CSU for two years. For Jennifer, adjunct teaching consisted of preparing lesson plans, constructing assessments, gathering classroom materials, and working through the various technologies required to do her job. Jennifer was very confident in her ability to achieve goals, overcome challenges, accomplish difficult tasks, and effectively perform her adjunct instructor duties. While Jennifer knew that she was proficient in her adjunct instructor abilities, she did not feel as though she had enough knowledge about her peers to compare her abilities to theirs. Jennifer did not receive any orientation or training when she started at CSU but felt that was partly due to her level of experience. Jennifer was glad that a version of professional development was offered the previous semester but said that it merely consisted of instructions on how to utilize library resources. Jennifer acquiesced that she was not around other adjunct faculty or full-time faculty enough to interact with them or build any kind of relationship with them. Jennifer was very appreciative of her relationship with her department head but said she had no dealings with her

dean. Jennifer would like to see updated technology at CSU. Also, Jennifer felt strongly that more support staff and a proper writing and math lab were necessary for CSU to provide the best college education possible, and she was frustrated about the lack of resources.

If I've got, you know, struggling students, I have nowhere to send them. And so, we end up doing a lot of that. I end up meeting with students before and after class who are struggling because the two students that they have available for tutoring either aren't available whenever the students need it. (Jennifer, personal communication, February 27, 2020)

Ann

Ann worked in higher education for 15 years and had three years of adjunct experience at CSU. Ann stated that, for the courses she taught, lead instructors created the courses and then those course shells were copied over for her; so, her duties include arranging the course component due dates and changing any assignment policies or structure to suit her teaching style. Ann perceived herself as a puzzle-solver and felt confident in her abilities to achieve goals, overcome challenges, accomplish difficult tasks, and perform her adjunct instructor duties effectively. However, Ann did mention that she had some apprehension when given a new class to teach but only because it was unfamiliar and taught by a different instructor with a different structure. Ann felt "underqualified" (Ann, personal communication, February 18, 2020) when compared to other adjunct instructors and full-time instructors but attributed that feeling to her personality rather than actual ability. Other than online learning management system (LMS) training, Ann did not receive formal orientation or training when she began adjunct teaching at CSU. Ann specified that, after she started to teach, her view of what it means to be an instructor changed because she saw the difficulties that instructors encounter such as failed assignments

and problematic students. Ann said that she had not been privy to any professional development and supposed that “when you’re doing a decent job, they just kind of leave you alone, which may be a good or bad thing” (Ann, personal communication, February 18, 2020). The little interaction Ann had with other adjunct faculty was good, and the interaction she had with full-time faculty was frequent because she works as a staff member on the main CSU campus. Ann saw her situation as “unique” (Ann, personal communication, February 18, 2020) and felt comfortable asking full-time faculty questions about various topics such as course content, course structure, LMS, and course policies. According to Ann, she had a great relationship with both her department head and her dean and felt like she could also approach either one of them for assistance. Ann found her former department head very encouraging, which was comforting because she had little confidence in her abilities as an adjunct instructor when she first started. When asked what changes she would like to see regarding adjunct faculty, Ann expressed an interest in additional training. Ann realized that not all adjunct faculty want to be included. Some are happy just doing their job and do not need community. However, Ann desired more inclusion for adjunct faculty which was comprised of communication, invitations to meetings, and regular email updates about events at the university and department-related matters.

Susan

Susan was involved in higher education for 24 years as a professor and in accreditation. Adjunct teaching led to a full-time position and tenure for Susan but her outreach location closed down after the economic crash in 2008. Eventually, Susan landed at CSU where she has taught for two and a half years. To fulfill her adjunct duties, Susan spent roughly 14 hours per week for each three-credit-hour course organizing lectures, creating vocabulary worksheets, building exams, constructing research paper instructions, and grading. Susan took extra time at the

beginning of each semester organizing the syllabi and making minor changes to the course shells she was given from the lead instructor. Susan expressed some frustration concerning the poor technology available for students on the satellite campus. At this point, it became very evident that Susan was passionate about teaching and cared very deeply for her students. Susan expressed gratitude for the support she received from her campus administrator and department head. Still, she was troubled by the negative relationship she had with full-time faculty, which she finds a difficult obstacle to overcome. However, Susan was very confident in her ability to perform effectively as an adjunct instructor and to reach her goals. When asked about orientation, Susan stated that her orientation consisted of learning how to use the software and where to get her parking pass. Susan did not receive any adjunct teacher training when she started at CSU and felt that her experience in higher education and her doctorate in education gave her superiors confidence about her ability to teach. Susan was not worried about professional development. "If I never had it [professional development], it wouldn't be a problem" (Susan, personal communication, February 20, 2020). Susan's experience in higher education and with an accreditation institution made her very self-assured. Interaction with other adjunct faculty was positive for Susan as they share advice and office space. Susan described a negative experience with full-time faculty in which they were not cooperative and dismissed Susan's ideas even though she had tremendous experience in higher education. Susan also explained that several times, no one notified her about textbook changes and she did not find out there was a new textbook until the first day of class when a student told her that the bookstore was selling a different book than the book she had. Susan preferred to have an opportunity to teach more than nine credit hours per semester. Susan was under the impression that men mainly dominated the control of higher education.

Ron

Ron started adjunct teaching 35 years ago at a private institution and began adjunct teaching at CSU nine and a half years ago. Ron stated that his adjunct duties included preparing syllabi, gathering materials, teaching classes, creating course components, administering exams, and grading assignments. Ron felt as though his ability to achieve his goals as an adjunct instructor was somewhat stifled by the limited power granted to him. Ron said that he had no authority to choose the textbook he used and thus had no control over course content. Also, Ron perceived his ability to be impaired by a lack of communication between him and the department head. Ron proclaimed himself to be persistent, organized, and a fighter which helps him to feel secure in his ability to overcome challenges, accomplish difficult tasks, and perform his adjunct instructor duties effectively. Ron expressed concern over student evaluations of instructors because he does not feel that they are a clear representation of the instructor's abilities. When asked how he thought his adjunct instructor abilities compared to those of his peers, Ron believed he does not know enough about other adjunct instructors to make a comparison. Ron did not receive any orientation, nor did he receive any formal training relative to his adjunct position. Ron was not asked to attend any professional development by CSU during his time there. Ron mentioned that he had a negative encounter with a very condescending full-time faculty member, but he also had a very positive communication and relationship with a full-time faculty member who was very helpful and supportive. When Ron was first hired, interaction with his department and dean was satisfactory. Recently, however, Ron experienced very little interaction with his department head or dean and expressed frustration about the lack of communication, which caused him, on more than one occasion, to show up to class with the wrong textbook. Ron identified CTL (Center for Teaching and Learning) personnel as not

helpful because they referred him to their extensive library of training videos rather than answering his questions. Ron indicated that the pay for adjunct instructors at CSU should be increased because he has not had a raise since his employment at CSU began. For potential adjunct instructors, Ron acknowledged that the students have changed from motivated learners who take notes in class to class attenders who barely listen. In the letter, Ron alerted potential adjunct faculty that, while the satellite campus director is beneficial, the CSU administration at the main campus does not communicate their expectations to adjunct faculty. “I have had to take the initiative myself and communicate any problem, need or concern that I might have” (Ron, personal communication, February 19, 2020).

Paul

Paul was an adjunct instructor, off and on, for 25 years. Paul came back to work as an adjunct at CSU two years ago. Paul itemized his general adjunct tasks such as preparing the syllabus, creating assignments, giving lectures, grading papers, holding office hours, and providing study sessions. For each three-credit-hour class, Paul spent seven to eight hours per week completing adjunct tasks. Paul affirmed his confidence in achieving goals, overcoming challenges and accomplishing difficult tasks. Even though it is out of his hands, Paul maintained that the CSU regulation forbidding adjunct faculty from teaching more than nine credit hours per regular semester somewhat stifles him from achieving his goals fully. It was evident early on that Paul desired to learn along with his students. He stated, “I save my evaluations and file them away just for future because I always want to see how I can become better” (Paul, personal communication, February 24, 2020). Paul was fairly certain that he was at the same level, if not a little better, than other adjunct faculty because of his passion for teaching. Still, Paul indicated that, when compared to full-time faculty, he may be somewhat lacking. He felt this way only

because full-time faculty are vastly more experienced and “their knowledge of the student body and the campus environment” (Paul, personal communication, February 24, 2020) is naturally greater than adjunct faculty. Paul stated that the orientation he received when he came back to CSU two years ago was adequate and consisted of training videos about sexual harassment. Paul did not receive any training but did not think that was an issue since the department head took some time to go over some basic requirements and logistics. Paul was not invited to any professional development at CSU but was invited to hear guest speakers. Paul had no interactions or relationships with other adjunct faculty and blamed that on timing. Paul is not on campus for more than a couple of hours a week which did not create many opportunities for interaction or relationship. Paul described his relationship with full-time faculty members, the department head and the dean as helpful and valuable. Paul articulated dissatisfaction about classes being taken away from adjunct faculty and given to full-time faculty right before the semester begins. Paul was also somewhat irritated about the pay for adjunct faculty and surmised that adjunct pay has not changed since CSU was a two-year institution.

Jane

Jane was an adjunct instructor at CSU for 10 years teaching two to three classes per semester. During those 10 years, Jane also spent two semesters adjunct teaching at a nearby private institution. Jane quantified the hours she spent on general adjunct instructor tasks as 15–40 hours per week for each three-credit-hour class she taught. That time was spent preparing the course shell, sending weekly emails, entering weekly announcements, answering student emails and questions, responding to online discussion forums, and grading assignments. Jane felt very confident about her ability to achieve goals, overcome challenges, accomplish difficult tasks, and effectively perform her adjunct instructor duties. Jane did “not shy away” (Jane, personal

communication, February 25, 2020) from challenges. Jane declared, “As an adjunct, you’re on an island of your own” (Jane, personal communication, February 25, 2020) and that she sets a high standard for herself so she is on the level of, if not better than, most other adjunct faculty and possibly even full-time faculty. Jane admitted that she received no orientation when she started at CSU and that her training consisted of a charge to “go forth and do good” (Jane, personal communication, February 25, 2020). Jane claimed to receive reasonably good professional development from CTL but no other professional development was offered to her at CSU. Jane said that while her interactions and relationships with other adjunct faculty and full-time faculty have been limited, those encounters were positive and beneficial. Jane defined her interaction and relationship with her department head and dean as lacking compared to the same situation with the previous administration who engaged adjunct faculty with inclusive meetings. Jane longed for more interaction, more information, better communication, newsletters, and quarterly online meetings from CSU.

Sarah

Sarah was a new adjunct hire having just started her second semester teaching at CSU. Sarah claimed to spend one to two hours per week for each one credit-hour lab preparing for class, taking roll, lecturing, overseeing science labs, and administering daily quizzes. Sarah was somewhat apprehensive about achieving her goals as an adjunct instructor simply because she does not yet have much experience. Sarah felt comfortable with her ability to overcome challenges and said that she gets better as time goes on. She described an issue with entering final grades which caused her to have to complete the same task multiple times to get it right. It was evident that she was proud that she persevered. Sarah was confident in her ability to accomplish difficult tasks and to perform her adjunct instructor duties effectively. Sarah did not

feel adequately qualified to compare herself to other adjunct faculty or full-time faculty because she is so new to the higher education field. Outside of lab safety and procedure training, Sarah did not receive orientation or training when she began adjunct teaching at CSU. Sarah was not invited to any professional development or meetings where faculty might attend. Sarah confirmed positive overall experiences with other adjunct faculty, full-time faculty, and the department head, but Sarah had very little interaction with the dean. Sarah desired the university and her department to invite adjunct faculty to conferences and other campus events. Also, Sarah acknowledged that “adjuncts should have proper training” (Sarah, personal communication, February 26, 2020) and an adjunct handbook was greatly needed for adjuncts who have never taught before coming to CSU.

Emily

Emily, a permanent staff employee, just started her second-semester adjunct teaching at CSU. Emily listed her adjunct instructor duties such as answering student emails and questions and grading assignments. Because she teaches online, Emily said she has fewer responsibilities than an on-ground instructor. Emily felt very confident in her ability to achieve goals, overcome challenges, and accomplish difficult tasks. Emily described herself as a driven person who enjoys a good challenge and tackling difficulties and acknowledged that her biggest challenge is learning to stand her ground with students. Emily hinted that, because students realize she is young, they try to take advantage of her naiveté where course structure and policy are concerned. Emily’s face brightened when asked about her confidence in her ability to perform her adjunct instructor duties, making it apparent that she enjoys adjunct teaching and finds joy in that role. Emily confided that she feels “less than” (Emily, personal communication, February 21, 2020) when compared to full-time faculty and that she is impressed by adjunct faculty that teach in

front of a live class. Emily admitted she would like to teach an on-ground class someday. Emily divulged that she did not receive formal orientation or training for her adjunct teaching position. Still, she attributed that deficiency, as it were, to her permanent staff employment at CSU. Emily expressed gratitude for the support of one adjunct faculty member specifically who helped her become acclimated to her adjunct role. Emily attributed having little interaction with other adjunct faculty to being so new but said that her interaction with full-time faculty was fantastic. Emily saw her department head and dean as positive, encouraging, and supportive. Emily mentioned that the former department head was responsible for her start in adjunct teaching. Emily preferred adjunct faculty to be more included in all that goes on at the university and within her department. “There are times as an adjunct that I feel a disconnect from the department, so I do wish there was more intentional interaction between adjuncts and full-time faculty” (Emily, personal communication, February 21, 2020).

Kevin

Kevin was involved in adjunct teaching for 14 years total and nine years at CSU at one of the satellite campuses. Kevin explained that he spends 8–10 hours per week completing adjunct instructor tasks for his three classes (three credit hours each). Kevin defined adjunct instructor tasks as reworking the syllabus, making appropriate changes to assignments, and lecturing. Kevin showed high confidence in his ability to achieve goals, accomplish difficult tasks, and effectively perform his adjunct instructor duties. Kevin felt as though adjunct instructors are not often approached with challenging tasks. When asked about his ability to overcome challenges, Kevin announced, “My ability to do it is only limited by your willingness to keep learning, keep growing. And as long as you’re doing that, you’re probably going to be just fine” (Kevin personal communication, February 25, 2020). Kevin said his CSU orientation consisted of LMS

tutorials and that CSU offers a variety of training for all faculty on a variety of topics such as communicating with students, uploading assignments and keeping a grade book or calendar. Kevin expressed gratitude about CSU's flexibility concerning formal orientation and training because it feels like busywork. Kevin could not recall being invited to any professional development at CSU and he went on to say that anything remotely similar to professional development at CSU was "very generic" (Kevin, personal communication, February 25, 2020) which is unfortunate because instructors typically need something more specific to their field or mode of teaching. Kevin attached the little interaction he has with other adjunct faculty to a matter of logistics. "Most of our adjuncts come in and teach and go on to other things" (Kevin, personal communication, February 25, 2020). Kevin admitted he did not have interaction with many full-time faculty members but had very positive experiences with the few he knew. Kevin recognized that full-time faculty often have credentials that adjuncts do not, but he would like to be able to teach more than nine credit hours per regular semester. "Big universities are picking up a bunch of adjuncts. That saves them money. If that's the case, let's not be so limiting as to how many courses we offer" (Kevin, personal communication, February 25, 2020). Kevin felt it essential to note that at least some adjunct instructors make themselves more available to students than full-time faculty. Kevin understood that student/instructor interaction results in a more positive experience for the student as well as the instructor.

Jessica

Jessica was an adjunct instructor at CSU for one year. Jessica truly enjoyed her role and said that, aside from tremendous amounts of grading, she constructed lesson plans, answered emails, and reported plagiarism as part of her regular adjunct instructor responsibilities. In the focus group, Jessica said that she chose adjunct teaching because it allowed her to work and stay

home with her child. However, achieving her goals was also sometimes difficult because of life demands. Jessica was confident in her ability to overcome challenges and effectively perform her adjunct instructor job, partly because she received support and encouragement from her department, but she was not seen as an authority figure by students because of her adjunct status. Jessica said that she feels “pretty certain” (Jessica, personal communication, February 20, 2020) about her ability to accomplish difficult tasks but admitted that she suffers from “imposter syndrome” (Jessica, personal communication, February 20, 2020), making her sometimes doubt her abilities. Jessica did not feel qualified to compare herself as an adjunct to other adjuncts and did not feel as qualified, in general, as full-time instructors. Jessica conceded that she did not receive an orientation or any training when she began adjunct teaching at CSU. While Jessica did not receive any formal professional development, she did have an opportunity to attend departmental program meetings which made her feel like part of the team, and she valued what she learned. Jessica appreciated the relationships she has developed with two of the other adjunct instructors in her department. They exchanged cell phone numbers, allowing them to text back and forth so they can ask questions for help and guidance. Jessica also appreciated her relationships with full-time faculty members who have shown her great care by helping her deal with some difficult issues such as student plagiarism. Jessica interacted very little with her dean but spoke to her department head regularly. Jessica would like to see more support for adjunct faculty regarding uniformity of course schedules. While adjuncts in her department were provided with the standard syllabus for a class, they were not given a common schedule which was difficult to construct before the semester begins because adjuncts are often provided only a short notice about their course load. Plus, if the class is a prerequisite for another course, it is beneficial for all of the instructors to be on the same page. Jessica also felt that it would be

advantageous to have a common pool of assignments so that new instructors can pull from that instead of trying to make up assignments that meet the course objectives. Jessica stated that she feels valued as an adjunct and is never made to feel “less than” (Jessica, personal communication, February 20, 2020) by anyone at CSU.

Steve

Steve started adjunct teaching at CSU 17 years ago and has taught on all three campuses, across three different disciplines. In the letter, Steve described the adjunct faculty experience as “a solitary endeavor” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020) and suggested that making an effort to join in on various university events would be an excellent way for new adjunct faculty to get plugged in and feel like a part of the institution. In addition to carrying out regular adjunct responsibilities such as creating assignments, grading assignments, overseeing students, and providing feedback for students, Steve originated an online course which is a responsibility that typically falls to full-time faculty. Steve was very confident in his abilities as an adjunct instructor and named timing and distance as the only challenges he faced which he usually overcomes easily. “I’ve been around for such a long time . . . I’ve been kind of autonomous in my teaching in many ways” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020). However, Steve admitted that he has to forego some opportunities at CSU because of scheduling conflicts. Steve attributed his self-assurance, in his ability to perform his adjunct instructor responsibilities well and in comparing himself to his peers, to his vast experience in his field. “I’ve directed professional conferences in the communications field. I’ve taught both secondary level and high university level. I may have a wider range of knowledge about some things” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020). Steve proclaimed that the orientation he received was satisfactory but hinted that the current orientation might be somewhat lacking.

“There may have been a time in the university’s history when, um, maybe there was a little bit more orientation for, you know, the collective” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020). Steve confessed that it had been a long time since he was hired and could not remember exactly what his training looked like or if he received any. Steve touted the helpfulness of CTL and ACS (Academic Computing Services) but said their hours were not convenient for adjuncts who are usually working on their courses during the evening and weekend hours. Steve expressed disappointment that CSU did not financially support off-site professional development for adjunct faculty. Steve had minimal interaction with other adjunct faculty and maintained that, after adjunct faculty leave the university, some complain that they felt there was no place for them at CSU. Steve stated that he had fantastic working relationships with other adjunct faculty in his department but did not know any adjunct faculty outside of his department very well. Steve found his department head and dean to be supportive. Steve asserted that “many of the university social functions are also difficult timing” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020), which is problematic for adjuncts that would like to attend. Steve requested an increase in adjunct pay and “a little bit more as far as scheduling of activities that can, you know, um, share the university and environment, the culture of the university” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020). Steve went on to say, “The vast majority of universities now are building their departments and their programs on the back of adjuncts. So, if that’s the case, then there needs to be something that provides a better environment overall kind of thing” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020). While Steve was very content in his adjunct role, his frustration with the issues of adjunct pay and inclusion became evident during the individual interview.

Karen

Karen was an adjunct instructor at CSU for six years and previously taught at another four-year institution in the area for two years. Karen spent 6–12 hours per week researching course-related topics, preparing lesson plans, and giving scenario lectures that included a question and answer segment. Karen was very self-assured in her ability to achieve goals, overcome challenges, accomplish difficult tasks, and effectively do her adjunct job because she receives high evaluation scores, she hears positive feedback from her full-time peers, and she makes her classes fun and exciting. However, Karen expressed some frustration because she is often given very little notice about her class schedule, which she said makes it more challenging to teach. Karen stated that she has no interaction with other adjunct faculty so she cannot attest to their capabilities, but she felt she was as good or better than full-time professors. Karen remembered her orientation and initial training as a gathering of all department faculty to discuss expectations concerning the syllabus layout. More recently, she received a lesson about how to use the new LMS but also stated that she is astute and does not know what CSU could offer that she might find of value. When discussing the minimal training offered at CSU, Karen said, “I don’t need training in that” (Karen, personal communication, February 20, 2020). The only professional development Karen received was mandated by the state regents for online instructors. Karen had no interactions with other adjunct faculty, minimal interactions with full-time faculty, close and frequent contact with her department head during her first year at CSU, and no interaction with her dean. Karen expressed an interest in more help choosing course materials and increased pay for adjuncts at CSU.

Melinda

Melinda was an adjunct instructor at CSU for five years. Adjunct instructor duties for Melinda include structuring lectures, creating and grading assignments and exams, researching for supplemental course materials, sending email reminders about upcoming deadlines, filing early alerts as a retention effort for students who are failing, and sometimes counseling. Melinda maintained that completing the previously listed tasks takes 5–9 hours per week for each three-credit-hour class she teaches. Melinda saw her aptitude for overcoming challenges, accomplishing difficult tasks, and doing her adjunct job well as sufficient because she is not necessarily faced with any issues that she considers difficult. Melinda found her adjunct capabilities comparable to her adjunct and full-time peers. Melinda's experience with orientation and training left much to be desired because her orientation was almost non-existent, and she only receives training at CSU when she seeks it out. Melinda revealed that there is not much incentive for adjuncts to participate in training when their schedules are already full of adjunct responsibilities and personal commitments. Melinda claimed that there was no professional development offered at CSU. Melinda had close relationships with two other adjunct faculty members in her department. Melinda said that full-time faculty are welcoming to her. "They're always very nice and polite, respectful, and helped me out when I need it" (Melinda, personal communication, February 27, 2020). Melinda expressed disappointment with the adjunct pay at CSU but understands that low pay is just part of being an adjunct.

Results

The results of this qualitative case study about understanding the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty are delivered in the theme development section of this project. The theme development, which includes specific quotes from participants, is reported in an

appropriate narrative, and data from the individual interviews, focus groups, and letters to potential adjunct faculty were utilized. Codes were developed from the individual interview responses, the focus group responses, and the participants' letters to potential adjunct faculty. The codes, which led to the development of themes, are represented in Tables 2 through 7.

Theme Development

My data analysis was constructed on the theoretical framework for this project which was a complex alliance of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), social cognitive (Wood & Bandura, 1989), and human motivation (Maslow, 1943a, 1943b) theories. I conducted data analysis for all data collected, "searching for patterns, insights, or concepts that seem promising" (Yin, 2018, p. 147). I examined the participants' letters and the transcripts from the individual interviews and focus group several times to immerse myself in the data so that I could better organize into themes (Creswell, 2013). Per Yin's (2014) advice, I wrote memos during the data collection and data analysis processes. I coded the data, organized the data, and interpreted the data to make sense of the underlying information in the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I used these discoveries to understand better how adjunct faculty at a regional university assign meaning to self-efficacy and how various contributing factors affect their self-efficacy. I analyzed and interpreted the data, which provided 15 themes that are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Themes

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Need	Non-existent/minimal	25
	New to field	8
	Differing student dynamic	6
	Discipline-specific	3
Confident	Self-assured	20
	Self-aware	8

	Familiarity with academic discipline	8
Positive	Skilled	19
	Comparable	12
	Abilities recognized	10
	Better than	3
Experience	Knowledgeable	18
	Positive incidents	12
	Joy in the work	12
Personality	Determination	14
	Inner desire	12
	Driven by goals	10
Belonging	Faculty encouragement	10
	Department head assistance	9
	Satellite campus director	3
Culture	Administrative policies	10
	Isolating nature	9
Inspiration	Passionate	10
	Encouragement from colleagues	8
	Student response	6
	Student success	4
Interaction	Positive encounters	9
	Lacking involvement	8
	Mentor	5
Undervalued	Poor support	8
	Underpaid	7
	Hindered by administration	6
Neutral	Already experienced	6
	Mass gatherings	4
Embryonic	New	4
	Lack of authority	2
	Imposter	2
Underqualified	Not as good as	3
	Lack of experience	2
	No PhD	2
Positive Impact	Adequate	3
	Plentiful training	1
Difficulty	Family life	2
	Red tape	2
	Logistics	3

These themes granted me the opportunity to detail the qualitative case study with narrative comprised of participant responses to the individual interview, focus group, and participant letters to adjunct faculty prompts.

Need. During the data analysis process, I discovered 42 instances where adjunct faculty made statements that I coded and categorized under the theme of need. In the individual interview, Jennifer stated that she did not receive orientation or training when she began adjunct teaching at CSU and that only in the previous semester had there been anything that remotely resembled professional development. However, after further reflection, she decided that the gathering of faculty in the fall semester did not exemplify professional development. In the focus group, Emily voiced that it would be beneficial for new adjuncts to shadow a member of full-time faculty so that they can get a clear picture of what it means to manage a class. Kevin, in the focus group, stressed the need for training about how to assist the multi-faceted student dynamic at CSU. In the letter to prospective adjuncts, Jennifer pointed out the insufficiency of professional development:

Professional development as a practice generally lacks content useful in the classroom, and when institutions start demanding that you spend your off time attending a 2-hour meeting that has no bearing on your ability to do your job, it negatively impacts how you feel about said job. (Jennifer, personal communication, March 4, 2020)

In the focus group, Karen articulated an interest in training for different learning methods, and Ann said that more detailed training for the LMS, outside of the various videos available, was needed.

Confident. In the data, I found 36 instances of confidence for the adjunct participants. In many cases, the adjuncts referred to familiarity with their academic discipline when discussing

confidence in their abilities. Jane stated she “knows her strengths and weaknesses” (Jane, personal communication, February 25, 2020), and this self-awareness increases her confidence. Linda said she “can climb any mountain” (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020) in front of her. Jennifer felt very confident and thought “if overcoming challenges isn’t in your wheelhouse, then you’re probably in the wrong position” (Jennifer, personal communication, February 27, 2020). Susan reminisced about having taught and having been involved in higher education for many years, which made her very self-assured in her adjunct teaching role.

Positive. Throughout the data analysis process, I found 54 instances that fed into the positive theme. When employees’ job aptitudes are recognized by colleagues and administration, the perception of their work excellence increases. In discussing her positive feelings about her skills and abilities as an educator, Jane brought up how her abilities were recognized by her peers when she received the Adjunct of the Year award. Steve saw his abilities as an educator comparable to those of his peers, and when asked how his abilities compared to his peers, he stated, “Because I’ve done things for such a long time. I’ve directed professional conferences. I’ve taught both secondary level and high and a university level. I may have a wider range of knowledge about some things” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020). A few times throughout the data collection process, adjunct faculty admitted that they feel as though their skills and abilities as educators actually surpassed those of their peers. Paul described his capabilities as “at the level or even better because I strive to just really be very passionate and excited about what I teach and taking that into the classroom” (Paul, personal communication, February 24, 2020). The adjunct participants felt positive about their abilities because they saw themselves as skilled, their skills comparable to or better than their peers, and their abilities recognized by others.

Experience. Linda, Kevin, Steve, Jane, Susan, Karen, Paul, and Ron had 9 to 25 years of experience as an adjunct so they attributed their self-efficacy, in part, to the knowledge they had obtained through their adjunct experiences. In the letter to prospective adjunct faculty, Susan informed the reader that she started as an adjunct 24 years before and that she taught several subjects within her academic discipline, providing her with self-efficacy in her abilities. Karen stated, “My talent is always to make the class interesting and fun and not boring” (Karen, personal communication, February 20, 2020), making it clear that she has the knowledge and experience to maintain students’ attention during her lecture, which increases her self-efficacy. Adjuncts at CSU have some positive incidents that contribute to their self-efficacy. In the focus group, Sarah stated that high student evaluations and constructive feedback from those evaluations contribute to her self-efficacy. In the individual interview, Emily said that positive reassurance from her department head increased her self-efficacy and gave her the courage to enter the adjunct field. Many of the adjunct participants indicated that experiencing joy in their adjunct work increased their self-efficacy. Ron wrote in the letter to prospective adjuncts, “I have always enjoyed being an adjunct teacher” (Ron, personal communication, February 21, 2020). Kevin had an overall joyful outlook on being an adjunct instructor. In the letter to prospective adjuncts, Kevin said, “Students are unique and with such uniqueness comes a wonderful opportunity to tackle student needs each and every time the class meets” (Kevin, personal communication, March 1, 2020); he also referred to adjunct teaching as “rewarding” (Kevin, personal communication, February 25, 2020).

Personality. While analyzing the individual interviews, focus group, and participant letters, I found 36 occasions where adjunct participants’ personality impacted their self-efficacy. To explain her confidence in the individual interview, Emily offered, “I think it has a lot to do

with, I think just how I was raised. My parents instilled those values in me that you work hard and you're going to achieve success if you work hard and you do what you're supposed to" (Emily, personal communication, February 21, 2020) to explain why she is so determined. Ron explained that he has always been "persistent" (Ron, personal communication, February 19, 2020), which supports his self-efficacy. During the focus group, Melinda admitted that she always had an inner desire to be a professor. Paul had a strong desire to achieve goals which naturally pushed him and created a domino effect regarding his self-efficacy.

Belonging. During the data analysis process, I found 22 instances of faculty encouragement, department head assistance, and satellite director impact which I categorized into the theme of belonging. When asked about her relationship with her department head and dean, Ann said, "I work side by side with him on a lot of things, so I think that my relationship with both of them is good. I feel like I can go ask questions if I have any. I feel like they've always been there for me" (Ann, personal communication, February 18, 2020). Both encouragement from full-time faculty and assistance from administration augment self-efficacy. In the letter to adjunct participants, Jessica discussed how help from colleagues amplifies her self-efficacy:

As an adjunct, self-efficacy is important because you often find yourself dealing with new situations. Have the confidence to know you can effectively handle a situation can be difficult, but I, once again, find it helpful to seek help from those who have already handled similar situations. While I sometimes don't know where to begin, discussing with my colleagues always helps me. (Jessica, personal communication, February 27, 2020)

In the individual interview, Kevin said that even though his department head is overworked, he is still attentive to the needs of all faculty, including adjuncts. Jennifer finds a sense of belonging in how she is treated by the director at the satellite campus of CSU where she is stationed. In the letter to prospective adjuncts, Jennifer said the director “is the only admin I know personally, and she is wonderful” (Jennifer, personal communication, March 4, 2020). Ron, speaking of the same director in the individual interview, proclaimed that she was accommodating and that he felt comfortable going to her for assistance and guidance.

Culture. Nineteen instances of demeaning administrative policy and feelings of isolation emerged during the data analysis process, forming the theme of culture. Both Kevin (in his letter) and Linda (during her interview) admitted that they felt adjuncts should be allowed to be on university committees because they, just like full-time faculty, have valuable insight and knowledge to contribute. Steve would like to see changes in academic policy that would allow for funding of opportunities for adjuncts. Another point of contention concerning culture was isolation. In the individual interview, Susan indicated she had no voice with full-time faculty and she was excluded from the department team. Linda expressed frustration in the individual interview:

I feel very disassociated from the rest. . . . I think a lot of times the adjuncts here are overlooked as to what we bring to the table where necessary and depending on whether it's a university or a smaller college or whatever the trend is that adjuncts are carrying a lot more load than they did say 10 years ago and it would be in the college's best interest to be inclusive of the adjuncts so that it's a uniform type education being given out and that issues that perhaps the full-time faculty are discussing are also issues that we care about. (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020)

Ron expressed feelings of isolation in the focus group. In the letter to prospective adjuncts, Susan said she felt “disposable” (Susan, personal communication, February 23, 2020).

Inspiration. Combing through the data revealed 28 instances of inspiration through passion, encouragement from colleagues, student response, and student success. For the group of adjunct participants, the inspiration that fed self-efficacy flowed from different sources. Even though many of the participants exclaimed how their peers were encouraging, Susan commented in the focus group that she experienced a lack of backing by the administration on certain issues, which does not positively support self-efficacy. In the letter to prospective adjuncts, Jennifer stated that positive student emails and praise from the administration help to maintain her self-efficacy:

Due to that background and experience in education, I feel that I am very efficient and competent in the classroom. My student evaluations seem to echo this; as does the fact that I am told so by my superiors and have been chosen for certain coveted class schedules. (Jennifer, personal communication, February 27, 2020)

In the individual interview, Kevin expressed that he is inspired by seeing his students succeed. Ron said he enjoys motivating students which feeds his self-efficacy. Paul said, in the letter to participants, “students here make my experience fun and exciting” (Paul, personal communication, March 5, 2020).

Interaction. During the data analysis process, I found 23 adjunct participant statements that built the theme of interaction. Sarah said that she had significant interaction with other faculty, adjunct and full-time, and her department head, touting “we all work well together in that department” (Sarah, personal communication, February 26, 2020). The adjunct participants also pointed out areas where interaction was lacking. In the individual interview, Sarah said that

she never sees her dean. Susan and Ron both felt that full-time faculty were not very warm to them, causing several problems like miscommunication and resentment which decrease self-efficacy. Karen commented that she had no contact with other adjunct faculty, very limited interaction with full-time faculty, a yearly meeting with her department head, and never saw her dean.

Undervalued. In the data, I found 27 instances that signified a feeling of being undervalued by the adjunct participants. One common complaint was that adjunct faculty do not receive enough notice about the classes they were expected to teach every semester. While adjunct faculty, for the most part, seemed to understand that last-minute notification was part of the nature of being an adjunct faculty member, late notice about course loads appeared to be perceived as a sign that adjunct faculty are undervalued. In her letter to prospective adjunct faculty, Linda stated, “Sadly, at [CSU], adjuncts are not valued nor recognized and self-efficacy is not promoted” (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020). Low pay was also a point of contention that made CSU adjunct faculty feel undervalued. In the individual interview, Karen defined adjunct pay as “abysmal” (Karen, personal communication, February 20, 2020). In certain instances, adjunct faculty at CSU see the administration as a hindrance to their self-efficacy. Jennifer, in the letter to prospective adjunct faculty, expressed frustration with the administration because she would like the opportunity to contribute to her retirement account. During the focus group, many of the adjunct participants explained that they would like to teach four or five classes but feel that the administration keeps this from happening.

Neutral. During the analysis process, I found 10 instances of neutrality. Paul felt that, even though orientation and training were not offered to him, orientation was “adequate” and training was “fine” because he “knew the ropes already” (Paul, personal communication,

February 24, 2020). Karen and Melinda felt that the orientation and training they received were pointless. In the personal interview, Melinda stated, “I think I've reached a point where I don't really need it now because it's been hands on” (Melinda, personal communication, March 3, 2020). None of the adjunct participants were necessarily haughty about not needing orientation or training. They simply spoke about their strengths in the area of teaching and how those strengths nullified the need for orientation and training as a matter of fact.

Embryonic. I categorized eight instances into relative codes that fed into the embryonic theme. In the individual interview, Jessica expressed a slight lack of confidence because she is new to adjunct teaching. Ann also expressed some hesitance due to only having two years of adjunct experience: “Am I going to understand the content well enough to really help the student get through?” (Ann, personal communication, February 18, 2020). Sarah felt her lack of public speaking experience, especially since she had not been teaching for long, hindered her from reaching goals. Jessica stated in the individual interview that she “felt like an imposter at first” (Jessica, personal communication, February 20, 2020). In the participant letter, Emily was initially “nervous to take on this new role” (Emily, personal communication, February 21, 2020), and acclimating to performing adjunct duties outside her regular 40-hour workweek was somewhat of a challenge until she became accustomed to it.

Underqualified. During the data analysis stage of my research, I found seven instances for codes that I categorized in the underqualified theme. Jessica stated that she was “not as qualified as colleagues” (Jessica, personal communication, February 20, 2020) in the individual interview. In the letter to prospective adjunct faculty, Jessica wrote, “There are times when students do not always see me as having the same authority” (Jessica, personal communication, February 20, 2020). This mirrors the feelings Emily has:

Students come to me and say, “I know I had, so-and-so, however much time to get this done. Um, I had some things come up. Is there any way you can open this up?” For me, I think that’s the hardest thing for me because I am young. They know I’m young, this is the first time I’m doing it. So, I don’t want to be too hard, but I don’t want to be too easy to where it’s just, “Oh, take her class, you’ll get an ‘A’ no matter what.” I think that’s the most difficult thing for me. (Emily, personal communication, February 21, 2020)

Ann mentioned that she had thought about going back to school to earn a doctorate because it might be necessary for furthering a career in teaching, but she had dismissed the idea.

Positive impact. Even though there were only four instances revealing a positive impact regarding orientation and training, it is important to note. When asked in the personal interview about the orientation he received, Paul said “I feel it was adequate” (Paul, personal communication, February 24, 2020). Paul went on to say that he felt the orientation and training he received were sufficient because he had previous experience that gave him the tools he needed to perform his adjunct instructor duties successfully. In the personal interview, Kevin said the training he received was “really good” (Kevin, personal communication, February 25, 2020). Kevin explained that CSU has many training opportunities.

Difficulty. There were seven instances where I coded family life, red tape, and logistics which were categorized into the theme of difficulty. In the focus group, Jessica expressed difficulty balancing her adjunct duties with her personal life and taking care of a small child, which decreased her self-efficacy somewhat. In the individual interview, Steve admitted issues with “time and logistics” (Steve, personal communication, February 17, 2020) even though he is otherwise very confident in his abilities. Ron confessed that he had limited power, which made teaching more difficult for him, slightly decreasing his self-efficacy. Linda disclosed that

“there’s always some piece of bureaucracy or politics that every now and then gets in the way” (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020) which decreases her self-efficacy by 10%.

Research Question Responses

One central question guided this qualitative case study into better understanding of the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty. Four sub-questions supported the central research question. In the following sections, I provide a narrative response to each research question and a defined table delineating the themes that best correspond to each research question.

Central research question. The central research question asked, What is the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU, a regional institution in the south-central region of the United States? Coding was used to classify the individual interview responses, the focus group responses, and the participants’ letter to prospective adjunct faculty prompt responses in a collaborated effort to answer the central research question. As such, the following themes which spoke to the central research question emerged: (a) confident, (b) embryonic, and (c) difficulty. In Table 3, descriptive responses from the individual interviews, focus group, and participants’ letters to prospective adjunct faculty that tie the central research question to the emerging themes are displayed. The self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU is confident, overall. However, some adjunct faculty are new and some have experienced difficulties. Both of these situations cause the self-efficacy of CSU adjunct faculty to diminish.

Table 3

Central Research Question

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Confident	Self-assured	20
	Self-aware	8
	Familiarity with academic discipline	8
Embryonic	New	4
	Lack of authority	2
	Imposter	2
Difficulty	Family life	2
	Red tape	2
	Logistics	3

Confident was the overarching theme that tied to the central research question and it reflected the top responses to Questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the individual interviews. During the individual interviews, the adjunct faculty implied or stated outright that they feel confident in their abilities to achieve goals, overcome challenges, accomplish difficult tasks, and effectively perform their adjunct duties, in general. In her individual interview, Ann said she was confident in most areas (Ann, personal communication, February 18, 2020). Jennifer was very confident in her abilities, and Melinda was “100% certain” (Melinda, personal communication, February 27, 2020) about her abilities as an adjunct instructor.

The next theme that spoke to the central research question was embryonic. There was some apparent trepidation among Ann, Emily, Paige, and Jessica about their abilities because they were fairly new to the adjunct field. However, this feeling was very slight and overall, they felt confident in their abilities. Jessica felt as though she was not seen as a person of authority by her students because she was so new in her adjunct role. Emily also felt as though she was lacking authority and said, “I’m young and they know I’m young” (Emily, personal communication, February 21, 2020). When CSU adjunct faculty are in the embryonic stage of

their adjunct role, their self-efficacy is somewhat decreased simply because they are new, sometimes because they see themselves as lacking authority, and occasionally because they feel like an imposter.

While CSU adjunct faculty feel confident about their abilities, for the most part, difficulty occurred as the third theme that answered the central research question. In the focus group, Jessica, Ann, and Steve each expressed difficulty with technology as an issue that minimally decreases their self-efficacy. In the participant letter to prospective adjunct faculty, Ron talked about the apathy of some students: “No, I have students that attend my class, do not bring their textbooks, do not take any notes, and just listen and look at me” (Ron, personal communication, February 21, 2020). Seemingly bureaucratic red tape keeps faculty from disciplining students for this kind of behavior which is frustrating for some faculty. While difficulty was recognized as a theme in this research, the number of instances was rather small. The participants named family life, red tape, and logistics as areas where difficulty crept in to their adjunct role decreasing their self-efficacy.

Sub-question 1. Sub-question 1 asked, How do CSU adjunct faculty feel about their skills and abilities as educators? Coding was used to organize the individual interview responses, the focus group responses, and the participants’ letter to prospective adjunct faculty prompt responses in a collaborated effort to answer sub-question 1. The following themes developed in response to Sub-question 1: (a) positive, (b) undervalued, and (c) underqualified. In Table 4, illustrative responses from the individual interviews, focus group, and participants’ letters to prospective adjunct faculty that tie Sub-question 1 to the emerging themes are presented. Most of the CSU adjunct faculty feel positive about their skills and abilities as educators. However, there were some instances of feeling undervalued and underqualified which

made adjunct faculty have a somewhat negative outlook about their skills and abilities as educators.

Table 4

Sub-question 1

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Positive	Skilled	19
	Abilities recognized	10
	Comparable	12
	Better than	3
Undervalued	Poor support	8
	Underpaid	7
	Hindered by administration	6
Underqualified	Not as good as	3
	Lack of experience	2
	No PhD	2

Overall, the participants saw themselves skilled as educators and this theme was evident several times throughout the data analysis process. In the individual interview, Karen iterated that she loved teaching and felt assured about her abilities as a teacher because students often remarked about how much they loved her class. “I had several students tell me I’m the best teacher they’ve ever had” (Karen, personal communication, February 20, 2020). The adjunct participants felt as though they were skilled in their adjunct duties and attributed their positive perception regarding their abilities, at least in part, to the recognition they received from their colleagues and peers. Several times, the participants made comments that hinted they felt as though their abilities were comparable and, on occasion, even rivaled their peers.

Sometimes, adjunct faculty at CSU feel undervalued, which undermines their perception surrounding the skills to do their job. Several of the adjunct faculty participants felt as though they were not supported by full-time faculty, administration, and CSU support teams. In the

focus group, Karen, Susan, Ron, and Kevin each voiced their desire for more than two weeks' notice for their course load. Low pay also caused adjunct faculty participants to feel undervalued. Linda claimed, "The pay is the lowest in the region, and accomplishments and growth are not recognized" (Linda, personal communication, February 24, 2020). Melinda, in the individual interview, voiced that she would like "the administration to provide encouragement and guidance to move up" (Melinda, personal communication, February 27, 2020). Adjunct faculty at CSU feel, at least to some extent, that administration is not concerned about their needs. In the focus group session, Kevin asked, "Why are we only able to teach three classes?" (Kevin, personal communication, March 1, 2020).

Some of the adjunct participants felt underqualified. In the individual interview, Ann expressed a small concern that she sometimes feels underqualified and feels as though her skills and abilities are not up to standard. When asked how her abilities compared to those of her colleagues, Sarah said, "I don't feel like there's really a comparison . . . I'm still so new" (Sarah, personal communication, February 26, 2020). The absence of a doctorate decreased confidence in adjunct abilities for some of the participants. In the individual interview, Kevin hinted that there is a distinct difference between his teaching abilities and those of his colleagues who have completed their doctorate. Perceptions of being "not as good as" other instructors, lack of experience, and having no doctorate degree were reasons that made some adjunct participants feel underqualified.

Sub-question 2. Sub-question 2 asked, What do CSU adjunct faculty attribute their self-efficacy to? Coding was used to organize the individual interview responses, the focus group responses, and the participants' letter to prospective adjunct faculty prompt responses in a collaborated effort to answer sub-question two. The following themes developed in response to

Sub-question 2: (a) experience, (b) personality and (c) inspiration. In Table 5, demonstrative responses from the individual interviews, focus group, and participants' letters to prospective adjunct faculty that tie Sub-question 2 to the emerging themes are presented. The adjunct participants attributed their self-efficacy to experience, personality, and inspiration.

Table 5

Sub-question 2

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Experience	Knowledgeable	18
	Positive incidents	12
	Joy in the work	12
Personality	Determination	14
	Inner desire	12
	Driven by goals	10
Inspiration	Passionate	10
	Encouragement from colleagues	8
	Student response	6
	Student success	4

Experience was the main theme that spoke to Sub-question 2. Linda, Kevin, Steve, Jane, Susan, Karen, Paul, and Ron had 9 to 25 years of experience as an adjunct so they attributed their self-efficacy, in part, to the knowledge they had obtained through their adjunct experiences. In the letter to prospective adjunct faculty, Susan informed the reader that she started as an adjunct 24 years before and that she taught several subjects within her academic discipline, providing her with self-efficacy in her abilities. Adjuncts at CSU also related some positive incidents that contribute to their self-efficacy. In the focus group, Sarah stated that high student evaluations and constructive feedback from those evaluations contribute to her self-efficacy. Finding joy in their work seemed to be a common thread among the adjunct participants. In the letter to

prospective adjuncts, Kevin said, “Students are unique and with such uniqueness comes a wonderful opportunity to tackle student needs each and every time the class meets” (Kevin, personal communication, March 1, 2020) and referred to adjunct teaching as “rewarding” (Kevin, personal communication, February 19, 2020). The experiences of being knowledgeable, being impacted by positive incidents, and finding joy in adjunct teaching positively impact adjunct faculty self-efficacy.

Adjunct participants partially attribute their self-efficacy to their personality. Determination, inner desire, and driven by goals were the codes I identified for the theme of personality. Ron explained in the letter to prospective adjuncts, “I have always been a very competitive and persistent person” (Ron, personal communication, February 21, 2020). Emily attributed her determination, inner desire, and need to fulfill goals to the way she was raised. Kevin’s inner desire to care came out when he said in his letter, “I have experienced another wonderful and most interesting result when I spend time with my students outside of class” (Kevin, personal communication, March 1, 2020). The adjunct participants contributed their self-efficacy to personality displayed by determination, inner desire, and goal orientation.

Inspiration was another theme that helped to answer Sub-question 2. For the group of adjunct participants, the inspiration that fed self-efficacy flowed from different sources. Many of the participants exuded passion for educating others that seemed to flow out of them naturally. As his eyes lit up, Paul passionately described his efforts to improve students’ college experience: “I’m always looking for ways, whether it’s through technology or whatever to teach the information better in a way that the students understand it” (Paul, personal communication, February 24, 2020). Ann said that receiving encouragement from her colleagues inspires her as an adjunct, stirring her self-efficacy. Student responses via evaluations, face-to-face

conversations, and letters help to shore up adjunct self-efficacy. Susan said that she has kept several letters over the years from students exclaiming their appreciation for her dedication to her adjunct profession. The adjunct participants attributed their self-efficacy to inspiration via passion, encouragement from colleagues, student response, and student success.

Sub-question 3. Sub-question 3 asked, How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of orientation, training, and professional development as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy? Coding was used to organize the individual interview responses, the focus group responses, and the participants' letter to prospective adjunct faculty prompt responses in a collaborated effort to answer Sub-question 3. The following themes developed in response to Sub-question 3: (a) need, (b) neutral, and (c) positive impact. In Table 6, characteristic responses from the individual interviews, focus group, and participants' letters to prospective adjunct faculty that tie Sub-question 3 to the emerging themes are presented. For the most part, CSU adjunct faculty saw a need for better orientation and training efforts for adjunct faculty. A few instances arose that showed orientation and training as a neutral or positive impact.

Table 6

Sub-question 3

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Need	Non-existent/minimal	25
	New to field	8
	Differing student dynamic	6
	Discipline-specific	3
Neutral	Already experienced	6
	Mass gatherings	4
Positive Impact	Adequate	3
	Plentiful training	1

The theme predominately emerged supplying answers to Sub-question 3 was need. When collecting and analyzing the data from the individual interviews, the focus group, and the participant letters to prospective adjunct faculty, I received an overwhelmingly negative response when I asked adjunct participants about orientation, training, and professional development. Twenty-five times, adjunct participants made statements that revealed they received no or very minimal training and/or orientation when they were hired at CSU. Paul described the orientation he received: “It was about sexual harassment and just the environments there” (Paul, personal communication, February 24, 2020). Paul stated, “There wasn’t really a lot of training per se” (Paul, personal communication, February 24, 2020), and he was not aware of any professional development offered at CSU. In the focus group, Emily expressed a desire for proper adjunct training for those new to the field. In the focus group, several of the adjuncts cited students with learning disabilities as a student population left out of institutional focus. Kevin felt that academic discipline-specific professional development was crucial. Overall, CSU adjunct faculty feel that better orientation and training are needed. The lack of orientation and training makes adjunct faculty feel somewhat unsure of their abilities. For example, if adjunct instructors stumble around in the LMS and are unable to figure out how to correct an issue, they may seem incompetent in the eyes of their students, which decreases their self-efficacy.

The second theme that helped to answer Sub-question 3 was neutral. Even though many of the participants stated that they received no orientation, training, or professional development, some felt that they were proficient as an adjunct and did not need orientation or training. A few thought they also did not require professional development. In the personal interview, Paul stated that he did not really need training and orientation because he had enough experience. Karen admitted in the individual interview that she felt the orientation and training she received, which

merely involved a gathering of about 15 departmental faculty at the beginning of the semester, had little to no impact on her as an adjunct instructor. Karen said, “It wasn’t that impressive in terms of making a memory for me. . . . I just remember them telling us about their expectations in terms of what the syllabus needs to look like . . . but that was pretty much it” (Karen, personal communication, February 20, 2020). Some adjunct participants perceived the role of orientation and training as having a neutral impact on their self-efficacy.

Positive impact was the next theme that spoke to Sub-question 3. Even though most adjunct faculty confessed that they received little to no orientation, training, or professional development, Paul and Kevin both said in the individual interview that they felt as though what they received was adequate simply because of their previous experience. Also, Kevin felt as though video tutorials were enough to learn the new LMS unless an adjunct teaches solely online. Kevin maintained in the individual interview that CSU “offers all the training you could want and then some” (Kevin, personal communication, February 25, 2020). Two of the adjunct participants perceived the role of orientation and training as having a positive impact on their self-efficacy.

Sub-question 4. Sub-question 4 asked, How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of university administrators and full-time faculty as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy?

Coding was used to organize the individual interview responses, the focus group responses, and the participants’ letter to prospective adjunct faculty prompt responses in a collaborated effort to answer Sub-question 4. The following themes developed in response to Sub-question 4:

(a) belonging, (b) culture, and (c) interaction. In Table 7, representative responses from the individual interviews, focus group, and participants’ letters to prospective adjunct faculty that tie Sub-question 4 to the emerging themes are presented. CSU adjunct faculty self-efficacy is

increased when university administrators and full-time faculty treat adjunct faculty in a way that makes them feel like they belong at CSU, is diminished by poor organizational culture, and can be impacted either positively or negatively by peer interaction depending on the situation.

Table 7

Sub-question 4

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Belonging	Faculty encouragement	10
	Department head assistance	9
	Satellite campus director	3
Culture	Administrative policies	10
	Isolating nature	9
Interaction	Positive encounters	9
	Lacking involvement	8
	Mentor	5

Belonging was the predominant theme responding to Sub-question 4. In the individual interview, Ann stated that she received positive support from full-time faculty and her department head, which increased her confidence. In the letter to adjunct participants, Jessica said that colleagues are happy to help. In the individual interview, Kevin said that even though his department head is overworked, he is still attentive to the needs of all faculty, including adjuncts. Jennifer finds a sense of belonging in how she is treated by the director at the satellite campus of CSU where she is stationed. Susan, speaking about her satellite campus director, maintained that she was “a wonderful person” (Susan, personal communication, February 20, 2020). When full-time faculty and administrators provide encouragement and assistance, adjunct faculty feel a stronger sense of belonging which increases their self-efficacy.

Culture was a relative theme that answered Sub-question 4. Many of the adjunct participants saw CSU administrative policies as a hindrance to positive organizational culture

and, thus, a hindrance to self-efficacy. In the letter to prospective adjuncts, Kevin said about adjunct faculty serving on committees, “We’re pretty limited in that regard” (Kevin, personal communication, February 25, 2020). In the individual interview, Linda also stated that she would like to be allowed to join committees. Steve would like the university to pay for adjuncts to speak at off-campus conferences. Some of the adjunct participants felt isolated in one form or another. In the individual interview, Susan indicated she had no voice with full-time faculty and she was excluded from the department team. In the focus group, Ron stated, “I feel left to figure it out on my own” (Ron, personal communication, March 1, 2020). Demeaning administrative policies and feelings of isolation brought on by issues within the organizational culture lead to decreased self-efficacy.

Also, the theme interaction helped to answer Sub-question 4. Most of the adjunct participants had positive interactions with other adjunct faculty, full-time faculty, and administration. In the individual interview, Ann stated that while her interactions with other adjuncts were nominal, they were positive and that interactions with full-time faculty and administration were mainly pleasant. In the participant letter, Sarah said of her colleagues, “We all work well together in that department” (Sarah, personal communication, March 2, 2020). Even though some adjunct participants had mostly positive interactions with their peers, there were a few instances where adjunct participants described a lack of interaction. In the individual interview, Sarah said that she never sees her dean. Ron said that one faculty member in particular was exceptionally rude to him and that considerable miscommunication with his department head made for uneasy interactions with peers. When asked about her interactions and relationships with full-time faculty members, Karen said, “It’s been very limited” (Karen, personal communication, February 20, 2020). Positive interactions with full-time faculty and

administrators have a positive impact on self-efficacy, but negative interactions or lack of interaction has a negative impact on self-efficacy.

Summary

This qualitative case study was conducted to increase understanding about the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty. The data collection methods utilized were individual interviews, a focus group, and participant letters written to prospective adjunct faculty. I assigned pseudonyms to 14 regional university adjunct faculty to protect privacy and confidentiality. The central research question along with four sub-questions guided the data collection protocols. Manual coding was administered to identify 15 themes that correlated the adjunct participant responses to the five research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

With severe funding cuts to higher education over the last 10 years, adjuncts have become a means of countermeasure to financial restrictions (Curtis et al., 2016). Thus, understanding the self-efficacy of this crucial and impactful higher education population is even more vital. While there is plentiful research about the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty, in general, little to no research is available on adjunct faculty specifically at regional universities. The purpose of this qualitative single instrumental case study (Yin, 2018) is to understand the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU. Self-efficacy is generally defined as the belief in one's skills and abilities (Bandura, 1977). The theories guiding this study are Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy and Maslow's (1943a, 1943b) human motivation theory because motivation-impacting self-efficacy is described as a dynamic that has definitive antecedents, but confidence in one's abilities and skills can change as a result of personal achievements, individual experiences, outside influences, and purpose. Using the research questions as a guide, I used themes to organize the data and tables for the visual representation of those themes.

This chapter consists of six sections: (a) an overview of the chapter, (b) a summary of the findings, (c) a discussion of the findings and the implications in light of the relevant literature and theory, (d) an implications section (methodological and practical), (e) an outline of the study delimitations and limitations, and (f) recommendations for future research. The summary of findings gives an overall description of the findings of the research. The discussion section of this chapter provides a general view of the findings in relationship to the empirical and theoretical literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The implications of the findings of the current research project are identified and the limitations and delimitations of the current research

project are explored. Recommendations for future research are made and, finally, a summary of the chapter is provided.

Summary of Findings

This qualitative case study was driven by one central research question and four sub-questions. The central research question asked, “What is the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU, a regional institution in the south-central region of the United States.” All 14 adjunct participants reflected stable self-efficacy about being an adjunct instructor. For the most part, the adjunct participants were self-assured, self-aware, and felt as though they were familiar with the topics surrounding their respective academic disciplines. Four adjunct participants had one year or less experience and showed some reservation about their self-efficacy simply because they were so new or they were young in comparison to other faculty. The less experienced adjuncts were in what I termed an “embryonic” phase characterized by one or all of the following: being new in the field of adjunct teaching, lacking authority or feeling as though they lacked authority, and suffering from imposter syndrome. Six of the adjunct participants brought up difficulties that interfere with their adjunct self-efficacy. Balancing adjunct duties with family life, the struggle of fighting higher education bureaucracy and politics, and distance each played a role in adding to the weight of being an adjunct.

The first sub-question asked, “How do CSU adjunct faculty feel about their skills and abilities as educators?” All 14 adjunct participants generally felt secure in their overall abilities as regional university adjunct faculty. Positive was the first theme that emerged about the first sub-question. The responses echoed that adjunct faculty at CSU felt as though their abilities were recognized and as though their abilities were comparable to that of their peers. Three adjunct participants even stated that their skills were better than those of their peers. However,

there were also several instances in the individual interviews, focus group, and participant letters where I found that CSU adjunct faculty felt as though they were not properly supported by the university. Eight of the participants said they are underpaid in comparison to adjuncts at other universities and the local community college. Four of the adjuncts that I encountered maintained they feel undervalued because of hindrances to their performance caused by the administration. Three of the adjunct participants saw themselves as not quite as good as their professional counterparts, making them feel underqualified. Lack of experience and lack of a doctorate also made them feel underqualified.

The second sub-question asked, “What do CSU adjunct faculty attribute their self-efficacy to?” Experience, personality, and inspiration were the themes that emerged. Of the 14 participants, 10 noted that the knowledge they gained within their discipline and expertise gained while employed in areas outside higher education gave them great confidence in their adjunct abilities. For several participants, positive occurrences during their adjunct experience had helped to stabilize their self-efficacy. Many explicitly stated that they found joy in their adjunct work which fed a positive outlook, increasing their self-efficacy. Six of the adjunct participants made several statements about how their personality is a vital factor regarding their self-efficacy. A firm determination, inner desire to succeed, and goal attainment ambition were factors that were seen as stemming from personality. The adjunct participants found self-efficacy contributing inspiration in various places. When talking to the 14 adjuncts, it seemed that each one was passionate about their work as an adjunct. However, only 10 identified passion as a driving influence for their self-efficacy. There were six instances where encouragement from colleagues was noted as inspiring. Positive student response and student success were also moving factors supporting self-efficacy.

“How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of orientation, training and professional development as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy?” was the third sub-question. The first theme identified for this research question was need. Throughout the data collection process, using all three protocols, participants hinted that there was a need when discussing orientation, training, and professional development. Participants said that orientation, training and/or professional development was non-existent or minimal 25 times. I found eight examples of a need for more focus on orientation and training for adjuncts that are new to the profession. In the focus group, particularly, the adjunct participants discussed the training/professional development need for the varying student dynamic at CSU. Adjunct participants brought up the need for more discipline-specific professional development. Neutrality was identified as a theme for the third sub-question because six of the participants felt that not having received proper orientation and/or training was okay because they had already worked in the adjunct field for many years. Almost negligible was positive impact about orientation, training, and professional development as they were described using terms such as “adequate” and “plentiful” only a few times by two of the participants.

The fourth sub-question asked, “How do CSU adjunct faculty perceive the role of university administrators and full-time faculty as impacting adjunct faculty self-efficacy?” The themes acknowledged as pertinent for the fourth sub-question were belonging, culture, and interaction. Overall, the adjunct participants were made to feel as though they belonged at CSU by other faculty; full-time faculty, in particular, had this kind of influence. Supportive department head administrators and campus directors were also named by participants as adding to the feeling of belonging and self-efficacy. Administrative policies were identified by several of the adjunct participants as factors that negatively impacted the university culture and

decreasing self-efficacy. Further, the culture was deemed as isolating in nature nine times by five of the adjuncts that were included in this study. Even though some of the participants had rather negative things to say about the role of university administrators and full-time faculty regarding impacts on adjunct self-efficacy, positive encounters with administration and full-time faculty were also observed by the adjunct participants. However, those were shadowed by statements about the general lack of interaction made available to adjunct faculty and the need for adjunct faculty mentors upon initial employment.

Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to increase understanding of regional university adjunct faculty self-efficacy through data collection and analysis using individual interviews, focus group, and participant letters to prospective adjunct faculty. After the audio files were transcribed, intense coding began. Fifteen themes emerged, and my interpretation of the data is reflected in narrative form and in Table 2 in Chapter Four. Also, in Chapter Four, Tables 3 through 7 provide an overview of the codes grouped into themes. This discussion section relates the findings from this research project to the theoretical and empirical literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The results of this study verified the theoretical and empirical literature surrounding adjunct faculty self-efficacy overall. Certain events and personal characteristics have an impact on self-efficacy. Also, the level of support from colleagues and the administration that adjunct faculty receive can sway self-efficacy. However, there were a few areas where the results were contradictory. Low self-esteem was a prominent correlation to adjunct faculty in theoretical and empirical literature, but the results from this study showed that the adjunct participants were, for the most part, confident in their abilities.

Theoretical Literature

The results of the current research support relative theoretical literature. Bandura (1977) maintained that specific factors and functions might steer behavior. Bandura (1977) held that motivation, goal setting, and efficacy expectations strongly impact the creation and development of self-efficacy. In almost every instance, the adjunct participants' responses correlated positive motivation, goal setting, and efficacy expectations to increased self-efficacy. In contrast, when encountered with negative factors such as administrative hindrances, negative feedback, and rejection from colleagues, the adjunct participants' self-efficacy waned. Bandura (1977) posited that success in a job increases self-efficacy and the current research findings uphold this idea. The more experience adjunct participants had, the more self-efficacy they had. Bandura (1977) also found that when issues arise causing difficulty or failure, self-efficacy decreases. Likewise, in the current study, when participants experienced difficulty or even small failures, their self-efficacy declined.

This project included a social cognitive relationship. Wood and Bandura (1989) posited that behavior, reasoning, personality traits, and environmental factors intertwine to reflect that self-efficacy is influenced by individual characteristics and situations. The current research echoed this idea. All of the adjunct participants exhibited self-efficacy influenced by one or all of the following: behavior, reasoning, personality traits, and environmental factors.

Human motivation theory was the third and final composite piece of the theoretical framework for the current research project. Maslow's (1943a) needs-based hierarchy, coupled with Maslow's (1943b) study of human motivation provided a basis for clear discussion about the relationship between the motivation of adjunct faculty and the behavior of adjunct faculty. The study findings show that motivation is linked to behavior. Adjunct participants who were

motivated by negative encounters and experiences had a higher rate of dissatisfaction with their adjunct employment. In contrast, adjunct participants who were motivated by wonderful adjunct experiences at CSU were more likely to have a positive outlook regarding their position.

Empirical Literature

According to Datray et al. (2014), adjunct faculty often have other professional experience before they enter the adjunct occupation. Many of the research participants in this study had previous experience either in another area of higher education or outside of higher education altogether, which helped them feel self-assured in their discipline. Also, the professional experiences obtained before entering the adjunct field provided the participants with familiarity with either their discipline or with the university atmosphere, which increased their self-efficacy for adjunct teaching. Kramer et al. (2014) found that, while some adjunct faculty would like to obtain full-time faculty employment, other adjuncts are perfectly content in their part-time role. This finding was mirrored in the focus research project with several participants voicing that they had no desire for full-time placement while others were frustrated because they could not find full-time positions. The correlation in the current project between joy, connection, and commitment with adjunct faculty motivation confirmed Smith's (2019) findings that the inner need to connect with people motivates adjunct faculty to have personal influence with other stakeholders.

Datray et al. (2014) found that adjunct faculty have as much ambition, if not more, than their full-time counterparts. Looking at the findings, this is true. Student interaction was voiced as crucial by 12 of the 14 adjunct participants. They talked about taking time after class to discuss different topics with the students, some course-related and some unrelated to the course. They also discussed going to university sporting events in which their students were participating

to show support. Most of the participants relied heavily on student evaluations for confirmation that they were effectively teaching. Rogers (2015) deliberated about the possibility that an adjunct's professional experience may be more valuable than a full-time faculty member's terminal degree because the adjuncts are constantly practicing their knowledge and naturally increasing their learning. When instructors feel they have a strong grasp on their academic discipline, their self-efficacy is increased (Hardy et al., 2017), which was obvious in the research findings because those participants with one year or less experience as an adjunct were more intimidated by student perception and felt less sure about their abilities as an instructor.

Schutz et al. (2015) maintained that full-time faculty feel as though more demands are placed on them from institutional administration than from any other university source. However, adjunct faculty are more impacted by interactions with students (Schutz et al., 2015). In the research findings, adjunct faculty certainly addressed how interactions with students impact them positively when students affirm their teaching effectiveness, but almost all of the participants felt as though administration hinders them in some way, either by the policies they make or through their lack of communication. Even though the research shows a strong desire for full-time employment (Kramer et al., 2014), dissatisfaction with pay (Thelin, 2017), and difficulties making ends meet (Curtis et al., 2016), all of the adjunct faculty found personal fulfillment in their adjunct instructor profession which coincides with Brennan and Magness' (2018) research findings. Nikolakakos et al. (2012) posited that grade inflation signaled low self-esteem on the part of adjunct faculty, but the adjunct participants seemed very devoted to their craft and genuinely concerned about doing what was best for students. Also, low self-esteem was not a common thread in the findings.

Kouzes and Posner (2017) maintained that effective orientation, training, and professional development are crucial for organizational success and that ushering in new employees properly significantly increases organizational culture and employee morale. Unfortunately, the current project findings indicate that CSU misses the bar where orientation, training, and professional development are concerned as most participants stated that they received no orientation, no training, and no professional development. Many of the adjunct participants found the organizational culture and administrative support to be lacking, which caused them to feel isolated. Lockhart-Keene and Potvin (2018) also found that orientation and faculty development are often lacking at the university level. This aligns with Levin and Montero-Hernandez's (2014) research showing that organizational culture and experiences with administration negatively impact adjunct faculty as a general rule because adjunct faculty are typically excluded from important departmental discussions and are not invited to staff development events. The findings solidify research by Carlson (2015) showing that faculty orientation and training are lacking overall, which contributes to feelings of isolation. Hardy et al. (2017) recognized that adjunct faculty are naturally distant because of time and logistics, and this sentiment was mirrored in the research project. Effective orientation and training could help to close the isolation that adjunct faculty feel (Carlson, 2015; Slade et al., 2017). In the data collection phase, several participants expressed a desire for proper training.

Burns (2017) stated that all institutional stakeholders should contribute to planning, strategizing, and development of the university. However, most of the participants stated that they were left out of the decision-making process. Two of the participants mentioned that they were not allowed to voice their opinion about a textbook. Many participants said the technology needs at CSU are not being met despite the need for such advancements (Brown & DiTrollo,

2017). With online learning growing at an exponential rate (Mitchell & Delgado, 2014) and the need for training for online instruction becoming ever more important (Shattuck & Anderson, 2013), technological maintenance and development are crucial.

Hardy et al. (2017) asserted that adjunct instructors are not as devoted as full-time faculty and see online teaching as simple and not requiring their full attention. My findings were that CSU adjunct faculty take their job very seriously and are very determined to do their job well whether in an online setting or a physical classroom. While adjunct instructors may lack job-specific training and development (Rogers, 2015), the current research findings show that students get the support they need (Fong et al., 2017; Hogan et al., 2013; Price & Tovar, 2014) from CSU adjunct faculty.

In general, adjunct faculty are impacted by their adjunct responsibilities, personal commitments, other professional duties, level of contentment in their job, feeling of belonging, and support from faculty and directors (Ferencz & Western Governors University, 2017), and this is true for the adjunct faculty at CSU as well. CSU adjunct faculty, like others (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018), often receive their course assignments only days before the semester begins. Of the adjunct participants that desired full-time employment, half have been searching for a permanent position for years, which is typical in the industry (Meyer, 2017). This adds to the feeling of isolation that some of the CSU adjuncts experience and is commonplace in similar situations (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Implications

The implications of this qualitative case study have empirical, practical, and theoretical significances that enhanced the existing research. The findings from the current study have the propensity to unveil areas of weakness regarding the situation surrounding adjunct faculty for

CSU as a university, various campus administrators, full-time faculty, and adjunct faculty. This visibility allows for correction in policy, behavior, and culture, providing for a more stable work environment for faculty and staff and a more effective learning environment for students.

Empirical Implication

The empirical implication of the current study provided attention to regional university adjunct faculty self-efficacy. Where most research on adjunct faculty is generalized, the current project was focused on adjunct faculty specifically at a regional university in an attempt to identify any nuances that apply only to regional university adjunct faculty. The current research project adds to Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) and Maslow's human motivation theory (1943a, 1943b) in that the findings support Bandura's (1977) and Maslow's (1943a, 1943b) research results for regional university adjunct faculty.

Practical Implication

CSU administration is now equipped with more knowledge about how to increase adjunct faculty self-efficacy, which benefits the stakeholders as a whole. The adjunct participants would like the opportunity to attend more functions, more training, and more professional development. CSU administration should implement an orientation, training, and professional development program that meets the needs of their adjunct pool whether that be through a formal mode or voluntary method so that heavily experienced adjuncts are not forced to attend training that they do not need. The adjunct participants feel isolated by certain academic policies and rules that forbid them from teaching more than three classes and choosing textbooks. CSU administration can use this information to understand better the desires of one of the most valuable assets at the university, explain the reasons for policies and rules that must remain intact, and change policies and rules that possibly no longer apply or require amending. Further, department heads are now

aware that many adjunct faculty members feel as though they are not heard. Department heads have the authority to change that dynamic.

Full-time faculty are encouraged to increase their awareness of adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty at CSU feel somewhat isolated and feelings of isolation are detrimental to the organizational culture, which impacts all university stakeholders. Some, not all, CSU adjunct faculty participants expressed a desire to have a community at their university, and full-time faculty should play an integral role in that implementation for those adjunct faculty who are not receiving cooperation and collaboration from their full-time counterparts.

Theoretical Implication

The theoretical framework for this study surrounded self-efficacy. An integrated model of Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) and Maslow's human motivation theory (1943a, 1943b) were delineated to utilize for exploration of regional university adjunct faculty self-efficacy because confidence in one's aptitude and capacity to finish a certain job supports motivation (Maslow, 1943a, 1943b). The current study revealed that regional university adjunct faculty, for the most part, have high self-efficacy even though they sometimes have negative experiences and other difficulties that impact them. This information enlarges the comprehension regarding the self-efficacy of a focus sample population which, in turn, strengthens a general understanding of the self-efficacy condition and how interactions along with other experiences influence self-efficacy.

Delimitations and Limitations

Certain purposeful delimitations exist in this study. I chose a qualitative single case study because I was looking for thick, rich detail with which to investigate the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty. A regional university is different from a state school

because, rather than a research focus, a regional university provides a valued higher education degree at about 25% less cost than the larger state schools (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2018). My rationale for choosing CSU adjunct participants was that I wanted my research to have real meaning and purpose. I felt that focusing on a specific regional university would have real meaning and purpose because regional universities do not get much attention when it comes to research focus. Regional universities are unique in that they tend to have smaller class sizes (Docking & Curton, 2015; Wright et al., 2019) which means greater propensity for student influence. Thus, the student impact that adjuncts have is vital because, at CSU, adjuncts outnumber full-time faculty by 30%.

The limitations of this study include sample size, geographical region, and singularity. I found it somewhat difficult to acquire volunteer participants because many adjuncts feel a little precarious in their position (Hardy et al., 2017). A few of the participants voiced some concern to me about confidentiality and privacy. I assured the participants that everything they told me would be held in the strictest confidence, I would use pseudonyms to protect them, they would be allowed to read their transcript to verify that what they meant to say was in the transcription, and they could drop out at any time if they felt uncomfortable. Fortunately, this reassurance was enough for them to stay in the study. However, I imagine several more adjuncts might have participated if they had not felt afraid to do so. CSU is located in the south-central region of the United States, which most likely changes the trajectory of the study to some extent. Cultural differences impact the way people perceive different situations, responses, and behaviors. Searching for volunteer participants from only one regional university posed some limitations because of the impact of organizational culture on employee perception.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research regarding the self-efficacy of regional adjunct faculty should focus on an expanded sample, multiplicity, regional variations, and the quantitative method. Taking into consideration the precarious nature of adjunct employment, an expanded sample might be more feasible if an incentive to participate were provided. Then, perhaps more than 14 volunteers would step forward to participate in a study that could support them in the end. Accessing participants from more than one regional university would likely increase the sample population and give more richness to the data because more than one organizational culture would be studied. Also, the differences in administrative policy would expand the data responses and coded themes. Choosing a university in a different region than CSU would open up the study for various cultural changes concerning the participants and research question responses. Finally, future research utilizing a quantitative method would be beneficial because it would easily allow for the inclusion of data from other stakeholders such as full-time faculty, university administrators, and students.

Summary

Understanding the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty has an important place in educational research because adjunct faculty play an integral role in the educational experience of college students. The self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at CSU was relatively high. However, there is still work that needs to be done. I find two points particularly significant. First, the findings show that regional university adjunct faculty self-efficacy depends on, at least to some extent, their perception of belonging. University administration has a considerable responsibility to address this issue. When employees feel as though they do not belong, they are less likely to perform their job effectively. Second, CSU adjunct faculty are sincerely devoted to

teaching. They are passionate about educating and interacting with students. All of the adjunct participants were interested in being the best teachers they can be. Unfortunately, some of them thought they had already achieved adjunct greatness, seeing no need for further training and development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Liberty IRB Approval

Dear Aletta Brook Purdum,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Please retain this letter for your records. Also, if you are conducting research as part of the requirements for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, this approval letter should be included as an appendix to your completed thesis or dissertation.

Your IRB-approved, stamped consent form is also attached. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office



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Appendix B: Vice President of Academic Affairs Permission Letter

[REDACTED]
OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, ACCOUNTABILITY & ACADEMICS

Brook Purdum
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

February 3, 2020

Dear Brook:

In response to your request to collect data from [REDACTED] for your graduate course work, [REDACTED] is willing to consider your request providing: [a] you obtain approval from the IRB at Liberty University, and [b] the [REDACTED] IRB subsequently approves it as well.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

[REDACTED]

Appendix C: Recruitment Email

Dear [Prospective Adjunct Participant]

I am a doctoral student at Liberty University conducting research for my dissertation titled *Understanding Self-Efficacy of Regional University Adjunct Faculty: A Qualitative Case Study*. The purpose is to gather data about the feelings and perceptions that regional university adjunct faculty have about their role in higher education. I am writing to invite you to participate in my study.

If you teach 1-9 credit hours at [redacted] and are willing to participate, you will be asked to participate in a recorded in-person interview and a focus group. In addition, you will be asked to review the verbatim interview and focus group transcripts to ensure the transcript reflects an accurate depiction of your answers and experience. You will also be asked to write a letter with guided questions about your experience as an adjunct faculty member at [School]. It should take approximately four hours for you to complete the procedures listed. Your name will be requested as part of your participation, but the information will remain confidential.

To express your interest in participating, please respond to this email confirming your interest, as well as confirming that you meet the criteria stated above. I will contact you via email within five days of your response to schedule an interview should you be selected to serve.

A consent document is attached to this message. Please review, and sign, the consent document and return it to me prior to our interview should you be scheduled to participate. You may return the consent document by scanning and emailing the signed document to me at abpurdum@liberty.edu, or by mailing it to the address listed below. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
A. Brook Purdum, Doctoral Student
Liberty University

Appendix D: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Understanding Adjunct Faculty Self-efficacy at a Regional University

A. Brook Purdum

Liberty University

School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study about the self-efficacy of regional university adjunct faculty. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a non-permanent faculty member teaching 1-9 hours per regular semester and/or 1-3 hours per summer semester at the target university. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

A. Brook Purdum, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to provide effective insight into the self-efficacy of adjunct faculty at a regional university.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Sit with the researcher for an interview to be completed in approximately one hour. The participant can expect to be audio/video recorded during the interview process.
2. Participate in a focus group to be completed in approximately one hour. The participant can expect to be audio/video recorded during the focus group.
3. Write a reflection letter about your feelings and perceptions regarding your adjunct faculty experience at [School]. This exercise should be completed within 30 minutes to one hour.
4. Review interview and focus group transcripts to ensure accuracy. This process should take roughly 30 minutes.
5. Remain available for follow-up questions. The participant can expect follow-up interview sessions to be completed in 30 minutes.

Risks: There risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. Benefits to society include greater insight into the disconnectedness of adjunct faculty.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. I may share the data I collect from you for use in future research studies or with other

researchers; if I share the data that I collect about you, I will remove any information that could identify you, if applicable, before I share the data.

- Participants and the university will be assigned a pseudonym. I will conduct the interviews in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews and focus groups will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.
- I cannot assure participants that other members of the focus group will not share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with [REDACTED]. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is A. Brook Purdum. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [REDACTED] or abpurdum@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Faculty Chair, at facultychair@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record/video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix E: [Redacted] IRB Approval



**Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Notice of Deferral Approval for [Redacted] Collaborator to Conduct Research**

Date: February 11, 2020

Principal

Investigator: Aletta Brook Purdum

IRB#: 11693

Reference#: 700354

Study Title: UNDERSTANDING SELF-EFFICACY OF REGIONAL UNIVERSITY
ADJUNCT FACULTY: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

This letter is to notify you that the [Redacted] [Redacted] Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your request for [Redacted] to defer all IRB responsibilities with regard to the above-referenced study to the IRB at Liberty University. This signed and IRB- approved [Redacted] Collaborator Assurance serves as the [Redacted] IRB's approval for you to conduct your research under the review and authorization of Liberty University.

On behalf of the [Redacted] IRB, I have reviewed the above-referenced study and determined that it meets the criteria for deferral. As a collaborating investigator on this study, you are responsible to:

- Conduct the study in a manner consistent with the requirements of the IRB's of the Liberty University and the [Redacted] and federal regulations 45 CFR 46;
- Request approval from the Liberty University IRB prior to implementing any/all modifications;
 - Notify the Liberty University IRB of any protocol deviations or unanticipated problems;
- Maintain accurate and complete study records for evaluation by the Liberty University and [Redacted] HRPP Quality Improvement Program and, if applicable, inspection by regulatory agencies and/or the study sponsor; and
- Notify the Liberty University IRB at the completion of the project.

For circumstances involving the review of uses and disclosures of protected health information (PHI) under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a determination will be made between the two institutions as to who will serve as the Privacy Board, if applicable.

If you have questions about this notification or using iRIS, contact the HRPP Office at [REDACTED] or irb.[REDACTED].edu.

Cordially,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Chair, Institutional Review Board