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ADJUNCT FACULTY JOB SATISFACTION: INTANGIBLE AND FINANCIAL FACTORS

AFFECTING THE ACADEMIC MAJORITY

by

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B.S. May 2014, Virginia Commonwealth University  
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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of  
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

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May 2020

Approved by:

Mitchell R. Williams (Director)

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## ABSTRACT

### ADJUNCT FACULTY JOB SATISFACTION: INTANGIBLE AND FINANCIAL FACTORS AFFECT THE ACADEMIC MAJORITY

Courtney Jane Obis Belmonte  
Old Dominion University, 2020  
Director: Mitchell R. Williams

As the landscape of higher education continues to tip more towards using or employing adjuncts, it is important to understand what factors contribute to adjunct faculty job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been linked with faculty loyalty and faculty turnover. Previous research on adjunct faculty job satisfaction aggregates all types of adjunct faculty together, while little research investigates the job satisfaction of disaggregated types of adjunct faculty in higher education.

The current study examines *ex post facto* faculty data from the National Science Foundation's 2017 National Survey of College Graduates on 3,737 full-time and part-time faculty. Faculty were divided into three groups: unintentional adjunct faculty (those who want a full-time position), intentional adjunct faculty (those who elect to be part-time), and full-time faculty (tenure-track or tenured faculty). Overall job satisfaction was divided into two scales: intangible and financial satisfaction. The study found statistically significantly different results with intentional adjunct faculty reporting higher levels of intangible satisfaction when compared to unintentional adjunct and full-time faculty. Intentional adjuncts did not fall far behind full-time faculty on levels of financial satisfaction, but unintentional adjuncts were still the least satisfied financially. Results indicated that intentional adjunct faculty may choose their part-time status because of its flexibility in comparison to full-time faculty.

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For my Lola and Lolo,

Alicia Cañeba Obis,

1930 – 2011.

And Restituto Nillo Obis,

1932 –

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES .....	x
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xi
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Job Satisfaction .....	3
Conceptual Framework: Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory .....	5
Literature Gap .....	8
Purpose Statement.....	8
Research Questions.....	8
Hypotheses .....	9
Professional Significance.....	9
Overview of Methodology .....	10
Definition of Key Terms .....	11
Summary .....	14
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	15
Purpose of the Literature Review .....	15
Method of the Literature Review .....	15
Adjunct Faculty at a Glimpse .....	16
Current Trends Surrounding Adjunct Faculty .....	18
Adjunct Faculty Job Satisfaction .....	26



Factors Affecting Adjunct Faculty Job Satisfaction .....	31
Summary .....	33
METHODS .....	35
Purpose Statement.....	35
Research Questions .....	35
Research Design.....	35
Context.....	39
Participants.....	39
Instrumentation .....	40
Data Collection Procedures.....	42
Data Analysis .....	43
Limitations .....	46
Conclusion .....	47
RESULTS .....	48
MANCOVA: Intangible and Financial Job Satisfaction .....	48
Summary .....	62
DISCUSSION.....	64
Overview of the Problem .....	64
Purpose Statement and Research Questions .....	65
Hypotheses.....	66

Significance of the Study .....	66
Overview of the Methodology .....	67
Summary of Major Findings .....	67
Findings Related to Prior Research.....	68
Discussion of Findings.....	72
Implications for Practice .....	73
Recommendations for Future Research .....	76
Conclusion .....	78
REFERENCES .....	80
APPENDICES .....	88
Appendix A – Recreation of Survey Questions Related to Job Satisfaction from the 2017 National Survey of College Graduates .....	88
Appendix B – Exempt Letter from the Human Subjects Review Committee .....	89
Appendix C – Breakdown of Job Category or Field of Study by Academic Discipline .....	90
Appendix D – Descriptives and Breakdown of Dependent Variables .....	93
VITA.....	95

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. The Adjunct Faculty Development Process: Six Key Practices for Success in Higher Education .....	22
2. Descriptives of Study Covariates .....	38
3. MACNOVA Assumptions Tested for the Current Study .....	45
4. Means, Adjusted Means, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors for the Two Measures of Job Satisfaction for Each Faculty Type .....	49
5. Pairwise Contrasts for Adjusted Means for Intangible and Financial Satisfaction for Each Faculty Group .....	50
6. Multivariate Results of the MANCOVA Investigating Intangible and Financial Satisfaction Among Faculty.....	51
7. Breakdown of Job Category or Field of Study by Academic Discipline.....	90
8. Descriptives and Breakdown of Dependent Variables .....	93

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and race as a covariate for intangible satisfaction .....	53
2. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and race as a covariate for financial satisfaction. .....	54
3. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and age as a covariate for intangible satisfaction. .....	56
4. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and age as a covariate for financial satisfaction. .....	57
5. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and gender as a covariate for intangible satisfaction. ....	58
6. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and gender as a covariate for financial satisfaction. ....	59
7. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and Carnegie Classification as a covariate for intangible satisfaction. ....	60
8. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and Carnegie Classification as a covariate for financial satisfaction. ....	60
9. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and academic discipline for intangible satisfaction. ....	61
10. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and academic discipline for financial satisfaction. ....	62

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Increased use of adjunct faculty in higher education has led four-year institutional leaders to consider factors that contribute to adjunct job satisfaction. Over 70 percent of instructional appointments in higher education are filled by adjunct faculty (American Association of University Professors, 2018). Higher education institutions are extensively criticized for the treatment of adjunct faculty in comparison to full-time, tenured, or tenure-track faculty in the departmental and institutional context (Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Fagan-Wilen, Springer, Ambrosino, & White, 2006; Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Kezar, 2012). Full-time faculty are more likely to teach fewer classes and at higher course levels when compared to adjunct faculty who typically have a heavier class load of lower level courses (Green, 2007).

Nevertheless, adjunct faculty work course loads with fewer institutional resources but they are expected to provide similar levels of educational quality to students (Ochoa, 2011). The increased hiring of adjunct faculty is generally thought of as a cost-effectiveness measure (Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006). Similarly, adjunct faculty may offer real-world experience and expertise that may attract students to their courses, especially in comparison to scholarly-driven faculty (Langen, 2011). Despite this, administrators have often been found to largely ignore adjunct faculty satisfaction (Eagan Jr., Jaeger, & Grantham, 2015). Overwhelmingly, adjunct faculty are found to be dissatisfied with their positions on campus (Ott & Dippold, 2018), but many continue to stay in these positions for lack of other options (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015). The current study will concentrate on factors related to faculty job satisfaction and how institutional leaders might provide more support to the new academic majority.

Adjunct faculty are described as contingent or part-time faculty. The American Association of University Professors (2018) defined part-time faculty as a broad term where they can be known as, “adjuncts, postdocs, TAs, non-tenure track faculty, clinical faculty, part-timers, lecturers, instructors, or nonsenate faculty” (par. 1). Adjunct faculty are generally categorized as part-time employees that are non-tenured or non-permanent, who are paid per a yearly contract or per course, who receive little to no health coverage or other insurance benefits from their institution, have little to no input in academic governance, and may hold a doctorate, master’s, or bachelor’s degree (Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Kezar, 2012). The categorization of adjunct faculty has evolved the past four decades, markedly from Tuckman’s (1978) research from seven categories of adjuncts to Gappa and Leslie’s (1993) broadened taxonomy of four categories: career-enders; specialists, experts, and professionals; aspiring academics; and freelancers. Notably, career enders may be defined as those “retired and coming from established careers;” specialists, experts and professionals all have full-time employment elsewhere; aspiring academics are “generally seeking full-time status;” and freelancers are “complementing part-time teaching with other jobs or involved at home and work for extra money” (Pons, Burnett, Williams, & Paredes, 2017, p. 48). It is important to note this is not an exhaustive list of reasons why adjunct faculty pursue this career path. A countless number of factors play a role in the individual reasons to teach part-time, and it is the responsibility of the institution to recognize this need for a new faculty model.

Higher education institutions continue to utilize adjunct faculty on renewable, usually yearly, short-term teaching appointment contracts (Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Kezar, 2012). Some literature suggests adjunct faculty are used to fill vacant and undesired teaching positions and thus adjunct faculty have become essential to higher education (Caruth & Caruth,

2013). Adjunct faculty account for relatively 40 percent of the current academic labor force, which is nearly the combined share of the 60 percent for tenured and tenure-track faculty (AAUP, 2018). According to the AAUP's 2018-19 Faculty Compensation Survey, average pay per course for adjunct faculty was \$3,984 with a large range between institution types with private doctoral religious-affiliated institutions pay per course at the highest amount of \$5,858 (Flaherty, 2019). Average annual salary for adjunct faculty varies considerably and has been as low as \$20,508 for the 2016 to 2017 academic year with a significant portion of the earnings from instructional teaching on a per course-section basis (AAUP, 2018). Faculty pay, regardless of status, is integral to job satisfaction (Ott & Dippold, 2018), especially when the average pay for most adjunct faculty is near the federal and state poverty line of about \$16,240 for a family of two (AAUP, 2018). Because most part-time faculty hold at least a master's degree, the disparate difference between anticipated degree worth and earnings is alarming (Kezar, 2012).

### **Job Satisfaction**

Adjunct faculty now constitute the majority of instructors in higher education but there is limited research on factors affecting their job satisfaction. Some literature suggests adjunct faculty experience slightly higher levels of job satisfaction in comparison to full-time faculty (Maynard & Joseph, 2008); however, slight differences in the factors influencing satisfaction are apparent (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015). Adjunct faculty who prefer their part-time positions have been found to have similar levels of satisfaction to full-time faculty in regard to the opportunity for advancement, compensation, and job security (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). Hoyt, Howell, and Eggett, (2007) developed an adjunct faculty job satisfaction survey instrument based on the Herzberg (1968) theoretical model of job satisfaction (i.e., motivators and hygiene factors) which

included 48 questions on adjunct support and development, teaching methods, reasons for teaching, characteristics of adjunct faculty, satisfaction, and loyalty. The original instrument included ten dimensions of overall job satisfaction: autonomy, teaching schedule, pay, work preference, faculty support, recognition, status, class facilities, quality of students, and job security (Hoyt, Howell, & Eggett, 2007). Following revision from the 2007 study, the survey was administered to 350 part-time faculty and found that 97% of part-time faculty members were somewhat to very satisfied with their jobs overall (Hoyt, Howell, Glines, Johnson, Spackman, Thompson, & Rudd, 2008). Hoyt et al. (2007) found that most adjuncts are intrinsically motivated in their positions, but pay is still important to their job satisfaction.

Later revised with the addition of a subscale of personal growth, Hoyt (2012) developed a job satisfaction survey particularly for adjunct faculty. Hoyt (2012) examined 676 adjunct faculty's institutional loyalty through their reasons for teaching, job satisfaction, teaching methods, and perceived departmental or institutional support. The measure was divided between motivators and hygiene factors, based on Herzberg's (1959) theory. A majority of adjunct faculty surveyed were found to teach at more than one institution, and primarily chose their profession because they enjoyed teaching (Hoyt, 2012). For most adjunct faculty, teaching was a secondary source of income and only 24% reported their position as their primary income. Research collaboration with full-time faculty was reported as one of the best sources of academic support for adjunct faculty. Overall, adjunct faculty sought greater opportunities for collaboration and engagement with full-time faculty, which led to feeling more informed about expectations within their department and institution. Moreover, adjunct faculty who actively chose to be part-time because of their love of teaching and who collaborated with other faculty on research had higher levels of loyalty to their institution and overall satisfaction with their



position (Hoyt, 2012). Overall, Hoyt (2012) found that specific differences in wages, benefits, and intent to stay were overwhelming predictors of job satisfaction. To that end, Hoyt (2012) concluded that focusing on part-time faculty job satisfaction will influence their loyalty and intent to stay, which will positively affect higher education as a whole. Although promising, Hoyt's (2012) motivators included work preferences with a questionable alpha value ( $\alpha = .65$ ) after averaging three items together. The extent to which this portion of the measure accurately represents work preferences is uncertain. Further, Hoyt's (2012) measure fails to appropriately split between motivators and hygiene factors, and instead measures a combination of these factors within one survey.

### **Conceptual Framework: Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory**

This study was conducted through a conceptual framework of Herzberg's (1968) motivation-hygiene theory which hypothesized that a particular set of conditions in the work environment, known as motivator factors, are more likely to encourage employee job satisfaction. Further, a different set of conditions, known as hygiene factors, are more likely to promote job dissatisfaction among employees (Herzberg, 1968). Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) sought to answer the question, "What do people want from their jobs?" (p. 113). Through in-depth interviews of 200 engineers and accountants, researchers found that individuals reported feelings of happiness through specific factors related to their tasks that made them feel their performance was successful and that there was a possibility for professional growth; whereas feelings of unhappiness were associated with conditions surrounding specific aspects of the job (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Eventually, this research concluded two concepts that exist in any job: motivators and hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1968). Motivators are certain characteristics of the job that promote employee job satisfaction and are

intrinsic factors related to employee intent and attitude, such as achievement and the opportunity for advancement. Hygiene factors are extrinsic characteristics of the job such as wages and work environment that tend to promote job dissatisfaction.

In particular, Herzberg (1968) noted that, “the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but no job dissatisfaction” (p. 56). Rather, there may be characteristics of the job that influence job satisfaction, but there may still be characteristics that also promote job dissatisfaction. Ultimately, Herzberg (1968) found salary and the potential for growth in the job to be the greatest driving factors of job satisfaction. One critique of Herzberg’s theory is his critical incident interview methodology, where he asked participants to remember times when they felt good or bad about themselves on the job (Gullickson, 2011). There is no clear consensus on the extent to which Herzberg’s theory is appropriate for a higher education setting with some in agreement (Lacy & Sheehan, 1997) and some in disagreement (Locke, Fitzpatrick, & White, 1983).

Utilizing this theory, Waltman, Bergom, Hollenshead, Miller, and August (2012) conducted research on 220 NTTF at a combination of institutions (e.g., diverse in geographic location, research or non-research intensive) and found that most voluntary part-time faculty were just as satisfied with their position as full-time faculty. Through focus groups and interviews four themes emerged, two which contributed to job satisfaction: teaching and students, and personal life and flexibility, and two which contributed to job dissatisfaction: terms of employment, and respect and inclusion (Waltman et al., 2012). Teaching and working with students was an overwhelmingly positive finding among adjunct faculty, where most were excited about presenting knowledge to and promoting learning in students, while also mentoring students into their careers (Waltman et al., 2012). Waltman and colleagues (2012) found the

flexibility of an adjunct position to be an advantage in regard to personal and family life, and ultimately, many adjunct faculty appreciated being free from the responsibilities of a tenure track position such as publishing and sitting on a number of committees. One participant shared, “I see some of the tenure-track faculty, and they are so down in the trenches. I’m not tied up in meetings and all those other obligations. I do have the time, believe it or not, to think more creatively...” which echoed the responses stating they felt less stress and pressure than their full-time faculty counterparts (Waltman et al., 2012, p. 421). On the other hand, adjuncts also shared that terms of their employment, like the lack of job security and opportunities for advancement, were major sources of job dissatisfaction (Waltman et al., 2012).

Motivators and hygiene factors should not be thought of as opposites, but as two dimensions of a whole (Herzberg, 1968). Although there may be motivators that promote job satisfaction, it does not mean there are no hygiene factors promoting job dissatisfaction. Adjunct faculty are generally dissatisfied with hygiene factors of their position (e.g., salary, benefits) and are factors generally outside their control. However, adjuncts have some control over the motivators of their position (e.g., opportunity for advancement, recognition by others), but it is up to higher education administrators to recognize the intrinsic factors affecting adjunct faculty job satisfaction. Previous applications of Herzberg’s (1968) theory have focused on adjunct faculty at community colleges and reveal specific predictors of adjunct faculty job satisfaction such as wages, level of independence, and job security (Gullickson, 2011; Hoyt, 2012; Renner, 2017). Therefore, Herzberg’s (1968) theory could provide insight into what factors are contributing to adjunct faculty job satisfaction. The current study maps motivators and hygiene factors into two separate measures of satisfaction which may indicate the importance of specific aspects of an adjunct faculty position.

## **Literature Gap**

Stereotyped ideologies about the instructional quality and subpar credentials of adjunct faculty perpetuate throughout higher education and prevent institutional change (Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Kezar, 2012). Institutions are ill-equipped to provide a constructive work environment for their adjunct faculty and as adjunct numbers grow institutions are limited with the resources they are able to provide. Adjunct faculty are often not privy to the same resources as full-time, tenured faculty; and those differences matter for a positive work environment (Ott & Dippold, 2018). The continued reliance of higher education on adjunct faculty should prompt the field to focus on adjunct faculty job satisfaction; however, most articles focus solely on full-time faculty (Hoyt et al., 2008). This study will contribute to the emerging body of research on adjunct faculty job satisfaction, particularly through analyzing the different factors influencing different types of job satisfaction.

## **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to examine differences in intangible and financial job satisfaction among faculty at four-year institutions based on faculty type. Faculty type refers to intentional adjunct, unintentional adjunct, and full-time faculty. Intangible and financial job satisfaction were scales constructed from the 2017 National Survey of College Graduates and used in this study.

## **Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent are there differences between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty in relation to intangible satisfaction?

2. To what extent are there differences between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty in relation to financial satisfaction?

### **Hypotheses**

1. It is hypothesized that intentional adjunct faculty and full-time faculty will have no significant differences on levels of intangible and financial satisfaction when controlling for race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline.
2. It is hypothesized that unintentional adjunct faculty will have significantly different levels of intangible satisfaction and financial satisfaction in comparison to intentional adjunct and full-time faculty when controlling for race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline.

### **Professional Significance**

Many institutions fail to adequately support adjunct faculty, despite their growing presence in higher education (Kezar, 2012). There is a need for additional empirical research that addresses job satisfaction specific to adjunct faculty. Higher levels of job satisfaction among faculty at institutions generally indicates reduced turnover rates and greater educational quality (Kezar & Maxey, 2016). With the knowledge of what factors are attributable to job satisfaction, higher education administrators will be better able to provide appropriate resources and structure for adjunct faculty in four-year institutions.

This research seeks to identify what factors are related to adjunct faculty job satisfaction. Moreover, if adjunct faculty are more satisfied, they are more likely to be retained, leading to greater adjunct faculty loyalty and workforce overall. Four-year institutions continue to hire more adjunct faculty on the basis that they provide a quality education to their students like full-time faculty. To that end, four-year institutions should value adjunct faculty job satisfaction and

how it relates to greater outcomes for faculty, staff, and ultimately, students. Institutional leaders, including but not limited to provosts, deans, department chairs, and administrators of instruction will be interested in the findings of this study because of the increasing number of adjuncts at nearly all institutions of higher education.

### **Overview of Methodology**

This quantitative, nonexperimental study used *ex post facto* data from the National Science Foundation's (NSF) 2017 National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG). The NSCG began in the 1970s and is a bi-annual survey sponsored by the NSF with data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau (NSF, 2019). The survey focuses on characteristics of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher, with a specific focus on education or employment in science or engineering.

The main dependent variables of interest are intangible and financial satisfaction. The overall job satisfaction variable was split into different satisfaction scales: intangible satisfaction ( $\alpha = .77$ ) (i.e., opportunities for advancement, intellectual challenge, degree of independence, job location, level of responsibility, and contribution to society) and financial satisfaction ( $\alpha = .71$ ) (i.e., job salary, job benefits, and job security).

The independent variable is faculty type. Faculty type was divided between full-time and adjunct faculty. Full-time faculty are defined through 40 hours or more of work per week. Adjunct faculty are defined through 39 hours or less of work per week, and further defined between adjunct faculty who are working part-time but want a full-time teaching position, and adjunct faculty who do not need or want a full-time teaching position.

There are five covariates in the current study: age, race, gender, Carnegie classification (e.g., public or private institution), and academic discipline. These covariates were included

because to account for their relation to the variability in scores of intangible and financial satisfaction. Age was used in lieu of years of experience because years of experience had the potential to reveal personally identifiable information about faculty from the dataset.

### **Delimitations**

This study was limited to adjunct and full-time faculty who participated in the NSF's 2017 National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG). The 2017 NSCG focuses exclusively on STEM field college graduates, however, the STEM field included a broad range of fields (e.g., humanities, social sciences). The NSCG used oversampling methods to produce a more representative sample. The study was further limited by the distinction between faculty type based on hours worked per week and limited to intangible and financial satisfaction. Adjunct faculty may work the equivalent of two full-time jobs, however, the current study cannot account for these differences and will define adjunct faculty through hours worked per week. The 2017 NSCG only provides a measure of hours worked per week, therefore, no other distinction between adjunct and full-time faculty is possible. Further, the study is limited to four-year institutions.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

The following catalog serves as a reference for the current study:

*Academic discipline:* Academic discipline is one of the five covariates included in the multivariate analysis of the study. Academic discipline is defined among the following researcher created categories: Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Formal Sciences, Applied Sciences, Human Resources/Administrative/Marketing, and Other Service-Related. Categories were further collapsed to Hard Sciences and Social Sciences for easier interpretation in graphs.

*Adjunct faculty:* Any faculty member, instructor, or lecturer that is part-time and off the tenure-track. Adjunct faculty are defined as part-time employees who are classified as non-tenured or non-permanent, paid per a yearly contract or per course, receive little to no health coverage or other insurance benefits from their institution, have little to no input in academic governance, and may hold a doctorate, master's, or bachelor's degree (Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Kezar, 2012). This may include part-time non-tenure track faculty and lecturers. For the purposes of this study, adjunct faculty are defined as working 39 hours or less per week. Adjunct faculty are further defined between two types: those working part-time but want a full-time teaching position (unintentional adjunct faculty), and those working part-time who do not need or want a full-time teaching position (intentional adjunct faculty).

*Age:* Age is one of the covariates included in the multivariate analysis of the current study, and refers to the age of the participants, which ranges from 18 to 76 years old.

*Carnegie classification:* Carnegie classification is one of the five covariates included in the multivariate analysis in the current study and is defined as whether the participants work at a public or private four-year institution.

*Financial satisfaction:* For the purposes of this study, financial satisfaction is defined through a researcher created scale from specific factors of the overall satisfaction measure which included job salary, job benefits, and job security.

*Full-time faculty:* Full-time faculty are defined as full-time tenured, or tenure track, faculty members. For the purposes of this study, full-time faculty are defined as working 40 hours or more per week.

*Gender:* Gender is one of the five covariates included in the multivariate analysis of the study. Gender is defined as Female or Male participants who answered the survey.



*Hygiene factors:* Extrinsic factors related to the adjunct faculty work environment such as higher education administration, status, and salary.

*Intangible satisfaction:* For the purposes of this study, intangible satisfaction is defined through a researcher created scale from specific factors of the overall satisfaction measure which included opportunities for advancement, intellectual challenge, degree of independence, job location, level of responsibility, and contribution to society.

*Intentional adjunct faculty:* Intentional adjunct faculty are participants who elected to be adjuncts and do not need or want a full-time position.

*Job satisfaction:* Job satisfaction is defined through a numeric value based on a 1 to 4 scale through the NSF's 2017 National Survey of College Graduates (1 – Very satisfied, 2 - somewhat satisfied, 3 – somewhat dissatisfied, 4 – very dissatisfied) (NSF, 2019).

*Motivators:* Intrinsic factors related to the adjunct faculty work environment such as achievement, recognition, and the opportunity for advancement.

*National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG):* NSCG is a survey distributed biennially through the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Census Bureau, with a specific focus on college graduates of STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and math) fields.

*Race:* Race is one of the five covariates included in the multivariate analysis of the study. It is defined through the race categories included in the 2017 NSCG, which included Asian, American Indian/Alaskan, Black, Hispanic, White, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and Multiple Race. Race categories were further collapsed into White, Black, and Other for easier interpretation of graphs.

*Unintentional adjunct faculty:* Unintentional adjunct faculty are participants who elected to be adjuncts but want a full-time position.

## Summary

The increased and continual reliance on adjunct faculty at four-year institutions calls for higher education to focus on aspects of adjunct faculty job satisfaction. Higher levels of satisfaction at institutions have been found to have profound effects on lower rates of turnover, greater quality of teaching, and an overall more positive work environment (Hoyt, 2012). Job satisfaction among adjunct faculty is unique to intrinsic and extrinsic factors related to motivation (Gullickson, 2011).

The remaining chapters of this dissertation are organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides a literature review on the introduction and brief history of adjunct faculty in higher education, what factors that have been found to be related to adjunct faculty job satisfaction, and how some institutions are addressing the changing faculty model. Chapter 3 addresses the methods that were used in this quantitative study. Chapter 4 reports the results of the quantitative analyses. Lastly, chapter 5 includes a discussion of study findings, implications for practice, recommendations for future research, and closing remarks of the study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter focuses on the literature surrounding adjunct faculty and the factors that contribute to their job satisfaction in higher education. After the methods of the literature review, the chapter provides a brief introduction and history of adjunct faculty, including research on the adjunct faculty work environment, relationships among adjuncts and their institutions. Lastly, the chapter concludes with recommendations for creating greater adjunct faculty job satisfaction.

#### **Purpose of the Literature Review**

This literature review presents information associated with adjunct faculty job satisfaction in higher education, specifically through methods and trends of the current work environment for adjunct faculty. The focus of the literature review is to provide a context for the proposed study specific to the framework, with the ultimate goal of outlining the current status of adjunct faculty in higher education and the factors that contribute to their job satisfaction.

#### **Method of the Literature Review**

The researcher assessed selected journal and periodical articles, dissertations, and books identified by queries in electronic library databases through the Old Dominion University (ODU) website's Monarch OneSearch tool, such as the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and EBSCO. Sources included national and international research, but besides a few seminal articles, were restricted to a 10-year span. Keyword and Boolean searches included "adjunct faculty", "faculty satisfaction", and "adjunct faculty satisfaction." These keywords were narrowed down by "higher education," "postsecondary education," and "college teaching."

A combination of quantitative and qualitative studies, dissertations, and a few books, were identified as relevant to the literature review.

### **Adjunct Faculty at a Glimpse**

After World War II, the increase of enrollment in higher education institutions changed the faculty model to some combination of research, teaching, and service for full-time, tenured or tenure track faculty; ultimately, the onset of part-time positions was a reactive and myopic solution to the massification and corporatization of higher education (Kezar, 2012; Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Adjuncts were hired in response to higher enrollment at two-year and four-year institutions in the 1970s and 1980s (Kezar & Maxey, 2016). The landscape of higher education is changing, and adjunct faculty are at the forefront of that change: the number of adjunct faculty in higher education institutions increased 103% from 1975 to 1995, while the number of full-time tenure ineligible faculty increased by 93% and awards of tenure decreased by 21 percent during the same time frame (Umbach, 2007).

Currently, among the 1.5 million faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 53% are full-time and 47% are part-time (NCES, 2019). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) definition of faculty included professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, assisting professors, adjunct professors, and interim professors (2019). Instructors and lecturers are often categorized as adjunct faculty, therefore, the number of part-time faculty may be greater than suggested. Because full-time, tenured faculty were the standard on which higher education was built, many institutions were uncertain of how to provide adequate resources for adjuncts, despite giving them full teaching loads with no research agendas (Ochoa, 2011). More than half of instructional appointments in colleges and universities are fulfilled by adjunct faculty with part-time contracts, who are generally paid a

third of the salary packages for full-time faculty (Halcrow & Olson, 2008). Adjuncts are usually given introductory courses with large numbers of students which tenured or tenure-track faculty do not want (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Because of this, adjunct faculty are often the subjects of scrutiny in terms of quality of instruction and student outcomes; however, recent adjunct faculty literature suggests that this growing group of higher education instructors may benefit the field (Morton, 2012).

The implications of adjuncts in higher education may depend on the type of higher education institution. Adjuncts might affect community colleges more than other higher education institutions, where over half of the nation's undergraduate students are enrolled (Stenerson, Blanchard, Fassiotto, Hernandez, & Muth, 2010). Students who are more likely to have adjunct faculty as their primary instructors in two-year colleges were also less likely to transfer to four-year colleges or to graduate (Jaeger & Eagan, 2009). Moreover, institutions that utilized large numbers of adjunct faculty were found to have lower graduation rates than institutions that used fewer numbers of adjunct faculty (Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005). However, adjunct faculty are not always harmful for students (Rogers, 2015). Adjuncts in professional programs might provide the connection between professional practice and classroom knowledge (Wallin, 2007). For example, Stenerson et al. (2010) argued that "modern engineering faculty by and large have little to no practical design experience" (par. 20), therefore, it is more practical to hire licensed engineers from the field to teach such design courses. Because of this, adjunct faculty expertise supplements classroom learning and promotes more positive interaction among students (Kim & Lundberg, 2016). Moreover, no distinct differences between full-time and adjunct faculty were found on student outcome measures (Figlio, Schapiro, & Soter, 2015). Regardless of benefits or harm, the future of the professoriate includes adjunct faculty, whether

for their professional expertise, practical connections, or love for teaching (Stenerson et al., 2010).

### **Current Trends Surrounding Adjunct Faculty**

There is a wealth of research on the use of adjunct faculty in higher education. Issues that are most salient to the current study are discussed below.

#### **The Deficit Framework**

Research on adjunct faculty often relies on a deficit framework, the common misconception that all adjuncts are dissatisfied with their positions on campus, and their inferior academic experience negatively contributes to higher education institutions (Kezar & Sam, 2011). A wealth of literature exists contradicting this belief, but the deficit framework perpetuates academia (Morton, 2012). Prejudiced notions about adjunct faculty result in inaccurate theoretical frameworks on which to base best policies and practices for adjuncts (Kezar, 2012; Kezar, Lester, & Anderson, 2006). The deficit framework originates from the perception adjunct faculty are a threat to the traditional academic community of higher education, markedly, full-time, tenured faculty members (Chait, 2005). Academic tenure was previously viewed as the standard within higher education; however, with the recent surge in non-tenure track appointments, those individuals accepting these positions are often viewed as outliers of the norm (Chait, 2005; Kezar & Sam, 2011). In particular, adjunct faculty are often perceived by administrators as less committed to the university than full-time faculty, yet with little offers of university or departmental involvement, lack of commitment appears to be a default of the job title (Eagan Jr., Jaeger, & Grantham, 2015). Full-time, non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) positions are becoming increasingly held by doctoral degree holders, confirming tenure-track positions as less available and competition more fierce (Kezar & Sam, 2011). Strip

away the professional title and it is found that a majority of tenure-track and NTTF carry similar course loads, with time allotted for research the only distinction (Kezar, 2012). The deficit framework distorts the larger picture of adjunct faculty, and research needs to go beyond this approach.

### **Institutional Support (or Lack Thereof)**

Higher education institutions are criticized for their treatment of adjunct faculty in comparison to full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty in the departmental and institutional context (Caruth & Caruth, 2013; Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006; Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Kezar, 2012). Full-time faculty are more likely to teach less classes, but at higher levels of courses, when compared to adjunct faculty, who typically have a heavier class load of lower level courses (Green, 2007). Incapable of prospering under such conditions, Meixner, Kruck, and Madden (2010) concluded that community disconnect was the central finding among their research on the advantages and disadvantages for part-time faculty at higher education institutions. Community disconnect is described as the overall lack of physical resources reported by part-time faculty, such as designated office space, mailboxes, and adequate parking. In addition to the lack of physical resources, part-time faculty reported feeling emotionally disconnected from their universities due to the limited collegial interaction within their department, and the general lack of respect from students (Meixner et al., 2010). According to Meixner and colleagues (2010), the lack of physical resources equates to the lack of knowledge and togetherness from a student perspective, which further perpetuates the deficit framework lens regularly cast upon adjunct faculty research. The literature is saturated with articles that echo this *less than* approach of which some adjunct faculty have become accustomed. Moreover, adjunct faculty feel marginalized and universities have struggled to find appropriate solutions.

Notably, community colleges and other two-year institutions have found ways to support adjunct faculty well-being. The community college has gained more traction among adult students as a more financially stable route of higher education, and adjuncts are more likely to fill these classrooms (Green, 2007; Jolley, Cross, & Bryant, 2014). Favorable relationships among adjunct faculty at three community colleges are well-documented through Wallin's (2007) research on adjunct academies or institutes. These adjunct faculty centers are dedicated exclusively to support adjunct faculty through discussion and development of teaching and learning philosophies, student motivation, instructional design, and small group work activities (Wallin, 2007). Adjunct faculty reported feeling more connected to their colleagues and institution, were more likely to stay, teach a variety of courses, and gain more confidence in the classroom (Wallin, 2007). Four-year institutions may benefit from the relationships these community colleges have fostered with their adjunct faculty.

Similarly, other institutions have created adjunct appreciation days, adjunct instructor committees and trainings to support adjunct faculty beyond the typical same-day orientation (Fagan-Wilen, Springer, Ambrosino, & White, 2006). Though sparse, such adjunct faculty academies, appreciation days, and committees are a response to the demand for higher education to adequately support adjuncts without great expense to institutional resources. Attempting to follow this trend is title changes for adjuncts. In 2014 at California's Grossman Community College, Jerde (2014) found that the Academic Senate created new titles for adjunct faculty: adjunct assistant professor, adjunct associate professor, or adjunct professor. Although the college's administration boasts the increase in morale and public recognition for adjuncts, some adjunct faculty are unhappy with the title change because there is no added benefit (Jerde, 2014). Though well-intentioned, the title change caused confusion among faculty and students, with



many adjunct faculty having to explain their role even more than before (Jerde, 2014).

Regardless, Grossman Community College acknowledged the need of some sort of change in relation to adjunct faculty, which is the push the rest of higher education needs.

Moreover, Burn and Kawai (2014) created the Adjunct Faculty Development Process, although specific for community college mathematics instructors, it is grounded in the similar need for dedicated support to adjunct faculty through six key practices at three core levels, as outlined in Table 1. Higher education administrators should work to incorporate these practices that may contribute to greater adjunct faculty job satisfaction. Two practices are coupled under three factors important to adjunct faculty development” engagement, access to knowledge, and learning capacity. Adjunct faculty engagement involves two practices to (a) Organize adjunct work and tap their skills, and to (b) Deepen adjunct commitment by recognizing them and providing opportunities for advancement. Access to knowledge states (c) Encourage collaboration and teamwork, and (d) Make information and professional development easy to access and readily available. Lastly, learning capacity includes (e) Promote innovation and professional development, and (f) Create formal career development plans for adjunct faculty (Burn & Kawai, 2014). The Adjunct Faculty Development Process is consistent with the other literature promoting adjunct development centers and training days, which is beneficial to both adjunct faculty and higher education administrators.

Table 1

*The Adjunct Faculty Development Process: Six Key Practices for Success in Higher Education*

Adjunct faculty engagement	Access to knowledge	Learning capacity
Organize adjunct work and tap their skills	Encourage collaboration and teamwork	Promote innovation and professional development
Deepen adjunct commitment by recognizing them and providing opportunities for advancement	Make information and professional development easy to access and readily available	Create formal career development plans for adjunct faculty

Note: Adapted from Burn & Kawai (2014)

Burn and Kawai (2014) implored other administrators and educators to take note of these key practices for part-time faculty. It is important for adjunct faculty and administrators to reflect on practices which are found to be related to success in higher education. More importantly, the development process provides a foundation of growth for the future of adjuncts and shares the sentiments consistent with designated adjunct centers. It is possible to create a mutually beneficial relationship between adjunct faculty and their institutions through engagement and support (Umbach, 2007).

### **Evaluation of Adjunct Faculty Quality**

Annual evaluations, which generally includes administrative and student evaluations of adjunct faculty, are the primary factor for adjunct rehiring (Jolley, Cross, & Bryant, 2014). Langen (2011) polled higher education administrators in 94 public and private institutions throughout Michigan and found that a fifth of these institutions did not require any form of adjunct faculty evaluation on a scheduled basis. Less than ten percent did not require any evaluation whatsoever; fortunately, the remaining 63 percent of institutions polled did evaluate

their adjuncts on a scheduled basis (Langen, 2011). The standard for evaluating quality control in higher education is limited. As such, no accrediting agency has identified specific assessment or evaluation guidelines for adjunct faculty and many only suggest what percentage of full-time faculty is needed for departments to properly function (Langen, 2011). However, some research suggests administrative evaluations differ slightly from student evaluations, which are widely used as a means to assess and evaluate adjunct faculty instruction, but often they do not match adjunct faculty qualifications (Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006). Adjunct faculty qualifications are not likened to greater quality of instruction, but differences from administrative evaluations limit the validity of student evaluations alone (Langen, 2011). Further, Langen's (2011) research found teaching performance, work experience, student evaluations, and availability the top factors considered for reappointment. Students evaluations and availability nearly received the same rating of importance, which poses the question: "are administrators reappointing faculty because they are excellent teachers or because they are available to teach the class?" (Langen, 2011, p. 194). This perpetuates the false belief that adjunct faculty are only used as the last option for higher education administrators when filling teaching positions.

Nevertheless, Jolley et al. (2014) interviewed 20 contingent faculty across multiple institutions and found vast differences between adjunct faculty student teaching evaluations and administrator observations. Although a requirement at some institutions, some adjuncts admit that they have been teaching for years but have yet to be observed by their department chair and have only kept their positions because of positive marks on evaluations (Jolley et al., 2014). Overwhelmingly, scheduled instructional observations were repeatedly forgotten or unnoticed by administrative faculty with instructors continually playing phone tag with administrators when planning observations, and promised student feedback they never received (Jolley et al., 2014).

Full-time faculty are held to a particular set of standards while also receiving a wealth of support and access to institutional resources. Adjunct faculty are also held to those same standards, but without the same support or access to institutional resources, which may suggest low morale and job satisfaction (Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006). For some adjunct faculty, annual or semester evaluations may be the only professional contact they have with a dean or other departmental administrator (Caprio, Dubowsky, Warasila, Cheatwood, & Costa, 1999). Other adjuncts describe evaluations from their deans as either frustrating or wonderful experiences: “the dean never answered emails, evaluated, or provided helpful feedback to [me]” (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018, p. 137). One adjunct who received excellent marks on a teaching evaluation stated, “It made me depressed, because I’m sort of like ‘well, you say I’m doing a good job, but you are not rewarding me in any way.’ That was frustrating” (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018, p. 139). Though few, some adjuncts described their deans as readily available to answer emails or questions, especially regarding their faculty evaluations (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). With little to no engagement with their department or institution, adjunct faculty job satisfaction suffers.

For most adjuncts, student evaluations of teaching were the primary measures of student performance (Jolley, Cross, & Bryant, 2014). Student evaluations are relied upon when adjunct faculty positions have the possibility of renewal (Boysen, Kelly, Raesly, & Casner, 2014). Studies show that student evaluations are sometimes the strongest indicator of adjunct quality for many deans and administrators (Jolley et al., 2014; Langen, 2011; Winchester & Winchester, 2014). These evaluations affect promotion, tenure, adjunct teaching reviews, and university recruitment (Winchester & Winchester, 2014). Hoffman and Oreopoulos (2009) found no significant differences between adjunct and full-time faculty on student evaluations in relation to commonly observed instructor traits (i.e., rank, faculty status, and salary). There were no

significant grade differences from either student evaluations or administrative evaluations of faculty (Hoffman & Oreopoulos, 2009).

Because institutions will continue to use evaluations of faculty as a measure of instructor ability, the extent to which administrators appropriately interpret these measures is questionable. Moreover, Kimmel and Fairchild (2017) examined the qualitative experiences of seven adjunct faculty at a public institution and found that most found student evaluations helpful, but with some strong reservations. Students evaluations are sometimes “gripe sessions” where students can be “cruel,” or be too haste and kind, believing the evaluation to affect their final course grade (Kimmel & Fairchild, 2017, p. 59). Of the seven faculty Kimmel and Fairchild (2017) interviewed, two admitted they were never observed by administrators, despite the contractual obligation for appointment. Teaching positions regularly depend on assessment and evaluation from administrators and students, but one study finds no statistically significant differences on evaluations between tenured or adjunct faculty, or doctoral students teaching college level courses (Thyer, Myers, & Nugent, 2011). Landrum’s (2009) research finds no significant differences between full-time and part-time faculty administrative or student evaluations, nevertheless, validation of these measures is needed. Without a well-defined system of assessment and evaluation and where some institutions fail to live up to specifications listed in adjunct faculty contracts, adjunct faculty continue to feel disconnected from their institutions (Kimmel & Fairchild, 2017).

Beyond student evaluations and educational quality for students, adjunct faculty have been linked to poor student outcomes (Kezar, 2012). Students enrolled in two-year colleges or remedial and preparatory courses in four-year institutions are more likely to have non-tenure track faculty who are unable to provide the time to cultivate a guiding relationship necessary for

students who may otherwise lack access to greater social capital in their daily lives (Eagan, Jaeger, & Grantham, 2015; Jaeger & Eagan, 2009). If adjunct faculty are the main source of knowledge for students in the beginning of their academic careers, it is a disservice to deprive adjuncts of resources essential to promoting educational quality and positive student outcomes. According to Kezar, DePaola, and Scott (2019), adjunct faculty represent a portion of the Gig Academy, “an extension of neoliberalism” that will continue to shape higher education and student outcomes (p. 105). The Gig Academy refers to the poor workforce development of adjuncts whose continued impermanence has tremendous effects on higher education institutions, faculty, and ultimately students (Kezar, DePaola, & Scott, 2019). Adjunct faculty are more prone to burnout because they struggle to offset the lack of institutional resources and support while educating students (Kezar, DePaola, & Scott, 2019). Further, researchers argue that, “the move to Gig Academy employment structures has interfered with the mission of creating educational environments maximally conducive to student learning and success” (p. 105). Kezar et al. (2019) implore higher education leaders and administrators to recognize the current direction of the Gig Academy for student outcomes. To that end, there is a need to understand what factors contribute to adjunct faculty job satisfaction, and how leaders need to consider the possible repercussions of the growing numbers of adjunct faculty.

### **Adjunct Faculty Job Satisfaction**

Though adjunct faculty have been utilized in higher education for over four decades, Feldman and Turnley (2001) examined the work experiences of 105 non-tenure-track faculty and found eight specific facets of the adjunct faculty work environment: scheduling flexibility, contact with coworkers, job autonomy, work challenge, quality of supervision, pay, fringe benefits, and opportunities for advancement. Findings indicated that adjunct faculty found their

work satisfying because of relationship with other faculty and students, and were generally positive about their teaching; however, little opportunities for advancement and low pay were sources of dissatisfaction. The sample of non-tenure-track faculty was divided into career stages: early, middle, or late career experiences. Adjunct faculty members early in their careers were most concerned with the perceived lack of advancement and mid-career adjuncts were worried about the work and family life balance. Late career adjuncts were the most positive about their current position because issues of low pay and opportunities for advancement were much less of a concern (Feldman & Turnley, 2001). Similarly, Valadez and Anthony (2001) found that pay and benefits were important to adjunct faculty, but the opportunity to teach is what they enjoy most. However, the authors are also quick to note that adjunct faculty would prefer a job with better wages, benefits, and security (Valadez & Anthony, 2001), further imploring higher education to heed the overwhelming call from adjunct faculty for change.

More recent studies examining adjunct faculty job satisfaction find similar results, echoing the stagnant nature of higher education's inability to change for adjunct faculty, despite the rapid growth of adjuncts nearly the past two decades (Eagan Jr., Jaeger, & Grantham, 2015). Reasons for hiring adjunct faculty vary from financially motivated decisions to the need for practitioner expertise from the field. Regardless of intent, measures of faculty job satisfaction find no substantial differences between adjunct and full-time faculty satisfaction (Antony & Hayden, 2011). Research on faculty satisfaction often aggregate different types of adjunct faculty together, possibly missing distinct factors that contribute to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Eagan Jr., Jaeger, & Grantham, 2015).

Relatedly, Maynard and Joseph (2008) used a person-job fit perspective and disaggregated adjuncts into two types of part-time faculty: voluntary (those preferring a part-time

position) and involuntary part-timers (those preferring a full-time position), and examined these two groups in conjunction with full-time faculty. Unlike prior research that offers faceted views of adjunct job satisfaction, researchers developed instruments intended to measure a combination of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). Organizational commitment is best described through Meyer and Allen's Organizational Commitment Theory (1991) research that describes it through three types of commitment: affective, normative, and continuance. Affective commitment is the extent to which an adjunct feels desire and is compelled to stay in their position at their current institution. Normative commitment involves the adjunct feeling pressure from others at their current institution to maintain their position. Continuance commitment denotes that the adjunct continues working for their institution because they cannot financially afford to leave (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Adjunct faculty, like all other faculty, are not confined to a singular mode of commitment and may either alternate between the different types or be committed through a combination of two or all three types of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Further, the disaggregation of adjunct faculty work preferences serves to pinpoint differing factors that contribute to overall job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Findings suggested that involuntary part-time faculty were least satisfied with three major components of job satisfaction: opportunity for advancement, compensation, and job security; however, voluntary part-time and full-time faculty harbored similar levels of satisfaction in relation to these components (Maynard & Joseph, 2008).

With similar goals, Levin and Hernandez (2014) further examined adjunct faculty and how they are largely an overlooked group in higher education, pointing out that adjuncts who do not rely on their part-time academic position as their primary source of income are maligned with subpar educational quality for students and ill work conditions. Through an interpretative



qualitative approach, Levin and Hernandez (2014) analyzed narratives by part-time faculty to gain a better understanding of their identity development as professionals, including what specific attributes contribute to their work ethic. Utilizing the lenses of cultural theory and identity theory, researchers found narratives perpetuated in the overarching adjunct faculty literature: that adjunct faculty offer specialized and practical knowledge in the classroom, but outside the classroom they are still undervalued and defined only by the constraints of their part-time status (Levin & Hernandez, 2014).

Further, Levin and Hernandez (2014) found four forms in which adjuncts “expressed agency and developed self-definitions”: agency framed by an imagined future, agency framed by the experiences of the past, agency based on personal conviction or self-definitions, and agency based upon the activity and responsibilities of teaching (p. 551). The first form of agency aligns with those individuals who aspire to a full-time position, and who attempt to understand their current position in the context of a hopeful future. Next, there are those part-timers with the second form of agency, who use their past experiences to make sense of their current situations. The third form of agency are for those part-time faculty who work with the ebb and flow of availability in higher education—a hallmark of most adjunct positions. Lastly, the fourth form of agency is applicable to all adjunct or part-time faculty because they view themselves as autonomous educators capable of engaging with students in the context of their past, present, and future (Levin & Hernandez, 2014). Levin & Hernandez’s (2014) work on adjunct faculty identity development extends to the context of adjunct faculty job satisfaction, particularly because agency is needed for proactive changes for adjunct faculty in higher education.

Eagan Jr., Jaeger, and Grantham (2015) went beyond the two groups of part-time faculty, utilizing Maynard and Joseph’s (2008) framework, and examined satisfaction in relation to

available campus resources and campus climate. Researchers argue that previous research fail to account for differences among campus resources and campus climate which may contribute more to adjunct faculty job satisfaction than low wages or job security (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015).

Unsurprisingly, voluntary part-timers found more positive relationships among the administration campus than involuntary part-timers in regard to resources afforded to adjunct faculty (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015). Likewise, Eagan Jr. and colleagues (2015) found the need for private office space and recognition from departmental and institutional administration primary factors contributing to adjunct job satisfaction—and not necessarily simply wanting a full-time job or not wanting a full-time job. Though these items might not be high priority on education administrators lists, it is important for adjunct faculty to feel included in their departmental office space and may be instrumental towards overall job satisfaction (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015). If adjunct faculty feel like recognized individuals and are integral parts to the success of the department and institution, then job satisfaction can only increase.

Similar to the disaggregation of faculty in the previous study, Ott and Dippold (2018) surveyed 1,245 part-time faculty at a community college to investigate the factors associated with adjunct faculty employment preference. Researchers utilized a person-job environment fit theory, much like previous research (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015; Maynard & Joseph, 2008), to frame their study and found that nearly 70% of the adjuncts were at least somewhat interested in becoming full-time faculty at a postsecondary institution, with nearly half of those participants conveying a strong and immediate desire for such a position (Ott & Dippold, 2018). Faculty who used their adjunct earnings as their primary source of income were 132% more likely to want a full-time faculty position in comparison to those who saw it as supplementary income (Ott & Dippold, 2018). Researchers also found that faculty enter their professions with varied

expectations of the workplace further substantiating Gappa and Leslie's (1993) work with similar results (Ott & Dippold, 2018). Similarly, though these results pinpoint differences among subgroups of faculty and their overall satisfaction on campus, no studies have analyzed the potential impact these different groups may have on students (Ott & Dippold, 2018). Lastly, Ott and Dippold (2018) found that most adjuncts in Health-related fields (e.g., Medical) did not prefer a full-time position in comparison to those in the Arts and Humanities field, possibly stemming from their primary professions needing greater time and commitment.

### **Factors Affecting Adjunct Faculty Job Satisfaction**

The New Faculty Majority (NFM) (n. d.) and the Coalition for Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL) (2014) are two organizations dedicated to supporting adjunct faculty in higher education. These organizations also offer partnerships with institutions to work closely with administration for the betterment of the adjunct work environment.

### **A New Faculty Model**

Full-time tenured faculty and the tenure system are historically the traditional model in higher education and the most prevalent faculty model (Holcombe & Kezar, 2018; Hudd, Apgar, Bronson, & Lee, 2009). Holcombe and Kezar (2018) analyzed the current mental models of different groups of higher education stakeholders at both two-year and four-year institutions (e.g., tenured/tenure-track faculty, non-tenure-track faculty, provosts, and deans) in relation to challenges and solutions to new faculty models. All stakeholders listed budgets and unions as main challenges to adopting new faculty models, but tenure-track faculty and NTTF were more concerned about faculty culture. Unsurprisingly, provosts and deans found market-based system mindsets and the difficulty of attracting high-quality talent more challenging than adopting a new faculty culture. No universal solutions for adopting a new faculty model were found between

stakeholders. Deans were most concerned with flexibility and provosts were more concerned with changing cultures and the possibility of removing the tenure/non-tenure-track dichotomy. Meanwhile, non-tenure-track faculty saw restoring professionalism in the workplace as the best solution for new model adoption (Holcombe & Kezar, 2018).

In an attempt to ameliorate these distinct mental models among higher education stakeholders, Kezar and Sam (2013, 2014) recommends a three-phase process for any new policy or practice adoption: (1) mobilization, (2) implementation, and (3) institutionalization. This three-phase process was a result of a combination of quantitative and qualitative research at dozens of two-year and four-year institutions across the United States (Kezar & Sam, 2013, 2014). Institutions are at variable phases of the three-phase process, but any progress towards changing to a new faculty model is an accomplishment.

First, mobilization entails formulating an awareness of the problem, creating a network of faculty and administration to address the problem, and “breaking invisibility” (Kezar & Sam, 2013, p. 80). MU will have to recognize the issue of faculty engagement on their large campus and its effect on students, especially considering the overwhelming number of adjunct faculty on their campus. Relatedly, mobilization includes allowing faculty to have a role in departmental governance, which is generally described by adjuncts as a luxury exclusive to full-time faculty, despite it being a fundamental right of being a professional (Kezar & Sam, 2014).

Representation in faculty governance may act as a catalyst for significant change to faculty models and higher education. Through governance and mobility, adjunct faculty will be more likely to be integrated with other faculty in the department, increasing faculty engagement with their organization, and subsequently recognition and job satisfaction.

Secondly, implementation involves: (a) creating a rationale for a new adjunct faculty model using data, benchmarks, and model institutions to guide policy development, (b) developing a standing meeting of a task force of policy committee composed of faculty with expertise on adjunct faculty and adjunct faculty development, (c) acquire outside pressure and support from unions (e.g., New Faculty Majority), media, students, and other invested stakeholders, (d) use partners and other departments to influence changes in policy and ultimately, (e) create a plan of action (Kezar & Sam, 2013).

Thirdly, institutionalization entails that institutions must: (a) address the current climate of the campus, (b) move beyond principal policies and individual departments to the entire campus, (c) produce a single, unified faculty, and (d) take direction on major issues on campus (Kezar & Sam, 2013). Through these three phases, adjunct faculty will be allowed to participate in departmental and institutional decision making, making use of their extensive training and socialization for the better of the institution. Ultimately, the goal of any new policy or practice adoption is to address the growing need for increased faculty engagement with their department and institution, thereby increasing adjunct faculty job satisfaction. Because of this, the feasibility of this policy adoption will rely on the value placed on adjunct faculty by higher education administrators.

### **Summary**

Mandatory retirement of tenured, full-time faculty members no longer exists, which has shaped the academic landscape of colleges and universities to its current state with a majority of adjunct faculty members in classrooms. Adjunct faculty job satisfaction can no longer be an afterthought in higher education, especially when adjuncts are now the new faculty majority. By pinpointing factors specific to adjunct faculty job satisfaction, appropriate resources can be

provided for these educators and change towards a new faculty model may be possible. Though the literature review provides possible solutions for current adjunct faculty issues, gaps in the literature regarding adjunct faculty job satisfaction exist. This study proposes to advance the literature on adjunct faculty job satisfaction by addressing the salient issues discussed in this review. Chapter 3 provides a description of the research design, context, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS**

This chapter begins with a review of the purpose statement and research questions for the study. Next it describes the research design, context, and participants, followed by a discussion on instrumentation and data collection. The chapter then concludes with information on the data analysis and limitations of the study, along with a summary which provides an overview of the chapter and reiterates the purpose of the study.

#### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to examine differences in intangible and financial job satisfaction among faculty at four-year institutions based on faculty type. Faculty type refers to intentional adjunct, unintentional adjunct, and full-time faculty. Intangible and financial job satisfaction were scales constructed from the 2017 National Survey of College Graduates and used in this study.

#### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent are there differences between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty in relation to intangible satisfaction?
2. To what extent are there differences between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty in relation to financial satisfaction?

#### **Research Design**

This quantitative study employed an *ex post facto* design using data from the 2017 National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG) through the National Science Foundation (NSF). Because the nature of the survey, it was impossible to randomly assign participants to either the

control or experimental group in this study. In cases where a true-experimental or quasi-experimental design are inappropriate, *ex post facto* research designs, or causal-comparative designs, are employed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). Sometimes confused with correlational or experimental research, *ex post facto* designs assume the “presumed cause” has already occurred and share characteristics with both correlational and experimental research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016, p. 194). Similar to correlational research, *ex post facto* designs use existing conditions, and like experimental research these designs have clearly defined independent and dependent variables. However, causal-comparative designs offer more rigor than either correlational or pre-experimental designs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Therefore, *ex post facto* design reveals what factors may contribute to financial and intangible satisfaction among adjunct and full-time faculty.

### **Dependent Variables**

There is limited research on adjunct faculty job satisfaction, with much of the literature focused on differences in salary and benefits between adjunct and full-time faculty (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015; Valadez & Anthony, 2001). Therefore, the dependent variables for the current study are intangible and financial satisfaction. Both measures of satisfaction were adapted from the overall satisfaction measure of the 2017 NSCG dataset. Six factors, which included the opportunity for advancement, intellectual challenge, degree of independence, job location, level of responsibility, and contribution to society, were averaged together to form the intangible satisfaction measure ( $\alpha = .77$ ). Three factors (e.g., job salary, job benefits, and job security) were averaged together to form the financial satisfaction measure ( $\alpha = .71$ ). All factors were originally measured on a 4-point Likert scale: (1) Very Satisfied, (2) Somewhat Satisfied, (3) Somewhat Dissatisfied, (4) Very Dissatisfied. Items were reverse coded for interpretation and



readability: (1) Very dissatisfied, (2) Somewhat dissatisfied, (3) Somewhat satisfied, (4) Very satisfied. Descriptives and further breakdown of the dependent variables are available in Table 8 (Appendix D).

### **Independent Variable**

The independent variable was faculty type. Faculty type was divided between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty, as defined through the NSCG dataset as a position in postsecondary education as their primary job at a four-year institution. Both types of adjunct faculty were defined through 39 hours or less of work per week, as the NSCG's primary job description did not delineate faculty type any further. Intentional adjunct faculty were defined as adjunct faculty who are working part-time but want a full-time teaching position. Unintentional adjunct faculty were defined as adjunct faculty who are working part-time, but do not need or want a full-time teaching position. Full-time faculty was defined through 40 hours or more of work per week. Unfortunately, the dataset cannot account for adjuncts who may work the equivalent of two full-time jobs. Descriptives for faculty are displayed in Table 2 following the covariate narrative.

### **Covariates**

There were five covariates in the current study: race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline. These covariates were chosen to control for their potential influence on measures of faculty job satisfaction. Descriptives for each covariate are displayed in Table 2 below. Age was used because years of experience was unavailable, due to its potential as personally identifiable information.

Table 2

*Descriptives of Study Variables*

Variable	Total Sample ( <i>n</i> )		%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Faculty Type	3,674	Full-time Faculty (3,148)	85.7	-	-
		Intentional Adjunct Faculty (269)	7.3	-	-
		Unintentional Adjunct Faculty (257)	7.0	-	-
Race	3,674	White (2,360)	64.2	-	-
		Asian (616)	16.8	-	-
		Hispanic (331)	9.0	-	-
		Black (248)	6.8	-	-
		Multiple Race (95)	2.6	-	-
		American Indian/Alaska Native (17)	0.5	-	-
		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (7)	0.2	-	-
Age	3,674	-	-	43.92	13.901
Gender	3,674	Female (1,741)	47.4	-	-
		Male (1,933)	52.6	-	-
Carnegie Classification	3,674	Public (2,313)	63.0	-	-
		Private (1,288)	35.1	-	-
		Missing data, unavailable (73)	2.0	-	-
Academic Discipline	3,674	Social Sciences (1,069)	29.1	-	-
		Natural Sciences (731)	19.9	-	-
		Applied Sciences (641)	17.4	-	-
		HR/Admin./Marketing (437)	11.9	-	-
		Formal Sciences (375)	10.2	-	-
		Humanities (350)	9.5	-	-
		Other Service-Related (71)	1.9	-	-

Note: All data were acquired through the NSF website and analyzed through IBM SPSS Version 26.

## Context

The current study utilized the 2017 National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG) (NSF, 2019), a biennial survey of college graduates in the United States that has been conducted since the 1970s in conjunction with the National Science Foundation and Census Bureau. Beginning in 2010, the NSCG started utilizing a cohort model of data collection, where respondents from 2010 were asked to conduct the study approximately every two to three years. The study uses *ex post facto* data from the 2017 NSCG, which required participants to refer to the week of February 1, 2017 when answering most survey questions. All 2017 NSCG data are downloadable and available to the public, as well as survey data dating back to the 1993 NSCG. The NSCG focuses exclusively on individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher in STEM or other science fields, which posed a unique opportunity for the current study given most in the STEM field choose practitioner-based positions over teaching (Patton, 2006).

## Participants

The target population of the survey met the following criteria: earned a bachelor's degree or higher prior to January 1, 2016, are not institutionalized and reside in the United States as of February 1, 2017, and are younger than age 76 years as of February 1, 2017. The overall population size was an estimated 61.2 million individuals. Key demographics of the survey included age, gender, race, and citizenship. The 2017 NSCG had 83,672 respondents, some of which are from previous cohorts of the study. Roughly 72% of the population were native United States citizens, 15% were naturalized citizens, and the remaining 13% were non-citizens who were permanent or temporary residents. The study sample consisted of 3,932 adjunct and full-time faculty, roughly five percent of all survey respondents. Full-time faculty accounted for 86.7% of the sample, followed by intentional adjunct faculty (6.8%), and unintentional adjunct

faculty (6.5%). The sample was 48.5% female and 51.5% male. The mean age of the sample was 43.76 years of age. A majority of the sample were White (63.6%), with the next largest category being Asians (17.0%). Further, Asians, Hispanics, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders, and American Indian or Alaskan Natives were combined into the Race category of Other for analysis purposes. Faculty were chosen based on their identification of working in postsecondary education. Over half of the faculty taught at public institutions (62.1%), followed by those teaching at private institutions (35.9%), and data were either unavailable or missing for some faculty (2.0%). Most faculty taught in the Social Sciences (29.1%), followed by Natural Sciences (19.7%), and Applied Sciences (e.g., engineering, medicine, health) (17.2%). Academic discipline categories were broadly grouped into Hard Sciences or Soft Sciences (See Table 7 in Appendix C for further details). The next three largest groups included those in the Human Resources or Marketing industry (e.g., administrative assistant) (12.1%), Formal Sciences (e.g., computer science, mathematics) (10.2%), and the Humanities (e.g., arts, history, law) (9.7%). Lastly, the smallest category were those in the Service-Related Industry (e.g., food service, protective service) with 1.9% of all faculty.

### **Instrumentation**

The NSCG is a repeated cross-sectional biennial survey that focuses on the nation's college graduates of science and engineering related fields (National Science Foundation, 2019). The 2017 NSCG marks the first full implementation of the new four-panel rotating panel design that began with the 2010 NSCG. Through this rotating panel design, "every new panel receives a baseline survey interview and three biennial follow-up interviews before rotating out the survey" (National Science Foundation, 2019, par. 5). The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2015 NSCG composed the sampling frame for the 2017 NSCG. The 2015 NSCG

sampling frame included the following” the 2009 ACS, 2011 ACS, and 2013 ACS. The ACS is an “ongoing survey that provides vital information on a yearly basis about our nation and its people. Information from the [ACS] generates data that help determine how more than \$675 billion in federal and state funds are distributed each year” (United States Census Bureau, 2019, par. 1). From this sampling frame, the 2017 NSCG used a stratified sampling design, with probability estimates proportional to size or systematic random sampling techniques to select the NSCG sample. The stratification cells were defined with the following variables: demographic group, highest degree type, and occupation field and bachelor’s degree field. Lastly, the 2017 NSCG oversampled young graduates, which tended to be women and minorities, in order to improve the accuracy of population estimates. Appropriate weights were used during data analysis to account for this oversampling.

The study used two measures adapted from the original survey (see Appendix A): financial satisfaction and intangible satisfaction. Unlike other measures of adjunct faculty job satisfaction, the current study uses validated measures of satisfaction with alpha values in the acceptable to good range. The financial satisfaction scale was created by averaging the following factors from the overall satisfaction measure: job salary, job benefits, and job security. The intangible satisfaction scale, also derived from the original satisfaction measure, averaged together opportunities for advancement, intellectual challenge, degree of independence, job location, level of responsibility, and contribution to society. Using Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha$ ), reliability of both measures fell in the acceptable range according to the generally accepted guidelines for scales: financial satisfaction ( $\alpha = .71$ ) and intangible satisfaction ( $\alpha = .77$ ). Participants were asked to reflect on their principal job during the week of February 1, 2017 and rate their satisfaction from one (1) to four (4) in regard to each Likert-response item on a 4-point

scale: (1) Very satisfied, (2) Somewhat satisfied, (3) Somewhat dissatisfied, (4) Very dissatisfied. Items were reverse coded for interpretation and readability to the following scale: (1) Very dissatisfied, (2) Somewhat dissatisfied, (3) Somewhat satisfied, (4) Very satisfied.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

All NSCG data are publicly available for download through the NSF website. The 2017 NSCG collected data through three approaches: self-administered online survey, self-administered questionnaire via mail, and computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). The data collection effort lasted approximately 6 months from April to October 2017. Participants had the option of choosing which method to complete the survey and were able to switch between methods at any time during data collection. All participants were asked to refer to the week of February 1, 2017 when answering most survey questions. Depending on survey cohort, a specific survey was administered to returning respondents, new respondents, and non-respondents. Non-respondent surveys were administered to returning sample members who did not respond to the 2015 NSCG. All 2017 NSCG data were subjected to editing and imputation procedures for data processing.

The NSCG used a stratified sampling design to select its sample from the eligible sampling frame. The NSF used estimation procedures with each iteration in order to reflect the portion of the overall population it represents. Weighting adjustments were used to justify sample selection, nonresponse, trimming procedures (to remove extreme weights), and raking procedures to determine sampling weights were appropriate for the sampling frame estimates. The final sample weight also accounted for the overlap procedures that converted weights to accurately reflect the population of each individual frame, which ultimately reflected the 2017

NSCG target population. The final sample weights allowed data users to obtain survey-based estimates from the NSCG target population.

### **Data Analysis**

The IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 was used to conduct all analyses for the study. The study involves a categorical independent variable, two continuous level dependent variables, and five covariates (i.e., race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline clusters), therefore a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was considered appropriate for the study (Field, 2013). Correlations between intangible and financial satisfaction were conducted to determine if both dependent variables should be included in one combined MANCOVA model, or two separate MANCOVAs.

Intangible and financial satisfaction were moderately positively correlated,  $r(3,737) = .47, p < .001$ . Therefore, one combined MANCOVA model was conducted.

MANCOVAs are the preferred statistical test to interpret between group and within group mean differences between multiple variables and covariates (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

MANCOVAs were conducted to determine differences between intentional adjunct, unintentional adjunct, and full-time faculty on two measures of satisfaction, while controlling for five covariates. According to Pallant (2016), MANCOVAs are an extension of the one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), and are used when there is more than one dependent variable and covariates present. Though multiple ANCOVAs may be conducted, this opens up the study to an “inflated Type I error” (Pallant, 2016, p. 289). A MANCOVA can compare the variance, or variability in scores, between the different groups (“believed to be due to the independent variable”) with the variance within each of the groups (“believed to be due to chance”) (Pallant, 2016, p. 255) and control for the risk of a Type I error. Likewise, post-hoc Sidak adjustments

were conducted to further reduce the risk of Type I error. Therefore, all three groups were compared to one another: intentional vs. unintentional adjuncts, intentional vs. full-time faculty, and unintentional adjuncts vs. full-time faculty, with a more precise measure of significance than multiple one-way ANCOVAs can afford.

### **Tested Assumptions**

MANCOVA is the extension of the one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and includes the assumptions of the original ANOVA and additional assumptions for the use of two or more dependent variables. Each of the assumptions were tested to determine the feasibility and appropriateness of the MANCOVA for the current study and are found in Table 3.



Table 3

*MANCOVA Assumptions Tested for the Current Study*

Assumption	Current Study
1. Two or more dependent variables that are measured at the continuous level	True
2. One independent variable that consists of two or more categorical, independent groups	True – The independent variable of interest is faculty type, where faculty are divided between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty
3. One covariate that is measured at the continuous level	True – There are five covariates that are measured at the continuous level
4. Independence of observations between each group of the independent variable	True – There is no correlation between any of the participants in each group of the independent variable
5. There should be a linear relationship between each pair of dependent variables within each group of the independent variable	True – Conducted visual inspection of scatter plot matrices to determine linearity
6. There should be a linear relationship between the covariate and each dependent variable within each group of the independent variable	True – Conducted visual inspection of scatter plot matrices to determine linearity
7. Homogeneity of regression slopes	Violates for some, but not all variables – However, kept as moderator analysis and continued analysis
8. Homogeneity of variances and covariances	Violates – However, the Central Limit Theorem (CLT) for large sample sizes allows violation, given the differing sample sizes in each group of the independent variable
9. There should be no significant univariate outliers in the groups of your independent variable in terms of each dependent variable	True – No standardized residuals greater than $\pm 3$ standard deviations
10. There should be no significant multivariate outliers in the groups of your independent variable in terms of each dependent variable	True – Adjustments made – Eight values greater than the critical Mahalanobis distance value of 13.82 (for two dependent variables) were removed, and analysis continued

Table 3 (continued)

11. The residuals should be approximately normally distributed for each group of the independent variable	True – All skewness and kurtosis values were less than $\pm 1$
---	--

Note: All assumptions were interpreted from Pallant (2016) and Laerd Statistics (n.d.)

There was a linear relationship between intangible and financial satisfaction for each faculty type, as assessed by visual inspection of a scatterplot. There was a violation of homogeneity of regression slopes, as assessed by the interaction term between faculty type and age,  $F(4, 7424) = 8.112, p < .001$ , faculty type and gender,  $F(4, 7424) = 4.0385, p < .001$ , faculty type and race,  $F(4, 7424) = 2.778, p = .025$ , faculty type and academic discipline,  $F(4, 7424) = 4.888, p = .001$ ; however, there was homogeneity of regression slopes between faculty type and Carnegie classification,  $F(4, 7424) = 1.883, p = .110$ . There was a violation of homogeneity of covariances, as assessed by Box's  $M$  test,  $p < .001$ . There was also a violation of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for financial satisfaction, but no violation for intangible satisfaction; however, these violations are moot considering the Central Limit Theorem (CLT) and the uniquely disproportionate sample sizes that reflect the general population. There were univariate and multivariate outliers, but analysis continued following the winsorization of the dataset and the removal of eight multivariate outliers per the critical Mahalanobis distance values cutoff for two dependent variables. Residuals were abnormally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p < .05$ ).

### Limitations

First, the use of *ex post facto* data excluded a true experimental design, thus there was no manipulation of the independent variable. Therefore, no well-founded inferences can be drawn

beyond the scope of the current study. Second, selection bias was an issue given the exclusive focus on adjunct and full-time faculty from the NSCG dataset. Adjunct faculty may choose their position for different reasons besides wanting a full-time position, thus, the current study could not account for potential differences in the types of adjunct faculty that may relate to financial and intangible satisfaction. Third, the NSCG is limited to graduates specifically from the STEM fields, however, STEM fields included a broad range of academic disciplines such as psychology and the humanities. Lastly, the current study differentiated between adjunct and full-time faculty through hours worked per week at a four-year postsecondary institution. It is possible that adjunct or full-time faculty were left out of this grouping through incorrect responses on the survey which the current study failed to take into account.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relation between adjuncts and full-time faculty on two measures of satisfaction (financial and intangible). Using *ex post facto* data from the 2017 NSCG, the study utilized a one-way multivariate analysis of covariance to analyze the relatedness of the independent variable on the combined dependent variables. A limitation of the study was selection bias. Chapter 4 reports the results of the study.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate how differences in intangible and financial satisfaction are related to faculty type. Faculty type referred to unintentional adjuncts, intentional adjuncts, and full-time faculty. This study examined data from the National Science Foundation (NSF) National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG, 2017). The NSCG provided quantitative data about factors related to college graduates in STEM and other disciplines. The survey and survey data were publicly available on the NSF website. This study used IBM SPSS Version 26 to conduct statistical analysis.

This chapter reports the results of the multivariate analysis described in Chapter 3. This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part presents the results of the one-way multivariate analysis of covariance, follow-up univariate tests, and pairwise comparisons to determine any relation of faculty type on intangible or financial job satisfaction while controlling for five covariates. The second part details the significant interactions between faculty type and the covariates, with figures detailing significant and insignificant interactions. The third part provides confirmation and rejection of the study hypotheses and summarizes the results of the statistical analyses.

#### **MANCOVA: Intangible and Financial Job Satisfaction**

A one-way multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted to determine the relation of faculty type on intangible or financial job satisfaction while controlling for age, race, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline. Means and adjusted means were quite dissimilar (see Table 4) and intangible and financial satisfaction showed a general trend to be higher in intentional adjuncts.

Table 4

*Means, Adjusted Means, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors for the Two Measures of Job Satisfaction for Each Faculty Type*

Faculty Type	Job Satisfaction			
	Intangible Satisfaction		Financial Satisfaction	
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M<sub>adj</sub> (SE)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M<sub>adj</sub> (SE)</i>
Full-time Faculty	3.41 (.484)	3.41 (.008)	3.15 (.603)	3.15 (.011)
Intentional Adjuncts	3.49 (.437)	3.46 (.031)	3.05 (.626)	3.07 (.039)
Unintentional Adjuncts	3.25 (.474)	3.25 (.032)	2.45 (.726)	2.44 (.040)

The one-way MANCOVA showed there was a statistically significant difference between faculty type on the combined dependent variables after controlling for race, age, gender, Carnegie Classification, and academic discipline,  $F(4, 7310) = 2.987, p < .05$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .997$ ,  $\eta^2 = .002$  (see Table 6). Despite significance, less than 1% of the variance is attributable to faculty type. In order to see differences in the combined dependent variable of satisfaction, follow-up univariate one-way ANCOVAs were performed. A Sidak adjustment was made such that statistical significance was accepted at  $p < .001$ . There were statistically significant differences in adjusted means for intangible satisfaction ( $F(2, 3656) = 14.218, p < .001, \eta^2 = .008$ ), and financial satisfaction, ( $F(2, 3656) = 147.808, p < .001, \eta^2 = .075$ ). Less than 1% of the variance in scores is due to faculty type on levels of intangible satisfaction. However, faculty type accounted for nearly 8% of the variance in scores on levels of financial satisfaction.

Table 5

*Pairwise Contrasts for Adjusted Means for Intangible and Financial Satisfaction for Each Faculty Group*

Satisfaction	Difference in adjusted means (95% CI)		
	FTF vs. Intentional AF	FTF vs. Unintentional	Intentional AF vs. Unintentional AF
Intangible Satisfaction	-.045 (-.122, .031)	.164 (.086, .242)**	.210 (.104, .315)**
Financial Satisfaction	.084 (-.013, .182)	.710 (.612, .809)**	.626 (.492, .760)**

Note: \*\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .001$  level.

Pairwise comparisons were examined for both intangible and financial satisfaction between the faculty types (see Table 5). Full-time faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.41$ ,  $SE = .008$ ) and intentional adjunct faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.46$ ,  $SE = .031$ ) had no significant differences on levels of intangible satisfaction and were similarly satisfied with a mean difference of  $-.045$ , 95% CI  $[-.122, .031]$ ,  $p = .406$ . Intentional adjunct faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.46$ ,  $SE = .031$ ) were statistically significantly more satisfied than unintentional adjunct faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.25$ ,  $SE = .032$ ) on levels of intangible satisfaction with a mean difference of  $.210$ , 95% CI  $[.104, .315]$ ,  $p < .001$ . Full-time faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.42$ ,  $SE = .008$ ) were statistically significantly more satisfied than unintentional adjunct faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.24$ ,  $SE = .030$ ) on levels of intangible satisfaction with a mean difference of  $.164$ , 95% CI  $[.086, .242]$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Full-time faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.15$ ,  $SE = .011$ ) and intentional adjunct faculty ( $M_{adj} = 3.07$ ,  $SE = .039$ ) had no significant differences on levels of financial satisfaction and were similarly financially satisfied with a mean difference of  $.084$ , 95% CI  $[-.013, .182]$ ,  $p = .110$ . Intentional

adjunct faculty ( $M_{\text{adj}} = 3.06$ ,  $SE = .038$ ) were statistically significantly more financially satisfied than unintentional adjunct faculty ( $M_{\text{adj}} = 2.42$ ,  $SE = .039$ ) on levels of financial satisfaction with a mean difference of .626, 95% CI [.492, .760],  $p < .001$ . Full-time faculty ( $M_{\text{adj}} = 3.15$ ,  $SE = .011$ ) were statistically significantly more financially satisfied than unintentional adjunct faculty ( $M_{\text{adj}} = 2.44$ ,  $SE = .040$ ) on levels of financial satisfaction with a mean difference of .710, 95% CI [.612, .809],  $p < .001$ .

Table 6

*Multivariate Results of the MANCOVA Investigating Intangible and Financial Satisfaction Among Faculty*

	Wilks' $\lambda$	$df$	$F$	$\eta^2$
Faculty Type	.997	4, 7310	2.987**	.002
Race	.997	2, 3656	2.305	.001
Age	.999	2, 3656	4.167**	.001
Gender	.997	2, 3656	5.489**	.003
Carnegie Classification	1.000	2, 3656	0.500	.000
Academic Discipline	.995	2, 3798	9.306***	.005
Faculty type $\times$ race	.996	4, 7310	3.958**	.002
Faculty type $\times$ age	.990	4, 7310	8.884***	.005
Faculty type $\times$ gender	.997	4, 7310	3.016**	.002
Faculty type $\times$ Carnegie Classification	1.000	4, 7310	0.315	.001
Faculty type $\times$ academic discipline	.997	4, 7310	2.602**	.001

\*Significant at  $p < .10$

\*\*Significant at  $p < .05$

\*\*\*Significant at  $p < .001$

## Covariates

Three of the five covariates included in the MANCOVA model were significant (see Table 6). Race was not a significant covariate of the MANCOVA model,  $F(2, 3656) = 2.305$ ,  $p = .100$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .997$ ,  $\eta^2 = .001$ . Age was a significant predictor of the combined dependent variable of satisfaction,  $F(2, 3656) = 4.167$ ,  $p < .05$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .999$ ,  $\eta^2 = .001$ . Gender was a significant predictor of the combined dependent variable,  $F(2, 3656) = 5.489$ ,  $p < .05$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .997$ ,  $\eta^2 = .003$ . Carnegie classification was not a significant covariate of the MANCOVA model,  $F(2, 3656) = 0.500$ ,  $p = .607$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = 1.000$ ,  $\eta^2 < .001$ . Lastly, academic discipline was a significant predictor of the combined dependent variable of satisfaction and had the largest effect size of the covariates, accounting for less than 1% of the variances in scores,  $F(2, 3656) = 9.306$ ,  $p < .001$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .999$ ,  $\eta^2 = .005$ .

## Interactions

There was a statistically significant interaction between faculty type and race on the combined dependent variable of satisfaction,  $F(4, 7310) = 3.958$ ,  $p < .05$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .996$ ,  $\eta^2 = .002$  (see Figures 1 and 2). Less than one percent of the variability in satisfaction scores were due to interaction between faculty and race. Race appears to have an effect on levels of intangible satisfaction, where White intentional adjunct faculty were more satisfied than White full-time faculty on levels of intangible satisfaction. However, Other intentional adjunct faculty were more satisfied than Other full-time faculty on levels of intangible satisfaction. White full-time faculty were more financially satisfied than White intentional adjunct faculty, however, Black intentional adjunct faculty were more financially satisfied than Black full-time faculty. Further, Other full-time faculty were more financially satisfied than Other intentional adjunct faculty.



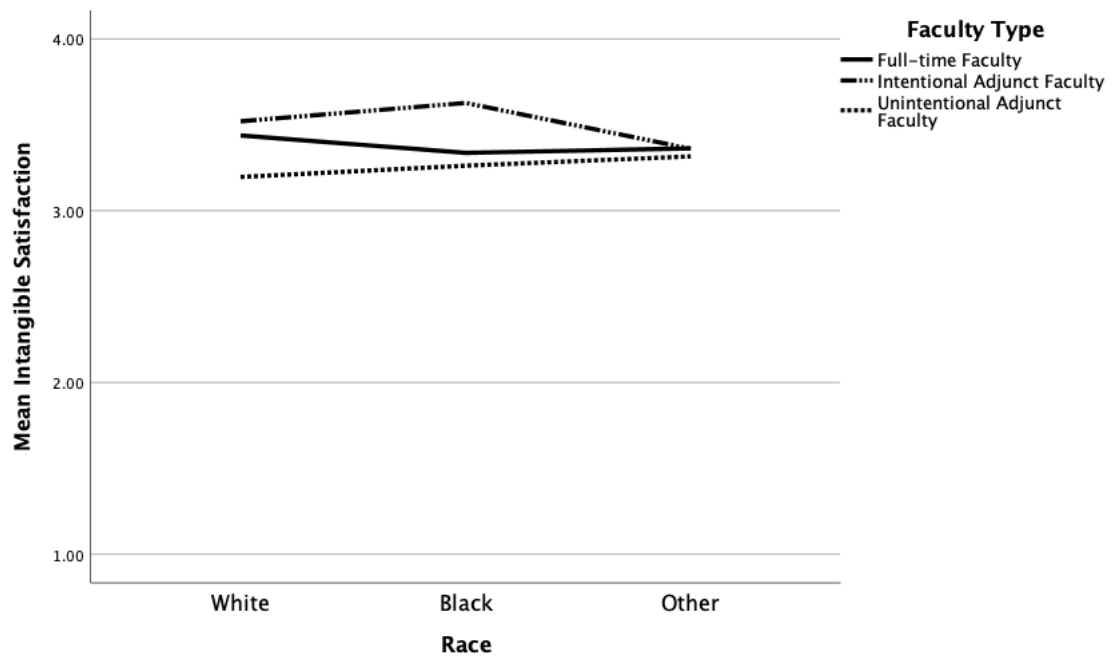


Figure 1. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and race as a covariate for intangible satisfaction

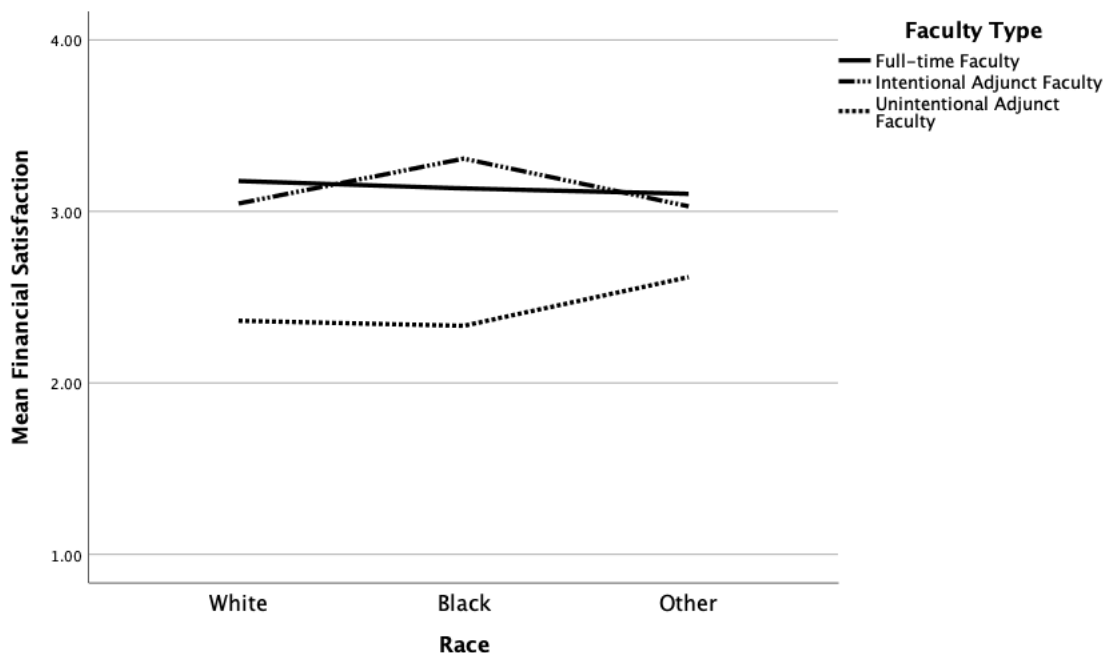


Figure 2. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and race as a covariate for financial satisfaction.

There was a significant interaction between faculty type and age on the combined dependent variable of satisfaction,  $F(4, 7310) = 8.884, p < .001$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .990, \eta^2 = .005$  (see Figures 3 and 4). Less than 1 percent of the variance in scores was due to the interaction between faculty and age. Intentional adjuncts in their twenties were more satisfied than full-time faculty on levels of intangible satisfaction, however, full-time faculty in their thirties and forties were more satisfied than intentional adjunct faculty of the same age. Full-time faculty in their forties were more satisfied than intentional adjunct faculty of the same age on levels of intangible satisfaction, however, intentional adjuncts in their fifties and sixties were more satisfied than full-time faculty of the same age. Intentional adjuncts in their sixties were more satisfied than full-time faculty of the same age on levels of intangible satisfaction, but full-time faculty in their seventies or older were more satisfied than intentional adjuncts of the same age.

Levels of intangible satisfaction remained relatively steady for unintentional adjunct faculty regardless of age.

Intentional adjuncts in their twenties were more financially satisfied than full-time faculty of the same age, but full-time faculty in the remaining age ranges were more financially satisfied than intentional adjuncts of the same age. Levels of financial satisfaction increased by age group for full-time faculty. Intentional adjunct faculty in their thirties were less financially satisfied than full-time faculty, but satisfaction continually increased for the remaining age groups. Unintentional adjunct faculty had varying levels of financial satisfaction dependent on age group.

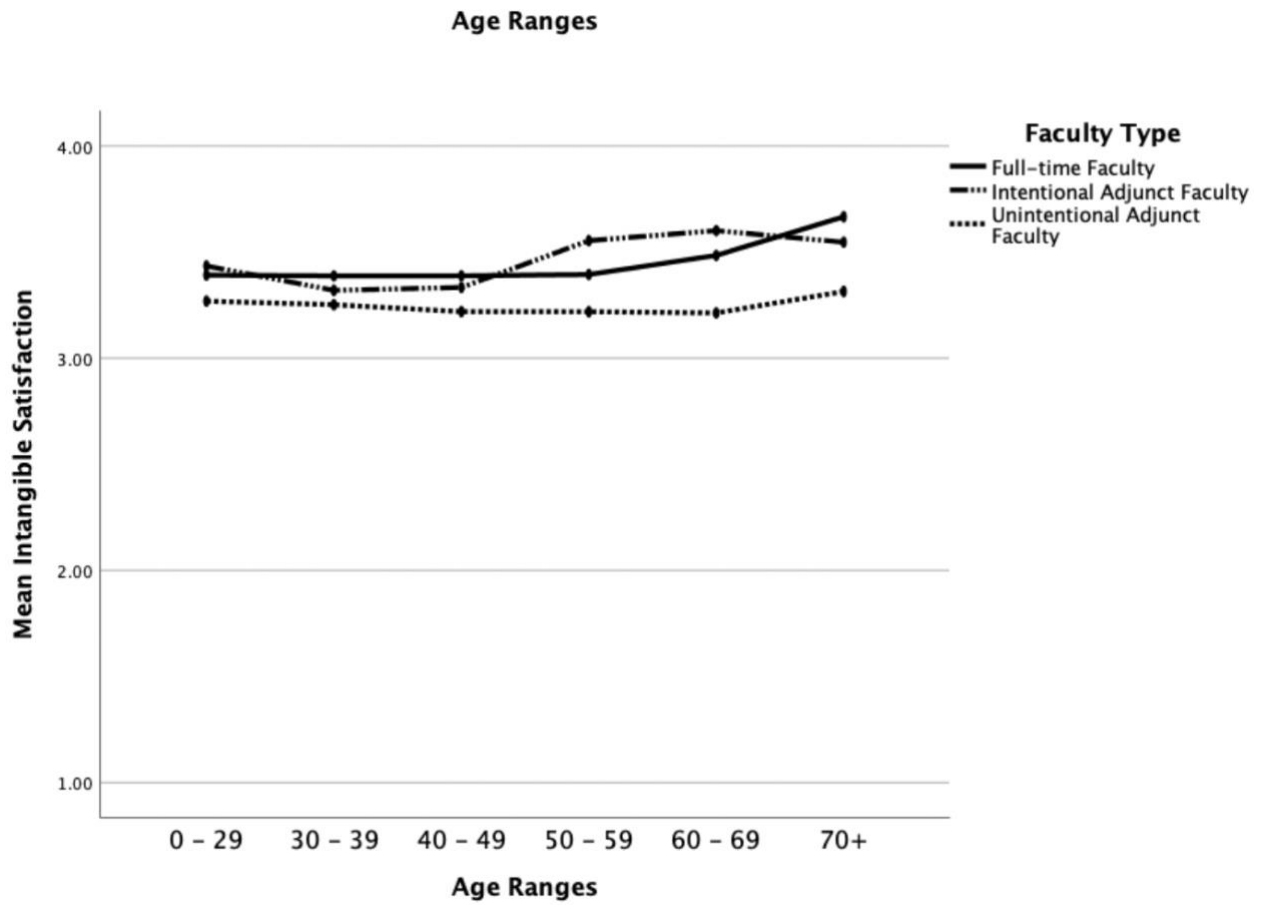


Figure 3. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and age as a covariate for intangible satisfaction.

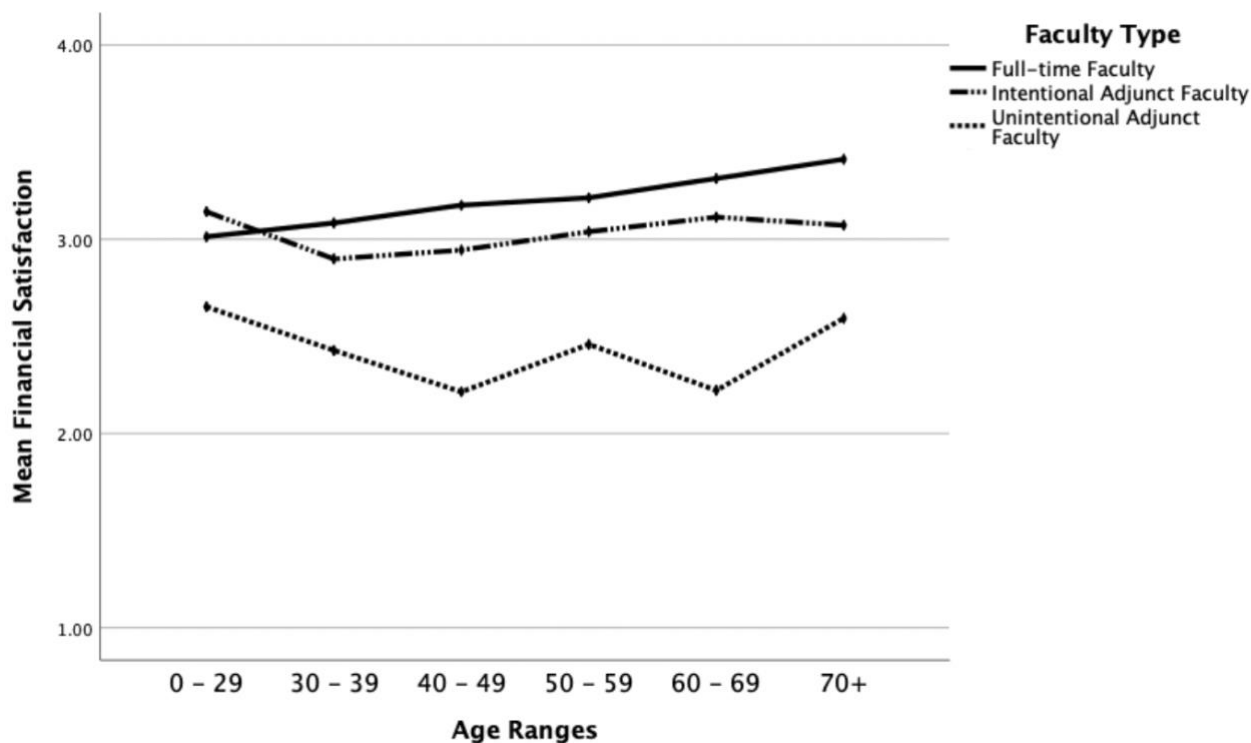


Figure 4. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and age as a covariate for financial satisfaction.

There was a significant interaction between faculty type and gender on the combined dependent variable of satisfaction,  $F(4, 7310) = 3.016, p < .05$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .997, \eta^2 = .002$  (see Figures 5 and 6). Less than one percent of the variability in scores of satisfaction were due to the interaction between faculty type and gender. There were no interactions between faculty type and gender on levels of intangible satisfaction, however, intentional adjunct faculty were more satisfied than full-time and adjunct faculty with the intangibles of their position regardless of gender. Male full-time faculty were more financially satisfied than male intentional adjunct faculty.

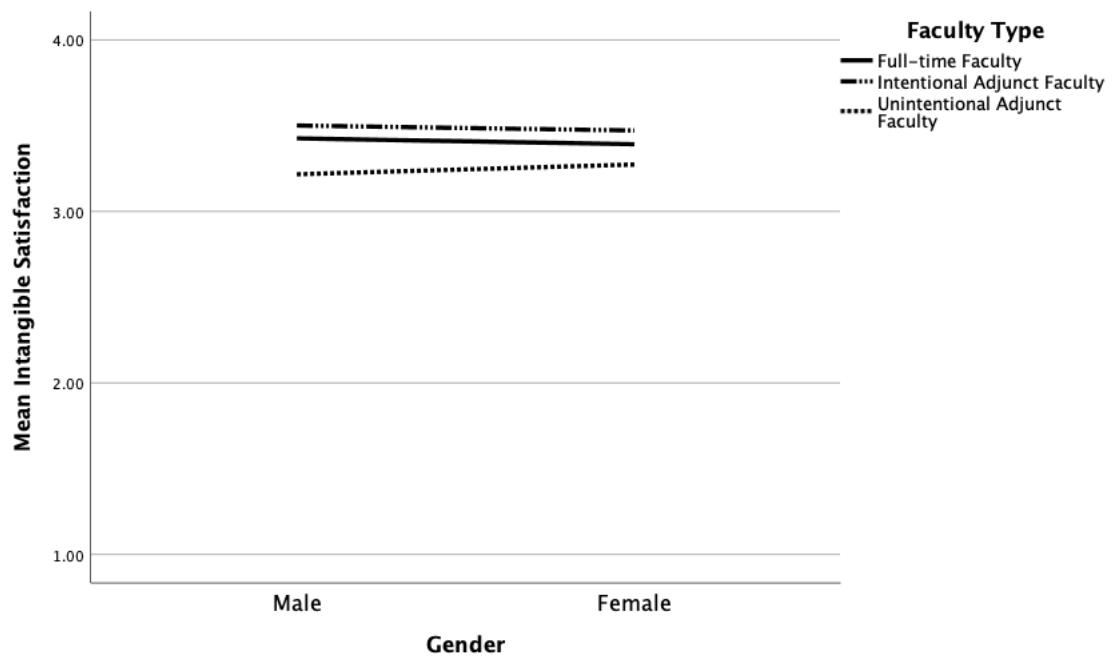


Figure 5. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and gender as a covariate for intangible satisfaction.

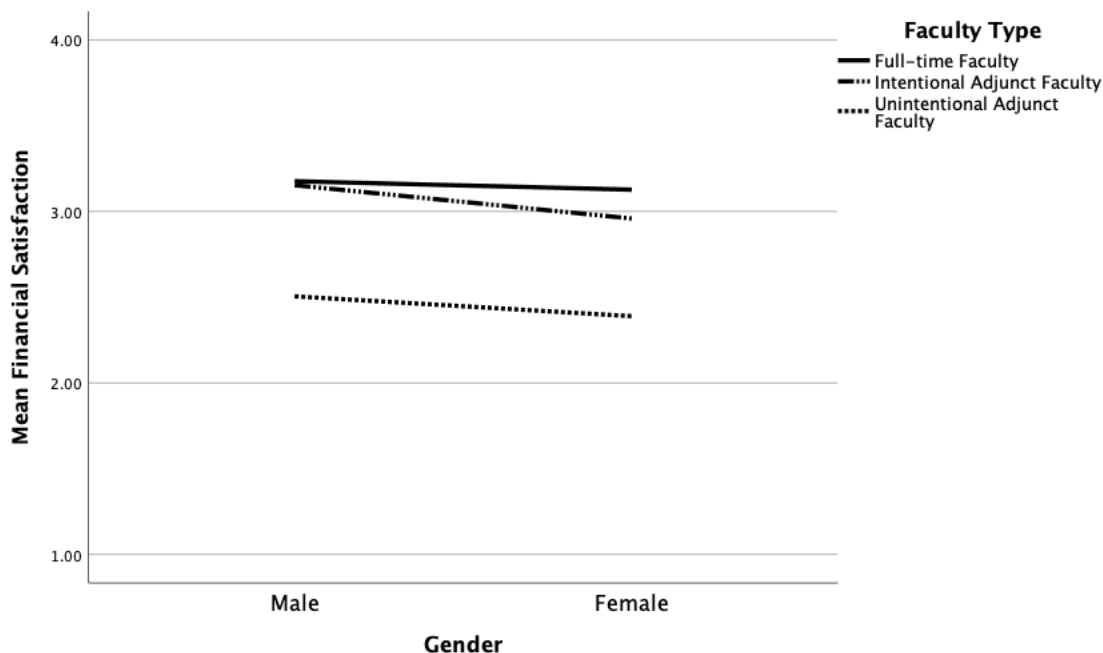


Figure 6. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and gender as a covariate for financial satisfaction.

There was no significant interaction between faculty type and Carnegie Classification,  $F(4, 7310) = 0.315, p = .868, \text{Wilks' } \lambda = 1.000, \eta^2 = .001$  (see Figures 7 and 8). Intentional adjunct faculty were more satisfied than full-time and adjunct faculty with the intangibles of their position regardless of a public or private institution. Full-time faculty were more financially satisfied than intentional and unintentional adjunct faculty regardless of Carnegie classification status.

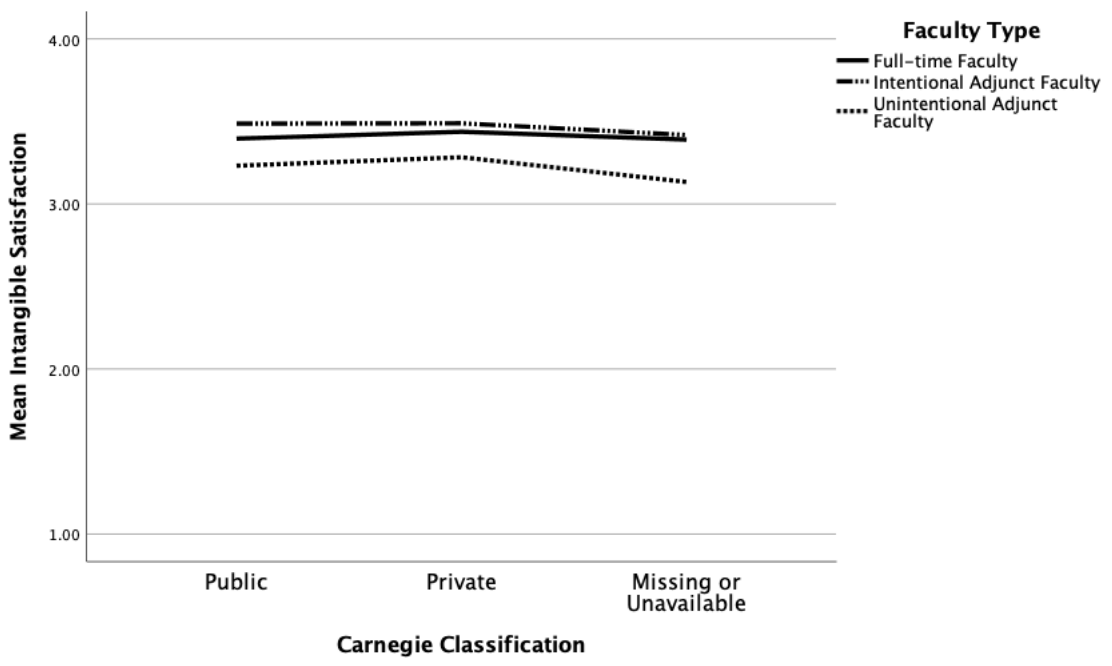


Figure 7. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and Carnegie Classification as a covariate for intangible satisfaction.

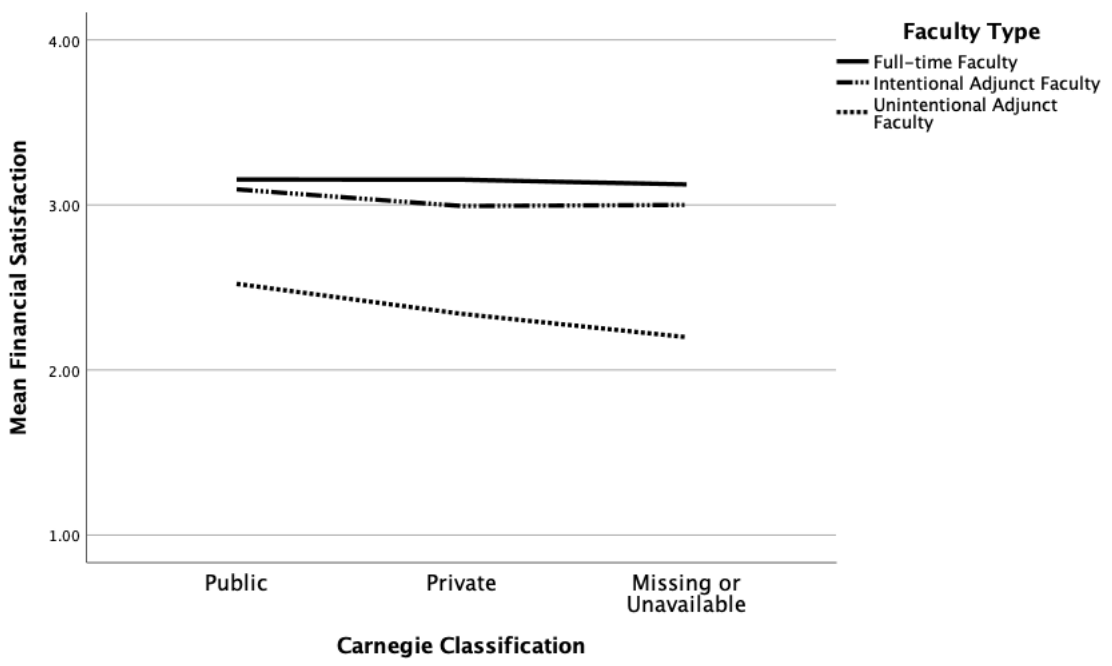
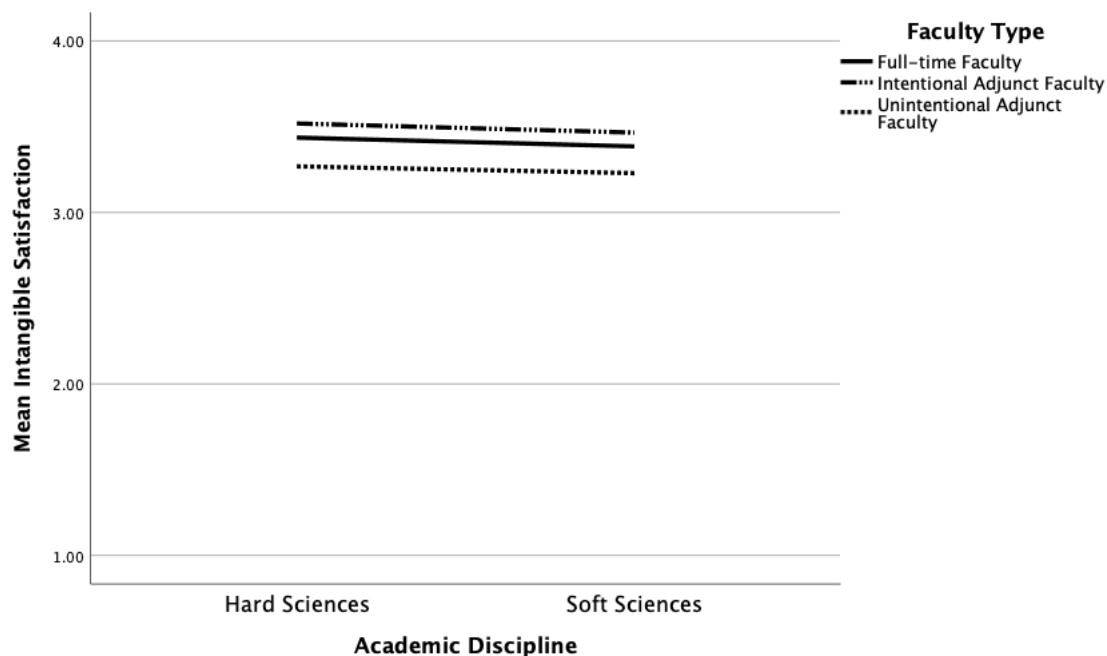


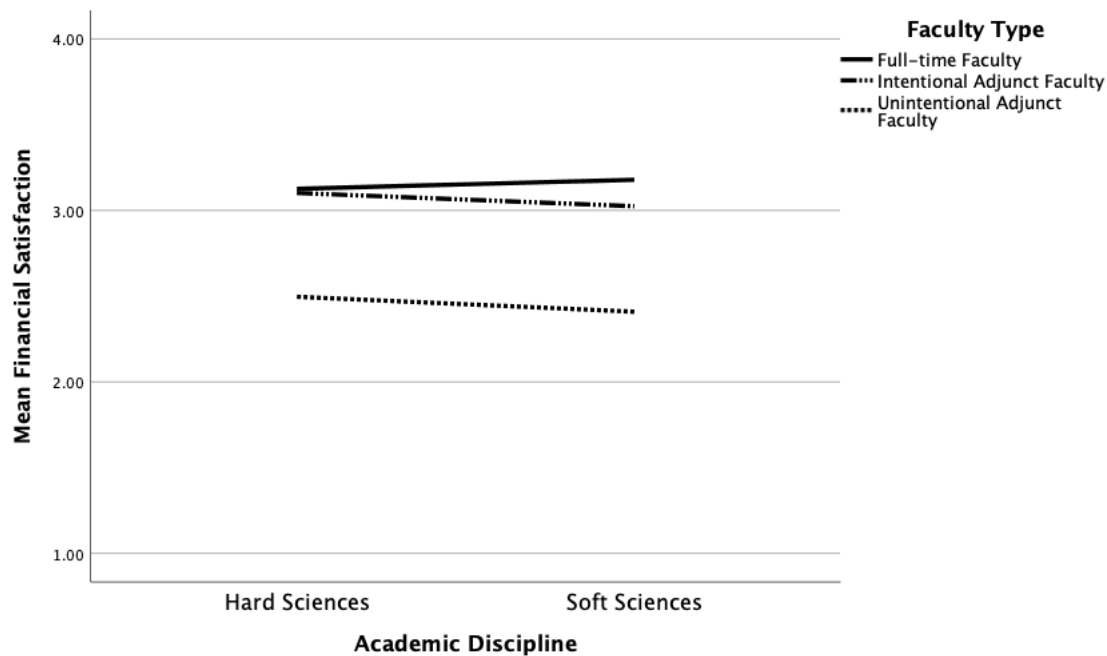
Figure 8. Graph of the interaction between faculty type and Carnegie Classification as a covariate for financial satisfaction.



There was a significant interaction between faculty type and academic discipline on the combined dependent variable of satisfaction,  $F(4, 7310) = 2.602, p < .05$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .997, \eta^2 = .001$  (see Figures 9 and 10). Less than 1 percent of the variability in scores of satisfaction were due to the interaction between faculty type and academic discipline. There were no interactions between faculty type and gender in regard to intangible satisfaction. Full-time faculty in the hard sciences were more financially satisfied than intentional adjunct faculty in the same field. However, full-time faculty in the soft sciences were more satisfied than full-time faculty in the hard sciences. Similarly, intentional adjuncts in the hard sciences were more financially satisfied than intentional adjunct faculty in the soft sciences.



*Figure 9.* Graph of the interaction between faculty type and academic discipline for intangible satisfaction.



*Figure 10.* Graph of the interaction between faculty type and academic discipline for financial satisfaction.

### Summary

The hypothesis for research question one was that intentional adjunct faculty and full-time faculty would have no significant differences on levels of intangible and financial satisfaction when controlling for race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline. The results from the MANCOVA supported this hypothesis. Intentional adjunct and full-time faculty had no significant differences on levels of intangible or financial satisfaction. This indicates that intentional adjunct and full-time faculty are similarly satisfied on levels of intangible and financial satisfaction.

The hypothesis for research question two was that unintentional adjunct faculty would have significantly different levels of intangible satisfaction and financial satisfaction in

comparison to intentional adjunct and full-time faculty when controlling for race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline. The results from the MANCOVA supported this hypothesis. Unintentional adjunct faculty were statistically significantly less satisfied on levels of intangible and financial satisfaction in comparison to both full-time and intentional adjunct faculty. This indicates that unintentional adjuncts are the least satisfied of the faculty types examined in this study.

MANCOVA results indicated statistical significance for the combined dependent variable for faculty type while controlling for five covariates. Follow-up univariate analyses also concluded statistical significance for both intangible and financial job satisfaction. Pairwise comparisons indicated statistically significant differences between intentional adjunct, unintentional adjunct, and full-time faculty. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the results and implications for future research.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

This chapter first provides an overview of the study, which includes a brief overview of the problem, a reiteration of the purpose statement, research questions and hypotheses, and the significance of the study. Next there is an overview of the methodology and a summary of major findings from the current study. Following are a discussion of findings related to prior research, unanticipated findings, and implications for practice. Lastly, the chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and closing remarks.

#### **Overview of the Problem**

It is imperative to understand what factors contribute to adjunct faculty job satisfaction, since their role is critical to high education. The number of adjunct faculty at four-year institutions has grown considerably over the past forty years, with an estimated 70 percent of all teaching appointments currently held by adjuncts (AAUP, 2018). Because awards of tenure have substantially decreased since the early 2000s (Bastedo, Altbach, & Gumport, 2016), it is projected that adjunct faculty will continue to make up the majority of the teaching force in four-year institutions nationwide (Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Adjuncts are hired for the addition of their expertise and real-world experience in the classroom (Langen, 2011) or for purely financial reasons (Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006). Implications for adjunct faculty in higher education are dependent on higher education administrators not only taking note of this shift, but reallocating the current state of adjunct resources altogether. Studies have found most adjunct faculty to be dissatisfied with their positions (Maynard & Joseph, 2008; Ott & Dippold, 2018). Extensive literature on adjunct faculty focuses on their impacts on students, particularly student outcomes, in comparison to full-time faculty (Stenerson et al., 2010). More recent research on adjunct

faculty shifts the focus towards the different types of adjuncts (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015; Maynard & Joseph, 2008), with differences found between intentional part-time faculty and those who are seeking a full-time position. Hoyt (2012) found most adjunct faculty choose their profession because they enjoyed teaching; however, wages and benefits were still important predictors of their job satisfaction and intent to stay.

Gaps in the literature make it challenging to assess adjunct faculty job satisfaction when all types of adjunct faculty are aggregated together. Full-time faculty job satisfaction is the general focus of most research on job satisfaction in higher education, and when adjuncts are included, they are viewed through the lens of a deficit framework. Further, much of the literature on adjuncts emphasizes unequal wages or poor job security, and few, if any, investigate specific facets of job satisfaction or recognition by colleagues. The current study sought to fill these gaps and expand upon the different types of adjunct faculty that may pinpoint the importance of specific factors of job satisfaction. To that end, the current study utilized Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1968) as a conceptual framework, where motivators and hygiene factors work in combination to create an environment conducive to adjunct faculty job satisfaction.

### **Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to examine differences in intangible and financial job satisfaction among faculty at four-year institutions based on faculty type. Faculty type refers to intentional adjunct, unintentional adjunct, and full-time faculty. Intangible and financial job satisfaction were scales constructed from the 2017 National Survey of College Graduates and used in this study.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are there differences between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty in relation to intangible satisfaction?
2. To what extent are there differences between intentional adjunct faculty, unintentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty in relation to financial satisfaction?

### **Hypotheses**

The current study hypothesized the following:

1. It was hypothesized that intentional adjunct faculty and full-time faculty will have no significant differences on levels of intangible and financial satisfaction when controlling for race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline.
2. It was hypothesized that unintentional adjunct faculty will have significantly different levels of intangible satisfaction and financial satisfaction in comparison to intentional adjunct and full-time faculty when controlling for race, age, gender, Carnegie classification, and academic discipline.

### **Significance of the Study**

The increasing numbers of adjunct faculty in higher education confirms the significance of the current study. Many institutions have constrained resources and can provide little to no support for adjunct faculty. With loyalty low and turnover high among adjunct faculty, four-year institutions will benefit from the current research. The current study sought to encourage higher education administrators to reevaluate and restructure their current support for adjunct faculty at their institutions. Moreover, disaggregating adjunct faculty into two groups allows deeper analysis of potential areas for hiring practices, search committees, and potential impacts on students. With higher education leaning more towards student outcomes-based funding, it is

important to understand the motivations and satisfaction of the primary group of educators who interact with students in classrooms.

### **Overview of the Methodology**

This quantitative, nonexperimental study was conducted to determine if there were any significant relations between intangible and financial job satisfaction among different groups of faculty, while controlling for covariates. The current study employed an *ex post facto* design using NSF data from the 2017 NSCG. There were two dependent variables: intangible satisfaction and financial satisfaction. There was one independent variable of faculty type with three levels: unintentional adjunct faculty, intentional adjunct faculty, and full-time faculty. Unintentional adjunct faculty are those who seek a full-time position. Intentional adjuncts do not want a full-time position and elect to be part-time. Full-time faculty refers to tenure-track or tenured faculty. The study also included five covariates: age, gender, race, Carnegie classification of each institution, and academic discipline. These five covariates were included to account for any possible influence they may have on intangible or financial satisfaction. Multiple assumptions were tested in order to conduct the one-way multivariate analysis of covariance. Initially some assumptions were violated, but adjustments were made to correct these violations and statistical analysis continued.

### **Summary of Major Findings**

The current study found intentional adjunct faculty have higher levels of intangible satisfaction when compared to unintentional adjunct faculty and full-time faculty. Although full-time faculty had the highest levels of financial satisfaction, intentional adjunct faculty levels of financial satisfaction were not significantly behind. Unintentional adjunct faculty had significantly different levels of intangible and financial satisfaction in comparison to full-time

faculty. Surprisingly, full-time faculty were found to have the lowest levels of intangible satisfaction, which slightly confirms findings from the literature that full-time faculty cannot enjoy the benefits or flexibility available to some part-time faculty appointments.

Slight differences in levels of satisfaction were found between faculty type and race on both measures of satisfaction, with Black intentional adjuncts being most satisfied. There were differences between faculty type and gender, where male full-time faculty were slightly more financially satisfied than male unintentional adjunct faculty; however, intentional adjunct faculty were more satisfied with the intangibles of their position than full-time faculty and unintentional adjunct faculty. Likewise, female full-time faculty were more financially satisfied than female unintentional adjunct faculty. Significant differences were found between faculty type and academic discipline, where intentional adjuncts were more satisfied than the other faculty types with the intangibles of their position regardless of academic discipline. No significant interactions were found between faculty type and Carnegie classification status.

### **Findings Related to Prior Research**

The results of this study support the idea that those adjunct faculty who elect to be part-time have greater flexibility than tenured, full-time faculty and are more satisfied than full-time faculty on levels of intangible satisfaction. These findings support Valadez and Anthony's (2001) report that adjuncts prefer higher wages, but they are motivated to stay by the opportunity to teach. Though differences in pay may be the number one distinguishing factor between full-time faculty and adjunct faculty, intentional adjunct and full-time faculty were similarly satisfied with intangible and financial satisfaction.

The current study mirrored the disaggregation of adjunct faculty into two groups following Maynard and Joseph's (2008) study with involuntary and voluntary part-timers, and



comparing them to full-time faculty. Intentional adjunct and full-time faculty had similar levels of both intangible and financial satisfaction, with unintentional adjuncts being the most dissatisfied faculty type. These results support prior research where those adjuncts who elect to be part-time (e.g., voluntary part-timers) have similar levels of satisfaction with full-time faculty, and where those adjuncts who want a full-time position (e.g., involuntary part-timers) are the least satisfied in their positions (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). The opportunity for advancement, which was central to their research, was included in the intangible satisfaction measure, and was found to be highest among intentional adjuncts, which confirms findings from their study. Further, unintentional adjuncts were also found to have the lowest levels of intangible and financial satisfaction, echoing Maynard and Joseph's (2008) finding that involuntary part-timers were most dissatisfied with their opportunity for advancement, compensation, and job wages.

It is important for adjunct faculty to feel and be recognized by their colleagues, department, and institution (Eagan Jr. et al., 2015). The current study supports Eagan Jr. et al.'s (2015) finding through the intangible satisfaction measure, which includes level of responsibility and contribution to society, and are both loose adaptations of recognition. Intentional adjunct faculty were the most satisfied faculty type, which aligns with Eagan Jr. et al.'s (2015) finding that voluntary part-timers found their relationships among the administration and campus the most positive.

Previous research has found that most adjuncts want a full-time position, and those who use their adjunct position as their primary source of income are 132% more likely to want a full-time position than those who have another source of primary income (Ott & Dippold, 2018). The current study confirms Ott and Dippold's (2018) research, as intentional adjunct faculty's levels of financial satisfaction were statistically significantly higher than that of unintentional

adjunct faculty. This finding also supports the idea that different types of adjunct faculty have different motivations which contribute to their job satisfaction. Ott and Dippold's (2018) research also found faculty in the Health-related fields (e.g., Medical) do not prefer full-time positions, which affirms findings from the current study of a stark drop off for all faculty for intangible satisfaction in the Applied Sciences. This may be related to the constraints of their primary positions in their respective health-related fields, which limits their time and dedication to teaching responsibilities.

**Herzberg's (1968) Motivation-Hygiene Theory.** The current study utilized Herzberg's (1968) Motivation-Hygiene Theory as a conceptual framework, where motivators are factors that promote job satisfaction, and hygiene factors are those characteristics of a job that promote job dissatisfaction. The conceptual framework served as a basis for organization and interpretation of the study findings. Motivators and hygiene factors work in combination to create a work environment that promotes job satisfaction as a whole (Herzberg, 1968). The intangible satisfaction measure included only motivators: opportunities for advancement, intellectual challenge, degree of independence, job location, level of responsibility, and contribution to society. These six motivators were most important to intentional adjunct faculty, who were most satisfied with the intangible aspects of their positions. The financial satisfaction measure included hygiene factors: job salary, job benefits, and job security. These factors, which are generally outside of employee control, were most important to full-time faculty, who were most satisfied financially. Utilizing this lens of motivators and hygiene factors provided evidence there are distinct factors that work together to promote overall adjunct faculty job satisfaction.

Prior research utilizing this theory in relation to adjunct faculty job satisfaction solely focused on adjuncts perception of satisfaction in comparison to full-time faculty (Gullickson,

2011). Findings from the current study indicated that despite the hygiene factors intangible satisfaction measured, the measure did not particularly promote job dissatisfaction. However, the current study only measured these hygiene factors on the basis of job satisfaction and not job dissatisfaction. Regardless, the current study benefited from the lens of Herzberg's (1968) Motivation-Hygiene Theory because it provided additional support for the distinct factors that contribute to adjunct faculty job satisfaction.

### **Unanticipated Findings**

Surprisingly, full-time faculty were not the most satisfied faculty type on both measures of satisfaction. Because full-time faculty are the highest paid of the three faculty types, their numbers on financial satisfaction were expected to be significantly higher than that of both unintentional and intentional adjunct faculty. The expectation was that because full-time faculty are the highest paid of the three, they would be more satisfied than both intentional and unintentional adjunct faculty. It is possible the flexibility of an adjunct position carries more freedom than that of a tenure-track or tenured position.

The current findings did not support Feldman and Turnley's (2001) research that early career adjuncts were more concerned with opportunity for advancement. Results show a trend where older intentional adjuncts were more satisfied than younger adjuncts. The current study also contradicts the idea that late career adjuncts were more positive about their positions because they were no longer as concerned with low pay or opportunity for advancement (Feldman & Turnley, 2001). Intentional adjuncts levels of intangible and financial satisfaction increased as the age groups increased, therefore, concern over low pay and the opportunity for advancement are still important factors for older adjuncts.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The first research question in this study focused on the relation between the three types of faculty and intangible satisfaction. The intangible satisfaction scale measured the opportunity for advancement, intellectual challenge, degree of independence, job location, level of responsibility, and contribution to society. In the current study, intentional adjunct and full-time faculty did not have statistically significant differences on either levels of intangible or financial satisfaction. It was hypothesized for intentional adjunct faculty and full-time faculty to have no significant differences on levels of either intangible or financial satisfaction. Therefore, results of the study indicate that intentional adjuncts are just as satisfied as full-time faculty in their positions, and unintentional adjuncts are the least satisfied with the intangibles of their position. This implies that the unique motivations between intentional and unintentional adjunct faculty significantly contributes to their levels of intangible satisfaction.

The second research question in this study focused on the relation between the three faculty types and financial satisfaction. Financial satisfaction measured job salary, job benefits, and job security. The current study found intentional adjunct and full-time faculty to be similarly financially satisfied. Further, unintentional adjunct faculty were statistically significantly less satisfied than intentional adjunct and full-time faculty. This indicates that the financial satisfaction for each faculty type is motivated by their salary, benefits, and security. Unintentional adjuncts and intentional adjuncts are assumed to have the same pay, so it appears their reasons for choosing a part-time position is the primary distinction between their different levels of financial satisfaction. Unintentional adjuncts in the current study might rely on their position as their primary source of income, whereas intentional adjuncts might have other more secure, sources of income. Moreover, full-time faculty had statistically significantly lower levels

of financial satisfaction than intentional adjunct faculty. Despite their tenure-track or tenured status, which signifies greater job security than unintentional or intentional adjuncts, they are still not the most satisfied financially.

The study covariates indicate that race, age, gender, Carnegie Classification, and academic discipline have somewhat of a significant bearing in relation to faculty on measures of intangible and financial satisfaction. However, the effect sizes of these main effects and interactions are low. Regardless, it is possible that race, age, gender, Carnegie Classification, and academic discipline moderate the relation between faculty type and intangible and financial satisfaction.

### **Implications for Practice**

This study has a number of implications for practice in higher education. First, the study indicated that intentional adjunct faculty, regardless of large differences in pay and benefits, are more satisfied than full-time faculty with the intangibles of their position. Further, intentional adjuncts were nearly just as satisfied as full-time faculty on levels of financial satisfaction. This suggests to higher education leaders and policymakers that wages, benefits, and job security may no longer be the only driving factors behind faculty job satisfaction. The flexibility of an adjunct position may outweigh the security of a tenure-track or tenured position, something that higher education administrators should consider more thoughtfully.

Second, the study examined that there are at least two different types of adjunct faculty, intentional and unintentional, each with different motivations which contribute to job satisfaction. This may influence higher education administrators' hiring decisions with adjunct faculty, considering that different types of adjunct faculty may be more satisfied than others, which in turn, may relate to the quality of their teaching and intent to stay. A number of research

studies either celebrate (Bettinger & Long, 2010; Green, 2007; Kezar, 2013) or denounce the effect adjunct faculty have on higher education, particularly on student outcomes (Landrum, 2009; Umbach, 2007). It is important for administrators to be aware of the intentions of adjunct faculty upon hire. In this way, transparency will create a strong foundation on which future communication between administrators and adjunct faculty can rely. It is crucial for adjunct faculty to clearly outline their intentions and expectations of their position, and for administrators and those on the hiring committee to do the same. These small steps may be instrumental to improve the current structure and hiring practices of adjunct faculty in higher education.

The results of the current study should encourage scholars on adjunct faculty and adjunct faculty job satisfaction to rethink tenure-track or tenured faculty as the primary standard on which to compare adjunct faculty. The results indicated full-time faculty were not the most satisfied group of educators, prompting more research on faculty job satisfaction to shift towards the growing numbers of adjunct faculty. To that end, the distinction between unintentional and intentional adjunct faculty in the current study also suggests that adjunct faculty should no longer be analyzed as one group. There are different types of adjunct faculty beyond that of the two examined in this study. Gappa and Leslie's (1993) taxonomy of four categories of adjunct faculty (e.g., career-enders; specialists, experts, and professionals; aspiring academics; and freelancers) provides evidence that there are myriad ways to examine types of adjunct faculty. It is possible there could be a combination between unintentional and intentional adjunct faculty and Gappa and Leslie's (1993) four categories of adjunct faculty for higher education leaders, administrators, and scholars to consider. In particular, specialists, experts, and professionals are defined as those adjunct faculty with full-time work elsewhere, which aligns closely to that of intentional adjunct faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Unintentional adjunct faculty closely align

with aspiring academics, who are defined as those adjuncts likely pursuing a full-time position (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). It is possible there are more ways to examine adjunct faculty beyond the two faculty types presented in this study and Gappa and Leslie's (1993) four categories. Adjunct faculty enter academia for many reasons, reasons that are necessary for higher education leaders and policymakers to newly consider.

Further, the current study speaks to the growing Gig Academy, where adjunct faculty burnout is high and loyalty is low (Kezar, DePaola, & Scott, 2019). However, the current study also provides evidence that adjuncts who elect to be part-time are more satisfied in their positions than adjuncts who want a full-time position. This finding supports the idea that because specific types of adjunct faculty are just as satisfied as full-time faculty, this offers higher education leaders and administrators one way to possibly combat the current direction of the Gig Academy. The Gig Academy is hurting the structure and development of faculty in higher education, and ultimately hurting educational quality and student outcomes (Kezar, DePaola, & Scott, 2019). If the needs of adjuncts, specifically adjuncts who want to be adjuncts, are met by their position, it could have positive effects on adjunct faculty workforce development, and student outcomes.

Prior research has found different types of adjunct faculty may have different expectations of the workplace (Ott & Dippold, 2018), indicating that hiring committees should take this research into consideration when completing searches for part-time positions. If adjunct faculty are anticipating more support in the form of campus resources, which hiring committees and the institution will not or cannot provide, it should be stated from the start. Adjunct faculty work is generally undervalued at their institutions, especially beyond that of providing expertise in the classroom or being hired as a cost-effective measure by administrators. Greater

communication and transparency between adjunct faculty and hiring committees can help improve adjunct faculty job satisfaction, and the overall improvement and treatment of adjunct faculty in higher education.

Higher education professionals can also use the results of this study to reevaluate the intangible aspects of an adjunct faculty position that contribute to overall job satisfaction. The intangible satisfaction scale measured the opportunity for advancement, intellectual challenge, degree of independence, job location, level of responsibility, and contribution to society. These are aspects of any job that should be considered by both the hiring coordinator and prospective employee. Job location is one aspect that is in the adjunct's control; however, the remaining aspects cannot be directly attributed to the position without a few days or weeks on the job. It is here that higher education leaders and administrators can further investigate the not-so-routine aspects of creating position descriptions that will match adjunct faculty expectations and intentions. The disparate relationships and interactions between adjunct faculty and leaders in higher education has persisted for too long. To that end, both adjunct faculty and higher education leaders can be better prepared for the integral role adjunct faculty play in student outcomes, departments, and institutions as a whole.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Several recommendations for future study should be considered. Future research on adjunct faculty job satisfaction can use findings from Levin and Hernandez's (2014) research on the different forms of agency in combination with those from the current study. In this way, research can further extrapolate some of the nuances found within the intangible and financial satisfaction measures in relation to themes of agency. Similarly, Hoyt's (2012) research on the combination of faculty loyalty and turnover should be considered when investigating adjunct



faculty job satisfaction, as the current study did not measure loyalty specifically and could only infer from the context of two measures of satisfaction.

The distinction between unintentional and intentional adjunct faculty further supports the idea that work preferences may contribute to both organizational commitment and job satisfaction. This study only briefly attributed organizational commitment as related factors to job satisfaction. Future studies, which disaggregate adjunct faculty, can examine facets of adjunct faculty job satisfaction within the context of Meyer and Allen's (1991) Organizational Commitment Theory. In turn, disaggregated adjunct faculty job satisfaction within the theory of organizational commitment, may be compared to full-time faculty job satisfaction.

This study was limited to a publicly available NSF data set that focused on recent graduates in STEM. Future research could benefit by using the NSF's Survey of Doctorate Recipients, which focuses exclusively on recent doctorate recipients. Because those with a doctorate may be more likely to pursue faculty positions, the differences between unintentional adjunct, intentional adjunct, and full-time faculty may be more pronounced than the current study. Similarly, future research could also use survey methods instead of *ex post facto* data to examine these same types of faculty and measures of job satisfaction.

A replication of this study, but with a more comprehensive Carnegie classification status, beyond private or public status, could provide additional insight in the context of intangible and financial satisfaction. With this information, it may be possible for the research or teaching motivations of the institution to be compared with faculty type, and moreover, satisfaction. Further, the current study was limited to the five covariates included in the one-way multivariate analysis, and it is possible that a number of covariates beyond those included could influence intangible or financial satisfaction. To that end, follow-up qualitative research could be used to

bolster the results of the current study, explore more of the nuances of factors related to job satisfaction.

Finally, future studies should expand upon the two measures of job satisfaction, beyond that of intangible or financial job satisfaction. It is possible that the overall satisfaction measure could be divided into more types of satisfaction or to examine satisfaction in the context of adjunct faculty's intent to stay. Because the numbers and types of adjunct faculty in higher education continue to grow and change, it is important for measures of job satisfaction to reflect this change accordingly.

### **Conclusion**

Adjunct faculty are critical voices in higher education, and this study offers higher education administrators the opportunity to reconsider the conditions in which adjunct faculty work. It is essential for leaders and administrators in higher education to recognize the negative future of the Gig Academy if the current policies and conditions for adjunct faculty do not change. Despite the mixed literature on the benefit or harm of adjunct faculty on student outcomes and institutions as a whole, it is important for higher education to acknowledge adjunct faculty's presence. Beyond the economical motivations for hire, adjunct faculty offer higher education the option of providing courses rich with academic rigor and practical expertise. Adjunct faculty are playing a more significant role in higher education and this study suggests ways that administrators and scholars on adjunct faculty job satisfaction should deeply consider. Full-time faculty were not the most satisfied, in regard to aspects like the opportunity for advancement, level of responsibility, and intellectual challenge. Intentional adjunct faculty were just as satisfied as full-time faculty and were more satisfied with the intangibles of their position than full-time faculty. It is important to consider what motivates adjunct faculty job satisfaction,

especially with different types of adjunct faculty. Further, unintentional adjunct faculty may not be the most appropriate types of adjuncts to hire considering their needs may not be met. The flexibility of a part-time position may come with greater benefits than that of a tenure-track or tenured position. However, it is important for leaders and administrators in academia to seriously consider the direction of the Gig Academy and the current state of resources for adjunct faculty. Ongoing research should inform future examination of adjunct faculty job satisfaction and how higher education can restructure to reduce adjunct faculty turnover, increase retention, and provide a quality education for students.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A – Recreation of Survey Questions Related to Job Satisfaction from the 2017

#### National Survey of College Graduates

A28. Thinking about your principal job held during the week of February 1, please rate your satisfaction with that job's...

*Mark one answer for each item.*

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
1 Salary	1	2	3	4
2 Benefits	1	2	3	4
3 Job security	1	2	3	4
4 Job location	1	2	3	4
5 Opportunities for advancement	1	2	3	4
6 Intellectual challenge	1	2	3	4
7 Level of responsibility	1	2	3	4
8 Degree of independence	1	2	3	4
9 Contribution to society	1	2	3	4

A29. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the principal job you held during the week of February 1, 2017?

*Mark one answer.*

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Somewhat satisfied
- 3 Somewhat dissatisfied
- 4 Very dissatisfied

## Appendix B – Exempt Letter from the Human Subjects Review Committee



### OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH



#### Physical Address

4111 Monarch Way, Suite 203  
Norfolk, Virginia 23508

#### Mailing Address

Office of Research  
1 Old Dominion University  
Norfolk, Virginia 23529  
Phone(757) 683-3460  
Fax(757) 683-5902

DATE: September 23, 2019

TO: Mitchell Williams

FROM: Old Dominion University Education Human Subjects Review Committee

PROJECT TITLE: [1492933-1] Adjunct Faculty Job Satisfaction: Intangible and Financial Factors Affecting the Academic Majority

REFERENCE #:

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: September 23, 2019

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 4

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Old Dominion University Education Human Subjects Review Committee has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Chezan at (757) 683-7055 or lchezan@odu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Old Dominion University Education Human Subjects Review Committee's records.

**Appendix C – Breakdown of Job Category or Field of Study by Academic Discipline**

Table 7

*Breakdown of Job Category or Field of Study by Academic Discipline*

Academic Discipline		Detailed Breakdown of Job Category or Field of Study		
Soft Sciences	Humanities	Lawyers, judges Historians	History	Foreign Language English Art, Drama, and Music
	Social Sciences	Other teachers and instructors Social Workers Counselors Clergy and other religious workers Other Postsecondary Fields Physical Education Education	Teachers – Other precollegiate area Teachers – Special education – primary and secondary Teachers – Secondary – other subjects Teachers – Elementary Teachers – Pre- kindergarten and kindergarten Education administrators	Teachers – Secondary – Social sciences Other Social Sciences Sociology Psychology Political Science Economics Other social scientists Sociologists Anthropologists Psychologists, including clinical Political scientists Economists
	Human Resources/ Administrative/ Marketing	Librarians, archivists, curators Other administrative Secretaries, receptionists, typists Accounting clerks and bookkeepers	Other marketing and sales occupations Sales – retail Sales – Commodities except retail Insurance, securities, real estate, and business services Other management related occupations	Personnel, training, and labor relations specialists Accountants, auditors, and other financial specialists Other mid-level managers Top-level managers, execs, admins Writers, editors, PR specialists, artists, entertainers, broadcasters

Table 7 (continued)

Soft Sciences	Other Service-Related	Other occupations Transportation and material moving occupations	Precision production occupations Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	Construction and extraction occupations Other service occupations, except health Protective services Food preparation and service
Hard Sciences	Natural Sciences	Farmers, Foresters and Fishermen Technologists and technicians in the physical sciences Technologists and technicians in the biological life sciences Natural sciences managers Physics Earth, Environmental, and Marine Science	Chemistry Other physical scientists Physicists, except biophysicists Astronomers Oceanographers Geologists, including earth scientists	Atmospheric and space scientists Chemists, except biochemists Other Natural Sciences Biological Sciences Agriculture Forestry and conservation scientists Other biological and life scientists Medical scientists Biological scientists Biochemists and biophysicists Agricultural and food scientists
	Formal Sciences	Actuaries Technologists and technicians in the mathematical sciences Computer programmers Teachers – Secondary – computer, math or sciences	Computer Science Other mathematical scientists Statisticians Operations research analysts, including modeling	Computer engineers- software Other computer information science occupations Web developers Software developers – applications and systems software

Table 7 (continued)

Hard Sciences	Formal Sciences	Computer and information systems managers Mathematics & Science	Mathematicians Computer network architects, Computer information scientists, research	Network and computer systems administrators Information security analysts Database administrators Computer system analysts Computer support specialists
	Applied Sciences	Business Commerce and Marketing Architects Surveyors, cartographers, photogrammetrists Other engineering technologists and technicians Surveying and mapping technicians Drafting occupations, including computer drafting Electrical, electronic, industrial, and mechanical technicians Medical and health services managers Engineering managers	Health and Related Sciences Postsecondary Teachers – Health and Related Sciences Other health occupations Health technologists and technicians RNs, pharmacists, dieticians, therapists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners Diagnosing treating practitioners Engineering Other engineers	Sales engineers Petroleum engineers Nuclear engineers Mining and geological engineers Materials and metallurgical engineers Marine engineers and naval architects Environmental engineers Bioengineers or biomedical engineers Agricultural engineers Mechanical engineers Industrial engineers Electrical and electronics engineers Computer engineer – hardware Civil, including architectural sanitary engineers Chemical engineers Aeronautical aerospace astronautical engineers



## Appendix D – Descriptives and Breakdown of Dependent Variables

Table 8

Descriptives and Breakdown of Dependent Variables

Variable	Total Sample ( <i>n</i> )		%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Intangible Satisfaction	3,674	Opportunity for advancement		-	-	
		Very Satisfied (995)	24.6			
		Somewhat Satisfied (1,570)	42.7			
		Somewhat Dissatisfied (830)	22.6			
		Very Dissatisfied (369)	10.0			
		Intellectual Challenge			-	-
		Very Satisfied (2,256)	61.4			
		Somewhat Satisfied (1,081)	29.4			
		Somewhat Dissatisfied (288)	7.8			
		Very Dissatisfied (49)	1.3			
		Degree of Independence			-	-
		Very Satisfied (2,567)	69.9			
		Somewhat Satisfied (920)	25.0			
		Somewhat Dissatisfied (158)	4.3			
		Very Dissatisfied (29)	0.8			
		Job Location			-	-
		Very Satisfied (2,116)	57.6			
		Somewhat Satisfied (1,137)	30.9			
		Somewhat Dissatisfied (326)	8.9			
		Very Dissatisfied (95)	2.6			
Level of Responsibility			-	-		
Very Satisfied (2,043)	55.6					
Somewhat Satisfied (1,327)	36.1					
Somewhat Dissatisfied (266)	7.2					
Very Dissatisfied (38)	1.0					
Contribution to Society			-	-		
Very Satisfied (2,271)	61.8					
Somewhat Satisfied (1,205)	32.8					
Somewhat Dissatisfied (176)	4.8					
Very Dissatisfied (22)	0.6					

Table 8 (continued)

Financial Satisfaction	3,674	Job Benefits	-	-
		Very Satisfied (1,558)	42.4	
		Somewhat Satisfied (1,522)	41.4	
		Somewhat Dissatisfied (405)	11.0	
		Very Dissatisfied (189)	5.1	
		Job Salary	-	-
		Very Satisfied (717)	19.5	
		Somewhat Satisfied (1,807)	49.2	
		Somewhat Dissatisfied (832)	22.6	
		Very Dissatisfied (318)	8.7	
		Job Security		
		Very Satisfied (1,798)	48.9	
		Somewhat Satisfied (1,311)	35.7	
		Somewhat Dissatisfied (368)	10.0	
		Very Dissatisfied (197)	5.4	

## VITA

### COURTNEY JANE O. BELMONTE

Old Dominion University, Darden College of Education & Professional Studies, Educational Foundations and Leadership, 4301 Hampton Boulevard, Norfolk, VA 23529

#### EDUCATION

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<b>Doctor of Philosophy in Education, Higher Education</b> Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA	<b>May 2020</b>
<b>Master of Professional Studies in Clinical Psychological Science</b> University of Maryland, College Park, MD	<b>December 2015</b>
<b>Bachelor of Science in Psychology, <i>Cum Laude</i></b> Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA	<b>May 2014</b>

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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<b>Market Research Assistant</b> xspierient   Segmedica	August 2019 – Present
<b>Doctoral Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant</b> Old Dominion University	May 2017 – Present
<b>Adjunct Faculty in Psychology</b> Christopher Newport University	August 2016 – December 2018

#### SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- 
- Belmonte, C.J.O. (2019, March). *Intangible and financial satisfaction among full-time and adjunct faculty*. Poster presented at Graduate Research Achievement Day 2019, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.
- Belmonte, C.J.O. (2018, November). *Intangible and financial satisfaction among full-time and adjunct faculty*. Poster presented at the Darden College of Education's Graduate Research Colloquium, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.
- Belmonte, C.J.O. (2017, November). *Evaluating adjunct faculty*. Paper presented at the Darden College of Education's Graduate Research Colloquium, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.
- Belmonte, C.J.O. & Wartella, J.E. (2014, February). *Using the life story to promote identity formation and career decision-making in an undergraduate population*. Poster presented at the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of The Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.
- Belmonte, C.J.O., & Wartella, J.E. (April, 2013). *Using the life story to promote identity formation and career decision-making in an undergraduate population*. Poster presented at the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Annual Poster Symposium, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA.