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RECENT TRENDS IN FACULTY GOVERNANCE AND ITS OVERALL IMPACT ON WORK LIFE, JOB SATISFACTION AND FACULTY RETENTION

ABSTRACT: Recent decades show an emerging trend of shortened job duration by those who serve in leadership positions within the university or college campus setting. Current research indicates that the relationship between university faculty and administrators is a subject that would benefit from further investigation. This study attempts to illuminate and understand perceptions about this relationship of five different faculty members, each from the same department within a land grant university, located in the northwest region of the United States. To do this a descriptive methodological approach is employed that allowed the researchers to examine and reveal the perceptions, insights, and opinions of the participants. By discerning and evaluating the elements that contribute to a positive collegial work environment through an interview process results of this research will be used to inform those who have a vested interest in faculty-administrator relationships. It will provide a guide to follow when setting out to establish and implement policy and procedures that may be used to improve professional culture and climate within the respective schools or departments. It makes fiscal sense for those in leadership roles to work diligently toward retaining and sustaining highly trained professionals and minimize both faculty and administrative turnover within the university setting.

Keywords: descriptive methodological, faculty governance, shared governance.

Introduction

Traditionally the world of higher education has embraced the notion of shared governance and it has been this notion or philosophy that has been embraced for many years by both faculty and administration alike. Shared governance is a set of practices under which college administrators, faculty and staff participate in a significant percentage of the decision making processes together (Olson, 2009). According to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) (2015), it ensures that all college and university employees regardless of their rank and tenure have a guaranteed voice in the decision-making process, as well as allowing faculty members the opportunity to play a role in shaping policy which may lie in areas of their expertise. In theory, this broad participation in the decision-making process is designed to increase the level of employee investment in the institutions success however, according to Miller, McCormick and Pope (2000) an institutions capacity to involve faculty and other constituencies in governance and administration has proven to be both creative and problematic. From the standpoint of an administrator, the extra time needed for decision making- as well as the methods for involvement often prove cumbersome for closure and consensus (Miller, et. al., 2000). Alternatively, administrators and faculty alike find comfort, power and effectiveness in the sharing of decision-making on issues of major concern. Typically, the institutional benefits of involving faculty in the governance process include greater personal investment by faculty and which far outweigh the problematic issues. However, because of the relationships and time commitment required for successful shared

governance coupled with a common trend where higher education administrators are serving shorter and shorter terms in office so too has effectiveness of shared governance and the morale of faculty.

For the past several years' colleges and universities around the country have witnessed the morale of faculty and likelihood of those faculty members sticking around for extended portions of their careers in higher education decrease.   To top things off the process of shared governance has become a mile wide and an inch deep with everyone possessing their own interpretation of what exactly shared governance is.   When this is the case, participants can become frustrated and walk away from the commitment to do the hard work of good governance (Bahls, 2014). This is of great concern for those who study campus culture and climate because it suggests that the integrity of the key educational and research functions that faculty and staff perform on a day-to-day basis is threatened and in a world where the trends pressuring many colleges and universities are so numerous, our schools now more than ever require unprecedented cooperation and collaboration between faculty and leadership.

It is entirely possible that one of the main contributing factors to this decline in broad participation in the decision-making process or shared governance and the low morale and retention rates of faculty is that for the past several decades' college campuses across the nation have been witnessing a drastic decrease in the length of tenure of those who serve in leadership roles. To compound the situation, we have also seen a shift in leadership trends where faculty members are being bombarded with increased workloads, restrictive tenure standards, pressures to incorporate new technologies in their teaching strategies and the overall demoralization from top-level assertions of power.

Purpose and Research Questions

This study used a social constructivist lens to uncover or explain the most pressing and sentiments held by faculty members on college campuses. The goal of this research is to have the findings help inform the work of those associated with the curriculum development of higher education administration programs. It aimed to identify and understand the key elements that ensure a healthy faculty relationship with administrators.

By discerning and evaluating the elements that contribute to a positive collegial work environment through the interview process, results of this research will be used to further inform those who have a vested interest in faculty-administrator relationships. It will provide a guide to follow when setting out to establish and implement policy and procedures that may be used to improve professional culture and climate within the respective schools or departments.

Review of Literature

In the past faculty involvement in governance has been known to cause a great deal of stress and anxiety for both faculty and school leaders alike (Miller, McCormick & Pope, 2000). However, despite this discomfort in shared governance or authority, it still has the potential to greatly add to the effectiveness, productivity, and quality of academic programs and operations within an institution. It is for this reason faculty participation in the governance process has been viewed as essential to effective administration. This effectiveness is dependent upon several factors, including the administrative leadership styles of those who have the ability to involve faculty, the culture of the institution which may or may not solicit or encourage faculty participation, the beliefs and values of trustees and those serving on governing boards which relate to the sharing of authority by administrators and the legal interpretation set forth by the university concerning the legal decisions (Miller, et. al., 2000).

To glean a clearer understanding of these phenomenon researchers have set out to examine the academic faculty career through varied academic career check points. To do this they have investigated academic career stages (pre-tenure vs. tenure academic positions), female faculty, and faculty members of color perceptions of the workplace, and the socialization process in relation to workplace relationships from distinct, as well traditional perspectives (Ponjuan, Martin-Conley, & Trower, 2011; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). For example, Seifert and Umback (2008) examined assistant professors who were female and faculty of color; Baldwin, Luceford, and Vanderlinden (2005) studied the middle years of faculty life; and Conley (2005) studied later-career faculty.

In one notable longitudinal study of faculty conducted by Olsen and Crawford (1998) examined the career stage differences of a single cohort of pre-tenure faculty in their first, third and fifth years on the tenure track at a large public research university. They found that high levels of work stress during the early stages of (i.e. first year) could be attributed to lower levels of job satisfaction at the end of their fifth year. In a landmark study of American

academics by Menges (1999), Menges identified the common themes in new faculty lives as stress, time, socialization and evaluation. Menges (1999) found that it is not uncommon for new faculty members to experience significant stress in adjusting to the demands of their new positions. In fact, many individuals reported spending inordinate amounts of time preparing, leaving little time to pursue expected research agendas (Murray, 2008). Depending on the supports provided by the institution, and factors such as the effectiveness of their chair, new faculty may feel a sense of isolation in their new role (Sorcinella, 2000).

In addition to the harshness of academe on new faculty, researchers have also documented the underrepresentation of women in academe and have shown that women, in particular, experience the academic career differently than their male counterparts (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Seifert & Umbach, 2008). Marschke, Laursen, Nielsen, and Dunn-Rankin (2007) documented the "daunting" effects of "demographic inertia" and concluded that real change will not occur unless research institutions "endorse simultaneously policies and practices that ensure gender equality in recruitment, hiring, retention, and retirement" (p. 20). Tower and Bleak (2004) found that as female faculty members joined an academic department, intergroup hostility and conflict increased between men and women, which lead to an increased likelihood of female faculty turnover and as a result female faculty members had a much lower satisfaction with their institutional workplace. For example, Bronstein and Farnsworth (1998) found that female pre-tenure faculty were less likely than males to experience appreciation and support from colleagues, more likely to experience negative behavior from colleagues or administrators, and face demoralizing behavior during the tenure process. August and Waltman (2004) asserted that the tenure process may be "an important component of satisfaction and attrition, especially for junior faculty women" (p.178). Similarly, Marschke, Laursen, Nielsen, and Dunn-Rankin (2007) argued that current institutional policies and strategies fail to address "concerns thought to affect women disproportionately: new ways to balance work and home lives; adjustment to flexibility of the tenure process" (p. 21).

Researchers have also investigated how faculty of color also face similar frustrations in the workplace. Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin (2000) found that pre-tenured faculty described their work as isolating and competitive, and the lack of a sense of community with peers was a primary concern. There seems to be a much greater likelihood of attrition for faculty of color compared to Caucasian faculty (Rosser, 2004). Some studies have found that these attrition rates are often associated with a challenging departmental climate, sense of isolation from their peers and all the extra duties because of their minority status that faculty of color tend to experience when compared to their colleagues (Culotta, 1993; Rosser, 2004). To further compound the issue there is an over flow of highly qualified people out there looking for faculty positions and very few of those are of African-American decent or minority backgrounds, so "unless diversity is explicitly considered in the hiring process, it is very unlikely that a minority will even be chosen for a position" (Culotta, 1993).

Johnsrud and Heck (1998) tested a conceptual model of faculty work life and assessed its generalizability by comparing possible differences in the model across three groups of probationary faculty members at a major research university. Based on their work, they proposed and tested three broad areas of concern to faculty work life: the attack on the professional priorities, their lack of confidence in their institutions to support and protect their personal and professional interests, and the erosion of their quality of life (Rosser, 2004). Johnsrud and Heck (1998) contended that benchmarks for faculty work life could be used in monitoring changes for the purpose of improving the climate and culture of the institution.

Then in Johnsrud and Rosser (2002) conducted another study. This time the study was a system wide study on faculty members from ten different college campuses. In their study they proposed and tested a multilevel structural equation model (SEM) on the quality of faculty work life encompassing professional priorities and rewards, administrative relationships and support, and the quality of benefits and services. The purpose of their study was to ascertain the impact of faculty work life and morale on intent to leave and determine whether the impact is a function of individual or institutional perceptions. The results indicated that the perceptions of faculty members concerning their own work life had a direct and powerful impact on their morale and subsequently their intentions to leave both the individual and group or institutional level (Rosser, 2004). What they eventually found was that there was little of no direct effect of demographic and work life variables on faculty members' intentions to leave. Therefore, the quality of faculty members' work life affects their level of morale, and in turn, morale effects their intentions to leave their position or career (Rosser, 2004).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

According to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Higher Education (2015) there are six basic principles of shared governance. These six basic principles are 1) faculty and staff set academic standards and curriculum; 2) faculty and professional staff require academic freedom; 3) faculty and professional staff should have primacy in decisions on academic personnel status; 4) participation in shared governance should be expanded; 5) unions, representative assemblies and faculty senates all can have significant roles in shared governance; 6) accrediting universities should support fully the concept of shared governance in their standards. In this particular study the conceptual lens focuses on the perceptions and feelings of the individual faculty members being interviewed and emphasizes through accurately transcribed transcripts from recorded interviews on the perceptions and observations of faculty concerning faculty governance in institutions of higher education. By exploring the subjects' reactions, observations and perceptions through the descriptive study this investigation is able to uncover shared patterns of beliefs, and perceptions and further explore and test whether or not some of the six basic principles the AFT Higher Education put out are perceived as being more significant to the success of faculty governance in institutions of higher education.

Methodology

This study builds on the work life-morale-intentions concept by employing a descriptive methodological approach to illuminate and examine faculty members' perceptions, insights and opinions concerning the effects of campus and departmental governance and how both can affect faculty retention, morale, and overall job satisfaction. To do this five different faculty members, from a single department within a land grant university, located in the northwest region of the United States were obtained through a semi-structured interview process and then analyzed. This semi-structured interview process allowed the researcher the flexibility to ask more specific and probing questions of the interviewee as well as allowing for a more natural flow of conversation to take place during the interview process (Savin-Baden & Howell-Major, 2013; Creswell, 2007). By having the ability to interview (using the same set of questions) five different individuals who have somewhat shared or similar experiences or perspectives the researcher was able to describe the true essence of the experience or phenomenon.

To select the five participants/interviewees the researcher sent out an initial email to all faculty members within a single department of a college campus which is located in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. Once initial contact had been made by the researcher the first five faculty members who responded and agreed to be interviewed (signed and returned the informed consent letter) were the individuals who were selected as the five participants.

Since the primary researcher did not live in the same geographical area as the interviewees all interviews took place over the phone. Interviewees had to sign and submit their informed consent documents via a digital PDF document prior to the interview process.

Once initial introductions were made the interview began and typically lasted somewhere between twenty and thirty minutes. During the interview process all interviews were recorded using a recorder app on the interviewer's iPhone and the following questions were asked of each participant:

1. What is your current position with the university?

2. What do you see as the most common factor(s) which cause faculty members to seek out employment elsewhere?

3. Do you believe that trust is an important aspect in the relationship between faculty and administration? Why, please explain your rationale?

4. What are some key things you feel could be used to build trust between faculty and administration?

5. Outside of salaries, what do you view as key factors which help a university retain faculty members?

6. Describe your ideal workplace and institutional fit? Is there anything I did not ask and you feel I should have?

7. Do you have any questions for me?

Once the interviews were complete the interviewer then was able to take the recordings and use them to transcribe the interviewees responses into a word document. After the transcription process was completed the transcriptions were given back to the interviewee for a quick review and approval before data analysis could begin. Once the transcripts were read and approved by the interviewee the researcher assigned each participant with a pseudonym, created a demographic table which ordered the participants in order of when the interviews were conducted (first being the earliest interviews and last being the latest interviews conducted). The pseudonyms were randomly assigned with consideration given to the genders of the participants only. Both disciplines and academic ranks were generalized in an attempt to further protect the participants and their identities.

After all that was completed then the researcher was able to begin analyzing the data. To analyze the data collected during the interviews the researcher looked for reoccurring themes which required the researcher to read and reread the text in search of common themes shared between interviewees. The hope was that once the common themes or perceptions of faculty members had been identified the data collected from the research could be used to inform the work of those associated with the curriculum development of higher education administration programs and eventually be used to improve higher education governance.

Participants

Participant one: Sam Matson

Sam Matson is an idealistic Caucasian male who graduated from prestigious schools such as Brown and Stanford. In addition, he has published more than 200 articles, interviews, and reviews and is the author, editor, or co-editor of 22 books.

He dreams of a world where barriers between colleagues are shattered and fluidity exists between and within departments. Where academics are not constrained by institutional structures but supported whenever and wherever possible by those structures. He would like to remove the proprietary sense of turf within intellectual disciplines, in individual departments, and to some extent across colleges.

His ideal work place is a place where there may be certain structures and boundaries but where these boundaries are porous enough so that people can easily move back and forth and collaborate with colleagues whose backgrounds may be different from their own.

Participant Two: Helen Martin

Helen Martin is a pragmatic Caucasian female who currently serves as an associate professor and has published several books. She has had lucrative positions at numerous institutions of higher education and loves the role she serves in her current position. Her ideal workplace is a place where professional and academic freedom are a cultural norm and she would/is able to teach and write what she wants.

Participant Three: Jon Halvorson

Jon Halvorson is an associate professor who spends about 50% of his time on administrative duties for his department. He has spent his career having his work published in numerous forms of print.

Jon Halvorson is happy with his current work place and said that his ideal work place would look pretty much like it does right now. He has great colleagues, a comfortable office, a supportive dean and he gets to spend his time doing meaningful work.

Participant Four: Annie Schmidt

Annie Schmidt is a Caucasian female who immigrated to the United States from Europe. She has taught in her field of expertise at varying levels for over 12 years and has several publications in journals. She is also part of an editorial board, where she has also been published.

Annie's ideal workplace would be a combination of several factors. These factors include but are not limited to, geographical area, salary, expectations for tenure, and expected work load.

Participant Five: Tim McGraw

Tim McGraw is a native to the state in which he currently lives and works. He has been a professor for over twenty years and during that time has produced some amazing contributions to his art form.

Tim's ideal work place would be one where there is autonomy within the department, with shared resources and information in a more open and inclusive way.

Demographic Information

Of the five faculty members interviewed four were classified as tenured full professors and three of those had varying degrees of department/administration responsibilities while the fifth interviewee was classified as an assistant professor. Three males and two females were interviewed. All participants in this study had served four or more years as faculty in their various departments and have focused their studies in the humanities at the Universities main campus.

Table 1: Demographic Summary Table

	Name (pseudonym)	Gender	Discipline	Academic Rank	Served at the Institution 4 years or more
1.	Sam Matson	Male	Humanities	Full Professor	Yes
2.	Helen Martin	Female	Humanities	Associate Professor	Yes
3.	Jon Halvorson	Male	Humanities	Associate Professor	Yes
4.	Annie Schmidt	Female	Humanities	Assistant Professor	Yes
5.	Tim McGraw	Male	Arts	Full Professor	Yes

Order: Participants are listed in order of when the interviews were conducted, first being the earliest interviews and last being the latest interviews conducted.

P**seudonyms:** Pseudonyms were randomly assigned with consideration of genders only.

Gender: for the purpose of this research the gender of each participant was unchanged.

Discipline and Academic Ranks: Both disciplines and academic ranks have been generalized in an attempt to further protect the participants and their identities.

For this particular project faculty from the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences were interviewed. These were the first five participants to accept the invitation to be interviewed.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The questions and interview process were designed to allow the research to obtain detailed unscripted responses. These responses were useful for describing the issues being explored and provided an understanding and description of people's personal experiences of phenomena (i.e., the emic or insider's viewpoint) while allowing the data that was collected to be collected in a more naturalistic setting which was especially responsive to the stakeholders' needs. In addition, because of the structure of the interview process the researcher was able to be responsive to

changes that occurred during the conduct of the interview process and was able to shift the focus or add in additional impromptu questions when appropriate.

However, the fact that there is a chance that the knowledge being produced in this particular study may or may not generalize to other people or institutions (i.e., findings might be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study) may be seen by some as a limitation of this study.

Findings

There is some suggestion in the literature that institutions of higher education have been moving to what the business community sees as a new, "more efficient" way of administering our institutions and, because an ever-growing number of board members and administrators with this mindset have reached positions of responsibility on campus, a direct assault is being launched on the practice of shared governance in higher education (American Federation of Teachers, 2015). The faculty members interviewed for the purpose of this study disagreed completely with the arguments of "big business" and politics which deem changes in higher education governance to be "necessary" changes to make the process a more streamline or efficient way of administering our institutions. Those who were interviewed believed that all college and university employees are the very people who keep the educational enterprise going— and therefore they should always have a guaranteed a voice in decision-making process, as well as a role in shaping policy in the areas of their expertise.

According to the five faculty members interviewed there are many possible explanations for why a faculty member might be unsatisfied with his/her current working conditions and eventually choose to move from one institution to another. Some of these reasons included but were not limited to:

1. Geography and quality of life
2. Low morale and frustration with their department or the institution as a whole
3. Better philosophical/professional fit
4. Salaries and Benefits

After reviewing the participant's responses to the interview questions five major themes emerged. These themes included; the need to be heard; the need for authentic informal communication; the need to minimize unnecessary busy work; the need for consultation and respect in the sense of shared purpose; and, the need to minimize the Human Resources (HR) bureaucracy.

Theme One - The need to be heard

The theme of "being heard" emerged primarily from the question: "*What do you believe is an important aspect that fosters trust between faculty and administration?*" and suggests that more authentic informal direct contact between non-administrative faculty and the higher levels of administration would go a long way to fostering trust between both parties. For example, Sam Matson stated

> There is often no direct contact between non-administrative faculty and the higher levels of administration while the contact with senior administration is sort of filtered through the department chairs and the deans. So, one way that faculty members often come to have crossed into fear of the administration is by witnessing the development of policies that understand the stresses and needs the faculty members typically experience. Which may be directly related to how faculty members do their work.

While he also stated that an ability to create situations for real human communication rather than public presentations was crucial to enhancing genuine communication between both parties. In doing so Sam felt that when these opportunities are created the faculty tends to gain a sense that administrators are genuinely listening to them.

From the interviews conducted it was made very clear that there needs to be strong levels of trust between the faculty and administration and this trust can be formed as a result of clear and open communication from both parties which will inevitably lead to a willingness on the part of the faculty leaders to trust the top executives to consult them and the willingness of the president and the provost to seek out council and bring important actions before the senate (Jon Halvorson). To do this affectively administrators must have the ability to reach out and forge meaningful relationships as well as the ability of faculty leaders to assert their primacy on issues where the faculty constitution gives the faculty primary responsibility. Therefore, good administrators tend to be viewed by the faculty as being approachable and this can be achieved by keeping it on a more peer-to-peer level rather than top-down model;

having a willingness to consult faculty leaders before making decisions that affect them; having the ability to hear opinions and ideas and have honest discussions about them.

Theme Two – The need for authentic, informal communication.

Another common theme was the need for more authentic, informal occasion for communication. While Annie Schmidt felt that administrators "needed to be viewed by the faculty as being approachable and of course willing to get to know the faculty on a more personal level." She felt that this went both ways. While Sam Matson clearly articulated the point that "barriers must be broken down" and the overall consensus within the group being interviewed was that "once a group of people gets into a big public meeting of one kind or another, it becomes more difficult for people to speak in candid and thoughtful ways" (Sam Matson). The tendency is, the more public the meeting forum the more canned the questions and the responses become and there becomes less opportunity for genuine creative thinking. Therefore, it is advisable for administrators to schedule smaller departmental meetings in terms of getting the president and or provost out to department level meetings, where there can be more intimate and meaningful interaction and conversation.

Another recommendation brought by up in the interview process was the need for semi private committee meeting/impromptu meetings which according to Sam Matson "have been found to produce some of the richest moments for communication because they are somewhat private, they are informal and creative and a lot of work tends to get accomplished while at the same time a sense of trust and teamwork is often established from these meetings." He also felt that if similar situations are created at various levels throughout the institution, the faculty members will get the sense that the senior leaders of the institution are paying attention to who the faculty members are, they will learn each other's names, ask them questions about what they do and how things are going. Administration will seem as though they are genuinely interested in what people are thinking, feeling, and doing.

Theme Three – the need to minimize unnecessary busy work.

The faculty members interviewed for the sake of this research overwhelmingly all agreed that there was a need to minimize unnecessary busy work. For instance, Jon Halvorson mentioned the frustrations he had with regards to the "red tape" necessary for even the simplest financial and administrative procedures. Dealing with the Human Relations (HR) department to get reimbursed for travel or go through the process of hiring part-time or adjunct faculty. Something which he claimed used to take little time and can now takes weeks to accomplish. In addition, several interviewees also reported an increase in the number of meetings they had to attend on a regular basis and how they felt those meetings were superfluous and detracted from their work and claimed that these a large number of these meetings or trainings tended to be useless if not misleading. To support these sentiments Sam Matson was noted as saying:

> Think of it this way, it is how we choose our paths in life by having a passion for some types of activities and ways of spending our time and thinking. College professors'/university faculty tend to be self-starters, they are driven they do not just have a desire to have a job and a paycheck but find their drive from a sense of purpose/calling. University faculty members believe that they have a special skill in a particular field or they have selected a field that is important to the world and they want to devote their energy to thriving in that area of activity and it would likely drive people away from an institution if they end up getting caught up in activities that did not originally draw them into the profession in the first place or do not align with their own set of passions or interests which are likely to be in the classroom, their research, and the programs they find exciting and meaningful. The more people are drawn away from what their passion is the more likely it is that you will encourage them to consider other institutions as viable career options.

It is ideal to allow the faculty to maximize their time doing what it is that they really love to do because an ability to be doing what they love to be doing will ultimately keep them satisfied. So, according to Helen Martin "it is important for administrators to always take into consideration how many meetings he/she is scheduling." To be an affective administrator one must carefully calculate how many faculty meetings they need to organize, and to spread those meetings out in a very mindful way throughout the semester (Helen Martin). The main goal of an administrator should be to allow people as much time as possible to focus on their own research and teaching. If an administrator over schedules meetings drain peoples' energy ends up getting drained and distracted from what they prefer to be doing. Universities are filled with "well-trained people who are kind of idealistic well-meaning people

and it is not a good idea for an administrator to not take advantage, in a good way, of the support that they can receive from their administrative colleagues as well as the faculty themselves" (Sam Matson).

Theme Four – the need for consultation and respect in the sense of shared purpose.

The need for consultation and respect in the sense of shared purpose has been noted as a reoccurring theme. Helen Martin said "There needs to be a sense of shared governance, a sense that okay you can in fact run your own department and we will not intervene until you ask us to. Where the administration has a great deal of respect for the faculty body and with that respect comes the understanding that you do not have to teach four courses and still turn out three books or two articles per year."

To those who were interviewed, respect meant there is an understanding that the teaching takes place where and when it does but that you cannot "expect blood from a stone" (Helen Martin) and by that they meant "administration cannot expect one to publish regularly if teaching is their true passion" (Helen Martin) they must be able to identify faculty strengths and find innovative ways to capitalize on those strengths (Jon Halvorson).

Discussions

After reviewing the interviewee's responses and comparing those responses to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Higher Education six basic principles of shared governance it was evident from their responses that the participants attributed some of the principles to job satisfaction more than others. For instance, the several of the interviewees clearly articulated the desire for the ability of faculty and staff to; set any academic standards and curriculum; and, have their academic freedom. One interviewee even made direct mention of the important role of the board/faculty senates.

Implications for Policy and Practice

If the administration appears to understand the needs of the faculty members and supports those needs with supportive policies, there tends to be more trust on the part of the faculty members. However, if the policies set in place do not appear to support the faculty and staff then there tends to be less trust on the part of the faculty. As a result, the development of policies that seem supportive and attentive to the needs of the faculty members fosters a sense of trust and also a kind of openness to the idea of better communication from other areas within the institution from the faculty up to the administration. The data collected in this particular study suggest administration at all levels would see positive results with regards to faculty retention and overall job satisfaction if they consider the following when creating and implementing policy:

1. make sure that the institutions strategic plan or institutional policies are clearly communicated and that supporting documents such as the budget align with the suggested practices for shared governance set forth in the strategic plan. For instance, this means that theymust ensure that the appropriate funds have been allocated for the maintenance of existing institutional resources as well as the creation of new resources.
2. support the board and faculty by encouraging a more open forum or platform from which policies and school wide initiatives can be created and implemented.
3. make a conscious effort to be seen as accessible not only to top administrators at elite events but to also have a physical presence around campus and in which will make him or her seem more approachable and help build a sense of loyalty and trust.

The sense that administrators at every level genuinely listen to faculty members seems to be very important. It is for this reason administrators at all levels need to be accessible when faculty want to come and speak to the administrators. To do this there needs to be avenues not just for top down communication but from the grass roots level up to the administrative level.

Conclusions

Institutions of higher education (Colleges and Universities) started out as communities and departments are communities. It is essential we find innovative ways to continually enhance that and strive to build a stronger sense of community. One of the ways administrators can promote this strong sense of community within their department

or institution is by trying to be as democratic as possible. This does not mean completely giving up control but rather encouraging conversation and then taking the time to really listen to faculty. Administration must listen with an open-mind to what their colleagues have to suggest. This means having consultation and respect in the sense of shared purpose. A sense of shared governance, a sense that okay you can in fact run your own department and we will not intervene until you ask us to.

To do this affectively an administrator must proceed with their work of university governance with a combination of confidence and humility. To have a clear understanding of the institution in which they work and have confidence in any decisions they make. Their main goal should be to support your colleagues while at the same time have enough humility to listen to other people's ideas, receive feedback and be willing to have a certain amount of flexibility built into their approach. Barriers need to be broken down to create a workplace where people can be free to explore issues that excite them and the institutional structures support rather than constrain their efforts.

The findings of this study reflect and in some parts mirror the findings and themes revealed in many previous studies. It extends the types of themes in breadth and scope found in university settings throughout the country and encourages future research in the dynamics surrounding faculty governance and institution culture concerning faculty morale.

AFFILIATIONS

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