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**SEEKING EXTERNAL FUNDING: EXPERIENCES OF SELECTED FULL-TIME
FACULTY AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY**

by

Lacey T. Murphy

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Services and Leadership
College of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirement

For the degree of
Master of Arts in Higher Education

at

Rowan University

June 30, 2018

Thesis Advisor: Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

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Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to my family, friends and colleagues who have always encouraged and never stopped supporting me. Thank you for always believing in me when I did not believe in myself.

Acknowledgments

This thesis could not have been completed without my family, friends and colleagues. I thank you for always being there to cheer me on.

To my family, thank you for always pushing me to do things I thought I could never accomplish. To my parents, I would not be where I am today if it were not for every one of you encouraging me and supporting me and pushing me to do my best. To my friends, and to my colleagues at Rowan University, thank you for all the support, laughs, and knowledge you have provided through my journey.

Last but not least, I would like to sincerely thank my husband, Michael. Thank you for always helping me and providing me with positive words of encouragement and believing in me. Also, to our newborn son, Michael, this is for you. Your daily smiles have encouraged me to never give up, as I want to be the best role model that I can be for you.

Abstract

Lacey T. Murphy

SEEKING EXTERNAL FUNDING: EXPERIENCES OF SELECTED FULL-TIME
FACULTY AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY

2018-2019

Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

Master of Arts in Higher Education

The purpose of this study was to analyze the obstacles and motivators that tenured and tenure-track faculty members at Rowan University's, Glassboro, New Jersey campus face while seeking and securing external funding. The surveys were distributed to all 433 tenured and tenure-track faculty members on Rowan University, Glassboro's campus. Of the subjects, 273 faculty members that are tenured, and 160 who are tenure-track. The results of the study conclude that Rowan University faculty members feel as though their heavy workload is a hindrance on their ability to seek and secure grant funding. Secondly, survey results indicate that Rowan University faculty members are motivated to seek external funding to build their professional career and finally, the results conclude that faculty members seek external funding to secure funds for financial support for travel, equipment, materials and supplies, and receiving financial support for student workers or other staff are extremely important motivators.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Sponsored research grants, also referred to as external funding in higher education institutions, are becoming more popular due to declining budgets and budget cuts. Faculty members, commonly referred to as principal investigators (PI's) at research institutions, are expected to seek research opportunities, and schools that are not research institutions seek sponsored research projects to provide funding for their research. Considering institutions are seeing their budgets decreasing, many faculty are feeling the pressure to secure grant funding. It is important to understand that obtaining sponsored research grants is not just about securing money from sponsors, it is about performing research and discovering innovative technologies and new knowledge. Much is required in order to obtain sponsored research grants, and this thesis focuses on the experiences that tenured and tenure-track faculty members at Rowan University encounter while trying to secure external funding opportunities, as well as the obstacles and motivators faculty experience after they have secured external funding.

Statement of the Problem

This research study provides helpful information to gain a better understanding of the experiences that faculty members report in pursuing external funding. Not only does the study look at what motivates faculty members to seek grant funding, but it also looks at the obstacles that may deter faculty members from seeking external funding. The data collected can be studied and reviewed so that grant seekers and recipients as well as research administrators have a better

understanding of the experiences that faculty members encounter. Research on this topic indicates that there are obstacles, as well as motivators when seeking and administering sponsored programs. The main motivator for seeking grant funding is for professional development. According to Zhang (2014), motivators are intrinsic to the faculty members' careers. The motivators are closely linked to job content such as desire for achievement, sense of responsibility, performance recognition, job potential, job significance, and personal growth. Knowing that some faculty members seek external funding for performance recognition, job potential, or other reasons is a good example that faculty members do not seek external funding for extra dollars; they do it because this research is meaningful to them.

It is also important for the university to understand what the obstacles that faculty members can experience while seeking and obtaining sponsored projects. Some obstacles that deter faculty members from seeking grant funding are lack of time, heavy work load, little or no assistance from colleagues or other staff members, and even uncertainty of how to administer a grant once awarded. This research helps the university have a better understanding of what faculty members experience. By knowing what faculty members experience, it allows the university to better assist faculty members while obtaining grant funding and throughout the course of their sponsored project. Having a better understanding of and being able to assist the faculty members with their sponsored projects can lead to more successful projects that helps secure any future funding.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to better understand and document the experiences of tenured and tenure-track faculty members in seeking grant funding. Moreover, the study sought to identify any obstacles faculty members encounter during this process. The findings of this research can help the campus in gaining a better understanding as to what challenges faculty may have while seeking or administering sponsored projects. By having this research at hand and having a better understanding of what faculty members face while pursuing external funding, it can better help bridge the gap between the university and the faculty member.

Significance of the Problem

The success of securing grant funding and having successful grants depends on having a clear understanding as to what faculty members experience throughout the entire grant process. By gaining this knowledge, the university will be able to make any alterations to the grant funding process. Whether it be providing more support for when the faculty member receives an award, or the process of seeking an award. This study is significant because it can help improve the grant process between faculty members and the university. If the university understands the obstacles faculty members face, then both the faculty members and the university can find ways to work together to make the experience more cohesive. Also, it is good for grant administrators to know what motivates the faculty member to seek grants, so they can better help assist the faculty member throughout the process. The more research administrators and faculty members understand each other's job, the more cohesive the outcome can be.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study was completed at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey and was limited to all full-time tenured or tenure track faculty. This study assumes that the faculty members who participated in the survey answered all questions truthfully. This study also assumes that all faculty members are interested in the grant process and have an understanding of the grant process itself and how it impacts their tenure status.

Limitations of this research study are as follows: the small contingent of faculty members who participated in the survey, and that faculty members were drawn from only one research institution, where research is a requirement for faculty members. Also, there is the potential for researcher bias as I work in an office devoted to the grant submission and monitoring.

Operational Definitions

1. **External Funding:** Specified funds that are restricted to the purposes identified in a formal and legally-binding, written agreement between an institution and the funder. These funds are obtained outside the institution from sources such as federal, state, or local governments; business; private foundations; or individuals. The funds are used to support programs or projects geared toward research or scholarly activity, instruction, training, public service, academic support, student services, institutional support, scholarships and fellowships, and other services (Chval & Nossaman, 2014).
2. **Extrinsic Motivation:** Behavior that is driven by factors that are outside of a person or external to the person such as rewards of money, fame, recognition, and praise (Cherry, 2015).

3. Faculty Member: Refers to Rowan University faculty at the rank of assistant, associate, and full-time professor who were tenured or on a tenure-track line during the 2017-2018 academic year.
4. Financial Rewards: Summer stipends, bonus pay, raises in pay, indirect costs, and supplemental compensation (Backes-Gellner & Schlinghoff, 2008).
5. Grant Administrator: Member working in the Office of Sponsored Programs at Rowan University with responsibility of assisting in the administration of grants.
6. Intrinsic Motivation: The internal desire to achieve or obtain new knowledge or a challenge that is driven by internal interest or enjoyment (Oudeyer & Kaplan, 2007).
7. Motivator: A motivator is what inspires and drives a principal investigator to seek grant funding.
8. Obstacle: An obstacle is what deters principal investigators from seeking sponsored programs.
9. Principal Investigators (PI's): A principal investigator is the individual who assumes full responsibility for a research project, including the supervision of any co-investigators, research assistants, house staff and students. ("Who may be," 2018).
10. Tenure: Having a tenure status means that one has an indefinite appointment that can be terminated only for cause or under extraordinary circumstances such as financial exigency and program discontinuation.

11. Tenure Track: An appointment at Rowan University for a probationary period that may not exceed 6 years of time for developing a substantial record in teaching, research, and service.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What do selected tenured and tenure-track faculty at Rowan University report about their experience in seeking grants or external funding?
2. What are the motivators that selected Rowan faculty have that prompt them to seek and securing external funding?
3. What are some obstacles that selected Rowan faculty encounter while seeking external funding?

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of selected faculty members experiences at Rowan University while seeking external grant funding. The goal of this study was to evaluate the motivators and obstacles that the faculty members face in order to have a better understanding of the grants process and to also help bridge the gap between the faculty members and grant administrators.

Chapter II presents a review of literature critical to the study. This section includes the background and history of sponsored research, obstacles when trying to obtain grant funding, motivators and incentives of seeking sponsored research as well as how grants can be made more accessible and other studies relevant to this research.

Chapter III describes the study methodology and procedures. The chapter

includes: the context of the study, population and sample size, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, and description of how the data were analyzed.

Chapter IV presents the findings from the study, and Chapter V summarizes the study, discusses the major findings, and offers recommendations and conclusions for practice and further research.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Introduction

Sponsored research grants, also referred to as an external source of funding are becoming more popular in higher educational settings. Often, institutions pursue external funding due to budgetary reasons, such as a declining budget within their institution. Rowan University in particular, has expectations for their faculty members to seek sponsored research projects due to it becoming New Jersey's second designated research institution. When external funding is secured, it provides the funds for their faculty members, also referred to as principal investigators (PIs) to conduct vital research which fund their research activities that they would not have been able to do using their institutions funds. When seeking external funding, not all grants are awarded. The more grants applied for the better chance there is in securing funding. There is much work that is required to obtain the external funding source, and once that external funding source is secured, there is much work that is required to maintain the funding. This review focuses on the experiences of selected faculty members in seeking grant funding. Of particular interest is the motivators and obstacles faculty report in seeking external awards. Prior research on the topic suggests that there are more obstacles than motivators that come with obtaining external funding and by having a better understanding, everyone can work together to make the grant funding experience more beneficial and successful for all.

Hanover Research (2014) published a report considering successful practices for initiating and maintaining a culture of research focusing in particular on practices in divisions without strong research traditions such as professional schools. According to

the study, institutions wishing to develop a culture of research must allocate significant resources for faculty training and support. A developing culture of research requires open and collaborative personal relationships among faculty members. A culture of research may take years to develop and once established requires regular maintenance (Hanover 2014).

Cheetham (2007) notes that a culture of research provides a supportive context in which research is uniformly expected, discussed, produced, and valued. Faculty at major research institutions have traditionally been expected to maintain scholarly activities including conducting research and publishing scholarly works. It has become obvious in recent decades that faculty at comprehensive and “teaching” universities have also come under pressure to research and publish (Blackburn, Bieber, & Lawrence, 1991).

Research that has been conducted has two opposing views on sponsored research. One side shows the importance of why obtaining external funding is important, which is so faculty members can become more successful and move ahead in their careers. The other view has been shown that seeking and securing external funding comes with much additional stress, which is why some faculty members can view this as a daunting challenge. This research study sought to provide more answers that may help address the challenges faculty members experience while seeking and securing external funding.

Background and History

The majority of research that has been performed on sponsored research shows that the process can be challenging. The time that goes into obtaining grant funding and performing the research presents many challenges.

Today, more and more public higher education institutions are receiving less funding from their states. With less money from the state, public higher education institutions are now relying on external funds to support their research activities. When looking at fiscal years 2000-2012, state funding for higher education has declined, and federal funding grew. Revenue per full-time equivalent (FTE) student from federal sources that were going to public, nonprofit, and for-profit institutions grew by 32%, while the state revenue fell by 37% (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2015). Not only do budget cuts encourage faculty members to seek external funding, but faculty members who teach at research institutions are required to seek and secure external funding in order to achieve tenure status and promotion. Moreover, with rapidly escalating budgets, due at least in part to the rising costs of technology, even private institutions have seen the need to significantly expand their sponsored research activity.

Obstacles to Obtaining Grant Funding

According to Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, and Staples (2005) there are certain characteristics found in institutions with high faculty research productivity. One characteristic is recruitment and selection. Schools must recruit and hire faculty who have the training, goals, and commitment towards conducting research. Another important characteristic is proper resources. Members must have access to sufficient resources such as funding, facilities, and research assistants. One of the obstacles that Bland mentions is that some faculty members lack motivation. One way to increase motivation is to implement institution wide recognition of research excellence for developing a culture of research. An institutions faculty awards and discussion of faculty successes can serve as important extrinsic motivation for educators. Xu (2008) suggests

three successful strategies for faculty recognition in research. One is publishing in a journal to highlight the successes of faculty researchers. The next suggestion is to circulate e-mails and newsletters around the university with faculty publishing their successes. Finally, Xu suggests creating faculty awards in recognition of achievements in research.

A common obstacle reported by faculty members is the lack of time to complete their research requirements while also teaching a full class load. Fairweather (2005) found that “for most faculty members generating high numbers of student contact hours diminishes publication rates and vice versa” (p. 44). Along with time, faculty in research universities also cite a lack in pay increase for a reason they are less motivated to become involved in research. Institutions seeking to ensure faculty put a balanced effort into teaching and research must establish criteria for pay increases, promotions, and other advancement that reflect this balance (Fairweather, 2005).

One of the issues with decreasing faculty class loads is taking away available resources to support teaching. Young and Price, (2009) indicate that shifts in resource allocation from teaching to research initiatives may have detrimental long-term effects on institutions with important teaching missions, such as comprehensive universities.

The lack of available money for research has also declined. According to a 2007 National Science Foundation survey, the trend of declining federal funds for research is unprecedented in the 34 years NSF has collected this type of data in their annual survey (Britt, 2008). Another negative aspect in the lack of available federal research funds is that this also hinders a university’s ability to attract and retain world-class research faculty members that often are awarded multi-million-dollar grants to conduct research in

their areas of expertise. The increasing complexity of sponsored research awards in combination with the trend of decreasing state appropriations due to economic factors also has a negative effect upon a university or college to conduct research (Watt & Higerd, 2007; Wimsatt, Trice, & Langley, 2009). The growing complexity associated with sponsored research awards adds a significant financial burden to the academic institution to support sponsored research activity.

Other trends such as increase in compliance costs, an increase in collaboration with other institutions resulting in numerous sub awards, and the cost of electronic research administration (ERA) affect the research colleges and universities engaged in sponsored research activities (California State University – Chico 2010).

University budget cuts have become a problem for research universities. According to Hoffmann (2009) from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, budget cuts within an academic department involved in research are offset by decreasing financial resources to undergraduate education such as “faculty replacements and teaching assistants” (para. 1). To support graduate research assistants with salaries and tuition waivers, faculty members must submit grant applications in order to secure external sponsored research funds.

In 2005, the Faculty Standing Committee of the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) surveyed 6,081 research faculty members about their reactions regarding various research activities required to receive federal funds. The FDP study was the first significant attempt to acknowledge the importance of reactions from faculty members at the nation’s leading research universities and colleges (Wimsatt et al., 2009).

According to the responses from faculty members participating in the FDP survey the following opinions were expressed by the respondents:

Respondents reported that about 38% of their work weeks went toward federally funded grant projects. Of the time committed to federal research, 42% was devoted to pre- and post-award administrative activities – not to active research. The time devoted to administrative tasks was divided almost equally between pre-award (writing/submitting proposals and budgets, applying for approvals, developing protocols, drafting safety/security plans) and post-award tasks (purchasing supplies/equipment, supervising budgets, managing personnel, complying with regulations, monitoring safety/security plans, writing reports). Ninety-five percent of respondents reported that they could devote more time to active research if they had greater support with administrative tasks. In addition, 95% reported that at least some of the time they spent managing federal grants could be conducted by administrative personnel, and 76% were willing to reallocate direct costs to provide for research-required administrative support. On average, faculty believed that approximately 28% of their grants-management time could be handled by administrative personnel. (p. 77-78)

Dooley (1994) conducted research at Texas A&M University on their College of Education faculty participation in grant related activities and because of dwindling resources all academia must be involved in external activities. Dooley (1994), used the work of Burgoon who stated, “more than ever, with declining percentages of state budgets allocated to higher education, academics who wish to engage in first-class scholarly research are going to have to find ways to support themselves” (Dooley, p. 258). Dooley’s research also noted that due to the increasing pressure to secure external

funding, it exposed a deficiency in the ability to secure funds, which is mainly caused by the intimidation of the grant submission process. This intimidation comes from a lack of knowledge of the process of obtaining grants and the process of managing the grants once awarded.

Most of the research that has been conducted exposes major flaws in seeking and securing external funding. Since the early 1990s higher education has become an increasingly more stressful work environment. Trends in student enrollment, decreases in external funding, lack of career advancement opportunities, inadequate salaries, increases in pressure to conduct research, and heavy workloads all contributed to a rise in work stress (Webber, 2011). The major issue that is a common theme in the research is that securing external funding is imperative due to budget cuts, yet the process in securing those funds can be complex.

External funding may be a new territory for faculty members, and with it comes learning a new process of something they need to learn on top of their current workload. Having to learn the grant process, is a second job, and faculty members have stated that time is a big constraint. If faculty members are already participating in other activities outside of their normal workload, having to learn the grant process is a large responsibility that they may not have the time to undertake. Once the faculty members receive the external funding, it does not end there as they then need to run the grant program, follow the grant guidelines, and ensure they are being compliant with their grant procedures. Most of the research on this topic shows that external funding is more of an inconvenience than a benefit. The rewards do not seem worth the stress that comes with receiving grants, however, due to budget cuts and job expectations faculty members

are feeling the pressure to seek additional funding sources. According to Smith (2016), she notes that studies have reported that academic staff perceived their work as becoming increasingly stressful primarily due to heavy workloads and pressure to perform (Katsapis, 2012; Shambook & Cooper, 2007).

Another flaw that comes with seeking external funding, is that many faculty do not wish to seek grants. They are seeking external funding because they are pressured to and must do so for earn tenure, extra income, or other reasons such as funds for student workers, travel, or equipment. If they are not seeking external funding because they genuinely have an interest than their studies and dedication may not be the same as someone who was genuinely interested in the research. What the research does not show is how to make the grant process less intimidating for faculty members. If the grant process is made less intimidating, then possibly there would be more faculty members willing to seek external funding. Not only would they be more willing to seek external funding, but they would become more familiar with the process and it would become more enjoyable for them and less of a stressor. The faculty members would be able to dedicate more of their time on sponsored research and less time trying to navigate through the obstacles of how grant funding works.

Motivators and Incentives of Seeking Grants

Although there are obstacles that faculty encounter while seeking and securing sponsored research projects, there are also motivators and incentives. The motivators for seeking sponsored projects can be for one's career advancement, professional acknowledgment, and financial incentives. These motivators are the forces that drive

faculty members to secure sponsored research projects. However, it appears as though there are far more obstacles in seeking grant funding.

In Monahan's survey of New Jersey State college faculty (1992), he found that respondents had a variety of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators for engaging in grants activity. The most frequently reported motivator (61%) was recognition in college publications. Forty-four percent noted that release time to work on successful grants was a motivator, and 41% said consideration in tenure and promotion decisions was their motivator. Respondents in the survey desired more release time from teaching loads and wanted more recognition for their role as researchers.

Hanover Research (2014) looked at three research institutions that were successful in creating motivated and productive research cultures. The School of Nursing at Stony Brook University created a research program dedicated to increasing research activity and grant submission, securing grant funding, and establishing an institute for quality, safety, and team science (Stony Brook SON, 2010-2015).

Emory University's School of Medicine is a successful research medical school raking in the top quarter of the *United States News and World Report's* National Rankings. The school of medicine reported that their strengths in research included their ability to work in an extremely collaborative environment with multiple investigators that possess a high scientific impact (Emory Strategic Plan, 2012-2017). Emory University made notable recommendations to increase grant funding in any research institution. They suggested encouraging collaboration by providing grant money for projects with two investigators who have not worked together before. They recommended publicizing faculty research through a department website, and incentivizing grant pursuit by offering

matching funds. Their final suggestion included establishing extensive instructional technology (IT) support for research projects (Emory Strategic Plan, 2012-2017).

In addition, Hanover Research examined the School of Law at Indiana University – Bloomington. The Maurer School of Law at Indiana University – Bloomington ranks among the top 30 law schools in the nation. Part of the schools' goals state faculty will regularly publish original, creative, and important scholarship in prominent scholarly journals. The law school will build and maintain an intellectual community that supports innovative and important scholarship. The school will also encourage and support interdisciplinary and collaborative research and teaching with other universities. The school adjusts faculty compensation, as well as teaching and administrative demands, to reflect the importance of research production. They also developed research centers and sought external funding for research.

Self-Determination Motivation Theory

University faculty members have been found to have intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that encourage them to seek external funding. The Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), states that there are different types of motivation based on different reasons or goals that give rise to an action. The most basic distinction is between *intrinsic motivation*, which refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and *extrinsic motivation*, which refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome.

Intrinsic motivation reflects an individual's desire to accomplish something because it is enjoyable (Grant & Shin, 2011). An example of an intrinsic motivator can be that the faculty member is truly interested in the research and wants to further explore

and expand their knowledge base. They are seeking external funding for their own experience and enjoyment rather than doing what is expected of them. Whereas, an extrinsic motivator can be that a faculty member is doing the research to gain tenure, secure funding for student workers, laboratory supplies, and other financial rewards. Extrinsic motivators are pursued without the personal enjoyment that is associated with intrinsic motivation.

In Clark's 2003 study, (as cited in Smith, 2016) motivation initiates the cognitive ability that pushes an individual to use knowledge, experience, expertise, and skills and without it productivity is lessened. Also, motivation supports an individual's decisions to be persistent in achieving a goal even if challenges exist. As such, the level of mental effort exerted on a task can determine the quality and quantity of work performance or level of productivity. Additionally, Clark (2003) suggested that "successful performance always involves the cooperation of motivation and knowledge in supportive work environments" (p. 2).

Summary of the Literature Review

Many of the research studies that have been conducted on research grants over the years have produced similar findings. From a motivation perspective, faculty members wrestle with the risk vs. reward of the grant process. These faculty members have to make the decision if the time and focus that grant proposals require is worth risking other obligations like their heavy teacher loads. The extrinsic motivators that faculty members noted were the accolades in publications, better standing when it comes to tenure and promotions, and the ability to work on projects with no financial restraints. Intrinsically many of the respondents in the various surveys reported that they felt a sense of

accomplishment in securing a major grant for their institution. One way for faculty members to feel a sense of risk is to be acknowledged of their work, which is why Xu (2008) suggested that higher education institutions create a faculty awards in recognition of achievements in research.

While there are motivators for faculty members in obtaining grants, there may be downfalls in the grant process. Many of the respondents in prior studies felt that they had no real experience when it came to writing a grant proposal. As mentioned in Dooley's research, increasing pressure to secure external funding, exposed a deficiency in the ability to secure funds, which is mainly caused by the intimidation of the grant submission process. This intimidation comes from a lack of knowledge of the process of obtaining grants and the process of managing the grants once awarded. Some faculty members feel the pressure to secure grant funding mainly because it is a requirement of the institution, whereas if the faculty members were doing it because they intrinsically felt the need, there would possibly be more faculty members seeking grants.

The research that has been documented shows that the faculty experiences in seeking grants is not an easy task and it can be viewed as an intimidating process. Prior research conducted by Fairweather has discussed that seeking and managing external funding becomes an additional stress and a common obstacle. This is mainly caused by the lack of time faculty members have while trying to complete their research. Another experience that faculty members encounter is a lack of motivation in pursuing external funding. This lack of motivation could be linked to the stress that comes with university budget cuts, decreasing faculty sizes, and possibly the stress faculty members may experience while seeking and securing the external funding.

The literature review is clear that there are obstacles, and very little motivators, but what the literature does not explain is how can we make this a better experience for faculty members, so they do not view external funding as a daunting experience? How can the university and higher educational professionals make the grants process less stressful and more attractive? What this research aims to find out is what motivators and obstacles faculty members face when seeking and securing grant funding, and how a university can make the grant process less intimidating. The research is clear that time, heavy workloads, and lack of support is an issue but what can be done to fix that? Do grant administrators need to host seminars, do colleges need to be more aware of how involved and detailed grantsmanship is, and do more people need to be involved in the grants process? What can be done to make grants more appealing rather than more of a burden? Research has documented what the obstacles and motivators are, but what can be done to make the obstacles less and the motivators more? This research sought to help find the answer to the problem because now more than ever external funding is needed due to the dwindling budgets.

Chapter III

Methodology

Context of the Study

Rowan University is a state designated public research institution with campuses in Glassboro (main campus), Camden, and Stratford, New Jersey. Rowan University has a total of 3,633 employees. Of those employees, 1,598 are faculty members and 2,035 are staff-full time and permanent part-time. Rowan University has a student population of 16,155 students (13,169 undergraduates, 2,078 graduates, and 908 professionals). This study focused on Rowan University's Glassboro campus.

Rowan University was designated in 2013 as New Jersey's second comprehensive public research institution, with plans to increase sponsored research to \$100 million per year by 2023. The office has seen incredible growth, with an increase of 41% in external awards, 100% increase in total requests for funding and a 42% increase in the number of proposals submitted. During fiscal year 2016, the Office of Sponsored Programs at Rowan University along with The Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations within University Advancement received grant awards totaling \$28.2 million; of this \$28.2 million, \$14.5 million was for Rowan's main Glassboro campus. These awards include grants and contracts from government, industry, and private sources, and grant funding from individuals, corporations and foundations to support faculty scholarly and service activities. (Rowan University, 2016).

During fiscal year 2017, the Office of Sponsored Programs at Rowan University on all campuses received a total of \$33.7 million which is a 20% growth from fiscal year

2016. This also includes The Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations within University Advancement received an additional \$275k in grant funding from individuals, corporations and foundations to support faculty scholarly and service activities. In fiscal year 2017, Rowan University raised a total of \$33.7 million for sponsored programs and projects, which is an increase of 20% in funds received from last year. Of that \$33.7 million, Rowan University's main Glassboro campus in particular received slightly over \$14 million.

Population and Sample

The surveys were distributed to all 433 tenured and tenure-track faculty members on Rowan University, Glassboro's campus. Currently, there are 273 faculty members that are tenured, and 160 who are tenure-track. As previously mentioned, this study has been limited to only Rowan University faculty members as this research is focused specifically on Rowan University faculty members and the motivators and obstacles they face. The more that can be learned about what the faculty members encounter when seeking and obtaining grant funding at Rowan, then the more that Rowan University will be able to help through the grant process of seeking and obtaining grant funding.

Instrumentation

This research study was conducted by a survey administered via Qualtrics that consisted of items regarding experiences in pursuing grant funding. This survey came directly from Smith (2016) and other items were altered to obtain information regarding the obstacles that faculty members may face while seeking and securing grant funding. Permission was granted by Smith to use her instrumentation in conducting research for this study. Smith used this survey in her 2016 dissertation, which was titled, *Factors*

that Motivate Faculty to Pursue External Funding at a 4-Year Public Institution of Higher Education. The survey instrument consisted of three sections. Section one describes the subjects demographics, gender and their tenure status; section two is related to experiences with seeking grants, and section three focuses on the motivators and obstacles while pursuing grant funding. The last section, section three, focuses on the motivators and obstacles while pursuing grant funding are based on a Likert scale. The question regarding motivators has sixteen questions and the question regarding obstacles has fourteen questions. The value of the Likert scale includes: 1-Not at all important, 2-Slightly important, 3-Moderately Important, and 4-Very important 5-Extremely Important. The instrument was pilot tested to verify validity and reliability, and to get an estimate of the time it took to complete the survey.

Data Collection

Prior to data collection, an application was completed and approved from the Institutional Review Board at Rowan University (Appendix A). The subjects who received the survey were tenured and tenure-track faculty. Of those faculty members, 273 faculty members are tenured, and 160 are tenure-track during the Spring 2018 semester. The survey was administered through a mass email sent in April 2018. The email included an outreach letter, along with a direct link to the survey on Qualtrics, an online survey tool, along with consent through Qualtrics (Appendix B). Over the time period of two months, there were ten reminders sent to complete the survey. Additionally, permission was given to reproduce and slightly alter the survey (Appendix C).

Data Analysis

The surveys were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. After the survey was administered, the results of the questions related to the obstacles and motivators of grant funding were examined using descriptive statistics and frequency tables and charts.

Chapter IV

Findings

Profile of the Population

The target population for this study was tenured and tenure track-faculty at Rowan University's Glassboro, New Jersey main campus during the spring 2018 semester. In the spring 2018 semester, 273 faculty members were tenured, and 160 were tenure-track, for a total population of 433 faculty. Of the population selected, 168 of the population completed the survey yielding a 39% response rate, however only 151 of the survey subjects completed the entire survey, yielding a useable response rate of 35%. The respondents that did not complete the survey at 100% can be due to the fact that it was at the end of semester, faculty members felt as though the survey did not apply to them as they informed me that they had never applied for grant funding in their past or planned to in their future since their research did not require funding, or they began the survey and did not finish completing it for reasons unknown.

Table 4.1 displays the demographic information collected, of the 168 respondents, 85 (50.60%) were male and 83 (49.40%) were female. The participants were also asked about their faculty tenure status, the results showed that 64 (38.10%) were tenure-track, 104 (61.90%) were tenured.

Table 4.1

Demographics of Rowan University Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty (N=168)

Category	Sub-category	<i>f</i>	%
Gender	Male	85	50.60%
	Female	83	49.40%
Faculty Status	Tenure-Track	64	38.10%
	Tenured	104	61.90%

Table 4.2 displays information about grants submitted and awarded by the faculty during the past three years. When asked how many grants or contracts they have received within the previous three years, it was reported that, 68 (40.48%) have not received any awards, 65 (38.69%) have received fewer than three, and 35 (20.83%) have received three or more. When the subjects were asked how many grants or contracts they have applied for within the previous three years, it was reported that 32 (19.05%) applied for none, 65 (38.69%) applied for fewer than three, and 71 (42.26%) applied for three or more.

Table 4.2

Grant Submission and Awards of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

Category	Sub-category	<i>f</i>	%
How many grants or contracts have you received within the previous three years	None	68	40.48%
	Fewer than 3	65	38.69%
	3 or more	35	20.83%
How many grants or contracts have you applied for within the previous three years	None	32	19.05%
	Fewer than 3	65	38.69%
	3 or more	71	42.26%

Analysis of the Data

Research question 1. What do selected tenured and tenure-track faculty at Rowan University report about their experience in seeking grants or external funding?

From the analysis, the experiences that tenured and tenure-track faculty have is that they seek external funding in order to carry out their research objectives and the secure extra financial support. However, it was reported that because of their heavy teaching load it may deter them to seek grants or external funding. Of the surveyed participants, more than 40% reported that having the freedom to carry out their research objectives, receiving funds for travel, equipment, materials and supplies, and receiving financial support for student workers and other staff was an extremely important motivator in seeking grants and external funding. Finally, the biggest obstacle when seeking and securing grant funding is having a heavy teaching load, with over 40% of survey participants reported that as being a hindrance.

Research question 2. What are the motivators that selected Rowan faculty report that prompt them to seek and secure external funding?

Table 4.3 displays the information that the survey subjects reported as a motivator while pursuing external funding. The participants were asked 16 questions on a Likert scale regarding to what extent they view specific items as a motivator while pursuing external funding. Of the responses, the extremely important motivators that prompt them to seek external funding are as follows: 70 (46.36%) of the respondents reported that having the freedom to carry out their research objectives as an extremely important motivator; 63 (41.72%) reported that receiving financial support for travel, equipment, materials and supplies is an extremely important motivator, and finally, 61 (40.40%) reported that receiving financial support for student workers or other staff as an extremely important motivator that prompt them to seek and secure external funding. Lastly, 55 (36.42%) of the respondents reported that building their professional career as a researcher was an extremely important motivator in seeking grants, and 53 (35.10%) reported that increasing scholarly work and publications was an extremely important motivator.

Table 4.3

Faculty Response to what extent they view the following as a Motivator while pursuing External Funding

Statement	Not at all important		Slightly important		Moderately important		Very important		Extremely important	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
More flexibility in the allocation of my time	25	16.56	17	11.26	41	27.15	41	27.15	27	17.88
Reduced teaching load	20	13.25	20	13.25	36	23.84	31	20.53	44	29.14
Freedom of choice in research topics	8	5.3	13	8.61	24	15.89	59	39.07	47	31.13
Freedom in carrying out your research objectives	8	5.3	6	3.97	20	13.25	47	31.13	70	46.36
Advancing my career	9	5.96	15	9.93	27	17.88	44	29.14	56	37.09
Building my professional reputation as a capable researcher	8	5.3	7	4.64	35	23.18	46	30.46	55	36.42
Increasing my scholarly works or publications	7	4.64	5	3.31	35	23.18	51	33.77	53	35.10
Developing experience in obtaining grant funding	17	11.26	22	14.57	44	29.14	40	26.49	28	18.54
Assistance in grant proposal development	31	20.53	27	17.88	39	25.83	32	21.19	22	14.57

Table 4.3 (continued)

Statement	Not at all important		Slightly important		Moderately important		Very important		Extremely important	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Assistance in grant award management	29	19.21	26	17.22	44	29.14	30	19.87	22	14.57
Opportunities to participate in grant writing or development workshops	38	25.17	36	23.84	47	31.13	19	12.58	11	7.28
Opportunities to network or collaborate with other faculty internal and external to the university	17	11.26	19	12.58	39	25.83	55	36.42	21	13.91
Receiving financial support for summer salary	18	11.92	15	9.93	37	24.5	34	22.52	47	31.13
Receiving financial support for travel, equipment, or materials and supplies	10	6.62	9	5.96	23	15.23	46	30.46	63	41.72
Having a portion of indirect costs returned to me	21	13.91	26	17.22	34	22.52	37	24.5	33	21.85
Receiving financial support for student workers or other staff	11	7.28	8	5.3	28	18.54	43	28.48	61	40.40

Research question 3. What are some obstacles that selected Rowan faculty encounter while seeking external funding?

Table 4.4 displays the information which focuses on the obstacles while pursuing grant funding. The participants were asked fourteen questions on a Likert scale regarding to what extent they view specific items as an obstacle while pursuing external funding. From the analysis, the biggest obstacle that principal investigators encounter while seeking external funding is having a heavy teaching load. Of the survey participants, 67 (44.37%) reported their heavy work load as an extremely important obstacle, which is what prior research on this topic also has concluded.

Table 4.4

Faculty Response to what extent they view the following as an Obstacle while pursuing External Funding

Statement	Not at all important		Slightly important		Moderately important		Very important		Extremely important	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Less flexibility in the allocation of my time	16	10.60	24	15.89	32	21.19	45	29.8	34	22.52
Heavy teaching load	11	7.28	11	7.28	24	15.89	38	25.17	67	44.37
Finding research topics	55	35.1	36	23.82	34	22.52	16	10.60	12	7.95
Limitation in carrying out your research objectives	26	17.22	33	21.85	46	20.46	30	19.87	16	10.6
Lack of time for increasing my scholarly works or publications	6	3.97	16	10.6	32	21.19	49	32.45	48	31.79
Lack of experience in finding grant funding	37	24.5	26	17.22	45	29.8	22	14.57	21	13.91
Lack of assistance in grant proposal development	33	21.85	33	21.85	35	23.18	32	21.19	18	11.92
Lack of assistance in grant award management	38	25.17	36	23.84	35	23.18	22	14.57	20	13.25
Lack of opportunities to participate in grant writing or development workshops	52	34.44	38	25.17	40	26.48	12	7.95	9	5.96
Lack of opportunities to network or collaborate with other faculty internal and external to the university	42	27.81	37	24.50	44	29.14	17	11.26	11	7.28
Lack of receiving financial support for summer salary	40	26.49	34	22.52	38	25.17	23	15.23	16	10.60
Lack of receiving financial support for travel, equipment, or materials and supplies	19	12.58	33	21.85	34	22.52	35	3.18	30	19.87
Lack of having a portion of indirect costs returned to me	37	24.50	31	20.53	49	32.45	19	12.58	15	9.93
Lack of receiving financial support for student workers or other staff	21	13.91	27	17.88	42	27.81	36	23.84	25	16.56

Chapter V

Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary of the Study

This thesis examined the obstacles and motivators that Rowan University tenured and tenure-track faculty members experience while seeking and securing external funding. The purpose of this study was to better understand and document the experiences of tenured and tenure-track faculty members and identify any obstacles faculty members encounter during this process. The subjects of this study were Rowan University tenured and tenure-track faculty members on Rowan University's main Glassboro, New Jersey campus. The survey instrument (Appendix C) was used and altered with permission from Dr. Sharon D. Smith. This study was conducted during the spring semester of 2018. As a result of the outreach efforts, 151 completed 100% of the survey anonymously through Qualtrics, an online survey tool designed to collect survey data, yielding a 39% response rate.

Demographic questions and Likert scale items were analyzed using SPSS to find descriptive statistics (frequency of responses and percentages) data from the completed surveys. Version 24 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding of this research study has concluded that a majority (44.37%) faculty members at Rowan University feel as though do not have enough time to dedicate to seeking grant funding due to their heavy workload. This finding of having a heavy

workload was not an uncommon theme in the prior research that has been conducted on the topic. When reviewing the motivators, the respondents reported that having the freedom to carry out their research objectives, receiving financial support for travel, equipment, materials and supplies, and receiving financial support for student workers or other staff are extremely important motivators that prompt them to seek and secure external funding. Along with those motivators, respondents reported that building their professional career as a researcher and increasing scholarly work and publications were extremely important motivators.

When comparing this study with prior research that has been done on the topic, there is a common theme, which is a heavy workload. It has been determined that the faculty members do want to seek external funding but they are faced with obstacles that may deter them or make the task more difficult. Prior research has also determined that academic staff perceived their work as becoming increasingly stressful primarily due to heavy workloads and pressure to perform (Katsapis, 2012; Shambook & Cooper 2007). With the lack of time, stress, and heavy workload the faculty members' ability and drive to seek external funding may decrease. The findings in this study indicate that the experiences faculty members have at Rowan University are similar to other research institutions.

Conclusion

The data from this study suggest three conclusions. First, it can be concluded that, based on the findings of the study, that Rowan University faculty members feel as though their heavy workload is a hindrance on their ability to seek and secure grant funding. Based on these findings it is important for the faculty members and Rowan

University to explore ways to ease the workload for faculty members, so they can engage in external funding. Having support from research administrators as well as the University can help the faculty member when trying to obtain external funding. If faculty members need to seek external funding in order to obtain tenure, then there needs to be more assistance to make this goal more attainable.

Secondly, survey results indicate that Rowan University faculty members are motivated to seek external funding to build their professional career. They also reported that they seek external funding, so they can increase their scholarly work and publications, which is what prior research has also concluded on this topic. These findings conclude that Rowan University faculty members do want to seek external funding, however, because of their workload it may be more difficult for them to do so.

Finally, the results conclude that faculty members seek funding to secure funds for financial support for travel, equipment, materials and supplies, and receiving financial support for student workers or other staff are extremely important motivators. When funds are received with the external funds it allows the faculty member to hire staff and students. With the help from staff and students, the faculty member will have assistance with their research, which can potentially help decrease their heavy workload. These findings further the knowledge base regarding the obstacles and motivators that Rowan University faculty members have when seeking and securing external funding. This study provides evidence that the faculty members are motivated to seek external funding however, they are faced with obstacles due to the lack of time they have.

Recommendations for Practice

Based upon the findings and conclusions of the research conducted, the following suggestions are recommended:

1. Provide more assistance to faculty members in the grant seeking process.
2. Encourage faculty members to seek external funding by offering more incentives.
3. Help the faculty member find ways to decrease their workload so they can focus on external funding.
4. Have grant administrators conduct more trainings and seminars for faculty members and have required training for new faculty members regarding external funding.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based upon the findings and the conclusions, the following suggestions are presented.

1. Survey faculty members to determine the type of support they feel as though they need in order to seek and secure external funding.
2. Survey faculty members to determine what type of resources and support needed in order to help with their heavy workload.
3. Replicate study during the academic year to yield more survey results.
4. Reissue the survey during the academic year and have a survey question to determine what college the faculty members are a part of, and list open ended questions regarding their experiences while seeking grants funding and what can be done to ease the process

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Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Approval



** This is an auto-generated email. Please do not reply to this email message.
The originating e-mail account is not monitored.
If you have questions, please contact your local IRB office **

DHHS Federal Wide Assurance Identifier: FWA00007111
IRB Chair Person: Harriet Hartman
IRB Director: Sreekant Murthy
Effective Date:

eIRB Notice of Approval

STUDY PROFILE

Study ID: Pro2018002315
Title: Obstacles and Motivators of External Funding
Principal Investigator: Burton Sisco Study Coordinator: None
Co-Investigator(s): Lacey Murphy Other Study Staff: There are no items to display
Sponsor: Department Funded Approval Cycle: Not Applicable
Risk Determination: Minimal Risk Device Determination: Not Applicable
Review Type: Exempt Exempt Category: 2

CURRENT SUBMISSION STATUS

Submission Type: Research Protocol/Study Submission Status: Approved
Approval Date: 4/26/2018 Expiration Date:
Pregnancy Code: No Pregnant Women as Subjects Pediatric Code: No Children As Subjects Prisoner Code: No Prisoners As Subjects
Protocol: Survey Approval Alternate Consent Survey and Consent Protocol
Consent: There are no items to display
Recruitment Materials: There are no items to display

* Study Performance Sites:

Glassboro Campus 201 Mullica Hill Road, Glassboro 08028
There are no items to display

Appendix B

Recruitment Letter and Survey Instrument

Dear Faculty,

Hello! My name is Lacey Symons-Murphy and I am a graduate student and a Post-Award Analyst in the Office of Sponsored Programs at Rowan University. I am currently conducting a study on the experiences that faculty members encounter while pursuing external funding.

The survey would take approximately 5-10 minutes. **This is an anonymous survey.**

Please participate in this study and feel free to reply to this email or you can call me at (856)-256-5198 if you have any questions.

*This study has been approved by Rowan IRB

Thank you,

Lacey Symons-Murphy

Appendix C

Permission to Reproduce Survey

From: Sharon D. Smith [<mailto:Sharon.D.Smith@tn.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 2:14 PM
To: Murphy, Lacey Taylor
Subject: RE: Thesis Survey Permission

Good Afternoon Lacey,
Thank you for reaching out to me concerning the use of my survey. The focus of your research sounds very interesting. I would love to be of assistance to you. As such, you have my permission to use my survey instrument in conducting your research. Please remember to include the copyright statement on all copies of the instrument.

Sharon D. Smith, Ed.D. | Federal Programs Director
Andrew Johnson Tower, 9th Floor
710 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37243
615-981-0503
Sharon.D.Smith@tn.gov
tn.gov/education

From: Murphy, Lacey Taylor [<mailto:symons@rowan.edu>]
Sent: Thursday, March 8, 2018 8:58 AM
To: Sharon D. Smith <Sharon.D.Smith@tn.gov>
Subject: Thesis Survey Permission

Hi Dr. Sharon Smith,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Lacey Murphy and I am in my final year of the Master's in Higher Education Administration program at Rowan University. I am writing my thesis on The Obstacles and Motivators of Grant Funding here at Rowan, and I found your dissertation, "Factors that Motivate Faculty to Pursue External Funding at a 4-Year Public Institution of Higher Education" to be a very helpful reference for me while writing my chapters 1-3 and I would like to model and adapt my survey off of yours.

I am reaching out to you to see if I have permission to use your survey instrumentation. I obtained your contact information from your dissertation, however, it was your old office number and I spoke to Jolene who kindly provided me with your e-mail.

Thank you very much for your time and I am looking to hearing from you!

Thank you!
Lacey

Lacey Symons-Murphy

Post Award Analyst
Office of Sponsored Programs
Rowan University
856-256-4500 ext 65198