

**The Helicopter Parent Phenomenon:
Examining the Effects of Strong Parental Attachment on the Transition of
Millennial Emerging Adults from College to the Workplace**

By

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Abstract

Helicopter parents are recognized for meddling in all aspects of the academic, social, and professional lives of their children. As a result, these children may be hindered in the development of essential applied skills, i.e. transferable/soft skills for educational and career success. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of helicopter parenting on the development of transferable/soft skills necessary for career readiness and job preparation. A mixed methods approach was utilized for this study including a quantitative survey adapted from the Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (IDEA) by Reifman, Arnett, and Coleman (2007) and parental involvement by Mitchell (2012), as well as transferable/soft skills identified by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2015). The quantitative analysis for this study utilized both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The qualitative portion of this study included sequential follow-up interviews with purposefully selected participants. A grounded theoretical approach using in-depth, semi-structured interviews for descriptive data collection and open, axial, and selective coding techniques for data analysis guided the qualitative methodology for this study. The participants for this study consisted of traditional-age college students (19-25 years) and parents. The initial survey phase of the study collected data from students (n=335). The secondary interview phase of the study included students (n=6) and parents (n=3). The EFA results revealed seven domains

for emerging adulthood, which were labeled self-authorship, uncertainty, anxiety, individuation, accountability, positivity, and impulsiveness, as well as three domains for transferable/soft skills development, which were labeled emotional intelligence, information technology application, and professionalism. The ANOVAs revealed statistically significant results in relation to parental involvement for two domains of emerging adulthood (impulsiveness and accountability) and one domain related to transferable/soft skills (emotional intelligence). The majority of student participants (93%) self-reported a level of agreement (strongly agree to somewhat agree) with their core skills development. Further, 81% of student participants agreed they are experiencing the periods of emerging adulthood with the exception of feeling restricted, settling down, and responsibility for others. Most interestingly, student participants noted a preference for somewhat less involvement from parents during their time as a college student ($\bar{X}=2.42$). During the qualitative interviews, participants noted the importance of the college experience including living away from home and peer socialization, as well as engagement in extracurricular activities and experiential education for transferable/soft skills development. The findings for this study are useful for college administrators for planning, policy development, and procedural improvement to better handle parental involvement, as well as for human resources professionals for managing the effects of parental presence in the workforce. Further, the findings are useful for students and parents in determining appropriate levels of parental involvement pertinent to students' transferable/soft skills development for career success during the critical transition to the first-year in the workplace.

Dedication

In loving memory of my dad, Dr. Ernest D. Riggsby, a genuine and humble scholar.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
List of Tables	xiii
List of Figures.....	xv
Chapter 1 – Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Purpose of the Study.....	3
Research Questions.....	4
Significance of the Study.....	5
Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions.....	5
Definitions.....	6
Organization of the Study.....	7
Chapter 2 – Literature Review.....	9
Global Perspectives.....	13
Rationalizing the Problem.....	16
Legal Ramifications.....	19
Mixed Results from Current Research.....	20
Academics and 21 st Century Skills Development.....	24

Impacts on Career Readiness	27
Employment Trends.....	30
Consumerism in Higher Education.....	31
Defining the Generation.....	33
Conceptual Framework.....	37
In Loco Parentis	40
Student Development Theory	41
Psychosocial Development	44
Vectors of Development	45
Educational Environments	46
Emerging Adults	48
Theoretical Combination	50
Conclusion	52
Chapter 3 – Methodology	54
Mixed Method.....	56
Quantitative Methodology	57
Qualitative Methodology	60
Participants.....	62
Instrumentation/Data Collection.....	63
Surveys.....	63
Interviews.....	64
Data Analysis	65
Surveys.....	65

Interviews.....	65
Concerns for Validity and Reliability.....	66
Quantitative.....	66
Qualitative.....	67
Ethical Considerations	68
Summary.....	69
Chapter 4 – Findings.....	71
Sample.....	72
Quantitative Results.....	72
Measures of Central Tendency	72
Emerging Adulthood.....	73
Parental Involvement	74
Soft Skills Development	79
Exploratory Factor Analysis	81
Emerging Adulthood Domains	82
Factor Labeling: Self-Authorship	82
Factor Labeling: Uncertainty	83
Factor Labeling: Anxiety	84
Factor Labeling: Individuation	85
Factor Labeling: Accountability	85
Factor Labeling: Positivity.....	86
Factor Labeling: Impulsiveness	87
Soft Skills Domains	88

Factor Labeling: Emotional Intelligence	88
Factor Labeling: IT Application	89
Factor Labeling: Professionalism	89
ANOVA	90
Impulsiveness.....	91
Accountability.....	92
Emotional Intelligence	92
Qualitative Results	93
Students.....	93
Collegiate Experiences.....	93
Peer Relationships.....	96
Career Readiness.....	98
Emerging Adulthood.....	100
Parental Involvement	102
Parents.....	109
Collegiate Experiences.....	110
Peer Relationships.....	111
Career Readiness.....	112
Emerging Adulthood.....	113
Parental Involvement	115
Selective Coding	118
Impulsiveness.....	118
Accountability.....	119

Emotional Intelligence	120
Summary	121
Chapter 5 – Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations.....	124
Summary of Findings.....	124
IT Application.....	126
Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving	127
Oral/Written Communication	128
Teamwork/Collaboration	130
Leadership.....	131
Professionalism/Work Ethic	133
Career Management	134
Emerging Adulthood.....	135
Parental Involvement	137
Concerns	140
Conclusion	141
Recommendations.....	142
Theoretical Application	144
Future Implications	145
References.....	149
Appendices.....	168
Appendix A: Reliability Statistics for Exploratory Factor Analysis	169
Appendix B: Codebooks	173
Appendix C: Interview Protocols.....	179

Appendix D: Student Email Invitation for Survey Participation	182
Appendix E: Permissions to Use Survey Instruments	184
Appendix F: Survey Instrument.....	186
Appendix G: Institutional Review Board Documents	196

List of Tables

Table 1 – Ratings of Emerging Adulthood Experiences	73
Table 2 – Frequency of Parental Contact.....	75
Table 3 – Frequency of Parental Contact with Campus Administrators	75
Table 4 – Advice Sought for Major	76
Table 5 – Satisfaction of Parental Involvement.....	77
Table 6 – Parental Involvement with College and Academics.....	78
Table 7 – Soft Skills Development.....	79
Table 8 – Self-Authorship Domain.....	83
Table 9 – Uncertainty Domain.....	83
Table 10 – Anxiety Domain.....	84
Table 11 – Individuation Domain.....	85
Table 12 – Accountability Domain.....	86
Table 13 – Positivity Domain	87
Table 14 – Impulsiveness Domain.....	87
Table 15 – Emotional Intelligence Domain.....	88
Table 16 – IT Application Domain.....	89
Table 17 – Professionalism Domain.....	90
Table 18 – Impulsiveness and Level of Parental Involvement.....	91
Table 19 – Accountability and Level of Parental Involvement	92

Table 20 – Emotional Intelligence and Level of Parental Involvement	92
Table 21 – Summary Table of Findings: IT Application.....	126
Table 22 – Summary Table of Findings: Problem-Solving.....	127
Table 23 – Summary Table of Findings: Communication.....	129
Table 24 – Summary Table of Findings: Teamwork/Collaboration.....	130
Table 25 – Summary Table of Findings: Leadership.....	131
Table 26 – Summary Table of Findings: Professionalism/Work Ethic	133
Table 27 – Summary Table of Findings: Career Management.....	134
Table 28 – Summary Table of Findings: Emerging Adulthood	135
Table 29 – Summary Table of Quantitative Findings: Parental Involvement	137
Table 30 – Summary Table of Qualitative Findings: Parental Involvement	138

List of Figures

Figure 1 – Theoretical Combination of Emerging Adulthood, Vectors of Development, Challenge and Support.....	51
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Helicopter Parent Phenomenon

Helicopters serve many important services to the military, including scouting, personnel and utility transport, air attack, and search and rescue (United States Army, 2010). In much the same way, parents may hover like a helicopter to protect and rescue their own children. These parents have been labeled “Helicopter Parents” (Cline & Fay, 1990).

Helicopter parents are recognized for meddling in all aspects of the academic, social, and professional lives of their children. They are likely to become involved with their child’s college discovery and prospecting, admissions and housing decisions, career and graduate school decisions, and even with employers during the child’s job search process (Hunt, 2008). More specifically, helicopter parents are observed completing their child’s entrance applications, writing admissions essays, contacting admissions departments, checking student emails, and discussing grades with professors. In anticipation of their child’s graduation, helicopter parents may engage in filling out employment applications, writing resumes and cover letters, prepping for and attending job interviews, contacting employers to negotiate job and salary offers, and attending work-related events (Aslop, 2008; Cain, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010).

The consistent involvement of these parents may limit a child's ability to successfully transition to college and, ultimately, experience a successful transition to the workforce (McKnight, Paugh, McKnight, & Parker, 2009). Unfortunately, parental involvement may also inhibit opportunities for children to experience challenging situations, which afford them a chance to learn important decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills. Further, these children may be hindered in the development of essential applied skills, i.e. transferable/soft skills for educational and career success. These important skills including independence, self-reliance, and autonomy are critical in developing leadership, which is a trait that employers consistently rank at the top of their hiring priorities (Aslop, 2008; Hiltz, 2015; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Lampert, 2009; Ludden, 2012; Moriarty, 2011; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Savage, 2003; 2008; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009).

According to results from a 2013 study by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the preeminent professional human resources (HR) membership association, over two-thirds (68%) of the 3,400 employers surveyed indicated they are experiencing a difficult time recruiting qualified candidates for specific full-time positions as a result of an enduring and increasing skills gap, which is a significant gap between the skill sets necessary to meet an organizational need and the current capabilities of the workforce (Miller-Merrell, 2013). This is a startling increase from more than half (52%) of employers surveyed just two years earlier. These employers reported both basic and applied skill gaps, including deficient basic skills in written and verbal English language, mathematics, and reading comprehension, as well as subpar

applied skills in critical thinking/problem solving, professionalism/work ethic, communication, and leadership. Overall, nearly half (48%) of employers reported that candidates do not have the right skills for the job. Additionally, 40% of employers reported that candidates do not have the right work experience for the job (Minton-Eversole, 2013; Society of Human Resource Management, 2013). These findings signal an important need for recent college graduates to be adequately prepared with both basic and applied skills, as well as relevant experience in order to make a successful transition to the workplace.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the popularity of the issues regarding helicopter parenting, there is limited research that has been conducted on the subject. Most of the research conducted thus far has been related to the impact of helicopter parenting on the transition of students from secondary to post-secondary education, student success at the collegiate level as it relates to helicopter parenting, and the impact of helicopter parenting on higher education institutional policies and practices (Baldwin, 2011; Cullaty, 2009; Lampert, 2009; Moriarty, 2011; Parrott, 2010; Spence, 2012; Wartman, 2009; Watson, 2007). However, there is limited research conducted concerning the effect of helicopter parenting on the transition of students from college to the workplace (Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010; Lundsteen, 2011; Mitchell, 2012; Moreno, 2011).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact that helicopter parenting has on the skills development that is necessary for students to be successful in their transition from higher education to the professional workplace. This study was

conducted based on research that revealed the need for specific transferable/soft skills for students' career readiness and job preparation (Harris & Jones, 1996, Hofer & Moore, 2010; Little, 1998; Mitchell, 2012; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015), as well as research that indicated few employers are content with the level of preparation demonstrated by newly hired recent college graduates (Esposito, 2006; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010; Levine, 2005; 2006; Spence, 2012). Perhaps frustrated college administrators and underwhelmed HR professionals have exaggerated the impact of helicopter parents. For example, recent research has revealed mixed results on the impacts of parental involvement on students at the post-secondary level (Aucoin, 2009; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Kuh, 2001; 2003; Matthews, 2007; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2000, 2007; Somers & Settle, 2010; Slicker, Picklesmer, Guzak, & Fuller, 2005; Vinson, 2011). This study investigated the supposition that excessive parental involvement may be hindering students from the ability to develop these transferable/soft skills (Aslop, 2008; Cain, 2008; Cullaty, 2009; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010; Ludden, 2012; Mitchell, 2012; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Silverman, 2010; Twenge, 2006; Vinson, 2011).

Research Questions

The following research questions were used for this study:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the skills development of traditional-age students in preparation for the transition from college to the workplace?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the progression to adulthood for traditional-age college students?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are useful for college administrators for planning, policy development, and procedural improvement to better handle parental involvement, as well as for HR professionals for managing the effects of parental presence in the workforce. Further, the findings of this study are useful for students and parents in determining appropriate levels of parental involvement pertaining to satisfactory skills development necessary for future success.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions

It is important to note a few limitations/delimitations and assumptions with the methodology for this study:

One limitation is that this study was conducted at a time of slow recovery following the “Great Recession” of December 2007 – June 2009 (National Bureau of Economic Research, 2010), which could impact the findings of the study in regards to student employability. A delimitation, which is a researcher-imposed limitation, was that the study was conducted at a four-year, public, southeastern, co-ed, and predominately white institution (PWI), which could impact the findings of the study in as far as diversity of the sample. Additionally, due to timing, response rates, and funding restrictions, the sample size is relatively small in comparison with institutional enrollment. It is important to note that demographics such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, parental age, or single/dual parent household differences are not being considered as a part of this study. Student age is intentionally limited to traditional-age, millennial, emerging adults of age 19-25 (based on the legal age of consent in the state of Alabama). For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that the

students involved in this study are representative of all students with (self-reported) strong parental attachment. Further, it is assumed that the parents in this study are representative of all highly involved parents of traditional-age college students. It is assumed that the characteristics of the university setting of this study are representative of the characteristics of similar four-year, public institutions. Additionally, it is assumed that the transferable/soft skill requirements for the workplace as revealed in the literature review for the conceptual framework for this study are typical for all workplace environments (for-profit and not-for-profit) within the United States. Lastly, it is assumed that all participants are truthful and honest with the answers provided.

Definitions

It is important to note a few key definitions for the purposes of this study:

Helicopter Parent: A highly involved, strongly attached parent primarily focused on protection and success of their child (Cline & Fay, 1990; 2006).

Millennials/Emerging Adults: Traditional-age college students (19-25 years old) born to Baby Boomer parents influenced by changing family dynamics, increased technology, and devastating cultural events, such as September 11, 2001 (Arnett, 2000; 2013; Merriman, 2007; 2008; Martin & Tulgan, 2001; Somers & Settle, 2010).

College/University: An institution of higher education created to educate and grant degrees. For the purposes of this study, a post-secondary, four-year, public, southern research institution with enrollment of over 25,000 students (Lindsay, 2015).

Workplace/Workforce: These terms are used interchangeably with other terms including work, employment, job, labor, and career to describe an occupational pursuit

involving specialized training, education, and professional development (Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning, 1997).

Transferable/Soft Skills: These are reasonably developed knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) attained through training/education and experience as reflected by employers in the current labor market. Basic skills include reading, writing, and mathematical comprehension, whereas applied skills or essential core career competencies include critical thinking/problem-solving, oral/written communication, teamwork/collaboration, information technology application, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, and career management (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Society of Human Resource Management, 2016).

Employability: The capability of being hireable or employable also referred to as career readiness or job preparation based on a set of hard technical skills and soft transferable skills gained through personal and academic pursuits (Knight & Yorke, 2004).

Organization of the Study

The study is comprised of an introduction (Chapter One) and review of relevant literature (Chapter Two), including contemporary discussion and examples of the helicopter parent phenomenon, global perspectives on parental style, rationalization for increased parental influence, legal ramifications of parental involvement, impacts of parental involvement on career development, employment trends and hiring practices, definition of the millennial generation, and a review of student development theory. The methodology (Chapter Three) describes the theoretical framework, multi-methodological approach, qualitative and quantitative methodology, ethical considerations, description of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data

analysis. The findings (Chapter Four) includes quantitative results using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA), as well as qualitative results using open, axial, and selective coding methods. The final chapter (Chapter Five) includes a summary, conclusion, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Helicopter parents are recognized for meddling in all aspects of the academic, social, and professional lives of their children. They are likely to become involved with their child's college discovery and prospecting, admissions and housing decisions, career and graduate school decisions, and even with employers during the child's job search process (Hunt, 2008). More specifically, helicopter parents are observed completing their child's entrance applications, writing admissions essays, contacting admissions departments, checking student emails, and discussing grades with professors. In anticipation of their child's graduation, helicopter parents may engage in filling out employment applications, writing resumes and cover letters, prepping for and attending job interviews, contacting employers to negotiate job and salary offers, and attending work-related events (Aslop, 2008; Cain, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010).

The consistent involvement of these parents may limit a child's ability to successfully transition to college and, ultimately, experience a successful transition to the workforce (McKnight, Paugh, McKnight, & Parker, 2009). Unfortunately, parental involvement may also inhibit opportunities for children to experience challenging situations, which afford them a chance to learn important decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills. Further, these children may be hindered in the development of essential applied skills, i.e. transferable/soft skills for educational and

career success. These important skills including independence, self-reliance, and autonomy are critical in developing leadership, which is a trait that employers consistently rank at the top of their hiring priorities (Aslop, 2008; Hiltz, 2015; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Lampert, 2009; Ludden, 2012; Moriarty, 2011; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Savage, 2003; 2008; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009). The following research questions were used for this study:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the skills development of traditional-age students in preparation for the transition from college to the workplace?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the progression to adulthood for traditional-age college students?

Despite the best intentions of well meaning parents, college administrators frequently label parents who are too involved in the lives of their children as “helicopter parents” – a pejorative term – due to their often meddlesome, intrusive, and protective behavior (Wartman, 2009). The term “helicopter parent” is a media-hyped, pop-culture description of a parent who provides a vigilant “hovering” style of child rearing. Helicopter parents hover because they want to shelter their children from stress by providing direct, unlimited, and lasting support and conflict resolution (Hirsch & Goldberger, 2010). Obsessed over their children’s success and safety, these parents anxiously hover and swoop down to shield their child from any potential problem, crisis, challenge, trouble, harm, or discomfort, whether life-threatening or mundane, insulating them from possible risks, mistakes, or disappointments (Aslop, 2008;

Demetriou, 2007; Howe & Strauss, 2000; 2003; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Pricer, 2008; Williams, Beard, & Tanner, 2011; Vinson, 2011). Literally, these parents do not want their child to suffer or fail (Hiltz, 2015). However, this parental behavior may become invasive rather than involved and deprive the child of the opportunity to learn important decision-making, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills, which may interfere with the student's academic learning, personal development, and career preparation (Lampert, 2009; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009).

The term "helicopter parent" appears to have originally been used in 1990 by Foster W. Cline and Jim Fay in the book, *Parenting with Love and Logic: Teaching Children Responsibility*. It has recently gained in popularity when college administrators began using the term to describe parents "virtual" involvement in students' daily lives via phone, text, email, and social media. However, these parental practices have become over-increasingly intrusive including selecting courses and programs of study, writing and editing papers, intervening in roommate issues, dealing with faculty conflicts, and contacting college administrators (College Parents of America, 2006; Cutright, 2008). The term "helicopter parent" gained enough notoriety that it officially earned an entry in the 2011 edition of the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary, which defined a "helicopter parent" as "a parent who is overly involved in the life of his or her child" (Cohen & DeBenedet, 2011; Merriam-Webster, 2011; 2014, p. 578; Weston, 2014).

The most common example of helicopter parenting behavior is overprotectiveness (Hiltz, 2015). These overprotective, excessively involved parents may serve as motivated supporters but ultimately, they over-manage, protect, and rescue

their children in ways that can hinder a child's ability to develop independence by depriving them of the critical opportunity to learn from their personal successes and failures (Cain, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Pricer, 2008; Silverman, 2010). Despite parents' concerns with whether their behavior is helpful or simply meddling, over-involvement may result in children being hampered and ill-equipped with the self-reliance needed to deal appropriately with challenges, obstacles, and disappointments due to limited personal growth and learning opportunities (Aslop, 2008; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Savage, 2003; 2008; Silverman, 2010; Twenge, 2006). Specifically, these children may lack resiliency, the ability to recover easily from difficulty, as their upbringing is focused on protecting them from negative consequences without providing them an opportunity to learn from conflict or disappointment (Twenge, 2006).

While this pattern of behavior may exist from birth through adulthood, helicopter parenting is particularly problematic in higher education. It conflicts with the basic educational philosophy of building independence and self-regulation (Hiltz, 2015). Without these basics, it is unlikely students can achieve healthy interdependence (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Unfortunately, it may be difficult for parents to determine the appropriate level of involvement in their children's safety and academic success in college, especially after years of encouragement to get involved in primary and secondary education (Hofer & Moore, 2010; Moriarty, 2011). In fact, some college parents may live vicariously through their child's college experience, immersing themselves in the admissions process, academic selection, and extracurricular activities while taking upon themselves the experiences and failures of their children and deriving

personal satisfaction from their student's accomplishments (Aslop, 2008; Moriarty, 2011; Ward-Roof, Heaton, & Coburn, 2008; Weston, 2014). These parents often use the pronoun "we" to describe their student rather than the more appropriate pronoun "they" by making statements such as "We have a problem!" or "We need a job!" (Coburn, 2006; Lampert, 2009). According to Elmore (2015), it is critical for parents to learn to adjust their parental approach as their children mature.

Global Perspectives

The helicopter parent phenomenon has been experienced on a global scale in the United States and abroad. McKnight (2009) estimated that as many as 70% of U.S. parents can be classified as helicopter parents. In the United Kingdom, Redmond (2008; 2011) witnessed varying degrees of hovering behavior from which he developed a list of five types of helicopter parents: (1) "Agents" or "Consumer advocates" serve as a mediator by confirming arrangements, negotiating contracts, and resolving conflicts; (2) "Bankers" are accessible virtually or in-person to provide timely financial arrangements with minimal responsibility to the child; (3) "White knights" are fantasy characters who appear at a moment's notice to resolve all types of situations with no expectations of recognition; (4) "Bodyguards" or "Safety patrols" provide protection from a variety of awkward social situations in order to protect the child from embarrassing, stressful, or negative situations; (5) "Black hawks," which are aptly named after the most recognized military aircraft, are the most extreme hovering parents also referred to as "Apaches," "Drill sergeants," "Toxic parents," or "Stealth fighters" who are ready and willing to go above and beyond the call of duty (legal or illegal, ethical or unethical) to strike at a moment's notice to ensure their child has an

advantage over the enemy or any potential situation of threat (Cline & Fay, 1990, 2006; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010; Redmond, 2008; 2011; Somers & Settle, 2010; Vinson, 2011).

In the United States, the black hawk helicopter parent may have landed but there are also new forms of parenting on the horizon. According to Wartman and Savage (2008, p. 152), “Lawnmower” or “Kamikaze” parents “mow down anything in their students’ way” while “Submarine” parents “hid beneath the surface and pop up to attack when things go wrong.” Whereas, “Stealth missile” parents “arrive under the radar and destroy any obstacles in their child’s path” (Shellenbarger, 2006, p. 1).

Nauert (2009) acknowledged that over-parenting transcends global and geographic boundaries. He noted the benefits of parental guidance but recognized that “helicopter parenting is wrong for all cultures” as it can inflict psychologically damaging effects on children such as feelings of a lack of self-control (Nauert, 2009, p. 1). The most problematic of concerns of the extreme Black Hawk or Kamikaze parents occur when these parents cross the line into unethical behavior by encouraging plagiarism, falsifying records, or bullying anyone that stands in the way of their child’s potential success or threatens their child’s sense of well-being (Vinson, 2011).

Julie Lythcott-Haims, former Dean of Freshmen and Undergraduate Advising at Stanford University asked a profound question in a June 15, 2015 blog for the Huffington Post, “When did parenting change from preparing our kids for life to protecting them from life?” Elmore (2015) made a similar statement in an on-line article for *Focus on the Family* when he stated, “... I did a better job protecting our kids from the world than preparing them to live in it” (p. 1)

Interestingly, in Asian cultures, hyper-vigilant mothers are referred to as “Tiger Moms” but the parenting style of these Asian mothers is uniquely different from the over-parenting of U.S. helicopter parents (Gibbs, 2011). Tiger Moms focus on their child’s potential success; whereas, helicopter parents obsess over potential failure and how to prevent their child from experiencing disappointment. Similarly, Tiger Moms manage through a disciplinary parental style while encouraging their children to be strong and able to endure negativity; whereas, helicopter parents maneuver in a fearful parental state in which children are viewed as fragile, precious, and in need of protection (Gibbs, 2011).

In France, heavily involved parents are referred to as “Mere Poules,” which translates to “Mother Hens” in English (Druckerman, 2014). However, French parenting generally is described as a more hands-off approach, commonly referred to as “free-range parenting,” a term coined by Skenazy (2010). Typically, French parents tend to adopt a more calm, rational, laid-back, common sense approach to parenting than U.S. parents, which the French believe leads to greater independence as adults (Druckerman, 2014; Teitell, 2012).

In the U.S., a new term has been developed for less aggressive protective parenting called “Lighthouse” parents (Elmore, 2015). When imagining a lighthouse, one can picture a stationary beacon with on-going communication of passing vessels simply warning of dangers and providing guidance but never directly providing intervention; however, this is different than the helicopter one envisions as a hovering craft with nearly unlimited mobility able to swoop in to intervene upon command. Helicopter parents tend to follow and control children by imposing rules and regulations

for behavior but Lighthouse parents tend to provide wisdom and guidance through communication at necessary intervals (Elmore, 2015). Wolpe (2015) referred to a similar parental approach as “helium” parenting, whereby parents permit their children freedom and parents can simply “look up” to keep a watchful eye (p. 1). According to Elmore (2015), children need to be challenged in order to learn how to successfully navigate unfamiliar situations and gain maturity. If all struggles and barriers are removed then children will be rendered helpless. Ultimately, they will miss the chance to develop key strengths such as “resilience, creativity, and problem-solving,” which are necessary to their future success (Elmore, 2015, p. 2).

Rationalizing the Phenomenon

Helicopter parents do not hesitate to enlist campus services in search of assistance for their children. This philosophy may be due to the consumerist view of higher education as a commodity for purchase on behalf of students (Coburn, 2006; Redmond, 2008; Somers & Settle, 2010; Watson, 2013). As a result, these parents are concerned with the direct economic value of education and, most importantly, the return on investment (ROI) as it relates to their student’s job placement success after graduation. This perspective is understandable given the rising cost of education and the slow economic recovery in the United States (Carney-Hall, 2008; Lampert, 2009; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009). As a result, helicopter parents are characterized by both an emotional and a financial investment in their children (Howe & Strauss, 2003).

In addition to education being viewed as a commodity, Somers and Settle (2010) identified six additional factors that attempt to explain the increase in the helicopter parent phenomenon in American colleges and universities today, including: (1)

demographic shifts in the U.S., which include a greater number of adolescents seeking a college education; (2) changes in family dynamics and parenting whereby, families are delaying parenthood and having fewer children; thus, parents are able to indulge and lavish children; (3) advances in technology, including the growth of instant communication; (4) structural changes in society, including globalization and outsourcing, which adds to parents' concern of students being overeducated and underemployed; (5) psychological shifts of 'emerging adulthood' resulting in traditional responsibilities being postponed to an older age; and (6) child safety concerns resulting from highly publicized events such as the abduction of Adam Walsh in 1981, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and the 2007 campus shooting at Virginia Tech. Parents have a heightened sense of concern for their children's safety due to these unfortunate and devastating events (Merriman, 2008). Weston (2014) noted peer pressure from other parents as an additional reason for helicopter parenting.

The most commonly cited reason for the rise in helicopter parents is an increase in the ease and use of technology (Pricer, 2008). Technological advances including computing and communication devices such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops, along with text, voice mail, email, video conferencing, and social media have enabled parents and students to communicate nearly instantaneously and continuously. While overprotective parenting is not a new phenomenon, the ease of communication through technology has intensified the overprotective behavior resulting in the helicopter parent phenomenon (Pricer, 2008). Advances in information technology and communication have created limitless means of connectivity. In fact, the cell phone has been labeled as the "world's longest [virtual, cordless, high-tech, electronic] umbilical cord," a phrase

credited to Dr. Richard Mullendore of the University of Georgia, tethering children to their parents even in adulthood (Childs, 2014, p. 1). Through this ubiquitous connection parents can be constantly apprised of their child's involvements and whereabouts (Aslop, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Hunt, 2008; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Savage, 2003; 2008; Somers & Settle, 2010). This parental culture of enhanced connectivity utilizing the technology of instant communication or "electronic apron strings" has been referred to as "iParenting, iConnected parenting," or "Permaparenting" and it has affected students personally, academically, socially, and professionally (Hofer & Moore, 2010; Marcus, 2010, p. 1). Wolpe (2015) labeled this as "radar" helicopter parenting (p. 1). Rather than "cut the cord," many parents prefer to buy an "extension cord" (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010, p. 6).

According to a survey report released in March 2006 by the College Parents of America, a U.S. membership organization comprised of current and future college parents and founded by Douglas Laughlin (Hoover, 2004) of the 839 parents surveyed, 74% communicated with their students two or three times per week and 33% did so at least once daily. Nearly all (99%) stated that they used cell phones to keep in touch with their children and nearly 60% frequently used email as correspondence with these students. Visits to campus were also common with 75% stating they dropped in at least once or twice per semester and 17% visited their children once per month or more (Jaschik, 2007; Rainey, 2006). As a result, these college students comprise a generation that "maintains near daily contact with their parents and relies on them for continual support, counsel, and emotional reinforcement," which could potentially interfere with

the development of independence and self-sufficiency (Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011, p. 313). Technology is changing not only the relationship between parents and children but also the college experience and entrance into the workforce (Hofer & Moore, 2010).

In a national survey of higher education professionals (2006), conducted by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), the leading association for student affairs professionals, a vast majority (93%) of higher educational institutions reported an increase in the number of interactions with parents on campuses since the year 2001 (Cutright, 2008; Merriman, 2007; 2008). Parental involvement can potentially affect many aspects of the college experience, including institutional policies and procedures, administrative structure, faculty duties, programs/services offered, and student development (Carney-Hall, 2008).

Legal Ramifications

Helicopter parenting can have legal implications related to privacy rights including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a federal law otherwise referred to as the Buckley Amendment enforced by the U.S. Department of Education that protects the privacy of student educational records by prohibiting the sharing of student information with anyone, including the student's parents (Cutright, 2008). For students over the age of 18 and attending school beyond the high school level, the right to inspect and review educational records transfers from parent to student (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). However, parents may feel entitled to access to these records due to their financial investment in the students' educational pursuits. In fact, according to the U.S. federal government concerning the completion

of the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), it is assumed that parents or guardians have the primary responsibility of paying for their child's undergraduate education if the student is under the age of 24 (Pratt, Rhodes, Weitzel, & Trombitas, 2012). It is important to note that financial independence is an important part of the process to entering adulthood, yet one of the most challenging transitions for both children and adults (Arnett, 2000; Robbins & Wilner, 2001).

Mixed Results from Current Research

While some prefer to negatively label highly involved parents as 'aggressive' or 'overbearing' others prefer a more positive label referring to them as 'activist parents' (Hayden, 2007, p. 1). According to Webb (1992), activist parents are those "working for change" in hopes of making a difference in educational issues (p. 3). Despite the negative reactions to parental involvement, according to the 2000 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which annually collects data at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities in the United States and Canada measuring student participation and involvement in programs and activities provided by institutions for learning and personal development, students expect and embrace their parents' participation in their campus lives (Hofer & Moore, 2010; Kuh, 2001; 2003; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2000). In fact, as stated by Richardson (2011), "millennials are comfortable with their parents' values and not as rebellious as earlier generations. They appreciate and seek guidance, coaching, and mentorship opportunities" (p. 15).

More recently, the 2007 NSSE reported the derived benefits from parental involvement in higher education. According to Jillian Kinzie, associate director of

Indiana University's Center for Postsecondary Research, in an interview for the *Boston Globe*, students of helicopter parents reported higher levels of engagement with learning, greater satisfaction with college, and, even though their grade point averages (GPAs) were slightly lower, they reported more involvement with faculty and more active collaborative learning with their peers (Aucoin, 2009). Further, NSSE findings revealed that children of helicopter parents reported more satisfaction with every aspect of their college experience, gained more knowledge in subjects such as writing, developed stronger skills in cognitive matters such as critical thinking, and were more likely to engage with faculty and peers on important topics (Aucoin, 2009; Kuh, 2001; 2003; Matthews, 2007; Somers & Settle, 2010). As early as 1967, the research of Donald Super noted the importance of family as an influential factor in the career development process (Super, 1967). Kerka (2000) more recently discovered that proactive interactions from family contribute significantly to students' career readiness. Similarly, Young and Friesen (1992) revealed parent's intentional and unintentional engagement and intervention in their children's career development. Specifically, parent's intentions are focused on influencing the development of their children's range of skills and aptitudes for the purpose of acquiring a specific and appropriate set of skills for particular career aspirations (Young & Friesen, 1992). Ketterson and Blustein (1997) reported the association of secure and comfortable parent-child relationships in career decision-making progress, positive career self-efficacy beliefs, and productive career planning and self-exploration. Additionally, Way and Rossmann (1996) noted the significant contributions of a proactive family dynamic towards youth career readiness in the development of autonomy and critical life skills such as decision-

making, work ethic, conflict resolution, and communication. In fact, the benefits of helicopter parenting can include a close bond between parent and child, including continual support and encouragement leading to positivity and motivation (Lipkin & Perrymore, 2009). According to Simmons (2008), students feel their parents play a vital role by serving as advisors in their academic and career decisions but in order for parents to successfully manage their parenting role with college students they need to develop listening skills and the ability to provide constructive communication and, especially, assist their children in developing “independent decision-making, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills” (p. 41). Bowlby (1988) found that parents serve as an important source of support for students’ collegiate success. He used the description “secure base” to illustrate a concept of parenting, which allows for exploration of new challenges while maintaining a receptive environment of physical and emotional nourishment and comfort during times of fright and distress (Bowlby, 1988, p. 11; Simmons, 2008). According to Bowlby, “in essence this role is one of being available, ready to respond when called upon to encourage and perhaps assist, but to intervene actively only when clearly necessary” (Bowlby, 1988, p. 11).

It is essential to point out that “involved parents are not sure if all this instant communication is healthy, but they enjoy the closeness they have with their kids and are proud of it” (Hofer & Moore, 2010, p. 2). Piercy, a private practice counselor and co-author of the book, *Teacher’s Tackle Box*, noted that involved parenting is a good practice; however, over-parenting can lead to detrimental outcomes for the child (Weston, 2014). According to Vinson (2011), although some studies link parental engagement to positive educational outcomes, including better grades, higher test

scores, and less substance abuse, overinvolved parents may be producing “‘the most protected and programmed children ever’ – without the life skills necessary to succeed in the realities of an increasingly competitive and complex workplace and economy” (p. 12). Life skills development is focused on providing the practical skills necessary to be successful in life (Vitalo, 1974; Mitchell, 2012). College students with responsive rather than demanding parents develop better life skills (Slicker, Picklesmer, Guzak, & Fuller, 2005).

While research has demonstrated mixed results from strong parental involvement – positive, negative, and neutral – college administrators still fear that helicopter parents are interfering with one of the most important aspects of student development during the college years: Autonomy (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014). Autonomy exemplifies the ability for students to make capable, independent decisions about their own lives while taking responsibility for their own behavior within the context of an appropriately strong, loving, and consultative connection with parents (Aslop, 2008; Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Savage, 2003; 2008). This concept is illustrated in the work of Chickering and Reisser (1993) who identified the phase of moving through autonomy towards interdependence as a goal of identity development.

According to Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012), helicopter parenting represents a parenting style that provides high levels of warmth and support while simultaneously providing high levels of control, which results in low levels of autonomy. Developing autonomy is an important outcome of the college experience, especially, in preparation for the workplace (Moriarty, 2011). The college experience offers students an

opportunity to adequately prepare for the transition into adulthood. However, the development of a sufficient level of preparation depends equally on the college experience and the parent-child interactions of students during these formative years. Unfortunately, parents may hinder their students in this process as a result of over involvement during the college years (Hofer & Moore, 2010).

Academics and 21st Century Skills Development

Parental involvement influences both the academic and career decisions of students (Cullaty, 2009). As a result, the concerns of the workforce reflect the concerns of higher education. Parents expect colleges and universities to focus on successful student learning outcomes (SLOs), including career development and job preparation, as well as traditional expectations of providing a safe, disciplined environment and quality academic experiences (Carney-Hall, 2008). Students, parents, and employers are all beginning to understand the value of including career preparation as a component of liberal arts education to adequately provide students the skills necessary for success in an economic situation challenged by a difficult job market as a result of the continued effects of the slow recovery from the economic recession (Savage, 2008). Nevertheless, parents may be overly involved in their child's career development to the point of researching companies, giving job advice, writing students' resumes and cover letters, submitting employment applications, contacting potential employers, providing career coaching, attending job fairs, scheduling job interviews, navigating acceptance packages and salary offers, and even scrutinizing performance reviews (Aslop, 2008; Cain, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010). Unfortunately, according to Margaret Fiester, Knowledge Advisor for SHRM, interviewed in a recent

National Public Radio (NPR) broadcast, “[parental intervention] can backfire – and definitely does not show great leadership or decision-making skills [to potential employers]” (Ludden, 2012, p. 1). Young entrants into the workforce may no longer even be the primary decision-makers in their own job search process having relinquished that responsibility to their parents (Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010; Redmond, 2008).

In recent surveys by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), employers gave low ratings to recent college graduates in preparation for areas such as self-direction, critical thinking, and adaptability (Spence, 2012). Specifically, in a 2007 report from the National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) of the AACU, it was noted that what really matters in college are essential learning outcomes (ELOs) including intellectual and practical skills such as inquiry and analysis, clinical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative and information literacy, teamwork, and problem-solving, all of which the LEAP campaign designated as developed through a rich, contemporary liberal arts education. The report indicated that educators and employers have agreed on a set of skills, labeled 21st Century Skills, which are necessary for every facet of life and every occupation in a changing society. Specifically, employers require innovation to maintain their competitive advantage; therefore, they seek recent graduates who demonstrate the ability to think “outside the box” and adapt to change (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2007).

Building upon these 21st century skills, the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS) Project Team and Task Force identified four critical skill set areas,

including life and career skills such as flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility. The IMLS, an independent U.S. federal agency, which supports museums and libraries, further noted that the rapid globalization of the economy dictates new skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. As a result, the IMLS indicated that academic institutions have responsibility for building global citizens with skills such as information, communications and technology literacy, critical thinking/problem-solving, creativity, civic literacy, and global awareness (Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, 2015).

Saavedra and Offer (2012) also emphasized the impact of globalization, economic necessity, and civic engagement as rationales for developing students' knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) such as critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and leadership, agility and adaptability, initiative and entrepreneurialism, oral and written communication, accessing and analyzing information, and curiosity and imagination. As reported by The Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills consortium (AT21CS), these KSAs were organized into four distinct categories: ways of thinking, ways of working, tools for working, and living in the world. Similarly to IMLS, the AT21CS consortium emphasizes the responsibility of academicians to incorporate 21st century learning into the classroom curriculum (Saavedra & Offer, 2012).

According to Brenda Little of the Quality Support Center for the Council for Industry and Higher Education (1998) and the Centre for Higher Education Research

and Information (2006), employers in the United Kingdom believe that students can develop and improve upon a skills framework through relevant work-based learning placements as a part of the academic curriculum, including: (a) personal and social skills such as working relationships and teamwork; (b) communication skills such as oral, written, presentation/public speaking, and business writing; (c) problem-solving skills such as the ability to identify and analyze issues and suggest practical solutions; (d) creativity and initiative such as the ability to suggest new and innovative ideas; and (e) organizational skills such as setting priorities and tracking progress of tasks.

Through work-based learning placements, students indicated personal growth and development in areas including communication, networking, interpersonal skills, organizational skills, responsibility, confidence, time management, teamwork, subject knowledge and higher-level academic skills, and understanding of ethical issues (Harvey & Little, 2006; Little, 1998).

Impacts on Career Readiness

A consortium comprised of The Conference Board, along with Corporate Voice for Working Families, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), conducted a 2006 watershed survey of over 400 human resources (HR) managers, which examined the career readiness of new entrants into the workforce and discovered several applied skills that young employees are lacking including professionalism/work ethic, oral and written communications, teamwork/collaboration, and critical thinking/problem-solving (Cavanaugh, Klein, Kay, & Meisinger, 2006). Employer respondents revealed important aspects of professionalism and work ethic including proper dress, strong interview and

communication skills, an understanding of the job search and application process, the ability to express oneself clearly and articulately, acceptance of personal responsibility and commitment to the job. Employers further indicated a belief that communication skills are essential for successful sales, marketing, and customer service. Lastly, in regards to teamwork/collaboration and critical thinking/problem-solving employers required employees to demonstrate project-management skills. Employers in the initial survey phase of the study indicated additional important applied skills such as diversity, information technology application, leadership, creativity/innovation, lifelong learning/self-direction, professionalism/work ethic, and ethics/social responsibility (Cavanaugh, Klein, Kay, & Meisinger, 2006).

According to the consortium presidents, Richard Cavanaugh, Ken Kay, Donna Klein, and Susan Meisinger (2006), approximately one-quarter of four-year college graduates are perceived by HR managers to demonstrate excellent proficiency while more than one-quarter of these graduates are perceived to be deficient in demonstrating these skills for job success. Leadership was ranked by a majority of employers (81.8%) as a very important skill, yet over a quarter of employers (23.8%) reported new employees as deficient in demonstrating leadership as a key skill. Conversely, nearly half of employers (46.3%) rated college-educated workforce entrants excellently in demonstrating information technology application, which aligns with descriptions of this current generation as comprised of highly technically savvy individuals. Overall, the study revealed that between 60-70% of employers rank college graduates as merely adequately prepared for entry-level positions. Remarkably, employers noted parents as one of the primary parties responsible for ensuring young professionals are work-ready.

These employers indicated that parents play a critical role in instilling in their children the importance of both education and career, as well as emphasizing the importance of ‘getting a job, keeping a job’ (Cavanaugh, Klein, Kay, & Meisinger, 2006, p. 54).

Fingerman et.al. (2012), referred to the children of helicopter parents as “Landing Pad” kids, while others refer to them as “Boomerang” or “Yo-Yo” kids due to rising number returning home to live with their parents after unsuccessful employment ventures (Aslop, 2008; Cobb, 2013; Fingerman et. al, 2012; Harris & Jones, 1996; Haugen & Musser, 2013; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Okimoto & Stegall, 1987). In fact, the term “Boomerang Child” earned recognition (alongside the term helicopter parent) as an official entry in the 2011 edition of the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary (Cohen & DeBenedet, 2011). “Boomerang Child” is defined as “a young adult who returns to live at his or her family home especially for financial reasons” (Merriam-Webster, 2011; 2014, p. 142). Just as helicopter parents are a global phenomena, boomerang children exist worldwide from Brazil as “Kangaroo Kids” to Japan as “Parasite Singles” (Hofer & Moore, 2010).

Employers are concerned that these young professionals may lack the critical managerial/supervisory skills necessary to be successful leaders, such as problem-solving, decision-making, and the ability to deal efficiently and effectively with pressure or crisis, which may make them unable to endure the realities and difficulties of the workplace, especially, in light of their personal history of constantly being able to rely on their parent’s rescue attempts at the onset of pressure (Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010).

According to Mel Levine, author of *Ready or Not, Here Life Comes*, these students are part of a pandemic he referred to as “worklife unreadiness” whereby, students demonstrate a learning disorder of “incomplete comprehension,” affectively disabling students’ ability to understand and process concepts, terminology, issues, and procedures (2005, p. 1, 4; 2006, p. 4). Further, he stated that many of today’s students demonstrate a form of “collegiate dysfunction” as they are unable to handle the typical workload due to a lack of crucial organizational and time management skills (Levine, 2005, p. 1). Essentially, parents must support their child’s career development and job search process at a distance in order to truly foster self-reliance, “a trait prized by employers” (Hofer & Moore, 2010, p. 226).

Employment Trends

According to Mary Elizabeth Hughes, a sociologist at Duke University, “helicopter parenting may be a sign of economic insecurity” (Hunt, 2008, p. 9). Historically, it has always been a challenge for recent graduates to locate employment upon graduation due to limited professional experience. However, the effects of the Great Recession have left recent college graduates struggling to find employment and fully utilize their education (Abel & Deitz, 2014). As a result, many graduates accept positions that are traditionally considered non-degree positions, whereby, candidates are not required to have completed a degree for consideration. These graduates are labeled as underemployed. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2015), underemployment is defined as those who are highly skilled but working in low paid, low skilled jobs and/or part-time workers seeking full-time employment. For the class of 2014, the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) revealed that a total of 8.5% of recent

graduates are unemployed and an additional 16.8% are underemployed working part-time and/or non-professional (non-degree required) positions while continuing to seeking professional, full-time employment (Economic Policy Institute, 2015; Shierholz, Davis, & Kimball, 2014).

In 2007-2008, the United States experienced the largest rise in unemployment since the Great Depression marking the start of the Great Recession (December 2007 – June 2009) with a record loss of approximately 8.4 million jobs between the years of 2008 – 2010 (Economic Policy Institute, 2015). At its peak, in October 2009, national unemployment rose to 10%. Unfortunately, this trend has continued since 2009 making this the longest period of sustained unemployment in recorded history (Pasch, 2015). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), the national unemployment rate is 4.9%. Correspondingly, the national underemployment rate is 14.7% (Statista, 2016).

Consumerism in Higher Education

Historically, college has been viewed as the required pathway to an economically stable future (Moriarty, 2011). However, due to the continued unemployment and underemployment trends coupled with rising tuition costs, postsecondary education can be considered a risk or a gamble (Redmond, 2008). Not only have employment opportunities decreased but tuition costs have increased 1,120% in the last 30 years, which has led to a consumerist mentality for those considering higher education, especially when conducting a cost-benefit analysis (Watson, 2013).

According to Paul Redmond (2008), “risk is the fuel that drives helicopter parents” (p. 1). Parents consider enrollment of their children in higher education to be

an investment and they expect quality instruction, services, and facilities, as well as a high return on investment (ROI) through students' employment opportunities (Coburn, 2006; Redmond, 2008).

The term "gainful employment" has been used in recent U.S. political policy by the Obama presidential administration as a label for purposeful, meaningful, and reliable opportunities for recent graduates in response to rising unemployment and underemployment rates, as well as the aforementioned rising tuition costs, which have resulted in increased student loan debt (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The purpose of the policy was to improve successful student outcomes while limiting financial burdens. A "scorecard" was created to provide greater accountability to institutions and provide more transparency to students and parents when evaluating enrollment in college/university institutions and programs (College Affordability and Transparency Center, 2015, p. 1).

In regards to higher education, gainful employment provides opportunities for students to utilize their education in relevant field experience. However, it is critical for students and parents to understand that employers are looking for more than simply the completion of an accredited college degree. The hard/technical skills may be gained within the classroom; however, an overwhelming 81% of employers report a primary interest in non-technical, soft/transferable skills (MacCracken & Scimecca, 2015).

Unfortunately, research has revealed that graduates are not meeting employer expectations in the attainment of these valuable skills. According to a recent survey conducted by Inside Higher Ed and Gallup, a mere 11% of business leaders strongly agreed that graduates have the necessary skills to succeed in the workplace (Busteed,

2014). According to Busteed (2014), this illustrates a significant “skills gap” between the jobs available and qualified candidates to fill these positions (p. 1).

Students desire an “immersive learning” environment with an opportunity to engage in learning processes both in and out of the classroom through formal and informal education (MacCracken & Scimecca, 2015, p. 6). Students must be able to seek field experiences through experiential education such as internships/co-ops, as well as extracurricular involvement, and community service, service learning, and servant leadership. However, students view the effects of rising tuition costs as a hindrance to their career development, especially if they cannot afford to participate in critical skill building experiences such as extracurricular activities and experiential learning since many of these opportunities are unpaid (MacCracken & Scimecca, 2015).

According to Richard Cavanaugh, Donna Klein, Ken Kay, and Susan Meisinger, presidents of The Conference Board, Corporate Voices for Working Families, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and the Society for Human Resource Management (2006), educators and businesses should be held accountable for providing methods of enhancing workplace knowledge and skill building opportunities such as internships, externships, summer jobs, work study placements, job shadowing, mentorships, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and community service for college students.

Defining the Generation

In a report by Fry (2015) of the Pew Research Center, a non-partisan, non-advocacy fact tank that conducts social science research concerning trends within America, as of May 2015, the millennial generation had officially surpassed Generation

X and the Baby Boomers as the largest generation in the U.S. workforce with 53.5 million working professionals (ages 18-34).

They're blunt. They're savvy. They're contradictory. They defy easy labeling and exact parameters. They're the children of the Baby Boomers, the upbeat younger siblings of Generation X, and the 29 million young adults who have begun streaming into the workplace (Martin & Tulgan, 2001, p. xi).

Demographers have been unable to unanimously agree on a defining label for this generation thus names have included: Generation WWW, Digital Generation, Net Generation, iGeneration, Generation.com, Generation 2000, Generation E, Echo Boomers, Boomer Babies, Boomlets, Baby Busters, N-Gens, Generation M, Generation XX, Generation Y, Generation Why, Generation Next, Nexters, Nintendo Generation, Generation Tech, Internet Generation, Generation Me, Generation We and most commonly, Millennials/Millenniums (Greenberg & Weber, 2000; Haugen & Musser, 2013; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Inch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010; Lancaster & Sullivan, 2002; Martin & Tulgan, 2001; Twenge, 2006).

Demographers have also been unable to agree on the generation's exact parameters, stating ranges spanning over 20 years from 1978 – 1998/2000 (Haugen & Musser, 2013; Martin & Tulgan, 2001) and 1980/1982 – 2000/2001 (Aslop, 2008; Barefoot, 2008; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011). Therefore, this generation comprises America's largest, as well as most ethnically diverse, affluent, educated, and technologically adept population (Greenberg & Weber, 2008; Haugen & Musser, 2013; Howe & Strauss, 2000).

While demographers offer many commonalities in describing the qualities and characteristics of the millennial generation, there are still many unique traits that individual researchers use to label this young generation.

Millennials prefer team and group activities, are racially and ethnically diverse, have strong ties to parents and family values, want immediate access and response at all times, like humor and games, prefer engaging in experiential activities as opposed to rote learning, want structure and active engagement in the classroom... They expect a continuous flow of praise from authority figures, parents, teachers, and bosses to validate their accomplishments - and reward [them] not for achievement, but for participation (Cain, 2008, p. 15, 16).

Further, millennials and their parents exhibit near zero tolerance for delays and expect services to be available 24/7 (twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week) in a variety of modes: electronically via web/phone or personally via face-to-face, in-person interactions and they expect a one hundred percent (100%) satisfaction guarantee on services rendered (Cain, 2008; Moriarty, 2011).

Claire Raines (2002; 2003), author of *Connecting Generations: The Sourcebook for a New Workplace* and owner of the on-line resource Generations at Work, characterized millennials with a variety of traits including: diverse/multicultural, global, patriotic, connected, confident, sociable, civic-minded/service-oriented, optimistic, talented, well educated, collaborative, inclusive, tolerant, open-minded, hopeful/positive, influential, tech-savvy, and goal/achievement-oriented.

In the books *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation* (2000) and *Millennials Go To College* (2003), Howe and Strauss labeled the millennial generation

with seven (7) additional characteristics: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, and achieving. In describing each of these individual characteristics, these generational experts state:

Older generations have inculcated in Millennials the sense that they are, collectively, vital to the nation and to their parents' sense of purpose.

Millennials are the focus of the most sweeping youth safety movement in American history. With high levels of trust and optimism – and a newly felt connection to parents and future – Millennials are beginning to equate good news for themselves with good news for their country. Millennials are developing strong team instincts and tight peer bonds. Millennials are on track to become the best educated and best behaved adults in the nation's history.

Millennials feel a “trophy kid” pressure to excel. Millennials support convention – the idea that social rules can help (Howe & Strauss, 2000, pp. 43, 174-188; 2003, pp. 51-63).

While stating similar characteristics for the millennial generation, such as feeling special, Joan Richardson (2011), president of Phi Delta Kappa, a professional association for educators, continued with a few additional characteristics of the millennial generation by pointing out that they are not afraid of accountability but millennials need and expect praise and recognition for their accomplishments. Richardson elaborated on millennials' enthusiasm for cooperative learning and teamwork, especially those with a social aspect to build lasting friendships. Further, she pointed out millennials have a high tolerance for change including changing jobs or careers. She also noted that millennials are confident and assertive. Additionally, she

noted that millennials are highly tech savvy and innovative. Lancaster and Sullivan (2002) stated that this generation could be labeled as lifelong learners.

It is important to note that the characteristics of this generation will continue with them through college graduation and beyond (Howe & Strauss, 2003). Therefore, the helicopter parent that hovered over years of schooling may fly into the air space of the student's workplace. Unfortunately, according to Johnson and Schelhas-Miller (2011), "a generation that has been raised to believe that they are special and destined for great things may have difficulty facing the harsh reality that college is over and their prospects are limited" (p. 333).

These "trophy kids" who have often been rewarded simply for participation or mediocrity "just for showing up and trying" have left employers with mixed feelings about this generation entering the workplace (Aslop, 2008, p. 1; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Williams, Beard, & Tanner, 2011, p. 44). Although, this may be the most educated generation in history, unfortunately, they are also entering the workforce with the least amount of relevant field experience in history (Howe & Strauss, 2003; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Robbins & Wilner, 2001).

Conceptual Framework

Parental intervention may hinder student development including the ability to develop the skills necessary for successful entrance into the job market upon graduation from college (Esposito, 2006). The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) annually publishes *Job Outlook* to forecast hiring trends for the current graduating class. One particular section of this forecast portrays a profile of traits, skills, competences, and attributes illustrating an ideal or perfect candidate wish list as

described by employers as desired of graduates for entry-level hiring practices (Andrews & Higson, 2008). In addition to high GPA and relevant academic major, employers are seeking college graduates with a specific set of transferable/soft skills.

Consistently, leadership is identified as a top trait that employers are seeking in recent college graduates (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015).

Further, employers expect college graduates to demonstrate professionalism, problem-solving, and interpersonal skill sets when they enter the workforce (Harris & Jones, 1996; Mitchell, 2012; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015).

Students and employers agree that college graduates need to develop core competencies or transferable/soft skills such as critical thinking, the ability to apply knowledge, communication, negotiation, and professionalism for a range of career paths (MacCracken & Scimecca, 2015).

The most recent edition of *Job Outlook (2015)* identified leadership and teamwork equally (78%) as the top candidate traits for most recent graduates. Additionally, employers are seeking candidates with written communication skills (73%), problem-solving (71%), strong work ethic (70%), analytical/quantitative skills (68%), technical skills (68%), verbal communication skills (67%), initiative (67%), computer skills (63%), flexibility/adaptability (62%), interpersonal skills or the ability to relate well to others (61%), detail-oriented (58%), organizational skills (42%), strategic planning skills (35%), friendly/outgoing personality (29%), entrepreneurial skills or risk-taker (25%), tactfulness (23%), and creativity (18%) (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015).

Additionally, the Corporate Executive Board (CEB), which provides insight into global best practices and technology trends to businesses worldwide, conducted a survey of over 2,000 Information Technology (IT) professionals within 75 organizations to identify a set of twelve (12) core competencies creating a competency framework essential for employees to produce high performance outcomes, especially in light of the pressures experienced by the continually rapid changing needs of businesses today. These competencies included three skills sets: (1) working collaboratively, (2) balancing analysis with judgment, and (3) adapting to change. Within these three skills sets are the subset skills that comprise the competency framework: (a) business results orientation, communication, influence, relationship management, and teamwork; (b) analytical ability, decision making, prioritization, and process orientation; and (c) creativity, learning ability, and organizational awareness (Gelders, 2014). Significantly, this survey revealed that the technical/hard skills generally associated with the IT profession and most often gained within classroom learning environments are less important to success in the profession than the variety of transferable/soft skills gained outside of the classroom (Gelders, 2014).

Higher education should be geared towards developing the whole student, including the development of employable, transferable, interpersonal, and life skills (Murakami, Murray, Sims, & Chedzey, 2009). The importance of providing students career and life skills development is to provide them the opportunity to develop, practice, and implement the skills necessary to be successful in adulthood such as creating and maintaining meaningful relationships, including respect and empathy, as

well as developing systematic problem solving skills, especially related to life and career issues (Mitchell, 2012; Vitalo, 1974).

In loco parentis

From the early 1900s, “in loco parentis” was the operating educational philosophy on college campuses. According to the landmark case, *Gott v. Berea* (1913), which established the doctrine and defined the relationship between colleges, students, and parents, colleges were expected to serve “in place of the parent” or “instead of the parent” by accepting legal responsibility of the student in order to supervise and guide the students’ behavior and development while in academia (Cutright, 2008; Duderstadt, 2007, p. 239; Henning, 2007; Hirsch & Goldberger, 2010).

By the 1960s, as a result of *Dixon v. Alabama Board of Education* (1961) the role of administrators on campus evolved to one of merely coordinating and guiding student development in a less evasive approach, thereby, permitting student responsibility for growth and personal development. However, according to Henning (2007), the shifting paradigm with helicopter parents influenced a new educational philosophy, which could be referred to as “in consortio cum parentibus” or “in partnership with the parents” (p. 551).

According to Hofer and Moore (2010), at the start of the helicopter phenomenon, colleges resisted parental efforts to become more involved on campus; however, involved parenting has become a part of the educational culture and with the continued rising cost of college education many institutions are beginning to embrace parents on college campuses.

Helicopter parents are part advocate and part critic. Helicopter parents also believe they are working for the betterment of education - on behalf of both their child and other students. They tend to be better informed about education policy and their legal rights (Hiltz, 2015, p. 26).

Therefore, administrators can benefit from their involvement and use them as a resource to provide improved policies, services, and programs. In fact, over 70% of four-year colleges and universities have implemented new positions on campuses, e.g., Parent Coordinators, Parent Advisors, Parent Liaisons, Parental Relations Officers, and Parental Outreach Officers (Cutright, 2008; Hoover, 2004; Johnson, 2004; Lum, 2006). These administrators are responsible for establishing a variety of parent programs or “flight plans” (Hughes, 2015, p. 1), including parent orientation sessions, parent/family weekends, parental handbooks, parent-focused listservs, parent councils, parent committees, parent associations, parent-related institutional web sites, parent newsletters, and continuing education courses for “empty nesters” (Cutright, 2008; Hoover, 2004; Johnson, 2004; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Watson, 2007).

One particular institution, University of Tennessee at Martin, created a website, MyUTMartinParentPortal, which Kolowich (2014) referred to as a “heliport” or “launching pad,” where students can provide parents access to view courses, track attendance, check grades, note behavioral issues, and receive notification of missing documents such as financial aid forms, etc. (p. 1). Not all helicopter parents are looking to find problems – they just want to be involved and heard (Hiltz, 2015).

Student Development Theory

Student development theory refers to the “body of theories related to how students gain knowledge in post-secondary educational environments. Knowledge of student development theory enables practitioners to proactively identify and address students’ needs, design programs, develop policies, and create healthy college environments that encourage positive growth in students” (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998, pp. 4, 5). Student development theory addresses the way in which a student grows, changes, adapts, or develops in his/her personal capabilities as a result of engagement in classroom and extracurricular activities. Student development theory can guide student affairs practitioners and institutional administrators in ways of better understanding and supporting students through focused programs and services (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

In particular, Sanford (1967) defined development as “the organization of increasing complexity” (p. 47). Specifically, Sanford viewed identity development as an affirmative process of personal growth whereby an individual becomes better equipped to associate with and act upon a variety of life experiences and personal influences (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Sanford, 1967).

According to Sanford’s book *Education for Individual Development* (1967), “[a] college student needs preparation for a world in which he must play a variety of roles and even adopt new occupational roles” (p. vi). Further, Sanford explained “the extent to which the teaching is directed toward practical training” also influences the level of benefit to the student (p. vii). Sanford was one of the first scholars to address the connection between collegiate environments and the transition of students from late adolescence to young adulthood (Mitchell, 2012). Sanford viewed the college

experience as ideal for individual development as it presents “strong challenges and appraises students’ ability to cope with challenges while providing support when challenges become overwhelming” (Sanford, 1966, p. 46).

Sanford discovered that college students gain a great deal of personal growth and development both in and out of the college classroom. Specifically, he addressed the importance of balancing challenge and support. Essentially, the amount of challenge a person can tolerate relates to the amount of support available (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Sanford, 1966). Challenge pushes students to reach beyond the “status quo” and out of their comfort zone. However, excessive challenge can cause a student to reach a limitation and withdraw or disengage. Students need support by student affairs professionals in order to succeed in their personal, vocational, and educational endeavors. Conversely, excessive support can cause stagnation in student development (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Institutions must maintain an ideal balance of challenge and support for optimal student engagement and development. In fact, Kenny and Rice (1995) recommended that college counselors concern themselves with “helping students negotiate more adaptive parent relationships and strive for balance between connectedness and individuation” (p. 448). Importantly, according to Sanford (1966), students must demonstrate readiness both physically and psychologically in order to be willing and able to progress in student development. The balance of challenge and support does not necessarily imply that students will not experience unpleasant situations, negative consequences, or even failure; however, they can be equipped with the support and resources to learn and grow from their classroom and experiential experiences. Educational institutions can provide learning

opportunities through the freedom to experience challenge while maintaining a structure of support. Support can come from the institution, i.e. faculty, staff, and peers but it can also come from the home, i.e. parents, siblings, and extended family. Parents play a significant role in student development by providing support for students as they navigate challenges adjusting to college and beyond (Mitchell, 2012).

Psychosocial Development

There are three types of student development theories: psychosocial, cognitive-structural, and typology. The focus of this literature review is on theories related to psychosocial development, which is concerned with identity development of students, as well as interpersonal relationships (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). In addition to new views in educational philosophy, there are also new views in psychosocial development.

Early psychosocial developmental research was influenced primarily by Erik Erikson (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). He described psychosocial development as a sequence of age-linked stages taking place across one's lifespan with each stage involving a developmental task (Erikson, 1950; 1968). Erikson studied the impact of parents and society on personal development from childhood through adulthood. Erikson is credited for developing the way in which identity development is currently understood today (Mitchell, 2012).

Gerrig and Zimbardo (2002) stated that identity is an individual's sense of self as defined by physical/psychological characteristics and social roles/interpersonal affiliations. Identity development is a lifelong process. The concepts of separation and individuation were described in early works of Erik Erikson. Chickering and Reisser

(1993) defined separation as “a physical distancing,” whereas individuation means, “becoming one’s own person and taking increasing responsibility for self-support” (p. 115). Therefore, the key to a successful transition into adulthood is individuation, rather than merely separation.

Vectors of Development

One of the most well-known and widely cited student development theorists, Arthur Chickering (1969; 1981), was an earlier researcher to expand on the work of Erik Erikson (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). He examined the developmental issues faced by college students, as well as, the environmental conditions that influence development. Chickering and his colleague, Linda Reisser (1993) proposed seven psychosocial tasks or vectors of development that contribute to the formation of identity: (1) developing competence, (2) managing emotions, (3) moving through autonomy towards interdependence, (4) developing mature interpersonal relationships, (5) establishing identity, (6) developing purpose, and (7) developing integrity. According to Taub (2008), vector three, moving through autonomy towards interdependence, is the most important vector for student affairs professionals concerning the impact of parental involvement on student development.

Chickering and Reisser’s model illustrated three components to autonomy: (1) emotional independence, (2) instrumental independence, and (3) recognition of interdependence. In the process of moving through autonomy towards interdependence, students gain emotional independence by resolving their need for reassurance, comfort, affection, affirmation, and approval from parents and peers. Students gain instrumental independence by becoming self-sufficient and autonomous as they take personal

responsibility for growth, development, and educational attainment. Most importantly, as students gain autonomy they begin to understand the need for and importance of interdependence, which is defined as the “interconnectedness of others” (1993, p. 140).

Learning to identify one’s own personal needs while maintaining a willingness to seek assistance from others is an important part of growing up (Hofer & Moore, 2010). Excessive involvement from parents can significantly hinder the process of becoming an autonomous young adult (Howe & Strauss, 2000; 2003).

The first step toward emotional independence involves some separation from parents, increased reliance on peers, authorities, and institutional support systems, and growing confidence of one’s own self-sufficiency. The road to emotional independence begins with disengagement from parents, proceeds through reliance on peers and role models, and moves toward a balance of comfort with one’s own company and openness to others. Disengaging from parents can be hampered when insufficient opportunities exist to develop instrumental independence; students need to grasp responsibility for planning and producing their own work in an orderly way. Reliance on peers, non-parental adults, and occupational and institutional reference groups fosters awareness of interconnectedness with others (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, pp. 117, 122, 133-134, 140).

Taub summarized these points by stating that Chickering and Reisser “explicitly described how parents could inhibit students’ development of autonomy by being overly restrictive, unsupportive, or domineering” (2008, p. 18).

Educational Environments

Chickering and Reisser (1993) further documented several educational environments, which provide important influences on student development: (1) institutional objectives - programs and policies, (2) institutional size - campus community, (3) student/faculty relationships - intellectual interactions, (4) curriculum - situational reasoning, (5) teaching - active learning, (6) friendships and student communities - learning from peers, and (7) student development programs and services - collaborative environment.

These theorists specified three important principles concerning these educational environments. First, colleges/universities need to commit to programs that integrate work and learning to provide opportunities for students to gain relevant experiential field experiences (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). These types of programs can exist through strong town/gown partnerships between higher education institutions and community leaders. Second, educators need to maintain awareness of and respect for student's distinctive learning styles, needs, and interests in order to adapt programs, services, expectations, and interactions to individual students (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). This principle is especially important given the increasingly diverse student populations on college campuses today. Third, educators must understand the cycle of learning and development by providing stretch assignments to challenge student's learning processes and understanding of themselves, others, and the world in which they live and work (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). As students engage in new experiences and challenges, they will gain new perspectives, which will further result in new experiences and challenges and provide them with greater personal growth (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). As students transition through the process of

dependence to interdependence, parents and educators need to be continually aware of student's changing needs and required level of support to maintain an appropriate balance for these new challenges.

Emerging Adults

According to Hofer and Moore (2010), "the road to adulthood just keeps getting longer and longer" (p. 9). Mel Levine used the term "startup adults" to describe individuals in their 20s who lack the mindset and necessary preparation for successful entrance into adulthood (2005, p. 1; 2006, p. 19).

Expanding on the original stages of life-span development by Erikson (1950), Arnett (2000; 2006; 2013) proposed a new stage of development to address the "in between" gap from adolescence to adult maturity entitled emerging adulthood (ages 18-29). These ages are distinguished by three categories: launching (ages 18-22), which is the earliest phase of emerging adulthood whereby children increasingly become more comfortable living on their own and making their own decisions; exploring (ages 22-26), which is a period of time where young adults develop greater confidence and accept more responsibility while beginning to focus on aspects of both their personal and professional futures; landing (ages 26-29), which is the final period when emerging adults begin making significant decisions regarding love (spouse) and work (career) while preparing to take complete ownership of their personal and fiscal responsibilities (Arnett, 2000; Hofer & Moore, 2010).

According to Arnett, emerging adulthood is a period of life that offers the greatest opportunity for identity exploration in all aspects of love, work, education, and personal worldviews (Arnett, 2000; Arnett & Tanner, 2006; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller,

2011). In addition to identity exploration, emerging adulthood also typically involves four additional key features: (1) instability resulting from confusing changes and choices during life exploration while experiencing a lack of self-confidence concerning personal success, (2) self-focus resulting from accepting greater independence and personal responsibility, (3) feeling in-between, which occurs from an identity crisis taking place while progressing from adolescence yet at the same time not feeling completely ready and able to identify oneself as an adult, and (4) sense of possibilities, which results from feelings of hopefulness and optimism due to the immense opportunities available during this period of transition (Arnett, 2013; Arnett & Tanner, 2006; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011). Arnett described this time as “semiautonomy,” a term originally used by Goldscheider and Davanzo (1986). Overall, the challenge for young adults during emerging adulthood is “to become one’s own person” (Hofer & Moore, 2010, p. 35).

Hofer and Moore (2010) pointed out that emerging adults are “postponing traditional adulthood” by taking longer to complete college, delaying marriage and children, and most importantly, taking longer to support themselves financially (p. 9). Psychosocially, emerging adults are trying to discover themselves and establish their personal identity while learning how to adjust using their newly acquired independence (Hofer & Moore, 2010). In order to successfully transition to adulthood, Arnett (2000) emphasized that emerging adults must accept responsibility for themselves and make independent decisions but most importantly, gain financial independence.

It is important to recognize that “one of the most challenging shifts between childhood and adulthood is the changing relationship with parents” (Robbins & Wilner,

2001, p. 55). Emerging adulthood allows young adults to develop intangible transferable/soft skills such as decision-making and problem-solving. However, these skills require extensive practice and development through this emerging phase of adulthood (Robbins & Wilner, 2001).

Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012) noted the particularly problematic issue of over-parenting or helicopter parenting during the period of emerging adulthood. As similarly proposed by Sanford (1966), Arnett's theory demonstrates that emerging adults need freedom to make decisions within the challenges experienced but they also need guidance and support as they transition to mature adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Mitchell, 2012).

Theoretical Combination

In considering the relationship between the aforementioned student development theorists, Sanford (1962), Chickering and Reisser (1993), and Arnett (2000), the researcher created a diagram (Figure 1) to illustrate the connection between educational philosophy and psychosocial development through the stages of emerging adulthood. The goal for students through the developmental process is to learn to manage greater challenge, while requiring less support as they progress as emerging adults through the stages of launching, exploring, and landing while advancing from dependence to independence towards interdependence, simultaneously receiving influence and guidance from peers, parents, and campus administrators within the context of the educational environment and career building opportunities in the community.

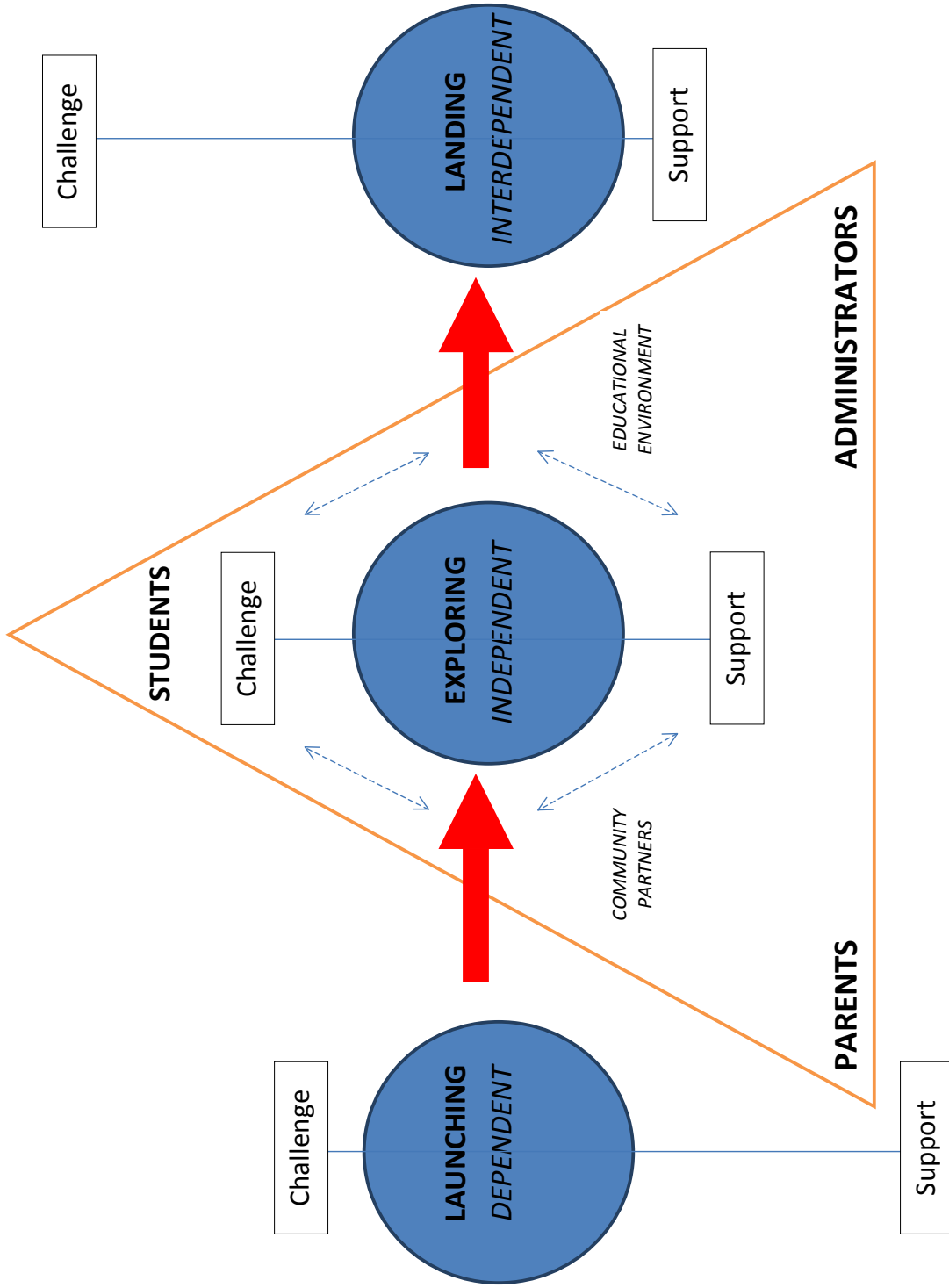


Figure 1. Theoretical Combination of Emerging Adulthood, Vectors of Development, Challenge and Support

Conclusion

According to Hirsch and Goldberger (2010), students must be “empowered to take responsibility for their education and to develop the skills they will need for life after college... this effort involves a delicate balance of guidance without interference and support without intrusion...” (p. 32). The transition to college can provide the ideal opportunity for parents and children to begin the process of aligning a new challenge and support balance, whereby parents can provide a more appropriate level of support while at the same time providing a chance for children’s growth through engagement in challenging new opportunities to develop the skills necessary to be successful as emerging adults (Mitchell, 2012). College can present a multitude of challenges to students, especially as they navigate many first-time experiences. However, college can also provide the support for student success through formal education and student support services. By understanding student development theory, student affairs practitioners can create an appropriate setting to assist students in developing the life skills needed for experiences beyond the collegiate environment (Mitchell, 2012).

Essentially, parents must provide children the freedom to engage in these opportunities otherwise they may experience significant negative impacts, especially as students transition from college to the workplace. In the book *Y in the Workplace: Managing the “Me First” Generation* by Lipkin and Perrymore (2009), human resource professionals documented a list of potential negative impacts for young employees as a result of helicopter parenting including limited decision-making, problem-solving, negotiation skills, and prioritization, as well as a lack of confidence, stress management, coping skills, autonomy, independence, accountability, responsibility, commitment, and

an inability to establish work/life balance and boundaries. Despite the best of intentions, parental over-involvement may result in young employees who lack the necessary critical skills to be effective leaders (Holton, 1991).

Chapter 3

Methodology

Helicopter parents are recognized for meddling in all aspects of the academic, social, and professional lives of their children. They are likely to become involved with their child's college discovery and prospecting, admissions and housing decisions, career and graduate school decisions, and even with employers during the child's job search process (Hunt, 2008). More specifically, helicopter parents are observed completing their child's entrance applications, writing admissions essays, contacting admissions departments, checking student emails, and discussing grades with professors. In anticipation of their child's graduation, helicopter parents may engage in filling out employment applications, writing resumes and cover letters, prepping for and attending job interviews, contacting employers to negotiate job and salary offers, and attending work-related events (Aslop, 2008; Cain, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010).

The consistent involvement of these parents may limit a child's ability to successfully transition to college and, ultimately, experience a successful transition to the workforce (McKnight, Paugh, McKnight, & Parker, 2009). Unfortunately, parental involvement may also inhibit opportunities for children to experience challenging situations, which afford them a chance to learn important decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills. Further, these children may be hindered in the development of essential applied skills, i.e. transferable/soft skills for educational and

career success. These important skills including independence, self-reliance, and autonomy are critical in developing leadership, which is a trait that employers consistently rank at the top of their hiring priorities (Aslop, 2008; Hiltz, 2015; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Lampert, 2009; Ludden, 2012; Moriarty, 2011; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Savage, 2003; 2008; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009). The following research questions were used for this study:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the skills development of traditional-age students in preparation for the transition from college to the workplace?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the progression to adulthood for traditional-age college students?

In 2015, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) released a document entitled *Career Readiness for the New College Graduate: A Definition and Competencies*. This document outlined a list of core competencies based on the results of the annual NACE Job Outlook survey and in collaboration with Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Corporate Voices for Working Families, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), and The Conference Board, Inc. These core competencies included: critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communication, teamwork/collaboration, information technology application, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, and career management. Further, NACE defined career readiness as “the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace” (National

Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1). The NACE career readiness core competencies and Job Outlook survey were used to inform the survey instrument and interview protocol.

Mixed Method

According to Creswell (2003), the concept of applying different research methods appears to have been originated by Campbell and Fiske (1959) when these researchers employed a ‘multimethod matrix’ in the study of psychological traits (p. 15). Multi-methodology or mixed methods procedures involve the use of more than one method of data collection and multiple forms of analysis (Creswell, 2003). This approach has been primarily associated with researchers mixing qualitative field methods such as observations and interviews along with quantitative data collection such as traditional surveys (Creswell, 2003). Mingers and Gill (1997) noted a multi-methodological approach can also be referred to as methodological pluralism or multi-paradigm research.

According to Tashakkori and Teddle (2003), “in multi-method research studies, research questions are answered by using two data collection procedures. Mixed method research studies use qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques in either parallel or sequential phases” (p. 11). Sequential data gathering or “sequencing” enables the researcher to first gather primary data to be used to inform the collection of secondary data (Tashakkori & Teddle, 2003).

This study relied on a sequential explanatory strategy beginning with quantitative data collection using a primary survey instrument, followed by secondary qualitative data collection through participant interviews. According to Creswell

(2003), the use of sequential explanatory strategy “is characterized by the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data [with] priority typically given to the quantitative data and the two methods are integrated during the interpretation phase of the study” (p. 215).

The integration or mixing of the data from the multiple sources may occur at any or many stages in the research process including data collection, data analysis, and/or interpretation (Creswell, 2003). The integration for this study occurred during both the data collection and data analysis/interpretation stages. Additionally, the quantitative findings guided the qualitative coding process through a grounded theoretical approach.

Quantitative Methodology

The quantitative methodology for this study utilized both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Spearman (1904) coined the term “factor analysis.” According to Gorsuch (1983), the goal of factor analysis is to aid in conceptualization by summarizing the underlying, interrelationships among variables. Child (1970) used the phrase “‘orderly simplification’ ... of a number of interrelated measures” to describe the central aim of factor analysis (p. 1). Kerlinger (1979) stated, “one of the most powerful methods yet invented for reducing variable complexity to greater simplicity is factor analysis... It tells the researcher, in effect, what tests or measures belong together – which ones virtually measure the same thing...” (p. 180). Kline (1994) explained that factor analysis is a series of statistical techniques aimed at simplifying and identifying correlations or common factors among variables within complex sets of data.

According to Child (1970), “these related variables are discovered using the technique of correlation” (p. 2). The correlation coefficient quantifies the statistical relationship between two or more variables (Child, 1970). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is data-driven and exploratory for the purpose of determining the number of common factors between individual variables and the strength of the relationship between factors (Chumney, 2012). This study utilized a multivariate EFA in order to create sets of domains or factors from a large set of variables for the purposes of data reduction and scale construction (Brown, 2006; Kline, 1994). Factor labeling was accomplished with substantiated references through an extensive literature review of pertinent sources.

Factor loading is a coefficient, which illustrates how much a variable is “loaded” or “saturated” on a factor (Kerlinger, 1979, p. 181). Factor loading is also referred to as the communality coefficient. The communality coefficient demonstrates how useful a particular factor is in explaining the variance for a set of factors (Thompson, 2004). Item loadings greater than .30 provide the ‘cleanest’ data fit (Costello & Osborne, 2005, p. 3). However, according to MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang, and Hong (1999), communalities of .60 or higher are preferred. For the purposes of this study, the more rigorous threshold of .60 factor loading was utilized.

Early research by Child (1970) defined a factor “as the outcome of discovering a group of variables having a certain characteristic in common” (pp. 13-14). Kerlinger (1979) later defined a factor as “an underlying and unobserved variable that presumably ‘explains’ observed tests, scales, items, or measures” (p. 180). Kline (1994) further elaborated on the definition of a factor as a “dimension, construct, [hypothetical entity

or unobserved variable] which is a condensed statement of the relationships between a set of variables” (p. 5).

Within factor analysis each factor explains a certain amount of the overall variance in the observed variables. This study utilized EFA for the primary purpose of clustering the original thirty-one (31) variables of emerging adulthood and nineteen (19) variables of transferable/soft skills from the participant survey into defined domains of behavior (Tyron, 1959).

Post-hoc (Latin for “after this”) tests, which can also be referred to as “a posteriori tests” or “follow-up tests” or “unplanned comparison tests” are used to confirm the differences between groups resulting from the analysis of experimental data (Homack, 2001, p. 8). The most common tests include Bonferroni Procedure and Fisher’s Least Significant Difference (LSD). The Bonferroni Procedure or Bonferroni Correction is a multiple-comparison post-hoc test used when simultaneously performing several independent or dependent statistical tests (Supattathum, 1994). The Bonferroni procedure was selected for this study based on the multiple comparisons among the domains resulting from the EFA process. However, when the post-hoc test results were ambiguous for statistical significance, an alternative test was selected. The alternative post-hoc test selected for this study was Fisher’s Least Significant Difference (LSD). The LSD post-hoc test is used for ANOVA to identify which pairs of means are statistically significant (Homack, 2001).

According to Child (1970), “variance is a very common statistical term which provides an index of the dispersion of scores” (p. 32). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) determines variation between all of the variables within a study. Statistician Ronald A.

Fisher (1959) developed the statistical method of ANOVA. It was developed as an extension of the t-test, which is limited to two groups. ANOVA permitted the analysis of variance to be examined within more than two groups.

Rutherford (2011) noted that ANOVA is a statistical analysis technique that isolates the aggregate variability within a data set into two parts: systematic factors and random factors. The systematic factors are those that have a statistical influence on the data set, whereas the random factors are not statistically influential. A one-way (unidirectional) ANOVA examines the impact of a single factor (independent variable) on a single response to determine similarities or differences. Rutherford (2011) described ANOVA as one of the most frequently applied techniques of statistical analysis. Essentially, ANOVA “allows researchers to determine if the mean scores of different groups or conditions differ” (p. 1). This study utilized the methodology of one-way ANOVA for the purpose of comparing the domains identified from the factor analysis in comparison to levels of parental involvement (low, medium, and high).

Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variances was used to ensure that the assumption of variance was not violated for the ANOVAs. Levene’s test is used to examine if samples have equal variances; equal variance across samples is referred to as homogeneity of variance (Croarkin & Tobias, 2010). Levene’s test is especially useful for ANOVA, which assumes that variances are equal across groups/samples and this test can verify this assumption (Croarkin & Tobias, 2010).

Qualitative Methodology

A grounded theoretical approach using in-depth interviews for descriptive data collection and coding techniques for data analysis guided the qualitative methodology

for this study. According to Oktay (2012), grounded theory is one of the oldest, most widely known, and most often used of the qualitative research methods. Glaser and Strauss (1967) originally coined the term “Grounded theory” in the book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Glaser (1992) defined grounded theory as “a general methodology of analysis linked with data collection that uses a systematically applied set of methods to generate an inductive theory about a substantive area” (p. 16). The main goal of grounded theory is to move beyond description towards the development, generation, or discovery of theory that is grounded in empirical data from the field, generally applicable for use in real-world situations, and may provide a framework for future research (Creswell, 2007; Oktay, 2012). The grounded theoretical approach for this study provided an opportunity to utilize the research findings to develop theory for use in collegiate and workforce settings to manage parental involvement, as well as provide resources for parents and students concerning transferable/soft skills development for career readiness.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), “the best-known representatives of qualitative research studies are those that employ the techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing” (p. 2). Participant observation and in-depth interviewing are useful for generating descriptive data. The interviews in this study relied upon a semi-structured approach incorporating flexibility using a loosely structured interview protocol. The interview protocol consisted of two main sections related to (1) parental involvement in academic experiences and (2) transferable/soft skills development for career readiness and job preparation. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) described qualitative research as descriptive using data collection in the “form of

words... rather than numbers” resulting in quotations from interview transcripts, field notes, etc. (p. 3). Coding is a method of qualitative data analysis used to assign “tags” or “labels” to the words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs within these quotations in order to denote meaningfulness to the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56).

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), coding breaks down text into “manageable segments” by attaching key words to phrases in order to segment the text for easy retrieval later in the analysis process (p. 323). Oktay (2012) defined coding as “the process of analyzing data by identifying common elements or patterns” (p. 150). The coding process for this study included the use of Atlas.ti, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) program.

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of students (N=335, n=6) and parents (n=3). Student participants were traditional-age, undergraduate college seniors at a public flagship, land-grant, doctoral-level research institution in the Southeast United States. Participants were limited to students aged 19-25 years old based on the age range defined as “emerging adulthood” (Arnett 2000, 2013; Arnett & Tanner, 2006) and the age range for traditional students as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics (2016). Due to Alabama state regulations regarding legal age of consent, participation was limited to students over the age of 19 (within the perimeters of emerging adulthood).

The techniques of purposeful and theoretical sampling were used for the selection of student participants for both the qualitative and quantitative phases of this study. Purposeful and theoretical sampling are used when individuals are selected

because they have experienced a phenomenon central to the research study and can best aid the researcher in the formation of theory (Creswell, 2003; 2007). Selected parents of student participants were chosen to participate in the second phase of the study for in-depth interviews. Student participants were asked to self-identify parental interest in participation in this part of the study.

Instrumentation/Data Collection

The multi-methodological study design was setup sequentially with the preliminary survey conducted for data collection followed by participant interviews. This sequential explanatory strategy, as described by Creswell (2003), utilizes qualitative and quantitative components separately during data collection while bringing both elements together for data interpretation and analysis.

Surveys

The Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (IDEA) by Reifman, Arnett, and Colwell (2007) was utilized as the framework for the participant survey. This instrument was designed to measure the individual differences within the processes of emerging adulthood including the age of identity explorations, the age of instability, the self-focused age, the age of feeling in-between, and the age of possibilities (Reifman, Arnett, & Colwell, 2007). The IDEA was modified by Danielle Mitchell (2012) for a dissertation study entitled *Parental Involvement and the Transition to Adulthood for Undergraduate Students*, which included questions pertaining to parental attachment and parental involvement such as type and frequency of parental contact, parental involvement with college administrators, parental involvement in academic

decision-making, and level of satisfaction with parental involvement in collegiate experiences.

Permission was granted from the primary authors of the original IDEA instrument, Reifman and Arnett (2007), as well as the modified version by Mitchell (2012) in order to utilize both sections for this research study. Permissions are included in Appendix E. For the purposes of this study, a third section was added to the survey to include participant rating of the level of job preparation based on the list of transferable/soft skills from the annual NACE Job Outlook survey (2015) including leadership, problem-solving, communication (verbal and written), teamwork, analytical/quantitative, work ethic, initiative, technical/computer, detail-oriented, flexibility/adaptability, interpersonal, organizational, friendly/outgoing, strategic planning, creativity, entrepreneurial (risk-taker), and tactfulness. A copy of the complete survey instrument for this study is included in Appendix F.

The survey instrument was developed and distributed using Qualtrics research software. This software is maintained on-line through a secure server hosted by the University. Students were invited to participate in the survey through an email request sent to eligible students by the director of the university Career Center. A copy of the student email is included in Appendix D. Students that selected to participate were prompted to click on an internal web link to access the survey instrument.

Interviews

The qualitative research portion of this study consisted of in-depth interviews with selected students and parents. The interviews were semi-structured relying on an interview protocol script consisting of questions pertaining to (a) parental involvement

and (b) transferable/soft skills development. A final question of the initial survey requested both student and parent volunteers for the interview phase of the research study. Of the survey participants that designated both student and parent interest in the interview segment of the research study, students were identified for initial interviews based primarily on their responses to the parental involvement/parental attachment section of the survey. Parents were contacted for interviews upon completion of the corresponding student interviews.

Data Analysis

Surveys

Quantitative data from the student surveys were analyzed using Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) and employed both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) methods. Findings are detailed in Chapter Four.

Interviews

Qualitative data from the student/parent interviews were analyzed using Atlas.ti, which permitted the researcher to upload the interview transcripts for coding. The coding process began with preliminary “open coding” which involved the development of major codes or categories of information (Creswell, 2007, p. 64). The open coding technique revealed twenty-one (21) items identified as campus contacts, campus experiences, career aspirations, career decisions, career preparation, career readiness, childhood experiences, defining adulthood, emerging adulthood, helicopter parenting, parental education, parental influences, parental involvement, parental relationship, peer involvement, peer situations, personal challenges, personal feelings, personal

preparation, skills development, and student outreach. The next step of the coding process involved “axial coding” whereby these 21 codes were aligned into five (5) overarching ‘core’ phenomena (Creswell, 2007, pp. 64-65) identified as collegiate experiences, peer relationships, career readiness, emerging adulthood, and parental involvement. Lastly, the final step of the coding process involved “selective coding” (Creswell, 2007, p. 65) in which the codes were applied to the theoretical framework using the domains revealed through the exploratory factor analysis for career readiness and emerging adulthood. Creswell (2007) noted that axial and selective coding are central to the development of grounded theory.

Concerns for Validity and Reliability

Quantitative

Gerrig and Zimbardo (2002) defined validity as the extent to which a test measures what it is designed to measure. The content validity for the quantitative research portion of this study was assessed using a pilot study or “feasibility study,” which according to Teijlingen and Hundley (2002, p. 33), is a generally used method for testing and measuring validity. This pilot study was conducted as a requirement for an advanced applied research class in the final semester of graduate coursework.

Gerrig and Zimbardo (2002) described reliability as the consistency or stability of an instrument to produce similar results with each use of the tool. Internal consistency was measured for each scale in the survey instrument using Cronbach’s alpha. This measurement of scale reliability determines how closely related each set of items are as a group (Cronbach, 1951). Cronbach’s alpha is the most common form of reliability coefficient or internal consistency. According to Hair, Black, Babin,

Anderson, and Tatham (2006), the lower limit for Cronbach's alpha is generally .70 with values exceeding .70 considered preferable. However, Nunnally (1967) maintained that modest reliabilities of .60 or .50 are acceptable. Of the ten scales, nine measured higher than the minimum .50 threshold and of these six measured .70 or higher. Reliability statements for each scale are detailed in Appendix A.

Qualitative

According to Golafshani (2003), an "examination of trustworthiness is crucial" to establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research (p. 601). Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe trustworthiness as including validity, reliability, and objectivity.

For the qualitative portion of this research study, field experts including a professor of higher education administration and an AVP of Institutional Assessment provided a check of content validity through a review of the interview protocol. The interview protocols for both the students and parents are included in Appendix C.

Reliability within qualitative research concerns whether or not two independent researchers examining the same setting or subjects will reveal similar findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Reliability and validity of coded data can be achieved through inter-coder agreement measures, the standard process of which is codebook development (Macqueen, McLellan, Kay, & Milstein, 1998). For the purposes of this study, codebooks were created and provided for review to a senior-level career services administrator to establish inter-rater reliability by determining that the codes and themes as designated by the researcher were reasonably accurate and discreet. Inter-rater reliability is established when two (or more) individuals, i.e. primary researcher and secondary field expert(s), independently review the coded qualitative data for

comparison (Armstrong, Gosling, Weinman, & Marteau, 1997). The codebooks for the open/axial and selective codes are included in Appendix B.

The interview procedure added an additional component of trustworthiness by providing interview participants with an opportunity to contact the researcher for a copy of the interview transcript for the purposes of member validation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). However, it is important to note that none of the interview participants requested this opportunity.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) refer to objectivity as “freedom from bias” through reliable knowledge that has been “systematically cross-checked and verified” (p. 242). It is important to note the researcher’s background as a professional in career services as a possible concern of bias and lack of objectivity. Therefore, the aforementioned checks for validity and reliability of both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this study were established in order to safeguard against potential investigator bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ethical Considerations

In accordance with institutional policy, approval for this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects Research through the university’s Office of Research Compliance. As required for the IRB application, the researcher successfully completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) curriculum for responsible conduct of social and behavioral research. Participants of the initial survey were provided with an information letter detailing the purpose of the research project as well as the voluntary nature of participation, the length of time commitment, and the confidentiality of the data collection. Interview

participants were also provided with an informed consent form detailing participant selection criteria, the voluntary nature of participation, the length of time commitment, and the confidentiality of the data collection, as well as the use of the study results. The approved IRB documents including the information letter and informed consent forms for both student and parent participants are included in Appendix G. Student interview participants were also provided with an option to receive University career development resources at the conclusion of the interview.

The goal of qualitative sampling as stated by Barbour (2014) “is not to produce a representative sample, but is, rather, to reflect diversity” (p. 68). While quantitative studies may focus on the “representativeness” of a statistical distribution, qualitative studies take into account “outliers” or exceptions to generally observed patterns or principals (Barbour, 2014, pp. 55, 214). Leavy (2014) noted that interpretations in qualitative data can be judged by three criteria: coherence, correspondence, and inclusiveness. In regards to inclusiveness, it is important to consider outlier data or a negative example that “doesn’t necessarily support identified themes” (p. 641). According to Barbour (2014), these outlying or negative observations are “useful for identifying what features are missing in models... for the purposes of model-building, qualitative research is well-placed to focus on these ‘negative cases’ in order to explicate the processes involved” (p. 214). For the qualitative analysis of this study, negative examples were considered during the coding process for theme development and are described within the findings (Chapter Four) and summary of findings (Chapter Five).

Summary

The use of a multi-methodological approach provides an opportunity for triangulation or convergence of data sources across both qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2003). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), triangulation of data is crucial in naturalistic studies. Denzin (1978) defined triangulation as “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon” (p. 291). The use of multiple data sources or methods triangulation can facilitate deeper investigation and a more robust, comprehensive, and well-developed understanding of a particular phenomenon while avoiding “irrelevant error,” which can occur with the use of individual methods (Swanson, 1992, p. 4). The purpose of triangulation in this study was to produce an innovative conceptual framework.

Chapter 4

Findings

Helicopter parents are recognized for meddling in all aspects of the academic, social, and professional lives of their children. They are likely to become involved with their child's college discovery and prospecting, admissions and housing decisions, career and graduate school decisions, and even with employers during the child's job search process (Hunt, 2008). More specifically, helicopter parents are observed completing their child's entrance applications, writing admissions essays, contacting admissions departments, checking student emails, and discussing grades with professors. In anticipation of their child's graduation, helicopter parents may engage in filling out employment applications, writing resumes and cover letters, prepping for and attending job interviews, contacting employers to negotiate job and salary offers, and attending work-related events (Aslop, 2008; Cain, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010).

The consistent involvement of these parents may limit a child's ability to successfully transition to college and, ultimately, experience a successful transition to the workforce (McKnight, Paugh, McKnight, & Parker, 2009). Unfortunately, parental involvement may also inhibit opportunities for children to experience challenging situations, which afford them a chance to learn important decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills. Further, these children may be hindered in the development of essential applied skills, i.e. transferable/soft skills for educational and

career success. These important skills including independence, self-reliance, and autonomy are critical in developing leadership, which is a trait that employers consistently rank at the top of their hiring priorities (Aslop, 2008; Hiltz, 2015; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Lampert, 2009; Ludden, 2012; Moriarty, 2011; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Savage, 2003; 2008; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009). The following research questions were used for this study:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the skills development of traditional-age students in preparation for the transition from college to the workplace?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the progression to adulthood for traditional-age college students?

Sample

The sample for this study was comprised of traditional-age college seniors (19-25 years old). The initial phase of the mixed methodology used a survey instrument to collect data from students (N=335). Nine participants (N=9) volunteered for selection and participation in the qualitative interview phase of the study (students (n=6) and parents (n=3)).

Quantitative Results

Measures of Central Tendency

There are three primary measures of central tendency: mean, median, and mode. The mean (or arithmetic average) is the most common measure of central tendency. It is equal to the sum of all values in the data set divided by the number of values in the

data set (Dixon & Massey, 1957). The following tables illustrate the mean values for the three sections of the student survey: emerging adulthood, parental involvement, and transferable/soft skills development.

Emerging Adulthood. For the first section of the survey, student participants were asked to rate thirty-one periods of emerging adulthood using a four-level Likert scale of strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree, rated from one to four, respectively. The Likert scale is named after psychologist and inventor, Rensis Likert (1932). The Likert scale is one of the most widely used scaling instruments in survey research (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951).

Table 1

Ratings of Emerging Adulthood Experiences

Periods of Emerging Adulthood	Mean
Time of many possibilities (Q8_1)	3.72
Time of exploration (Q8_2)	3.61
Time of confusion (Q8_3)	3.20
Time of experimentation (Q8_4)	2.99
Time of personal freedom (Q8_5)	3.43
Time of feeling restricted (Q8_6)	2.07
Time of responsibilities for yourself (Q8_7)	3.66
Time of feeling stressed out (Q8_8)	3.40
Time of instability (Q8_9)	2.67
Time of optimism (Q8_10)	3.34
Time of high pressure (Q8_11)	3.39
Time of finding out who you are (Q8_12)	3.32
Time of settling down (Q8_13)	2.09
Time of responsibility for others (Q8_14)	2.40
Time of independence (Q8_15)	3.59
Time of open choices (Q8_16)	3.37

Time of unpredictability (Q8_17)	3.17
Time of commitment to others (Q8_18)	2.75
Time of self-sufficiency (Q8_19)	3.31
Time of many worries (Q8_20)	3.10
Time of trying out new things (Q8_21)	3.31
Time of focusing on yourself (Q8_22)	3.20
Time of separating from parents (Q8_23)	3.16
Time of defining yourself (Q8_24)	3.36
Time of planning for the future (Q8_25)	3.67
Time of seeking a sense of meaning (Q8_26)	3.21
Time of deciding on your own beliefs and values (Q8_27)	3.38
Time of learning to think for yourself (Q8_28)	3.52
Time of feeling adult in some ways but not in others (Q8_29)	3.47
Time of gradually becoming adult (Q8_30)	3.44
Time of being unsure whether you have reached full adulthood (Q8_31)	2.95

The overall mean for students' ratings of emerging adulthood is $\bar{X}=3.20$, which indicated that students agree they are experiencing most of the aspects associated with the periods of emerging adulthood with the exception of feeling restricted, settling down, and responsibility for others ($\bar{X}<2.5$). Students indicated the highest level of agreement in the aspect of emerging adulthood related to it being a time of possibilities ($\bar{X}=3.72$). Whereas, students indicated the lowest rating for defining this period of emerging adulthood as a time of feeling restricted ($\bar{X}=2.07$).

Parental Involvement. For the second section of the survey, student participants were asked to reflect over their college experience in regards to parental involvement. This section included five distinct questions. The first question asked students to indicate the frequency of contact with their parents during college. Participants ranked

this question using a six-level rating scale of not at all, once a month or less, a few times a month, about once a week, a few times a week, or daily.

Table 2

Frequency of Parental Contact

Communication Method	Mean
By Phone (Q9_1)	4.31
By Text Message (Q9_2)	4.61
By Email (Q9_3)	2.52
In Person (Q9_4)	2.28

The overall mean of parental contact is $\bar{X}=3.43$ indicating that students tend to have contact with parents on average of a few times a month to about once a week. 106 students (31%) indicated daily parental contact with text message and phone being the most common methods of communication. This finding aligned with research conducted by the College Parents of America (2006), which indicated 33% of parents have daily contact with their students.

The second question of this section of survey asked student participants to identify the types of contact that their parents had with administrators during their time in college. Participants ranked this question using a five-level Likert rating scale of never, one time, 2-5 times, 6-10 times, or more than 11 times rated from one to five, respectively.

Table 3

Frequency of Parental Contact with Campus Administrators

Types of Parental Contact	Mean
Financial Aid (Q10_3)	1.67
Residence Life (Q10_6)	1.17
Faculty Member (Q10_5)	1.14
Academic Advisor (Q10_4)	1.13
Dean of the College (Q10_2)	1.06
Student Affairs (Q10_7)	1.05
Career Center (Q10_8)	1.03
President of the University (Q10_1)	1.02

The overall mean for parental contact with campus administrators is $\bar{X}=1.16$ indicating that parents rarely contacted administrators on behalf of their child. Only eleven students (3%) indicated the highest level of parental contact with administrators (more than 11 times). Interestingly, contact with Financial Aid was the most frequently indicated. This finding aligned with the premise that parental involvement at the collegiate level may be a result of the rising costs of education (Carney-Hall, 2008; Coburn, 2006; Howe & Strauss, 2003; Lampert, 2009; Redmond, 2008; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009; Somers & Settle, 2010; Watson, 2013).

The third question of this section of the survey asked student participants to indicate with whom they sought advice in selecting their major whether parents, professionals, friends, or others.

Table 4

Advice Sought for Major

Contact	Frequency
Mother (Q11_1)	160
Father (Q11_2)	156
High School Guidance Counselor (Q11_3)	24
College Academic Advisor (Q11_4)	77
High School Teacher (Q11_5)	50
College Faculty Member (Q11_6)	45
Friend (Q11_7)	94
Other (Q11_8)	73

These frequencies indicated that students relied mostly on the advice of their mothers and fathers in selecting their majors (54% and 53%, respectively) followed by their peers (32%). High school guidance counselors received the lowest ranking (8%).

The fourth question within this section of the survey asked student participants to indicate their desired level of parental involvement during their time as a college student using a five-level Likert rating scale of much less involved, somewhat less involved, involved as much as they are, somewhat more involved, or much more involved rated from one to five, respectively.

Table 5

Satisfaction of Parental Involvement

Level	Mean
Parental Involvement (Q12_1)	2.42

This finding indicated that students prefer their parents to be somewhat less involved during their time as a college student. This is a particularly interesting finding due to research including the 2000 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which revealed students expectations and acceptance of parents' participation in their campus lives (Hofer & Moore, 2010; Kuh, 2001; 2003; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2000).

In the final question of this section of the survey, student participants were asked to indicate the level of their parent's involvement with several aspects of college decision-making and academic involvement. Students ranked this question using a six-level Likert rating scale of strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree or strongly agree rated from one to six, respectively.

Table 6

Parental Involvement with College and Academics

Discussion Topic	Mean
My parents and I discuss the classes I should take (Q13_1)	2.63
My parents and I discuss what I learned in class (Q13_2)	3.33
My parents are very interested in my academic programs (Q13_3)	4.56
My parents stress the importance of getting good grades (Q13_4)	4.62
I am pursuing a major I don't like in order to please my parents (Q13_5)	1.39
My parents ask about my friends or non-academic activities (Q13_6)	4.91
My parents are involved in my career pursuits (Q13_7)	4.16

The overall mean for this question is $\bar{X}=3.66$ indicating that students moderately agree that their parents are involved in discussions concerning their academic, non-academic, and career pursuits. Students indicated the strongest level of agreement with parents' discussion of friends and non-academic activities, as well as stressing the importance of good grades and expressing interest in academic programs. Students indicated the lowest level of agreement with parent's involvement in decisions regarding major and course selections.

Soft Skills Development. For the third section of the survey, student participants were asked to rank their perceived level of development for nineteen skill sets in preparation for future employment. The six-level Likert rating scale used for this section included the ratings of strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree rated from one to six, respectively.

Table 7

Soft Skills Development

Skill	Mean
Leadership (Q14_1)	5.14
Problem-Solving (Q14_2)	5.33
Written Communication (Q14_3)	5.25
Verbal Communication (Q14_4)	5.17
Teamwork (Q14_5)	5.41
Analytical/Quantitative (Q14_6)	5.16
Work Ethic (Q14_7)	5.50
Initiative (Q14_8)	5.29
Computer Skills (Q14_9)	4.83
Technical Skills (Q14_10)	4.69
Detail-Oriented (Q14_11)	5.16

Flexibility/Adaptability (Q14_12)	5.28
Interpersonal (Q14_13)	5.24
Organization (Q14_14)	5.20
Friendly/Outgoing (Q14_15)	5.14
Strategic Planning (Q14_16)	5.12
Creativity (Q14_17)	4.69
Entrepreneurial/Risk-Taker (Q14_18)	4.07
Tactfulness (Q14_19)	4.88

The overall mean for students' level of transferable/soft skills development is $\bar{X}=5.08$ indicating that students agree they have adequately developed the skills necessary for future employment with the exception of computer/technical skills, creativity, entrepreneurial/risk-taker, and tactfulness ($\bar{X} < 5.0$). In fact, less than 1% (.0085) of students strongly disagreed with their level of skills development with the highest level (2.67%) of student participants stating strong disagreement with their entrepreneurial/risk-taker abilities. However, it is especially interesting to note the lack of students' confidence in computer/technical skills given the description of this generation as technologically savvy (Cavanaugh, Kay, Klein, & Meisinger, 2006; Martin & Tulgan, 2001; Raines, 2002; 2003; Richardson, 2011). A mere 31% of student participants expressed strong agreement in their level of skills development for computer/technical skills. Also interesting is students' rating of strong work ethic, of which 63% of student participants strongly agreed with their development of this particular transferable/soft skill despite research identifying millennials as lacking work ethic for future workplace success (Cavanaugh, Klein, Kay, & Meisinger, 2006;

National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Society of Human Resource Management, 2016).

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to identify a domain framework from thirty-one data points related to emerging adulthood and nineteen data points related to transferable/soft skills development on the survey instrument.

Through the use of multiple regression EFA, the resulting domain framework explained 67.127% of variance. The item grouping of the EFA resulted in the creation of a framework of three domains for transferable/soft skills development, which were labeled emotional intelligence, information technology application, and professionalism. The EFA results created a framework of seven domains for emerging adulthood, which were labeled self-authorship, uncertainty, anxiety, individuation, accountability, positivity, and impulsiveness. These domains aligned well with previous scales determined by Reifman, Arnett, and Colwell (2007). These original researchers identified six scales entitled identity exploration, other-focused, self-focused, experimentation/possibilities, negativity/instability, and in-between. Of the seven domains revealed in this study, impulsiveness was the only domain that did not align with the results of the existing scales. Impulsiveness included components of experimentation/possibilities and self-focused. However, two of the domains revealed from this study aligned perfectly with the previous results including accountability and uncertainty, which aligned with other-focused and in-between, respectively. All of the remaining domains included between two to four common components within each of the existing scales.

Emerging Adulthood Domains. Expanding on the original stages of life-span development by Erikson (1950), Arnett (2000; 2013) proposed a new stage of development between adolescence and adult maturity entitled emerging adulthood. Reifman, Arnett, and Colwell (2007) designed a survey instrument to measure individual differences within the processes of emerging adulthood called the Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (IDEA), which comprised thirty-one statements for participants to agree/disagree related to this period of life. The IDEA was utilized as the introductory section for the quantitative survey in this study. The following tables illustrate the results of the EFA outlining the seven domains of self-authorship, uncertainty, anxiety, individuation, accountability, positivity, and impulsiveness, which were constructed from the results of the emerging adulthood statements completed by the student participants:

Factor Labeling: Self-Authorship. Baxter-Magolda described self-authorship as “the internal capacity to define one’s beliefs, identity, and social relations” (2008, p. 269). Kegan (1994) who is credited with coining the term “self-authorship” asserted the necessity of internal identity or self-authorship, self-initiation, personal responsibility, and interdependence for adults in work, school, and home situations. Self-authorship permits individuals to understand expectations, make independent decisions and gain self-confidence in difficult situations (Simmons, 2008). Simmons (2008) proposed that the theory of self-authorship is an important theoretical perspective when considering college student-parent relationships. Through the EFA process for this study the following areas of emerging adulthood were included in a domain entitled “self-

authorship” - time of finding out who you are, time of sense of meaning making, time of deciding on your own beliefs and values, and time of learning to think for yourself.

Table 8

Self-Authorship Domain

Statements of Emerging Adulthood	Factor Loading
Time of finding out who you are (Q8_12)	.651
Time of sense of meaning making (Q8_26)	.77
Time of deciding on your own beliefs and values (Q8_27)	.834
Time of learning to think for yourself (Q8_28)	.723

Factor Labeling: Uncertainty. Uncertainty is defined by Merriam-Webster (2014) as “the quality or state of being uncertain; doubt; something that is doubtful, unknown, uncertain, or undecided” (p. 1361). A study conducted by Jablonski and Martino (2013) reported that while parents and children both acknowledged the entrance into emerging adulthood status, parents noted that children didn’t always believe in themselves as emerging adults. Through the EFA process for this study the following areas of emerging adulthood were included in a domain entitled “uncertainty” - time of feeling adult in some ways but not in others, time of gradually becoming an adult, and time of being unsure whether you have reached full adulthood.

Table 9

Uncertainty Domain

Statements of Emerging Adulthood	Factor Loading
Time of feeling adult in some ways but not in others (Q8_29)	.814

Time of gradually becoming an adult (Q8_30)	.831
Time of being unsure whether you have reached full adulthood (Q8_31)	.679

Factor Labeling: Anxiety. Anxiety is defined by *Merriam-Webster* (2014) as “fear or nervousness about what might happen or a feeling of wanting to do something very much, especially because of fear or nervousness. Painful or apprehensive uneasiness of mind (nervousness) usually over an impending or anticipated ill - fear, concern, or interest” (p. 56). A study conducted by Kins, Soenens, and Beyers (2013), specifically examined the impact of separation anxiety on emerging adulthood. According to their research, separation anxiety may occur during the phase of emerging adulthood as a child makes the transition from being a dependent adolescent to an independent young adult, i.e. moving away from home (Kins, Soenens, & Beyers, 2013). The real-life experience of separation can cause stress, anxiety, and worry. Through the EFA process for this study the following areas of emerging adulthood were included in a domain entitled “anxiety” - time of feeling stressed out, time of high pressure, and time of many worries.

Table 10

Anxiety Domain

Statements of Emerging Adulthood	Factor Loading
Time of feeling stressed out (Q8_8)	.842
Time of high pressure (Q8_11)	.855
Time of many worries (Q8_20)	.765

Factor Labeling: Individuation. Mahler coined the term “individuation” as a process occurring in childhood (Mahler, 1988). Mahler noted, “individuation consists of those achievements marking the child’s assumption of his own individual characteristics” (Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975, p. 4). Blos (1967) postulated a second phase of individuation occurring during adolescence. According to Blos, this additional individuation process occurs in response to adolescents’ need for independence and autonomy. Kruse and Walper (2008) stated, “individuation in relation to father and mother is one of the key developmental tasks of adolescence and has been conceptualized as gaining autonomy while maintaining relatedness to parents” (p. 390). Through the EFA process for this study the following areas of emerging adulthood were included in a domain entitled “individuation” - time of independence, time of self-sufficiency, and time of separating from parents.

Table 11

Individuation Domain

Statements of Emerging Adulthood	Factor Loading
Time of independence (Q8_15)	.712
Time of self-sufficiency (Q8_19)	.772
Time of separating from parents (Q8_23)	.658

Factor Labeling: Accountability. Accountability is defined by Merriam-Webster (2014) as “the quality or state of being accountable, especially, an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions. Required to explain actions or decisions to someone; required to be responsible for something [or

someone]” (p. 8). According to a research study conducted by Shannon, Barry, DeGrace, and DiDonato (2016), college students’ accountability through self-regulation depends on the parent-child relationship and parents continue to play an important role in promoting academic success. Additionally, emerging adults are accountable for new financial and social responsibilities (Jablonski & Martino, 2013). Through the EFA process for this study the following areas of emerging adulthood were included in a domain entitled “accountability” - time of settling down, time of responsibility for others, and time of commitment to others.

Table 12

Accountability Domain

Statements of Emerging Adulthood	Factor Loading
Time of settling down (Q8_13)	.655
Time of responsibility for others (Q8_14)	.781
Time of commitment to others (Q8_18)	.728

Factor Labeling: Positivity. Positivity is defined by Merriam-Webster (2014) as “the quality or state of being positive, good, or useful. Thinking about the good qualities of something or someone. Thinking that a good result will happen – hopeful or optimistic. Completely certain that something is correct or true” (p. 968). A research study by Kenny and Sirin (2006) affirmed perceptions by emerging adults in positivity and self-worth as associated with parental attachment. Through the EFA process for this study the following areas of emerging adulthood were included in a domain entitled “positivity” - time of many possibilities and time of optimism.

Table 13

Positivity Domain

Statements of Emerging Adulthood	Factor Loading
Time of many possibilities (Q8_1)	.77
Time of optimism (Q8_10)	.798

Factor Labeling: Impulsiveness. Impulsiveness is defined by *Merriam-Webster* (2014) as “doing things or tending to do things suddenly and without careful thought; acting or tending to act on impulse; done suddenly and without planning resulting from a sudden impulse” (p. 627). According to Lane (2014), “emerging adulthood presents many life transitions... in the midst of prolonged identity experimentation and subjectivity, emerging adults navigate a multitude of major life and role changes, such as leaving home, entering educational settings, and starting a career” (p. 30). Through the EFA process for this study the following areas of emerging adulthood were included in a domain entitled “impulsiveness” - time of experimentation and time of unpredictability.

Table 14

Impulsiveness Domain

Statements of Emerging Adulthood	Factor Loading
Time of experimentation (Q8_4)	.637
Time of unpredictability (Q8_17)	.753

Soft Skills Domains. The most recent edition of the annual Job Outlook survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges of Employers (2015) included a set of nineteen skills considered by employers to be ideal for entry-level workplace success (Andrews & Higson, 2008). These skills from the third section of the student survey are leadership, problem-solving, communication skills (written and verbal), teamwork, analytical/quantitative, work ethic, initiative, computer and technical, detail-oriented, flexibility/adaptability, interpersonal, organizational, friendly/outgoing, strategic planning, creativity, entrepreneurial (risk-taker), and tactfulness. Through the EFA process for this study, these skills were included in three domains entitled emotional intelligence, information technology application, and professionalism.

Factor Labeling: Emotional Intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (1990; 1997; 2004) developed the psychological theory of Emotional Intelligence (EI) or Emotional Quotient (EQ). These researchers defined EI/EQ as “processes involved in the recognition, use, understanding, and management of one’s own and others’ emotional states to solve emotion-laden problems and to regulate behavior” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). Goleman (1995) popularized the term in the best selling book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. Through the EFA process for this study the following transferable/soft skills were included in a domain entitled “emotional intelligence” – communication, interpersonal, and friendly/outgoing personality.

Table 15

Emotional Intelligence Domain

Transferable/Soft Skills

Factor Loading

Verbal Communication Skills (Q14_4)	.801
Interpersonal Skills (Q14_13)	.840
Friendly/Outgoing Personality (Q14_15)	.837

Factor Labeling: Information Technology Application. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2015), information technology application includes the ability to “select and use appropriate technology to accomplish a given task while applying computing skills to solve problems” (p. 1). Through the EFA process for this study the following transferable/soft skills were included in a domain entitled “information technology application” – computer and technical skills.

Table 16

Information Technology Application Domain

Transferable/Soft Skills	Factor Loading
Computer Skills (Q14_9)	.941
Technical Skills (Q14_10)	.936

Factor Labeling: Professionalism. According to the career readiness competencies as outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), professionalism/work ethic is defined as the ability to “demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1). Through the EFA process for this study the following

transferable/soft skills were included in a domain entitled “professionalism” – work ethic and initiative.

Table 17

Professionalism Domain

Transferable/Soft Skills	Factor Loading
Strong Work Ethic (Q14_7)	.874
Initiative (Q14_8)	.854

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

One-way ANOVAs were conducted on each of the domains for emerging adulthood (self-authorship, uncertainty, anxiety, individuation, accountability, positivity, impulsiveness) and transferable/soft skills development (emotional intelligence, information technology application, and professionalism) in relation to the level of parental involvement as determined by frequency of parental contact based on student responses to the second section of the survey. This section asked student participants to “think back over your college experience [and indicate] how often you typically had contact with one of both of your parents.” The types of parental contact included: phone, text message, email, and in-person. Students selected either (a) not at all, (b) once a month or less, (c) a few times a month, (d) about once a week, (e) a few times a week, or (f) usually everyday. Parental involvement was designated as high if a student participant selected “usually everyday” for any type of contact (n=106). Parental involvement was considered mid-range (medium) if a student participant selected “a few times a week” for any type of contact (n=118). Parental involvement

was designated as low if a student participant selected any other level of contact for all other types of parental contact (n=78).

Of the ANOVAs that were conducted on the three transferable/soft skills development domains and seven emerging adulthood domains, three revealed statistically significant results including two related to emerging adulthood (impulsiveness and accountability) and one related to transferable/soft skills development (emotional intelligence).

Impulsiveness. For the purposes of this study, impulsiveness included experimentation and unpredictability as revealed by the exploratory factor analysis. The ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between impulsiveness and parental involvement [$F_{(2, 299)} = 3.145, p = 0.044$].

Table 18

Impulsiveness and Level of Parental Involvement

	\bar{X}	SD
Low Parental Involvement	6.05	1.357
Medium Parental Involvement	6.38	1.205
High Parental Involvement	5.98	1.265

Post-hoc comparisons using the LSD test indicated that the mean score for medium parental involvement ($\bar{X}=.400, SD=.019$) was significant in relationship to impulsiveness and revealed a positive mean difference; whereas low parental involvement ($\bar{X}=-.330, SD=.185$) and high parental involvement ($\bar{X}=-.070, SD=.189$) revealed negative mean differences.

Accountability. For the purposes of this study, accountability included settling down, responsibility for others, and commitment to others as revealed by the exploratory factor analysis. The ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between accountability and parental involvement [$F_{(2, 298)} = 4.845, p = 0.008$].

Table 19

Accountability and Level of Parental Involvement

	\bar{X}	SD
Low Parental Involvement	6.71	1.944
Medium Parental Involvement	7.52	1.769
High Parental Involvement	7.37	1.769

Post-hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test indicated that the mean score for low parental involvement ($\bar{X} = 6.71, SD = 1.944$) and medium parental involvement ($\bar{X} = 7.52, SD = 1.769$) were significant in relationship to accountability compared to high parental involvement ($\bar{X} = 7.37, SD = 1.769$). However, the mean difference for low parental involvement revealed a negative mean difference, whereas, medium parental involvement revealed a positive mean difference.

Emotional Intelligence. For the purposes of this study, emotional intelligence included communication skills, interpersonal skills, and friendly/outgoing personality as revealed by the exploratory factor analysis. The ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and parental involvement [$F_{(2, 295)} = 3.228, p = 0.041$].

Table 20

Emotional Intelligence and Level of Parental Involvement

	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>
Low Parental Involvement	15.05	2.578
Medium Parental Involvement	15.56	2.300
High Parental Involvement	15.91	1.956

Post-hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test indicated that the mean score for low parental involvement ($\bar{X}=-.862$, $SD=.339$) and high parental involvement ($\bar{X}=.862$, $SD=.339$) were significant in relationship to emotional intelligence compared to medium parental involvement ($\bar{X}=.509$, $SD=.332$). However, the mean difference for low parental involvement revealed a negative mean difference, whereas, high parental involvement revealed a positive mean difference.

Qualitative Results

Students

The coding process for the student interviews revealed five axial codes for theme development: (1) collegiate experiences, (2) peer relationships, (3) career readiness, (4) emerging adulthood, and (5) parental involvement.

Collegiate Experiences. In discussing collegiate experiences, students indicated positive growth from engagement in extracurricular activities such as athletics, fraternities, Christian organizations, academic societies, study abroad, etc. Students described social benefits from their involvement including making friends, as well as personal development of leadership and interpersonal skills.

I would say that I've learned the most valuable leadership skills through my involvement here on campus. I'm fortunate to serve in leadership positions. That's probably where I've learned the most and refined my leadership skills a little bit. [S2]

Study abroad has provided me with the opportunity to develop relationships with different types of people and really learn about human relationships. [S3]

I was in the band so I was involved in the whole football aspect and it was a great way to make friends. I had that forced social interaction and it was great for my freshman year. [S4]

[College] has a lot of events on campus where students can get together and hear different opinions and basically just figure out their values... I think that's an important part of figuring out who you are and what you believe as an adult that is separate from your parent's ideals. [S4]

I've just always found myself drawn to leadership positions so I feel very prepared to take on a role like that when I enter my career. [S4]

I was mostly involved with the campus ministry... and that become my social circle. [S6]

I volunteered at the athletic department so then those were the people that I got to know... and that was probably the biggest influence. [S6]

Students reflected on their initial campus experiences and the adjustment to college life describing their memories of the first moments on campus and the challenging transition from high school to college. They discussed the critical importance of figuring out how to approach college academics differently than high school. They described the difficulty of adjusting to the responsibilities that accompany living on one's own for the first time. Further, they discussed the social adjustments of being without friends and family including feelings of fear and sadness.

I really found that making friends was the easy part... The living aspect of taking care of myself was the hard part. [S2]

It took me halfway through my first semester to figure out either I'm going to buckle down and figure out how to study or I'm going to be back home at the end of the year and so that was the biggest thing, trying to learn how to study. [S2]

It was pretty intimidating to come freshman year but at the same time this is what I would like to do for four years so the learning curve was pretty overwhelming. [S2]

I was like, "What am I doing here? Why am I here?" I don't know anyone here and it was terrifying. [S3]

My parents dropped me off, stayed here for two nights with me and then they left ... I just started milling around campus by myself. That's how I got involved in that. [S5]

I remember cautiously closing the door... looking around and... really, I think I was sad. It was profound, kind of ominous, like, whoa, I guess it's just me now. [S6]

Students also reflected on their initial expectations entering college and their process of adjustment in the absence of parental supervision. For one particular student, the transition was relatively seamless while for others it was a period of change with notable outcomes in personal development such as the increase of independence. In fact, one student noted the on-going process of self-discovery.

I am still trying to figure it out. [S1]

You have to kind of learn how to deal with having so much freedom but I think I have adjusted well... Now, I feel like I'm more independent because of it. [S3]

Coming to [college] was very liberating for me. I was able to get out and kind of figure out who I was and what I believe in. For the first time in my life, really, exploring these aspects of myself. So when I got to [college] I was able to explore my beliefs and then really establish what I believed in that either lined up or didn't line up with my parents. [S4]

I came to college knowing what I wanted to get out of college and I didn't have much that I feel I needed to figure out. [S6]

Peer Relationships. Students described the influence of their peer relationships on their social and personal experiences including the comfort of knowing that others

are experiencing similar situations and therefore, they are able to rely on their peers for support and advice.

A lot of my closest friends are kind of going through about the same things that I am so I am can turn to them. [S2]

I rely a lot on my social circle... When I move to someplace that is completely new, I've got to rely a lot on friends. [S3]

Students discussed the role of their peer relationships in the career planning process, as well as job search expectations. Additionally, students described the influence of both peers and parents on the job search process. Students noted the difficulties associated with determining personal career aspirations. One particular student noted the impact of generational characteristics on career decision-making. Students discussed their focus on job prospects including feelings of excitement and personal preparation while other students described the lack of job preparation by peers, as well as the difference in their personal approach to the job search process versus peers as a result of parental influences.

My friends have definitely influenced what jobs I applied to... and how I look at a job because I value their input... [S3]

I feel much more prepared than my friends – some are freaking out! I feel very fortunate to have gained the experiences that I've gained. [S4]

It's hard for me and my peers to figure out what we're supposed to be... our generation is seen as kind of individualistic. [S6]

I think I have approached the job search process differently than my peers because of my parent's influence. Well, they have emphasized that it's always going to be more about the people you work with and the community you're in than the job. [S6]

Career Readiness. Students described their career readiness in terms of the value of field experiences gained through experiential education and the potential negative impacts for students lacking these professional development opportunities. These students noted that other students lacking these experiences might be less prepared and less confident for entrance into the workforce. Students noted the positive impacts of these field experiences for job preparation including an understanding of the basics necessary for entrance into the critical first year in the workforce.

My internship prepared me for my first year as a teacher by having so many classroom experiences during college. I feel pretty prepared for anything and any school system that may come my way. [S1]

I think my co-op was the thing that mostly prepared me for the workforce. [S3]

I think I am pretty prepared and pretty responsible... I feel really prepared. I took a year off of school to intern... It gave me a good basis of how to interact in the workforce... [S3]

I see that with students on campus, generally they don't come out of college as confident and as prepared as I feel. [S4]

My co-op was really important... I learned a lot about what I want to do as I continue on. [S6]

Students expressed their excitement and anticipation of entering the workforce. Student also noted their parents' excitement for their futures. However, students also noted a sense of reality regarding the pending challenges in their future.

I feel like it's my calling... and so there's kind of a dream come true... I want to do what makes me happy in life. [S2]

I'm excited and they're excited for me, everything. I know there are going to be things that I don't know and I'll just take it one day at a time... I'm down for a challenge. [S2]

I'm so excited... I'm incredibly excited. My mom is super excited. [S3]

I'm so excited! I'm really excited! It's been five years and I'm about to graduate. [S4]

I'm really excited about it for the most part. It's going to be a little hard at times but I look forward to it. [S6]

Students discussed their fears and apprehensions regarding career decision-making including doubt and uncertainty about future plans, especially related to career selection and social interactions. Although students expressed confidence in their career readiness one particular student noted continued indecision with job prospects.

Moving into the workforce, I have to decide what I am going to do and where I am going to find my friends... I'm very apprehensive of that part of the workforce. [S3]

I think I will be ready to enter the workforce but where I want to enter the workforce, I am not quite sure yet. [S5]

I don't really know where I want to go at all. I really don't know what I want to do with my life... I want to make sure that I'm happy because I know it will all be worth it. [S5]

Emerging Adulthood. Students described their personal definitions of the meaning of adulthood including productivity, decision-making, and responsibility. Further, students explained their personal progress as emerging adults and the changing role of their parent-child relationships towards decision-making as an adult. However, one student described her mother's continued involvement in daily chores.

I feel like an adult has to kind of pass that stage... You've calmed down, you're settled, you know what you want and you have your goals and you know how to meet them... You know what's really important in life... [S1]

When it comes to being an adult, it's being in the real world, working in a job or being a productive citizen in society. [S2]

Responsibility, so much responsibility. Everything is on your own. It's all on me! [S3]

Being an adult, I guess is taking responsibility for yourself so I feel very independent because I do handle most of my day-to-day responsibilities and expenses. [S4]

My mom was more focused on my day-to-day tasks. My mother loves to do my laundry so she'll still do my laundry for me. She gets upset when she doesn't get my laundry. [S5]

Being an adult is more of making your own decisions and using your parents as more of an advisory for big decisions. [S5]

I think being an adult comes to being wise and judicious... when you see people of that age not acting the ideal, you know how to do what you need to do to reach them. [S6]

Students discussed their feelings regarding their own personal transition towards adulthood including parental separation, financial responsibility, independence, and self-discovery. Students noted an acceptance of their personal level of development towards adulthood. Some students noted the need for developing continued responsibility, including fiscal accountability while others described additional learning experiences necessary in order to transition into full adulthood.

I feel like a real adult in pretty much everything except my finances. [S1]

I feel like I'm a separate entity from my parents at this point. [S2]

This is kind of my first chance to be an adult. [S2]

I kind of want to establish myself and be independent and I thrive on that. There are a lot of things that I have to learn just to move on from this part of my life to the next. [S3]

I think this time of life is definitely more a time of focusing on me. Everyone said focus on yourself, find out what you like, find your true self. It's cheesy but so true. [S3]

Parental Involvement. Students described the particular level of their parent's involvement in terms of their academic, career, social, and personal lives, as well as their personal satisfaction in the ways their parents approached their individual decision-making processes providing them with the opportunity to exercise their own personal judgment while being there to provide guidance and support in a loving and nurturing environment. However, one particular student noted a desire to be able to better problem-solve personal situations without the need for parental intervention.

My parents don't interfere in pretty much anything in my college or my job... They never ran to my rescue. They would just sit back and say, okay, we'll help you fix it but you're doing it yourself. [S1]

My parents played a big part in my college decisions but they have never, never, never directly pushed me to do anything. [S2]

My parents have played a very active role in my life but then at the same time they allow me to make my own decisions and just ultimately, be my own individual person. [S2]

Ultimately, I know they're there supporting me but they're back, they're not making the decisions for me. I just feel like through their guidance that's the reason I am and what I am. [S2]

They're, you know, awesome! I mean I really feel like they've done as good a job preparing me as they could you know and providing those opportunities to make my own decisions. [S2]

They are very supportive and very loving towards me, very. I don't think I would actually have gotten this far without them because there are times when you stumble and you see short-term and you need someone with more experience. [S5]

Everything they do is out of love. I know it is for loving me. I would love to be a parent like my dad. [S5]

I always go to my dad... I really know I want to be able to do it on my own. I want to be able to actually come to my own rescue and not have to go crying to daddy. [S5]

Students emphasized the importance of their personal independence while still maintaining a connection to their parents for advice, mentorship, and guidance.

Students described themselves as independent; however, they recognized the need for input and opinions from their parents.

I'm a very independent person... I like to make my own decisions but at the same time they're there for me if I need to bounce ideas off them. [S2]

They're kind of mentors. I look to them for advice. [S2]

I'm independent and want to be independent. I don't want them or need them to enforce their opinions or views on my life. [S4]

I'm very independent. My parents have always been hands-off in my academic affairs so when I came to college they let me do my thing. It was all self-motivated. [S4]

They've always been very hands-off. I'm very much a go-getter, very independent. I have always made my decisions so they have never had to push me, encourage me. I'm very motivated. [S4]

Since I got to college, my parents have let me be my own person. I love my independence. [S4]

They gave me a lot like my independence, like choosing my college. [S6]

Two of the students described a particularly nurturing relationship with their mothers labeling the role as ally and supporter. These students noted that their mothers provided care and advice when they experienced new and/or difficult situations. However, they also noted the opportunity provided by their mothers to make independent decisions and to develop themselves personally and professionally. Further, these students noted the important role that their mothers played in and the impact on their college and career decisions. However, one particular student described a more aggressive and overprotective parental approach from her mother.

My mom has always been my biggest ally. She's always the first person I go to. She has always been there to help me. [S3]

My mom has always given me a lot of leeway to just figure things out because she said that her parents were super, super

involved in her life and she wanted to make sure that I can define who I want to be. [S3]

My mom is really excited on where I'm going. She gave input on what job I should take but left the decision up to me. [S3]

My mom has just the right amount of being involved so I know that she cares and I know that she knows what I'm doing but not that she's pushing me one way or another. [S3]

I've never seen her as a been a bossy or controlling mom. She just always kind of influenced me on the right way. I have never seen her as being anything but a supporter. [S3]

My mom has always been like be yourself and do what you want to do and I'll support you no matter what. [S4]

I've always gone to my mom whenever I had an unusual situation, something that I hadn't been exposed to before. [S4]

My mom is complicated. She gets concerned really easily and like she's a momma grizzly bear, like if anything is threatening her cub, she goes all out on that threat. [S5]

She is just like a snoop and she checked out all of my friends' LinkedIn... This is a bad friend, this is a good friend. [S5]

Students described the relationship with their fathers as more protective yet more hands-off than the role of their mothers. However, students noted that their fathers provided guidance and influence whenever requested or necessitated.

I really talked to my dad about changing my major. I am just closer to my dad. I have to say my dad would be number one. My dad trusted me as a college freshman, which is when I felt like a sheltered, very sheltered high school student. [S1]

My dad has helped me in some regards but for the most part, it's been me. [S2]

My dad is very overprotective so if I did something he didn't like he would try to insert his influence on me. [S4]

I rely on my dad... My father is probably chief in my goals and aspirations. I would love to be a parent like my dad. [S5]

Students discussed their parent's involvement in their job search and career development processes while recognizing the need to maintain healthy limits and boundaries. Students also noted the positive impacts associated with their parent's excitement towards their futures.

In terms of my career, they're just kind of like fans, like excited spectators, so they kind of energize me. [S2]

I always went to my mom for her advice. She critiqued my resume and my purpose statement. She was very helpful on that matter. [S4]

My parents have given me a lot of advice about pay, location, benefits, and stuff but I don't think that I will ever use them as a surrogate in my job search. [S6]

Students described personal situations during their college years that necessitated parental assistance including social and financial issues. Students also noted situations in which they were provided an opportunity to handle situations without parental intervention. Further, students described peer situations for which parental intervention was viewed as unnecessary and harmful to the student's independence and personal development.

My parents handled all the money stuff. They were always in contact with the financial aid department looking for anything they could get as aid, scholarships, or extended deadlines for payment. [S1]

I had a bad roommate situation my freshman year. My parents didn't do anything about it. They trusted my responsibility to handle it and they didn't interfere, intervene, or anything. [S1]

I've had a couple of roommates and when we had a conflict they would have their parents come talk to me instead of them talking to me and I don't think that's very appropriate and I don't think that's great for them. It's not a learning opportunity for them to be very independent. [S4]

My dad came onto campus to help resolve a situation. I felt both comforted but I also felt scared about what my friends would think. [S5]

For me, I don't want them to call on my behalf. I have friends whose parents actually called to intervene on their residence

issue. I really don't want that. I've really been my own agent on campus. [S6]

Students described their parent's hopefulness and excitement for their futures. Students also described their parent's desire for them to be happy in their future plans. Students continued to illustrate their parent's approach to independent decision-making.

They want me to do what I want to do as long as I'm doing what's right and makes me happy. They see that I enjoy it so they are excited for me. [S1]

They've always told me that they want me to do what makes me happy. Neither of them has pressured me into doing what I'm going to do. [S2]

Students discussed the potential negative implications from intrusive parental involvement. Students expressed possible feelings of unhappiness, rebellion, and disrespectfulness. One particular student, specifically, described her parents' over-involvement while recounting her continued love and admiration.

It's hard for me to imagine them overly involved and I don't think I would be this happy as I am now. [S2]

I feel like if my mom would have been more pushy or prying, I probably would have tried to rebel more. It would have changed our relationship. I probably wouldn't have felt as supported and I wouldn't have as much respect for her. [S3]

I never want my parents to step in. I've had situations I didn't know how to handle so I went to them for advice but I was always the one to face the obstacle in front of me. [S4]

I belong to the highest parental attachment formula... Everyone thinks my parents are crazy but that hurts. They are slightly scared of losing me... so they might hold me a little too close... I was like, okay, it's time to relax. I don't know, they are just great parents. [S5]

Students described the changing dynamics of the parent-child relationship as a result of their impending college graduation and entrance into the workplace. Students expressed both satisfaction and concern. Students described the relationship as shifting to friendly, conversational, and equal. Students labeled parents as friends.

It is really nice to see the way my relationship with my parents has changed. It is less of a parent thing and more of a let's be friends. [S2]

We're not equals, obviously, but we're more on the same playing field now in a natural and more conversational level. It's more like two friends. It's kind of shifted. [S3]

I am moving across the country, two times zones away and I'm just wondering what the shift is going to be. I don't want to damage the relationship. I don't want to push them away. [S6]

Parents

Interviews were conducted with selected parents (n=3) based on willingness to participate and scheduling availability. The coding process for the parent interviews included the same five axial codes as the student interviews: (1) collegiate experiences, (2) peer relationships, (3) career readiness, (4) emerging adulthood, and (5) parental involvement.

Collegiate Experiences. Parents described the positive impacts of students living away from home for the first time including social aspects such as building friendships and personal growth opportunities such as gaining responsibility and developing maturity, as well as skill building experiences including learning adaptability, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.

It [relocation] was always a part of life for us. I think that's part of why he knows how to build community... I think that was a big part of him adapting to [college] as well as he did. [P1]

He's certainly had to get past challenges he never had at home. I mean the stress is extraordinary academically, of course, and having to find his way socially... being so far from home. [P1]

Yes, I'd say [he] matured while he's been at college. [P2]

I feel like he has received a good education... his first living experience because he's away from home... good experience. I saw maturity after two years of that. [P2]

Living away from home, that was a great experience for her.

Living with people... that she didn't know before helped how to problem-solve and do conflict resolution. It helped her to be

responsible for paying her own bills. She had to manage her own life. [P3]

Peer Relationships. Parents described the role of their children's peer relationships concerning seeking advice and input in decision-making processes. Parents noted the situational differences in times that children sought parent or peer advice and the diversity of the input desired from parents and peers. Parents also recognized the importance of parental advice from their children's perspective.

He turns to peers for direction... depends on the problem. I think he decides who would give him the best input... He is not afraid of asking more than one person... He'll ask as many people he feels that's necessary to glean what resonates with him... He takes everything with a grain of salt and makes his own decisions about them. [P1]

My personal feeling is he still looks to us mainly. But I do think he listens really well to others for advice and opinion. I've always encouraged [him] to listen to other people's opinions and advice. [P2]

Whether she relies on her family or peers depends on what part of her life because she is very pragmatic and she might ask my opinion and she might ask her father but she's also probably going to ask five or six people about their opinion and she's going to try to find some expert to ask them. [P3]

Career Readiness. Parents described the positive results of students' varied field experiences during college through experiential education such as internships and cooperative education (co-op), including skill building and career readiness. Parents indicated skill building in areas such as interpersonal, teamwork, communication, professionalism, diversity, and customer service. Parents noted the level of job preparation of their children as a result of these experiences.

He is adequately prepared to enter the job market, absolutely, especially having those co-ops. [College] provided that for him and having real-world experience of working in an industry. I mean not just the work but the interactions, the teamwork and how you communicate... It just was all such a deeply valuable experience. Absolutely, I feel like he's as ready as anyone can be. [P1]

She co-oped and she worked in an internship - both of them were separate working environments... It really helped her decide...

She has had a really diverse set of experiences so I think she is really prepared. [P3]

She worked one summer so she had to learn a whole lot about getting to work on time... play with other people nicely... learn customer service skills... [P3]

Parents described the skills and talents their children demonstrate that will enable them to be successful in the transition to the workforce. These skills included teamwork, leadership, compassion, reliability, and determination.

We've encouraged him to look at what his gifts are and to find and aim for something that would be the best use of his gifts.

[He] is very aware of what his gifts are, his talents are without being arrogant and the fact that he can give you an honest assessment and still be as humble as he is, I think that's very endearing and engaging. [P1]

I think he is perceptive and compassionate... significant contributors to being able to work in a team, to being able to lead people, to really care about other people, to understand what's going on with them and how their perceptions affect their work.

[P1]

She's very driven... I don't think I have equipped her on that, I think circumstances and her own drive, ability, talents, and skills have really shaped her. [P3]

I think [he] is prepared. [He] is fairly reliable. He does realize that it does take hard work to make him successful... He should be able to handle what is put before him or what he chooses to do. [P2]

We've always encouraged him to be [a] leader... The world does need good leaders, whether just in the business world or community, good leaders are needed. [P2]

Emerging Adulthood. Parents described their personal definitions of adulthood and explained their children's progress towards reaching adulthood. Parents defined

adulthood with labels such as kindness, respect, responsibility, self-motivation, pro-active, and positive. Parents described their children as mature adults with the ability to handle the expectations and challenges of the real world.

Oh yeah, I think he can handle challenges of the “real world”

better than a lot of adults I know. [P1]

I think that being an adult is making the highest and best use of the gifts that you have and doing your best in life... be kind and treat people with respect. [P1]

It’s exciting to see the person he’s become and continues to become. [P1]

I’m looking right at [him] as an adult... I don’t think of him as just a kid or child anymore. I would say he’s a young adult. [P2]

An adult is somebody who can take personal responsibility and they are self-motivated... not driven by decisions of other people... They claim their life and decisions and make mature decisions. I know [she] has an adult mindset. [P3]

An adult to me is someone who’s taken personal responsibility meaning they don’t blame other people. They don’t expect that other people will make their decisions for them. They are actually pro-active in their own life, making decisions and trying to figure out how to support themselves... building themselves in the direction of a positive future. [P3]

Parental Involvement. Parents described their level of involvement, as well as the potential impacts of over-involvement and under-involvement. Parents described the evolution of their parent-child relationship during the college years. Parents mentioned the importance of providing freedom for decision-making and self-discovery. Just as the student interview participants, parents noted the changing dynamic of the parent-child relationship to one of friendship and mutual respect.

He deserves my respect and he gets it. You need to respect their life as an adult and their ability to make their own decisions and butt out unless you've been asked and you know give them the freedom to fly. [P1]

I feel like we can discuss just about anything and it's surprised me a few times what he's been willing to discuss with me and very honored that he does feel comfortable discussing things with me. [P1]

I worked really hard not to be judgmental but to allow him to express whatever he needs to express, knowing that nothing can change my love or my regard for him. [P1]

I told him okay, when you go up to school, I want you to have the freedom to discover life without us in your pocket when you're ready to build a life there. [P1]

We want him to know we respect him and when he asks for advice it's his heart, his future, his decision. I'm going to support him in whatever he decides. [P2]

It's good for parents to be involved with their children. If you are not involved with your child, you are not invested... It was just important for us to encourage them to do well in school, to be good leaders, good role models, excel academically. [P2]

We just try not to be attached like glue and never let them go, you know. [P2]

When she was a kid, I was like, you know, the role-setter and disciplinarian so as she's gotten older, she shared a lot more responsibility and control of her life. She wanted control of her life... so I gave her the opportunity to make decisions and to vet those decisions and really help instead of telling her. [P3]

We have a lot of the same interests and we just like to chat so we have kind of evolved from you know, mother and daughter, to we are also friends and we love that about each other. [P3]

You largely see parents that are not involved or under-involved but being overprotective and not allowing kids to do anything, that's not good either. They just need a lot of encouragement.

[P3]

Parents described their level of involvement in the academic decision-making process. They expressed their joy in participating as a part of the process but approached the experience as a learning opportunity for their children.

It was so much fun having a role in his decision to attend college but it really needed to be his decision. I'm just deeply grateful and impressed. It was definitely his decision. [P1]

We had very little involvement in her decisions about attending college but I remember what made her decide. [P3]

One particular parent discussed the importance of children's proactive involvement in decision-making in order to develop critical skills such as initiative and work ethic. She described a situation from her daughter's perspective concerning parental involvement in an academic situation and her daughter's recognition of the need for the other student to take personal ownership of the situation.

Kids need to take initiative... I don't see a lot of that... It's getting worse. They are coming out with this entitlement and lazy work ethics. They don't have a lot of initiative and drive. There are some that are really go-getters like [she] is with her internship. [P3]

One of her roommates was complaining about her professor and said I'm going to call my dad and [my daughter] said, whoa, wait, you are in college, you need to respect your parents and your teacher and just take ownership. [P3]

This particular parent further mentioned the potential impacts of helicopter parenting noting the importance of providing children an opportunity to experience both success and failure in order to grow and mature for workforce preparation.

In college, the first time, unless you've got a helicopter parent that hovers, that won't let you take off, that is the time that the child is given the opportunity during that age frame, time frame, to be fairly independent and suffer the consequences of their failures on their own and also be proud of their successes... A helicopter parent will stunt their growth. It will keep them immature. It will make them go into the workforce immature. I'm telling you, look at what's coming into the workforce today.

[P3]

Selective Coding

The final process of coding the qualitative data involved selective coding using the domains from the ANOVAs comparing parental involvement to (a) emerging adulthood and (b) transferable/soft skills development. Through this process the qualitative data were selectively coded using the three statistically significant domains: impulsiveness, accountability, and emotional intelligence. Impulsiveness and accountability are domains of emerging adulthood. Impulsiveness includes experimentation and unpredictability, whereas, accountability includes settling down, responsibility for others, and commitment to others. Emotional intelligence is a transferable/soft skills development domain. Emotional intelligence includes communication skills, interpersonal skills, and friendly/outgoing personality.

Impulsiveness. Students primarily reported being past the time of adolescent experimentation. However, one student defined the college experience as an opportunity to experiment in career exploration.

I have my responsibilities... so I don't need to go out and look for it, experiment or that sort of thing like that. [S1]

I think that we are like exploring and experimenting and all that kind of thing. [S2]

I look less like that girl now... getting into experimentation, just do different, not too crazy things. [S3]

I came into college with my ideals already firmly in place so I did not experiment, I guess. [S4]

Accountability. Students routinely described themselves as responsible and capable of handling adult responsibilities. Students noted the influence of their parents in developing their sense of responsibility. However, for one particular student this period of emerging adulthood was less of a time for personal commitments and responsibility. One particular student noted the desire for a job opportunity with professional responsibility. Parents noted the importance of the experiences away from home in building responsibility and self-reliance.

As an adult, you've settled down because you know what's really important in life now, what you really want... I feel like I've reached that point... [S1]

They [my parents] trusted that as my responsibility to handle and they didn't interfere, intervene, or anything. [S1]

It's my parents who taught me responsibility that you know it's not their responsibility to take care of me. This is kind of my first chance to be adult, you know. [S2]

I'm pretty responsible... I think I am pretty prepared... But I'm not responsible for the happiness or well-being of any other person. [S3]

I guess the definition of an adult is taking responsibility for yourself so I feel very independent... My definition would be financial responsibility and financial independence. [S4]

I want a job where I can take on a lot of responsibility. [S5]

Some are just kind of drifting through our 20s like this is the time not to have any responsibility or anything. For me, it's a balance because I don't want to create too many commitments. [S6]

I'm just kind of good, responsible, reliable, a team member kind of thing. [S6]

Living away from home that was a great experience for her. It helped her to be responsible, totally responsible for her own work so she has to do with her own efforts. [P3]

Emotional Intelligence. Students positively described their communication skills, interpersonal skills, and friendliness. One particular student commented on her mother's influence in developing solid communication skills. Students described the ability to seek help from others as well as provide help to others in need of assistance.

I consider myself to be very friendly. [S1]

I really feel like communication, verbal communication, is probably one of my strengths and I'm not bad with written communication but like I'm just, I do better talking. [S2]

My mother fostered good communication skills in me, being able to communicate what you want and not being afraid of telling people, okay, that's not exactly what I wanted. [S3]

I am just a really outgoing, loud, boisterous type of person so I really don't have a problem with asking for help or like trying to figure things out. [S3]

So I try to be that breath of fresh air... the person that people can approach, the person that people want to approach with problems or help. [S4]

I have very good written communication skills. I think it's very, very professional. My verbal communication skills, it really depends on the situation on how I'm feeling confident. [S5]

Summary

The mean scores of emerging adulthood revealed that student participants strongly agree they are experiencing the periods of this stage of development in the transition from adolescence to adulthood in the areas of responsibility, independence, planning for the future, learning to think for themselves, and exploration of possibilities ($\bar{X} > 3.5$). The mean scores for transferable/soft skills development indicated that student participants agree they can confidently demonstrate the skills necessary for future employment including leadership, problem-solving, communication (verbal/written), teamwork, analytical/quantitative, work ethic, initiative, detail-orientation, flexibility/adaptability, interpersonal, organizational, friendly/outgoing, and strategic planning ($\bar{X} > 5.0$). However, students revealed less confidence in the areas of

computer/technical skills, creativity, entrepreneurial/risk-taker, and tactfulness ($\bar{X}<5.0$). In regards to parental involvement, student participants indicated a desire for somewhat less parental involvement during the college years ($\bar{X}=2.42$).

Factor analysis allowed for the extensive data points of the survey to be framed within a set of domains for emerging adulthood and transferable/soft skills development. The domains for emerging adulthood were named self-authorship, uncertainty, anxiety, individuation, accountability, positivity, and impulsiveness. The domains for transferable/soft skills development were named emotional intelligence, information technology application, and professionalism. The use of ANOVA revealed a statistically significant relationship regarding the level of parental involvement on two domains of emerging adulthood (impulsiveness and accountability) and one domain of transferable/soft skills development (emotional intelligence).

Through the use of coding techniques the qualitative data were selectively coded in reflection of these three domains. In reflecting on impulsiveness, students primarily reported having moved past personal experimentation as a part of adolescence but they viewed college as an opportunity to explore and experiment with career possibilities. In considering accountability, students routinely described themselves as responsible and professed their capability of handling adult responsibilities. Students described their parents' influence in developing their personal sense of responsibility. Parents indicated the importance of their children's opportunities to experience life away from home in being able to build a sense of personal responsibility. Lastly, in regards to emotional intelligence, students positively described their skills in the areas of

communication, interpersonal relationships, and friendliness. Students indicated parental influence on the development of these skills and personal traits.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Summary of Findings

Helicopter parents are recognized for meddling in all aspects of the academic, social, and professional lives of their children. They are likely to become involved with their child's college discovery and prospecting, admissions and housing decisions, career and graduate school decisions, and even with employers during the child's job search process (Hunt, 2008). More specifically, helicopter parents are observed completing their child's entrance applications, writing admissions essays, contacting admissions departments, checking student emails, and discussing grades with professors. In anticipation of their child's graduation, helicopter parents may engage in filling out employment applications, writing resumes and cover letters, prepping for and attending job interviews, contacting employers to negotiate job and salary offers, and attending work-related events (Aslop, 2008; Cain, 2008; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010).

The consistent involvement of these parents may limit a child's ability to successfully transition to college and, ultimately, experience a successful transition to the workforce (McKnight, Paugh, McKnight, & Parker, 2009). Unfortunately, parental involvement may also inhibit opportunities for children to experience challenging situations, which afford them a chance to learn important decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills. Further, these children may be hindered in the

development of essential applied skills, i.e. transferable/soft skills for educational and career success. These important skills including independence, self-reliance, and autonomy are critical in developing leadership, which is a trait that employers consistently rank at the top of their hiring priorities (Aslop, 2008; Hiltz, 2015; Hofer & Moore, 2010; Johnson & Schelhas-Miller, 2011; Lampert, 2009; Ludden, 2012; Moriarty, 2011; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Savage, 2003; 2008; Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009). The following research questions were used for this study:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the skills development of traditional-age students in preparation for the transition from college to the workplace?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between parental involvement and the progression to adulthood for traditional-age college students?

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) (2015) identified seven core career competencies as critical thinking/problem-solving, oral/written communication, teamwork/collaboration, information technology (IT) application, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, and career management. When considering the findings of this study in light of these NACE core competencies, 93% of student participants agreed on their development of these skills stating such influences as parental involvement, academic accomplishments, experiential education, job experience, and extracurricular activities. Of these students, 41% strongly agreed in their development of these transferable/soft skills, which aligned with the most recent NACE Job Outlook survey findings that overall 96% of student participants felt they

were proficient in their skills development within these seven core competencies with 34% stating extreme proficiency (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016).

IT Application

Interestingly, only 85% of student participants in this study expressed agreement in their confidence in IT application including both computer and technical skills as identified through the exploratory factor analysis. Of these students, a mere 31% strongly agreed with their personal development of their IT application, which according to NACE is defined as the ability to “select and use appropriate technology to accomplish a given task. The individual is also able to apply computing skills to solve problems” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1). The most recent NACE Job Outlook survey revealed similar findings related to IT application with 86% of student participants self-reporting proficiency levels ranging from extremely proficient to somewhat proficient with yet a meager 15% self-reporting extreme proficiency with IT application, which was the lowest student rating of skills proficiency within the seven core career competencies as defined by NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016).

Table 21

Summary Table of Quantitative/Qualitative Findings: IT Application

Evidence from the data regarding computer/technical skills

Students rated less confidence in their abilities with computer skills ($\bar{X} = 4.83$)

Students rated less confidence in their proficiency with technical skills ($\bar{X} = 4.69$)

I don't have the confidence in the technical aspects. [S5]

I don't have any resources to really help me with that... I know a lot of schools today have classes... I am still confident the workforce can help with it. [S1]

Despite previous research indicating the comfort level and proficiency of millennial students with current technology (Cavanaugh, Kay, Klein, & Meisinger, 2006; Martin & Tulgan, 2001; Raines, 2002; 2003; Richardson, 2011), the results of this study indicated student participants merely moderately agreed with their level of skills development and confidence in these basic areas of IT application. One particular student noted the lack of availability of classes at this particular institution to build IT application skills. However, she further noted the ability to rely on on-the-job training for the purpose of skills development in this domain.

Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving

Critical thinking/problem-solving is defined by NACE as the ability to “exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems – obtain, interpret, and use knowledge facts, and data in this process and demonstrate originality and inventiveness” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1).

Table 22

Summary Table of Quantitative/Qualitative Findings: Problem-Solving

Evidence from the data regarding critical thinking/problem-solving

Students' rating for problem-solving skills development (\bar{X} =5.33)

Students' rating for analytical/qualitative skills development (\bar{X} =5.16)

Students' rating for strategic planning skills development (\bar{X} =5.12)

I'm very math oriented, analytical, and curious so I have no worries about being able to handle any problem-solving. [S4]

Problem-solving is what I do in my major. It is part of my curriculum, figuring out how to take a big problem and figure it out. [S3]

Problem-solving is something I do on a day in, day out basis. I kind of enjoy problem-solving even if it's over my head at times, you know. [S2]

The quantitative findings revealed the vast majority (96%) of student participants agreed they have developed the ability to problem solve, as well as display analytical abilities and quantitative reasoning, and demonstrate proficient strategic planning. Of these students, nearly half (42%) indicated a strong agreement in their level of skills development in these areas of critical thinking/problem-solving. These findings aligned with the recent NACE Job Outlook survey, which revealed similar findings with nearly all (99%) of student participants reporting proficiency levels in critical thinking/problem-solving ranging from extremely proficient to somewhat proficient with over one-third (35%) of student participants reporting extreme proficiency (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016). As one student indicated during the interview portion of this study, it was the experiences within the academic settings that provided the opportunity to develop and exhibit problem-solving capabilities. Further, one particular student indicated personal enjoyment in the challenging aspects associated with daily problem-solving activities.

Oral/Written Communication

NACE defined oral/written communication as the ability to “articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization - public speaking skills and is able to express ideas to others and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1).

Table 23

Summary Table of Quantitative/Qualitative Findings: Communication

Evidence from the data regarding oral/written communication

Students’ rating for written communication skills development (\bar{X} =5.25)

Students’ rating for verbal communication skills development (\bar{X} =5.17)

I have very good communication skills. I’m very professional. [S5]

I feel like communication is probably one of my strengths. [S2]

The quantitative results of this study indicated that the majority (98%) of student participants agreed they have developed proficient verbal and written communication skills. Of these students, 42% indicated a strong agreement in their development of communication skills. Although it is interesting to note, student participants ranked verbal communication skills slightly lower (39%) than written communication skills (46%), which is notable considering concerns of students’ writing skills given the use of “textspeak” common to the millennial generation. Textspeak is defined as “a form of written language as used in text messages and other digital communications, characterized by many abbreviations and typically not following standard grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style (Merriam-Webster, 2014, p. 1293). The quantitative

findings of this study aligned with the recent NACE Job Outlook survey, which similarly revealed 98% of student participants reporting proficiency levels in oral/written communication ranging from extremely proficient to somewhat proficient with 33% of student participants reporting extreme proficiency in their communication skills (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016). As noted in the table above, one particular student recognized the importance of communication skills as an indicator of professionalism.

Teamwork/Collaboration

Teamwork/collaboration is defined by NACE as the ability to “build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, race, ages, gender, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1).

Table 24

Summary Table of Quantitative/Qualitative Findings: Teamwork/Collaboration

Evidence from the data regarding teamwork/collaboration

Students' rating for transferable/soft skills development in teamwork ($\bar{X}=5.25$)

I just want to be a responsible, reliable team member... I'm a really motivated member of the team. [S6]

Teamwork is being one with the team. [S5]

I can work with anybody... We are all working towards a common goal. [S2]

The quantitative findings revealed that nearly all (99%) of student participants agreed they have developed the ability to work well as a part of a team through teamwork and collaboration. Of these students, over half (52%) strongly agreed with their ability to demonstrate teamwork. The quantitative findings of this study aligned with the recent NACE Job Outlook survey, which similarly revealed 99% of student participants reporting proficiency levels in teamwork/collaboration ranging from extremely proficient to somewhat proficient with 40% of student participants reporting extreme proficiency in their ability to work well and collaborate as a part of a team (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016). The qualitative findings of this study further demonstrated students' desire and motivation to work as a part of a team, which corresponded with previous research of the millennial generation (Cain, 2008; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Richardson, 2011). Further, student participants indicated an understanding of the values and outcomes of teamwork.

Leadership

NACE defined leadership as the ability to “leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1).

Table 25

Summary Table of Quantitative/Qualitative Findings: Leadership

Evidence from the data regarding leadership

Students' rating for the development of leadership skills ($\bar{X}=5.14$)

Students' rating for the development of interpersonal skills ($\bar{X}=5.24$)

I would say leadership is confidence and kindness. [S5]

Dad was most instrumental in my leadership understanding. [S5]

I've always found myself drawn to leadership positions so I feel prepared to take on a role like that when I enter my career. [S4]

I feel like my experiences at college have given me a lot of leadership abilities. I feel like my leadership skills have really evolved. [S3]

I've learned the most valuable leadership skills through my involvement here on campus. I'm fortunate to serve in some leadership decisions. [S2]

The quantitative results of this study indicated that 96% of student participants agreed they have developed leadership including interpersonal skills. Of these students, 43% strongly agreed with their development of these transferable/soft skills. The quantitative findings of this study aligned with the recent NACE Job Outlook survey, which revealed similar results with 96% of student participants reporting proficiency levels in leadership ranging from extremely proficient to somewhat proficient with 34% of student participants reporting extreme proficiency in their leadership competencies (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016). The qualitative statements from the interviews conducted in this study indicated students' understanding of leadership values. One particular student stated her father's influence in the development of leadership skills while other students directed their leadership development towards campus involvement. Despite whether these influences and

experiences were familial or academic, all of the students interviewed indicated the positive preparation provided by their leadership involvement for future career roles.

Professionalism/Work Ethic

NACE defined professionalism/work ethic as the ability to “demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind and is able to learn from his/her mistakes” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1).

Table 26

Summary Table of Quantitative/Qualitative Findings: Professionalism/Work Ethic

Evidence from the data regarding professionalism/work ethic

Students’ rating for the development of professionalism and work ethic (\bar{X} =5.50)

I want to distinguish myself in my job. [S6]

I think I’m very professional. [S5]

I want to be successful in my career so I’m very motivated in that matter. [S4]

I worked every summer in a job or internship. [S4]

The results of the quantitative portion of this study indicated that nearly all of the student participants (99%) agree they demonstrate strong work ethic. Of these students, an overwhelming majority (63%) indicated a strong agreement in their demonstration of work ethic. In fact, the findings of this study indicated the highest

ranking by students in regards to their personal development of work ethic. This is of particular interest given previous research indicating the lack of demonstrated work ethic and professionalism by the millennial generation (Cavanaugh, Klein, Kay, & Meisinger, 2006; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; Society of Human Resource Management, 2016). However, most interestingly, the findings of this study aligned with the recent NACE Job Outlook survey, which similarly revealed that nearly all (99%) of student participants stated proficiency ranging from extremely proficient to somewhat proficient in professionalism/work ethic with over half (54%) reporting extreme proficiency in the perceptions of their demonstration of professionalism/work ethic (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016). The students' interview statements from this study indicated their desire to excel on the job through the demonstration of professionalism, as well as a previously established work ethic from prior field experiences, i.e. jobs and internships.

Career Management

Lastly, career management is defined by NACE as the ability to “identify and articulate skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace” (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015, p. 1).

Table 27

Summary Table of Qualitative Findings: Career Management

Evidence from the data regarding career management

I have a clear goal in mind. I want to be a teacher. [S1]

I have a career and salary that I know is coming. [S3]

I'm not afraid of the work or the actual job. [S3]

I have a very defined career plan. [S4]

Pursue your passion, find what makes you happy, and going to work everyday won't seem like a job. I think that those are the attitudes that keep you trying. [S5]

... Where I want to enter the workforce, I am not quite sure yet. [S5]

While the most recent NACE Job Outlook survey revealed 94% of students' proficiency in career management, merely 23% of these NACE participants stated extreme proficiency, which is the second lowest rating of the seven core career competencies as defined by NACE. However, the qualitative statements from this study revealed students' solidified career goals including a focus on the pursuit of passion and happiness even when the job location was yet to be determined. The majority of the students (five out of six interview participants) verbally expressed confidence in their personal career management and identification of career pursuits.

Emerging Adulthood

As defined in earlier chapters, emerging adulthood is the period of life between adolescence to adult maturity that offers the greatest opportunity for identity exploration in aspects of love, work, education, and personal worldviews (Arnett, 2000; Arnett & Tanner, 2006).

Table 28

Summary Table of Quantitative/Qualitative Findings: Emerging Adulthood

Evidence from the data regarding emerging adulthood

Students' rating of periods of emerging adulthood ($\bar{X}=3.20$)

I feel like a real adult in pretty much everything except my finances. [S1]

I feel like I am a separate entity from my parents at this point. [S2]

I want to establish myself and be independent. [S3]

I think this time of life is definitely more a time of focusing on me. [S3]

I feel very independent because I handle most of my day-to-day responsibilities. [S4]

The quantitative results revealed that 81% of student participants agreed they are experiencing the periods of emerging adulthood with the exceptions of feeling restricted (26%), settling down (31%), and responsibility for others (47%). The highest ratings were indicated for time of possibilities (98%), exploration (95%), responsibility for yourself (98%), independence (98%), planning for the future (98%), and learning to think for yourself (92%). These findings aligned with the original research study for the Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (IDEA), which revealed identity exploration, experimentation/possibilities, negativity/instability, and self-focus with the highest ratings as periods of emerging adulthood, whereas other-focused aspects of emerging adulthood such as time of settling down, time of responsibility for others, and time of commitment to others all received the lowest ratings by students age 18-23 (Reifman, Arnett, & Colwell, 2007). Additionally, the qualitative statements from this study indicated students' acceptance of their maturity and adulthood. However, one particular student noted the exception to her complete entrance into adulthood due to a lack of personal financial responsibility, which further aligned with previous research

indicating the importance of fiscal responsibility in reaching full mature adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Hofer & Moore, 2010). Lastly, one student indicated a personal desire to reach independence and established maturity while another student specified this period of life as “self-focused,” a specific term used by Reifman, Arnett, and Colwell (2007, p. 4).

Parental Involvement

For the purposes of this study, parental involvement was designated at three levels: high, medium, and low. Parental involvement was designated as high if a student participant selected “usually everyday” for any type of contact with parents via phone, text, email, or in-person. Parental involvement was considered medium if a student participant selected “a few times a week” for any type of contact with parents. Lastly, parental involvement was designated as low if a student participant selected any other level (from about once a week to not at all) for any type of parental contact.

Table 29

Summary Table of Quantitative Findings: Parental Involvement

Evidence from the data regarding parental involvement

Students’ rating on satisfaction of parental involvement (\bar{X} =2.42)

ANOVA for impulsiveness related to mid-level parental involvement (\bar{X} =6.38)

ANOVA for accountability related to mid-level parental involvement (\bar{X} =7.52)

ANOVA for emotional intelligence related to high parental involvement (\bar{X} =15.91)

The quantitative findings indicated that student participants prefer their parents to be somewhat less involved during their time as a college student. This is particularly

interesting due to research including the 2000 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which revealed students expectations and acceptance of parents' participation in their campus lives (Hofer & Moore, 2010; Kuh, 2001; 2003; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2000). The more recent 2007 NSSE noted that students reported higher levels of engagement, satisfaction, involvement, collaboration, and development in college as a result of parental involvement (Aucoin, 2009; Kuh, 2001 2003; Matthews, 2007; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2007; Somers & Settle, 2010). In fact, according to Simmons (2008), students reported perceptions of parents as vital advisors in their academic decisions. The ANOVA results for this study revealed statistically significant findings for parental involvement related to three domain scales including impulsiveness, accountability, and emotional intelligence. Interestingly, mid-level parental involvement was revealed to have the strongest relationship to the scales of impulsiveness and accountability in emerging adulthood; whereas, high parental involvement was revealed to have the strongest relationship to emotional intelligence within the transferable/soft skills domains.

Table 30

Summary Table of Qualitative Findings: Parental Involvement

Evidence from the data regarding parental involvement

... They never ran to my rescue. They would just sit back and say, okay, we'll help you fix it but you're doing it yourself. [S1]

My parents have played a very active role in my life but then at the same time they allow me to make my own decisions and ultimately, be my own individual person. [S2]

They've always been very hands-off. I have always made my decisions so they have never had to push me, encourage me. [S4]

I don't want them to call on my behalf. I have friends whose parents actually called to intervene on their residence issue. I don't want that. [S6]

I have responsibilities so I don't need to go out and look for it, experiment... [S1]

It's my parents who taught me responsibility that you know it's not their responsibility to take care of me. This is kind of my first chance to be adult. [S2]

My mother fostered good communication skills in me, being able to communicate what you want and not being afraid of telling people that's not exactly what I wanted. [S3]

We've always encouraged him to be [a] leader. [P2]

It's good for parents to be involved with their children. If you are not involved with your child, you are not invested... [P2]

When she was a kid, I was like, you know, the role-setter and disciplinarian so as she's gotten older, she shared a lot more responsibility and control of her life. [P3]

The qualitative statements revealed a balanced approach to parenting. Student participants revealed a desire to problem-solve for themselves. Further, these students recognized the impact of personal responsibility in regards to accountability and impulsiveness within the domains of emerging adulthood. One particular student recognized the impact of parental influence in the improvement of communication skills towards transferable/soft skills development of emotional intelligence. Parents described the changing role of parental involvement as their children entered college and prepared for the workforce. However, one particular parent indicated the need for

parental involvement in demonstrating a personal investment in their child. One parent specified the need to provide growing children with shared responsibility and greater control of their personal lives.

Within the context of student development theory and specifically, the theoretical combination illustrated in Chapter Two (See Figure 1, p. 66), the findings of this study revealed that students respond to a balanced approach in parental involvement, which includes a blend of opportunities to engage in challenging situations along with a supportive and nurturing environment when faced with adversity. Additionally, the majority of student participants indicated engagement in aspects of emerging adulthood including decision-making, responsibility, and a focus on the future, which signal their progression through the stages of launching and exploration (Arnett, 2000). Further, most of the student participants described the development of their personal independence while recognizing the importance of their connectedness to their parents and peers, which is a hallmark of the transition to interdependence (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

Concerns

The findings of this study raised two concerns in regards to the methodology. First, students were asked to self-report their level of transferable/soft skills proficiency as a part of the initial survey. Self-report questionnaires are a common methodology in behavioral science. However, according to Stone et.al. (2000), “it is naïve to accept all self-reports as veridical” (p. i). There are a myriad of concerns related to self-reporting errors such as participant honesty, as well as understanding or interpretation of particular questions, including introspective ability of the participant to provide an

accurate response. Further, responder biases may create an individual tendency to respond in a particular manner to certain types of questions such as rating scales (Stone et.al, 2000), which were utilized in the survey. There are ways to improve self-report accuracy, including the use of multi-methodology or mixed methods procedures such as conducting follow-up interviews (Stone et.al., 2000) as was a part of this study.

Second, interview participants were selected on a volunteer basis. Therefore, only those participants that were interested volunteered for participation. This created a selection error in the participant pool (Heckman, 1979). Of the six student participants interviewed, only one student appeared to have parents who exhibited over-involved behavior. Unfortunately, these parents declined the request for an interview. Only three parents were interviewed and all demonstrated mid-range parental involvement. As a result, the interview process did not include any highly involved or “helicopter parents” as operationally defined by the perimeters for this study.

Conclusion

Based on the research conducted in this study related to parental involvement in the process of emerging adulthood and the development of transferable/soft skills for career readiness in college students, the following themes emerged: (a) students are experiencing the periods of emerging adulthood with the exception of fiscal responsibility or feeling restricted, settling down, and responsibility for others while parents acknowledge children’s entrance into emerging adulthood; (b) students are confident in the development of the transferable/soft skills necessary for career readiness with the exception of IT application, creativity, entrepreneurial/risk-taker, and tactfulness; (c) students are only somewhat satisfied with their parents’ level of

involvement during college indicating a preference for somewhat less involvement; students recognize the need for independence while maintaining a sense of security with input from their parents when faced with new or difficult situations; (d) parental involvement has a significant relationship to emerging adulthood in the areas of impulsiveness and accountability and in transferable/soft skills development related to emotional intelligence; (e) students and parents recognize the potential skills development associated with collegiate experiences such as extracurricular involvement, peer socialization, and living away from home; (f) students and parents acknowledge the role of peer influences on college adjustment and career planning; and (g) students and parents recognize the value of experiential education, i.e. internships/co-ops and acknowledge the skills development for career readiness. Overall, students and parents acknowledge the potential negative ramifications from over-involvement or “helicopter parenting,” however, they also indicate the consequences associated with under-involvement. Therefore, a mid-level balanced approach to parental involvement appears to be ideal with a greater focus on the development of emotional intelligence.

Recommendations

Based on the limitations of this research, the following recommendations are proposed for future research:

1. Include demographics in the quantitative survey for cross tabulations, e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, first-generation, single/dual parent households, living at home/away from home, etc.

2. Conduct a longitudinal study to compare students' emerging adulthood and transferable/soft skills development at the time of graduation and one year post-graduation towards the end of the critical first-year on the job.
3. Use a different survey instrument for parental attachment, e.g. Inventory of Peer Attachment (Greenberg & Armsden, 2009) or Parental Attachment Questionnaire (Kenny & Rice, 1995) in order to better gauge the level of parental involvement to identify "helicopter parents."
4. Use a revised interview protocol to better gauge outcomes from parental involvement in students' college success and skills development (see interview protocol in Simmons, 2008).
5. Utilize a skills assessment tool such as the web-based Performance Assessment Network (PAN) Job Ready System. Utilizing such a tool will allow for better evaluation of students' skills mastery without the risk of self-report errors. The Job Ready System provides a strengths assessment of sixteen 21st Century Skills including problem-solving, strategic vision, customer focus, coping with pressure, flexibility, planning/organization, teamwork, management, innovation, drive for excellence, continuous learning, initiative, decision-making, reliability, influence, and integrity/responsibility (Performance Assessment Network, 2016), which reflect the transferable/soft skills and career core competencies of NACE and the 16PF (personality factors) questionnaire (Cattell & Meade, 2008).
6. Survey HR managers through membership in the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) to further validate the transferable/soft

skills development of students entering the workforce. Additionally, conduct interviews and/or focus groups with employers to discuss experiences with parental interference, as well as issues or concerns regarding parental involvement in the workplace.

7. Conduct a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to compare domains of emerging adulthood with transferable/soft skills domains to determine correlations between the level of emerging adulthood and the level of transferable/soft skills development.
8. Examine students' feelings in regards to the characteristics of the millennial generation, i.e. special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, and achieving (Howe & Strauss, 2000; 2003), as well as diverse/multicultural, global, patriotic, connected, confident, sociable, civic-minded/service-oriented, optimistic, talented, well educated, collaborative, inclusive, tolerant, open-minded, hopeful/positive, influential, tech-savvy, and goal/achievement-oriented (Raines, 2002; 2003), especially in light of some of the results of this study indicating students confidence in work ethic yet a lack of confidence in technology.
9. Conduct a literature review and research on Generation Next or Generation Z (Igel & Urquhart, 2012, p. 16), which includes children born as early as 1991 or as late as 2001 depending on the date ranges of particular generational experts (Posnick-Goodwin, 2010).

Theoretical Application

Based on the theoretical framework and the themes that emerged from this research study, the findings indicated that parents need to provide a balanced approach to parental involvement by providing adequate levels of challenge and support during the period of emerging adulthood in order to provide students with the opportunity to engage in the process of exploration and skills development for career readiness. Students need an opportunity to gain independence through engagement in a variety of academic, social, and professional experiences while continuing to feel supported by their parents and connected to their peers. This approach can enable student success in job preparation and career readiness as these emerging adults are encouraged to develop the essential transferable/soft skills for the workplace.

Future Implications

The findings of this study are useful for college administrators in policy development and instructional changes. Policy development might include procedures for providing greater assistance and support to parents with campus issues, especially concerning financial aid as this was indicated to be the greatest area of parental involvement on this particular college campus. Additionally, institutions may need to consider additional staffing to provide parental assistance, e.g. Parent Coordinators, Parent Advisors, Parent Liaisons, Parental Relations Officers, and Parental Outreach Officers (Cutright, 2008; Hoover, 2004; Johnson, 2004; Lum, 2006). Instructional changes might include modifications to the academic curriculum to allow for greater experiential learning opportunities for students including internships, co-ops, externships, and/or job shadowing, which as revealed in the findings provided students with opportunities to develop transferable/soft skills in career preparation. Further,

instructional changes could incorporate high impact practices (HIPs), which according to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) is defined as “techniques and designs for teaching and learning that have proven to be beneficial for student engagement and successful learning” (American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2015, p. 1). In addition to internships, the AACU identified nine additional HIPs including first-year seminars, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, community-based learning, and capstone courses and projects, all of which may provide extensive skill building opportunities for students. Lastly, college campuses could consider incorporating transferable/soft skills development as a focus of future quality enhancement plans (QEPs) for campus-wide involvement in student job readiness and career preparation.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), the regional accrediting body for schools and colleges within 11 U.S. Southern states, defines QEP as “a carefully designed course of action that addresses a well defined and focused topic or issue related to student learning and should be embedded within the institutions on-going integrated institution-wide planning” (2016, p. 1). Several SACSCOC schools are already engaged in QEPs focused on job readiness and career preparation including: Catawba College, College to Career (C2C); Columbus State University, Real-World Problem-Solving; Florida Institute of Technology (FIT), The Global Workforce and Cross-Cultural Competence; Southeastern Louisiana University, Real-World Ready; Rollins College, Preparing Students for Lives and Careers After Graduation; Sullivan University, Career Literacies

and Competencies: Putting Care Back into Career; and Wesleyan College, From Here to Career: Connecting Liberal Arts and Professional Development.

The findings of this study are also beneficial for HR professionals in establishing policies and procedures for parental involvement of young employees, especially during the critical first-year on the job. For example, Enterprise Holdings sends parents a copy of the child's recruitment package and parents are invited to children's presentations at the end of internship placements. Further, some companies have organized "Take Your Parent to Work" days (Ludden, 2012). As one student in this study indicated, employers may also need to provide additional on-the-job training to assist students with proficiency of hard/technical skills such as computer basics due to students demonstrated lack of confidence in IT application including computer/technical skills.

Most importantly, the findings of this study are useful for students and parents in determining appropriate levels of parental involvement pertinent to the satisfactory development of the transferable/soft skills necessary for career readiness and job preparation, especially as student transition from college to the workplace. This is particularly important given students indicated desire for somewhat less parental involvement during the college years. This may require parents to reevaluate their level of involvement as students matriculate from K-12 to college during the first-year transition, thereby, enabling students to develop the autonomy necessary for academic, career, and life success as they progress through emerging adulthood to maturity. Lastly, students must identify ways to demonstrate their self-proclaimed proficiencies of transferable/soft skills to potential employers as a part of the recruitment and hiring

process for job opportunities and career advancement. This is especially important given the previous research indicating that employers are significantly underwhelmed with the demonstration of the necessary essential (transferable/soft) skills by young employees (Society of Human Resources Management, 2013).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

RELIABILITY STATISTICS FOR EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

SELF-AUTHORSHIP

RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=Q8_12 Q8_26 Q8_27 Q8_28

/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL

/MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.820	4

UNCERTAINTY

RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=Q8_29 Q8_30 Q8_31

/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL

/MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.790	3

ANXIETY

RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=Q8_8 Q8_11 Q8_20

/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL

/MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.783	3

INDIVIDUATION

RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=Q8_15 Q8_19 Q8_23

/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL

/MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.565	3

ACCOUNTABILITY
 RELIABILITY
 /VARIABLES=Q8_13 Q8_14 Q8_18
 /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
 /MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.567	3

POSITIVITY
 RELIABILITY
 /VARIABLES=Q8_1 Q8_10
 /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
 /MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.494	2

IMPULSIVENESS
 RELIABILITY
 /VARIABLES=Q8_4 Q8_17
 /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
 /MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.406	2

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
 RELIABILITY
 /VARIABLES=Q14_4 Q14_13, Q14_15
 /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
 /MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.802	3

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) APPLICATION
RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=Q14_9 Q14_10
/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
/MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.884	2

PROFESSIONALISM
RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=Q14_7 Q14_8
/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
/MODEL=ALPHA.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.736	2

Appendix B
CODEBOOKS

CODEBOOK 1: STUDENTS

Coding relationships between axial and open codes for grounded theory

Axial Codes	Open Codes	Themes	Grounded Theory
College Experiences	Campus Contacts Campus Experiences	Involvement in extracurricular activities; transition from K-12 to college; adjustment in the absence of parental supervision	Positive growth from extracurricular activities including leadership and interpersonal skills; improvement of study skills; feelings of adjusting to life away from home include fear and sadness
Peer Relationships	Peer Involvement Peer Situations	Reliance on peers for support and advice; influence of peers on job search process	Comfort of knowing others are going through the same things; difficulty with determining personal career aspirations – seek advice from peers; negative impact of generational characteristics
Career Readiness	Career Aspirations Career Decisions Career Preparation Career Readiness Skills Development	Field experiences through experiential education; feelings towards entrance into the working world; career decision-making; sense of reality of real-world	Value of experiential education including confidence and understanding of basics necessary for entrance into the workforce; excitement and anticipation coupled with fear and apprehension of career decisions

Emerging Adulthood	<p>Childhood Experience Defining Adulthood Emerging Adulthood Personal Challenges Personal Feelings Personal Preparation</p>	<p>Personal definitions of adulthood; personal progress towards adulthood; feelings towards adulthood and parental separation</p>	<p>Meaning of adulthood including productivity, decision-making, and responsibility; personal transition towards adulthood including parental separation, financial responsibility, independence, and self-discovery</p>
Parental Involvement	<p>Helicopter Parenting Parental Education Parental Influences Parental Involvement Parental Relationship Student Outreach</p>	<p>Parental involvement in academic, social, career, and personal lives; changes in independence and connection to parents; differences in relationships with mothers versus fathers; parental assistance with campus situations; ramifications of over involvement; changing dynamics of parent-child relationship</p>	<p>Satisfaction with parent's approach to their decision-making and judgment; desire to problem-solve; importance of independence yet connection to parents for advice; Role of mothers as ally and supporter; father as protector; maintenance of healthy boundary of parents in job search process; need for parental involvement in certain social and financial campus situations; Feelings of unhappiness, rebellion, and disrespect from over involvement; satisfaction and concern over shifting parent-child relationship</p>

CODEBOOK 2: PARENTS

Axial Codes	Open Codes	Themes	Grounded Theory
College Experiences	Campus Contacts Campus Experiences	Impacts of students living away from home for the first time, as well as engagement with extracurricular activities	Positive impacts from socialization including friendships, responsibility, developing maturity, adaptability, problem-solving, and conflict resolution
Peer Relationships	Peer Involvement Peer Situations	Role of child's peer relationships; situational differences for parent versus peer advice	Students seek peers for advice and input in decision-making; importance of parental advice in particular situations
Career Readiness	Career Aspirations Career Decisions Career Preparation Career Readiness Skills Development	Results from student's varied field experiences; level of job preparation as a result of these experiences	Skill building and career readiness resulting from intern/co-ops, and jobs; skill building in interpersonal, teamwork, communication, professionalism, and diversity; job preparation for transition into workforce including leadership, compassion, reliability, and determination

Emerging Adulthood	<p>Childhood Experiences</p> <p>Defining Adulthood</p> <p>Emerging Adulthood</p> <p>Personal Challenges</p> <p>Personal Feelings</p> <p>Personal Preparation</p>	Personal definitions of adulthood; children's progression to adulthood	Parents defined adults with labels such as kindness, respect, responsibility, self-motivated, proactive, and positive; described their children as mature adults able to handle expectations and challenges of the real world
Parental Involvement	<p>Helicopter Parenting</p> <p>Parental Education</p> <p>Parental Influences</p> <p>Parental Involvement</p> <p>Parental Relationship</p> <p>Student Outreach</p>	Personal level of involvement; potential impacts of over/under involvement; evolution of parent-child relationship during college; involvement in academic decision-making process; potential impacts of helicopter parenting	Importance of providing freedom for decision-making and self-discovery; changing dynamic of parent-child relationship to friendship and mutual respect; expressed joy in involvement in academic decisions yet approached experience as a learning opportunity for children; importance of providing children with opportunity for both success and failure to mature, grow, and prepare for the workforce

CODEBOOK 3: STUDENTS/PARENTS

Selective codes applied to emerging adulthood and transferable/soft skills domains

Selective Codes	Domains	Themes	Grounded Theory
Impulsiveness	Experimentation Unpredictability	Students progress past adolescence; time in college in regards to career exploration	Students reported being past adolescent experimentation with the exception of experimentation in career exploration
Accountability	Settling Down Responsibility for Others Commitment to Others	Discussions of adult responsibilities; influence of parents in sense of responsibility	Students defined themselves as responsible and capable of adult responsibilities; desire for job opportunities with professional responsibilities; Parents noted the importance of experiences away from home in building responsibility and self-reliance
Emotional Intelligence	Communication Skills Interpersonal Skills Friendly/Outgoing	Students descriptions of emotional intelligence; parental influence on development of emotional intelligence; students ability to exhibit aspects of emotional intelligence	Students positively described communication, interpersonal skills, and friendliness; parental influence with skills in communication; ability to seek help from and provide help to others

Appendix C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Student Interview Protocol

Thank you for meeting with me today. I would like to have a conversation with you in regards to your experience as an undergraduate student and how your relationship with your parents has evolved as you matured through your college experience and have prepared for entrance into the workforce. This research is for my dissertation and will be treated completely confidentially. Our conversation will be recorded so that I can focus on our discussion and will allow me the opportunity to reflect back on our conversation at a later time. The recording will be transcribed and you are invited to receive a copy of the transcription for your review. As a reminder, your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime without penalty. You also have the right to skip any questions you prefer not to answer. Do you have any questions for me at this point? You may feel free to stop and ask me questions at any point throughout this interview.

1. Tell me a little about yourself. What is your major? Do you live on campus? Are you a member of any campus groups, etc.?
2. Why did you select this institution? What role did your parents play in your selection process?
3. How did you select your major? Again, what role did your parents play in your decision-making process?
4. Did your parents attend college? Please describe.
5. What were some of the “firsts” you experienced in college?
6. How would you describe your family?
7. When you consider the goals and aspirations you have in life, who has helped you define them?
8. Can you tell me about a time when your parents contacted a member of the university on your behalf? How did this make you feel? Do you feel this has changed your relationship with these individuals on campus?
9. Under what circumstances would you want your parent(s) to intervene in a problem on campus?
10. Do you feel that you can handle challenges that present themselves to you on campus? What about life after campus in the “real world”?
11. Do you ever talk with your peers about concerns? Do you tell them the ways that your parents have been involved in resolving your concerns?
12. What does it mean to you to be an adult?
13. In what ways do you think the college environment has prepared you for adulthood?
14. Do you feel prepared to enter the job market? How have your parents been involved in this process?
15. Would you be comfortable with your parents being involved in your job search process? In what ways?
16. Let’s discuss the top attributes employers seek on a candidate’s resume. How do you feel your parents have played a part in your development of the skills we just discussed?
17. Is there anything you would like to add that we haven’t already discussed?

Parent Interview Protocol

Thank you for speaking with me today. I would like to have a conversation with you about your relationship with your son/daughter in regards to their collegiate experience and preparation for entering the workforce. This research is for my dissertation and will be treated completely confidentially. Our conversation will be recorded so that I can focus on our discussion and will allow me the opportunity to reflect back on our conversation at a later time. The recording will be transcribed and you are invited to receive a copy of the transcription for your review. As a reminder, your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime without penalty. You also have the right to skip any questions you prefer not to answer. Do you have any questions for me at this point? You may feel free to stop and ask me questions at any point throughout this interview.

1. Please tell me a little about yourself. Did you attend college? If so, please describe your experience.
2. Please describe your relationship with your son/daughter.
3. How often do you communicate with your child? What means of communication are most common? When you speak with your child, what are the common themes of your conversations?
4. What role did you play in your child's college selection process?
5. What role did you play in your child's selection of major/minor?
6. How do you feel you have helped to define your child's goals and aspirations in life?
7. Have you ever contacted a member of the university on your student's behalf? If so, please explain the reason and how you felt about your involvement. Can you please describe your child's reaction to your involvement? When do you feel it is acceptable for a parent to contact a campus administrator?
8. Do you feel that you have helped to equip your child with the ability to handle challenges of the "real world" as they graduate from college?
9. Do you feel your child relies more on you or their peers (or someone else) for direction and assistance?
10. What does it mean to be an adult? Do you feel that your child can be considered an adult? Please explain.
11. In what ways do you think the college experience prepares students for adulthood? Do you feel that this institution has adequately prepared your child?
12. Do you feel your child is prepared to enter the job market? How do you feel you have helped prepare your child in this process?
13. In what ways do you feel it is appropriate to assist your child in their job search process?
14. Let's discuss the top attributes employers seek on a candidate's resume. Please describe your child's abilities in regards to these traits. How do you feel you have played a part in your child's development of these skills?
15. Is there anything you would like to add that we haven't already discussed?

Appendix D

STUDENT EMAIL INVITATION FOR SURVEY PARTICIPATION

Dear Student,

Congratulations on your upcoming graduation!

My name is Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez and I am a student in the College of Education, Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology working on my dissertation for the degree of Ph.D., Administration of Higher Education.

As you prepare to graduate, you have been selected to participate in my dissertation research studying the effects of parental attachment on the transition of young adults from college to the workplace.

Your participation is completely voluntary and will only require approximately five (5) minutes of your time to complete an on-line survey. Selected participants will be invited to participate in follow-up interviews. All data collected in this study will remain confidential.

Should you select to participate, please click the link below:

https://auburn.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_eM7QNPEhcbn76EB

You may choose to discontinue your participation at any point in the survey by simply closing your internet browser.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study. Your input will be valuable in assisting campus administrators and human resource professionals in providing the best preparation for college students transitioning to the workplace.

Should you have any questions or need any further information, please feel free to contact me at lzr0005@auburn.edu or (706) 507-8765 or the dissertation committee chair, Dr. David DiRamio at diramdc@auburn.edu.

Thank you!

War Eagle,

Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez

Appendix E

PERMISSIONS TO USE SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

From: "Danielle E. Mitchell" <danielle.mitchell@nyu.edu>
To: "Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez" <lzr0005@auburn.edu>
Date: 2/21/2014 at 12:22 PM
Subject: Fwd: UCUES data

Hello Lyn,

It was such a pleasure to speak with you. Below is my exchanges with UCUES.

You absolutely have my permission to use my inventory for your study. Please let me know if you need a more detailed approval.

Please don't hesitate to call or email with questions.

Best,
Danielle Mitchell, PhD

From: "Jeffrey Arnett" <arnett@jeffrearnett.com>
To: "Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez" <lzr0005@auburn.edu>
Date: 2/6/2014 at 1:47 PM
Subject: Re: IDEA Permission for Dissertation Proposal

Here's the original article, containing the scale as well as psychometric information.
You are welcome to use it.

Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, Ph.D.
Research Professor, Department of Psychology, Clark University

From: "Reifman, Alan" <alan.reifman@ttu.edu>
To: "Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez" <lzr0005@auburn.edu>
Date: 2/6/2014 at 3:00 PM
Subject: emerging adulthood

Dear Lyn,

Thanks for your interest. Yes, of course you can use the IDEA questionnaire. I have attached the Journal of Youth Development article in which we introduced the measure, to go along with the manuscript Jeff sent that contains more extensive psychometric information. The actual survey questionnaire is available at: http://www.webpages.ttu.edu/areifman/IDEA_instrument.htm .

Sincerely,
Alan

Appendix F
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Dissertation Survey with Informed Consent

Q1 INFORMATION LETTER For a dissertation research project entitled: The Helicopter Parent Phenomenon: Testing the Effects of Strong Parental Attachment on the Transition of Emerging Adults from College to the Workplace You are invited to participate in a research study to investigate the impact of parental attachment on the transition of students from college to the workplace. This study is being conducted by Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez under the direction of Dr. David DiRamio in the College of Education, Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology. You were selected as a possible participant because you are between the ages of 19-25 and preparing for graduation from an undergraduate degree program at Auburn University. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you will respond to an on-line version of the (IDEA) Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (Arnett, Reifman, 2007; Mitchell, 2014), which includes questions regarding your college experience. Your total time commitment will be approximately five (5) minutes. There is no expected risk to participants in this study. You may discontinue your participation at any time by closing your browser. The results from this study will be used to better prepare traditional-age college students for the transition from college to the workplace. Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Based upon survey results, eligible students will be invited to participate in an additional interview phase of this study. If you are willing to be considered for participation in the interview phase, your survey will no longer be anonymous, as contact information will be necessary for follow-up. Information collected through your participation will be used solely for the purpose of dissertation research at Auburn University. There is no cost or compensation for your involvement. If you have any questions in regards to this study, please contact Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez at lzt0005@auburn.edu or Dr. David DiRamio at diramdc@auburn.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone at (334) 844-5966 or by email at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu. Having read the information above, should you select to participate in this research project, please click the link below. Otherwise, if you chose not to participate, please close your browser. You may print a copy of this letter for your records. Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez, Principal Investigator. The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from February 26, 2015 to February 25, 2016. Protocol #14-453 EP 1502.

Q2 I have read and understood the above consent form and desire of my own free will to participate in this study.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q13 Are you between the ages of 19 - 25?

Yes (1)

No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q8 Is this period of your life a...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Somewhat Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
Time of many possibilities (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of exploration (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of confusion (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of experimentation (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of personal freedom (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of feeling restricted (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of responsibilities for yourself (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of feeling stressed out (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of instability (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of optimism (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of high pressure (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of finding out who you are (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of settling down (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of responsibility for others (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of independence (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of open choices (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of unpredictability (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

commitment to others (18)				
Time of self-sufficiency (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of many worries (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of trying out new things (21)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of focusing on yourself (22)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of separating from parents (23)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of defining yourself (24)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of planning for the future (25)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of seeking a sense of meaning (26)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of deciding on your own beliefs and values (27)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of learning to think for yourself (28)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of feeling adult in some ways but not in others (29)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of gradually becoming an adult (30)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time of being unsure whether you have reached full adulthood (31)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 Thinking back over your college experience, how often have you typically had contact with one or both of your parents?

	Not at all (1)	Once a month or less (2)	A few times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	A few times a week (5)	Daily (6)
By phone (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
By text message (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
By email (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In person (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 Thinking back over your college experience, has one or both of your parents contacted any of the following college administrators?

	Never (1)	One time (2)	2-5 times (3)	6-10 times (4)	More than 11 times (5)
President of the University (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dean of College (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Aid (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic Adviser (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty Member (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Residence Life (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Affairs (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career Center (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 When I selected a major, I sought the advice of... (Select all that apply)

- Mother (1)
- Father (2)
- High School Guidance Counselor (3)
- College Academic Adviser (4)
- High School Teacher (5)
- College Faculty Member (6)
- Friend (7)
- Other (8)

Q12 When it comes to my life as a college student,

	Much less involved (1)	Somewhat less involved (6)	Involved as much as they are (2)	Somewhat more involved (3)	Much more involved (4)
I would prefer that my parents be... (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about how your parents are involved in your college experience:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly agree (6)
My parents and I discuss the classes I should take (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My parents and I discuss what I learned in class (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My parents are very interested in my academic programs (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My parents stress the importance of getting good grades (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am pursuing (or considering) a major I don't like in order to please my parents (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My parents ask about my friends or non-academic activities (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My parents are involved in my career pursuits (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14 In considering my future employment, I feel that I have adequately developed the following skills for success on the job:

	Strong disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Agree (5)	Strongly agree (6)
Leadership (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-solving (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication skills (Written) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication skills (Verbal) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to work in a team (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analytical/Quantitative skills (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong work ethic (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initiative (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer skills (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technical skills (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Detail-oriented (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexibility/Adaptability (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpersonal skills (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizational ability (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friendly/Outgoing personality (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic planning skills (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creativity (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entrepreneurial (Risk-taker) (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tactfulness (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q15 Based on the results of this survey, eligible students will be invited to participate in an additional interview phase of this study. If you are willing to be considered for participation in an interview, please provide your contact information below:

Q16 If you are selected and choose to participate in an interview, do you think your parent(s) would be willing to participate in a separate interview with the researcher? These interviews can be conducted in person or virtually via Skype, etc.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Appendix G

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DOCUMENTS



The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 2/26/15 to 2/25/16
 Protocol # 14-453 EP 1502

AUBURN UNIVERSITY
 COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY

INFORMED CONSENT

For a dissertation research project entitled
The Helicopter Parent Phenomenon: Testing the Effects of Strong Parental Attachment on the Transition of Emerging Adults from College to the Workforce

You recently completed an online survey as a part of a research study being conducted by Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez, under the direction of Dr. David DiRamio in the College of Education, Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology. This research seeks to examine the impact of parental attachment on the transition of students from college to the workforce. The survey served as the initial phase of this research project.

Based on the results of your survey, you are invited to participate in the second phase of this research consisting of a personal interview with the primary investigator, Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez. Your parent(s) will be asked to participate in a separate interview with the primary investigator, Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez.

This interview should last approximately sixty (60) minutes. The interview will be digitally, audio recorded for transcription purposes only.

Your participation is completely voluntary. There is no expected risk to participants in this study. There is no cost or compensation for your involvement.

The results of this study will be used to better prepare traditional-aged college students for the transition from college to the workforce. Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Information collected through your participation will be used solely for the purposes of dissertation research at Auburn University.

If you have any questions in regards to this study, please contact Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez at lzr0005@auburn.edu or Dr. David DiRamio at diramdc@auburn.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board at (334) 844-5966 or by email at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

Having read the information above, should you select to participate in this phase of the research project, please sign below. A copy of this letter will be provided to you for your records.

 Student Signature

 Date

 Primary Investigator Signature

 Date

4036 Haley Center, Auburn, AL 36849-5221; Telephone: 334-844-4460; Fax: 334-844-3072

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The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 2/26/15 to 2/25/16
 Protocol # 14-453 EP 1502

AUBURN UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY

INFORMED CONSENT

For a dissertation research project entitled
The Helicopter Parent Phenomenon: Testing the Effects of Strong Parental Attachment on the Transition of Emerging Adults from College to the Workforce

Your student recently selected to participate in a study being conducted by Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez, under the direction of Dr. David DiRamio in the College of Education, Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology. This research seeks to examine the impact of parental attachment on the transition of students from college to the workforce. The survey served as the initial phase of this research project.

Parent participation is requested for the second phase of this research project and will consist of a personal interview with the primary investigator, Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez. It is acceptable for this interview to take place in-person or on-line via Skype (or similar technology), whichever is most convenient for the parent(s). This will be a separate interview from the student.

This interview should last approximately sixty (60) minutes. The interview will be digitally, audio recorded for transcription purposes only.

Your participation is completely voluntary. There is no expected risk to participants in this study. There is no cost or compensation for your involvement. The results of this study will be used to better prepare traditional-aged college students for the transition from college to the workforce.

Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Information collected through your participation will be used solely for the purposes of dissertation research at Auburn University.

If you have any questions in regards to this study, please contact Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez at lrg0005@auburn.edu or Dr. David DiRamio at diramdc@auburn.edu.

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Having read the information above, should you select to participate in this phase of the research project, please sign below. A copy of this letter will be provided to you for your records.

 Parent Signature

 Date

 Primary Investigator Signature

 Date

INFORMATION LETTER

For a dissertation research project entitled:

The Helicopter Parent Phenomenon: Testing the Effects of Strong Parental Attachment on the Transition of Emerging Adults from College to the Workplace

You are invited to participate in a research study to investigate the impact of parental attachment on the transition of students from college to the workplace. This study is being conducted by Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez under the direction of Dr. David DiRamio in the College of Education, Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology. You were selected as a possible participant because you are between the ages of 19-25 and preparing for graduation from an undergraduate degree program at Auburn University.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you will respond to an on-line version of the (IDEA) Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (Arnett, Reifman, 2007; Mitchell, 2014), which includes questions regarding your college experience.

Your total time commitment will be approximately five (5) minutes.

There is no expected risk to participants in this study.

You may discontinue your participation at any time by closing your browser.

The results from this study will be used to better prepare traditional-age college students for the transition from college to the workplace.

Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Based upon survey results, eligible students will be invited to participate in an additional interview phase of this study. If you are willing to be considered for participation in the interview phase, your survey will no longer be anonymous, as contact information will be necessary for follow-up. Information collected through your participation will be used solely for the purpose of dissertation research at Auburn University.

There is no cost or compensation for your involvement.

If you have any questions in regards to this study, please contact Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez at lzr0005@auburn.edu or Dr. David DiRamio at diramdc@auburn.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone at (334) 844-5966 or by email at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

Having read the information above, should you select to participate in this research project, please click the link below. Otherwise, if you chose not to participate, please close your browser.

You may print a copy of this letter for your records.

Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez

Lyn Riggsby-Gonzalez
Principal Investigator

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from February 26, 2015 to February 25, 2016. Protocol #14-453 EP 1502.

