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The Arrival of Generation Z on College Campuses

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THE ARRIVAL OF GENERATION Z ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

by

NICOLE GUERRERO TREVINO

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the University of the Incarnate Word
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Have faith in your journey. Everything had to happen exactly as it did to get you where you're going next! Mandy Hale

I would like to offer my appreciation and acknowledgement to those individuals who supported me along this journey. First, I would like to thank my family, in particular my husband, my parents, and my sister. Without the love and support of my husband, I could not have completed the journey. His constant encouragement kept me going. I am thankful to my parents for instilling in me that faith, hard work, and patience will guide you through anything. To my sister, who cheered me along every step of the way.

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Nicole Guerrero Trevino

THE ARRIVAL OF GENERATION Z ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Nicole Guerrero Trevino, PhD

University of the Incarnate Word, 2018

The purpose of the study was to understand the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. Colleges and universities may experience diminishing enrollment and possible closures if college administrators fail to address the needs and expectations of Generation Z students. Generation Z is entering college with a set of different expectations than their predecessors and it will be important for university administrators to understand this generation in order to attract and retain them.

Generation Z will enter college in the fall of 2018, research has shown that that their expectations are different, and it is important for university administrators to understand them in order to attract and retain them. The researcher sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What do teachers, counselors and administrators identify as effective strategies and services that foster student academic success?
 - a. What are some of the more effective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
 - b. What are some ineffective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
2. What do teachers, counselors and administrators identify as the expectations of Generation Z about their college experience? And, why do they perceive these to be their expectations?

This qualitative study followed an interpretive design inquiry utilizing narrative inquiry protocol as the data collection methodology. The researcher followed interpretive design inquiry and narrative inquiry protocol because it aligned with the conceptual framework. Six participants

were interviewed twice using a semi-structured interview format. In the first interview, participants were guided by an interview protocol asking them a series of questions related to their experiences as educators working with students and parents of this generation. During the second interview the participants were asked a second series of questions and member checks were completed to ensure accurate information had been gathered during the first interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 2009).

Three layers were incorporated to analyze the data that were gathered from the interviews. The main data analysis technique was Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis. The second layer of analysis that was Merriam's (2002) recommendation of analyzing the data while transcribing. The final layer of analysis was Spradley's (1980) steps for creating a domain analysis to help connect the field notes and observations in the compiling phase.

The findings were shared by first identifying the factors that impacted the development of the student and contributed to their overall school experience. These factors created the eight major categories by which the conversations flowed (1) Expectations, (2) Norms, (3) Student Welfare, (4) Campus Safety, (5) Parental Involvement, (6) Learning Styles, (7) Technology, and (8) Student Characteristics. The first level of categories was based on comments that connected to the larger overarching theme of the student experience at school. After completing a second round of interviews with all of the participants, the researcher went back to steps 1-3 of Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis. From here the researcher was able to drill down into the categories through the participant statements and identified five themes. The themes were student well-being, technology, parent involvement, flexible classroom modalities, and campus safety.

For higher education professionals working with Generation Z students the following conclusions were made in association with the purpose statement and the focus of the inquiry as gathered from the participant interviews: (1) universities must take the time to research and understand Generation Z in order to prepare and be a Generation Z ready college; (2) universities must find a way to engage parents as partners in order to foster student academic success; (3) universities should research, review, analyze, and implement academic services and tools that support student success across the student experience for this generation; and (4) universities need to identify service models that provide support for overall student well-being.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO GENERATION Z	1
History of Higher Education.....	2
Early education, B.C. – 1600s.....	2
Colonial period, 1600s–mid–1700s.....	3
American way, 1770s–1820s	4
Diversity and adversity, 1840-1880.....	4
Captains of industry, 1880-1910	6
Alma mater, 1890s–1920s.....	7
Expansion and reforms in higher education, 1920–1945.....	8
Golden age, 1945–1970	9
Coming of age in America, 1970–2000.....	10
Education in the 21st century, 2000–present.....	12
Statement of the Problem.....	14
Statement of Purpose.....	16
Research Questions	16
Summary.....	17
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	18
Student Development Theories and Practices.....	18
Generational Theory.....	27
Generational Forecast.....	30

Table of Contents—Continued

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
Generation X	31
Traits and characteristics	32
Leadership style	33
Values and perceptions	34
Parenting style	35
Generation Z	36
Traits and characteristics	36
Leadership style	42
Values and perceptions	42
Learning environments	44
Generation Z as adults	45
METHODOLOGY	48
Statement of Problem	48
Statement of Purpose	49
Research Questions	49
Research Design	49
Conceptual Framework	51
Research Perspective	54
Site and Participant Selection	55
Site selection and access	55

Table of Contents—Continued

METHODOLOGY

Participants	55
Materials and Procedure	56
Data collection methods.....	56
Interviews.....	57
Ethics.....	58
Data analysis.....	58
Transcription.....	59
FINDINGS	61
Participant Overview and Summary of Activities	61
Transcription	62
Data Analysis	63
Expectations	67
Norms.....	68
Student well-being	70
Campus safety	71
Parenting	73
Learning styles.....	74
Technology.....	75
Student characteristics.....	75
Validity	82

Table of Contents—Continued

FINDINGS

Process	82
Analyzing	82
Validation	83
Reporting	83
Saturation	83
Chapter Summary	83
SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS	85
Summary of the Research Study	86
Generational Cohort Theory and Findings	88
Parent involvement	91
Student well-being	94
Campus safety	96
Student Development Theory and Findings	99
Student well-being	104
Campus safety	104
Technology	105
Flexible classroom modalities	117
Parent involvement	111
Recommendations	112

Table of Contents—Continued

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Recommendation 1: Understand Generation X parent and create programs and initiatives that are focused on communicating and engaging with them	112
Recommendation 2: Create campus safety plans and communication streams for working with students and engaging with parents	113
Recommendation 3: Research, design, and implement flexible classroom modalities	113
Recommendation 4: Research, review, analyze, and implement technology tools in support of student success across the student experience	114
Recommendation 5: Educate faculty and staff regarding the increased changes in mental health and disabilities in order to serve Generation Z.....	114
Contributions to the Gap in the Literature.....	115
Future Studies	116
Student well-being	116
Parent involvement	116
Mental health and disabilities.....	117
Public schools.....	117
Conclusion	117
Universities must take the time to research and understand Generation Z in order to prepare and be a Generation Z ready college	118
Universities must find ways to engage parents as partners in order to foster student academic success	119

Table of Contents—Continued

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Universities should research, review, analyze, and implement academic services and tools that support student success across the student experience for this generation	119
Universities need to identify service models that provide support for overall student well-being	120
Closing Remarks	121
REFERENCES	123
APPENDICES.....	134
Appendix A: Interview Protocol	135
Appendix B: Consent Form	136
Appendix C: Tinto's Model of Persistence.....	137
Appendix D: Drawing A.....	138
Appendix E: Drawing B	139
Appendix F: Coding Levels.....	140
Appendix G: Subcategories	141
Appendix H: Themes.....	142
Appendix I: Generational Cohort Theory.....	144
Appendix J: Tinto's Model of Student Motivation and Persistence	145

Introduction to Generation Z

Although the incoming class of 2020 has not been officially named, some refer to this group of students, born after 2000, as Generation Z, while others have referred to them as Generation C (Dye, 2007), the Homeland Generation, or the iGeneration (Rosen, 2010). According to Dye (2007), the C stands for content, although some say it could stand for creativity, consumption, or connected; Rosen (2010) uses the term iGeneration because of their attachment to iPhones, iPads, iTouch, and a host of other technologies; and, Strauss and Howe (1991) refer to them as Generation Z. There is much debate about the genesis of this generation. Some say it began as early as 1995, while other researchers identify 2002 as the start of the generation. I will use the work of Howard Strauss and Neil Howe (1991), which identified this generation as beginning in 2000. Seemiller and Grace (2016) found that this generation is driven by a “different set of motivations, learning styles, characteristics, skill sets, and social concerns than previous generations” (p. 7). In order for colleges and university academic service administrators to provide quality services for Generation Z, they need to better understand this generation and their expectations.

Researchers have hypothesized many things about Generation Z, from the type of students they will be to the type of workers they will become. Much of the information presently known about Generation Z is based on a variety of factors such as who their parents are, extant research on generational cohorts (Strauss & Howe, 1991), or other studies conducted on this generation by marketing companies, Northwestern University, and several other researchers. University administrators, faculty, and staff will find this information useful as they begin to implement strategic plans for challenging and supporting this population of students through academic and co-curricular activities. In order for colleges and universities to stay relevant they will need to adapt their courses, programs, processes, environments, and initiatives to meet the

needs of this new cohort of students (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Students and parents will find this information useful as they began to think about which university to send their students to.

History of Higher Education

American colleges have been in existence for over 300 years. Institutions of higher learning have evolved due to changes in the world and generational needs. According to Seidman (2012), American universities have undergone changes in mission, curricula, student demographics, and financing. Thelin (2011), Kerr (2001) and Haskins (2007) noted this evolution within higher education has ensued as a result of changes in demographics, the economy, and the leadership in our country, wars that have occurred, increasing globalization of our world, the development of new technology, and many other factors. We know that from the beginning of time, human beings have always had a desire to obtain more knowledge, to use this knowledge to become model citizens, and to contribute to the development of a better world.

Early education, B.C. – 1600s. Some form of higher education has been in existence for hundreds of years. If we look back to the Greeks and Romans, the intellectually elite stood on street corners and lectured. While this was not a formalized way of educating, this was the start of higher education. The Greeks and Romans began what later became known as Academic Guilds. Several years later, came the development of universities in Paris and Bologna. The university in Bologna was the first institution to teach law. In Italy, the world also witnessed the development of the University of Salerno, which was the first institution to teach medicine (Haskins, 2007). Thelin (2011) explained that these institutions were chaotic, because they lacked a formal system of policies and procedures. Students who attended the university often lived in the same city where the university was located but did not have access to services and

resources that later students would have. These changes came with the development of the Oxford and Scottish models of higher education.

During this era, all students in college were male and were typically high school aged. In the early 1600s few students enrolled in colleges because college degrees had little to no value. Most of the colleges that existed were affiliated with a church for the purpose of educating men to serve as pastors or missionaries. In what was then called the New World, this included Harvard, William and Mary, and Yale (Seidman, 2012). The American college system struggled throughout its early years to stay open and to serve students as the country underwent many hardships, such as the establishment of the colonies, the institution of slavery in the New World, and the beginning of the Thirty Years War. As colonization of the New World continued, struggling families who saw little value in education were more likely to keep older children at home working for the family.

Colonial period, 1600s–mid–1700s. In the colonial period, the United States began to see a shift in higher education and the rise of universities. These institutions of higher learning were based upon the British, or Oxford, model of education. This model looked to the faculty to serve as the figureheads of the universities and to oversee daily operations. Higher education in the colonial period began with the development of Harvard in 1636, which was started by Puritans (Thelin, 2011). Virtually all universities established during this period were funded by the religious, the wealthy, or both. This period also brought about the creation of the University of Pennsylvania, established by the Anglicans, and referred to historically as Benjamin Franklin's school. The clergy ran universities during this period and their purpose was to develop men of honor and religion. At this time, only 1% of the country attended universities and there

was little concern for students completing their degrees. The student body was made up of children between the ages of 14-15 from wealthy families.

By the mid-1700s, about nine universities had been established, seven of which are considered Ivy League institutions today. These institutions were located in the northeastern United States and were funded by the religious and wealthy. Often wealthy families donated books and supplies for the students. The universities used a quadrangle format, meaning that the students lived, slept, and ate all in the same area. As a result, later during the Colonial period, we saw a shift in the student body and the students began to question their student experience and the quality of their academic instruction.

American way, 1770s–1820s. During the Revolutionary War, the nation witnessed the demolition of colleges and universities and a diminution of student bodies as a result of the fighting that took place in the United States. This era witnessed a shift in the higher education experience due to the first great awakening and the establishment of universities connected to each of the churches. It was also during this period, that higher education in the United States began the transition away from the British model of education reflecting the country's increasingly independent identity.

As a result of American independence, higher education shifted their educational model from the Oxford model to the Scottish model (Thelin, 2011). The Scottish model of governance brought about an external board of trustees and gave administrative authority to the university president. The board of trustees brought about a continual review of accountability, as the president was held accountable and responsible for the upkeep of the university by the board.

Diversity and adversity, 1840-1880. Benjamin Franklin brought the concept of the Enlightenment to the United States during this period; as a result, the focus of higher education

moved from religion to the sciences and arts. This also established the development of new areas of study. Thelin (2011) referred to the next period of higher education development as the diversity and adversity period. During this time, there was change and movement in the student body and in the classroom, such as African Americans and women becoming part of the college campus. The nation also saw the establishment of United Negro College Fund or UNCF, which was a college fund for African Americans. There was an expansion of location for universities, for example, the University of Transylvania, formed in Kentucky. As more women began to attend college, the nation saw the establishment of Mount Holyoke, a college for women. This integration of gender, race, and ethnicity had not previously happened across the United States.

The 1800s brought an expansion of colleges and the number of males enrolling increased significantly (Geiger, 1999). During the early 1800s, the higher education system saw an increase of denominational colleges, which contributed to an 80% increase in enrollment (Geiger, 1999). The majority of males who went to college came from elite families. Moving forward was the start of the women's suffrage movement in Wyoming, which brought an increase in women pursuing higher education. Higher education also saw the development of several Baptist schools in the South. The president of Baylor University became the champion of co-education. Between 1850 and 1900, more than forty colleges were created for women, including Vassar, Smith, and Wellesley (Seidman, 2012).

This was also the beginning of the U.S. Civil War and most institutions of higher education struggled to maintain their enrollment and keep their doors open. As a result, the offices of admissions at various institutions had to become creative with their enrollment practices. Most schools had been enrolling students who lived in nearby areas. Now they began

to work with families from further distances and working to convince them of the benefits of sending their children away to school.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln and Justin Smith Morrill came together to develop the Morrill Land Grant. This provided states with land to develop colleges and universities focused on agriculture, the arts, and sciences. The nation saw universities such as Texas A&M established. These institutions of higher learning marked a major shift in the United States and brought about a great deal of change. The land grant program was reviewed and updated in 1890, producing benefits that continue to accrue to institutions of higher education today. During this time, the number of institutions of higher education increased from just over 20 to approximately 820. There was also a shift in the funding for higher education from the religious and wealthy to the government and the states.

Captains of industry, 1880-1910. Thelin (2011) referenced the next period of higher education as *Captains of Industry* because of the shifts in funding, policies and procedures, and governance. We saw major philanthropists such as Andrew Carnegie and John Rockefeller lending their support to institutions of higher education. Carnegie for example, who as an immigrant had a rough beginning in life but became self-educated and a self-made businessman, vowed to provide educational services for those who did not have the means to educate themselves (Thelin, 2011). His name still rings in the minds of people today, associated with the money he donated to create free libraries, buy organs for churches, establish the KLRN network, and create the Carnegie Foundation, Carnegie School, and many other major educational programs and foundations.

Philanthropy changed the landscape of higher education, as donations to establish colleges and universities and to build college libraries increased. Higher education also saw the

establishment of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. This was an association that began to look at the standards such as processes, policies, and procedures for maintaining universities. The association began with an elite group of presidents and remains in existence today with many of the same universities still involved. In 2015, there are associations charged with reviewing universities on an on-going basis for accreditation. For example, many southern institutions must adhere to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation requirements and processes.

In addition, college entrance exams were introduced in the early 1900s which changed the face of student bodies as universities began to recruit and admit only certain types of students. During this period, President Elliot, of Harvard, began his career as a faculty member and moved into the presidency role while still in his early 30s; he went on to serve as president for 40 years. President Elliot transformed the face of higher education, but also the face of the Ivy League institutions in particular. Harvard began as the first university in the United States and continues its legacy today, as a university for elite scholars.

Alma mater, 1890s–1920s. Thelin (2011) called the next period the *Alumna* period. This era included an increase in the participation of alumni on college campuses. SAT scores became a major portion of the college entry process and is something that holds true today. Most colleges and universities across the nation still use SAT and/or ACT scores for college admission, and the more prestigious an institution, the higher the score needed to be admitted. Colleges and universities not only saw changes in their admissions practices, but they also witnessed the creation of college sports.

College sports, in particular football, became a very important part of the college experience. This drew, and continues to draw, alums in significant numbers. If you look at the

University of Texas at Austin, each Saturday during football season, thousands of alumni go into the city to watch the game and the city is covered in burnt orange. As a result of the development of college football teams, colleges and universities have seen an increase in alumni participation and philanthropy (Langley, 2014). Many institutions utilized alumni donations to support building new structures, and developing new programs, scholarships, and addressing other university needs.

Expansion and reforms in higher education, 1920–1945. During this next period, the number of universities in the country grew to over 1800. Another major development during this period was the establishment of student activities. Students became very involved in their college campuses, writing for school newspapers, participating in student organizations, playing intramural sports, and many other opportunities for engagement. These student activities remain an important part of the college experience and are now referenced as the co-curricular experience. Researchers (Astin, 1977; Kuh, 1997; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1975) support the concept that co-curricular experiences contribute to the overall success of students.

During the early 1900s the American higher education system began to see a more stable student enrollment. By 1914, there were 110,000 students attending just over 1,000 institutions (Seidman, 2012). As a country, the nation had become industrialized and there was a need for managers and professionals to direct these organizations. As a result of the increase in enrollment, colleges and universities became more selective in their admission practices. During these years, institutions became familiar with the issue of retention and began to investigate the concept of attrition. John McNeely completed the first attrition study in 1938, investigating student departures from universities (Seidman, 2012).

Golden age, 1945–1970. During the middle of the 20th century, higher education also experienced significant growth in enrollment as the result of an increase in students from upper middle-class protestant families (Thelin, 20011). This resulted in a more diverse college student population. The United States was going through a period of change and the events of this period influenced changes in higher education, such as the introduction of new fields of study and a more diverse college population. While the early 1900s brought the Great Depression and World War II, these events subsequently produced a surge in higher education. By the mid-1950s, there were over 2 million students enrolled in over 1,800 colleges (Sandeem, 2004).

Much of this growth was fueled by government through the GI Bill, the National Defense Education Act of 1958, and the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Seidman, 2012). In 1944, the GI Bill was developed to provide veterans with the opportunity to re-establish themselves after returning from the war. They were given \$90 for food and housing, and free tuition. This sent thousands of veterans into colleges and flooded the United States with degreed individuals. The GI Bill was supposed to be in existence for a short period of time, but as a result of its popularity and the impact that it had on the country as a whole, it was put into place permanently. Today, the GI Bill provides higher education for veterans all over the United States. Due to their experiences within the military, veterans bring a wealth of knowledge and experience into the classroom and to the campus community (O'Herrin, 2011).

The National Defense Education Act of 1958 targeted higher education by providing National Defense Fellowships and student loans (Thelin, 2011, p. 280). This was the first time in history that the federal government granted funds to general education; they had previously provided land grants for schools and aid to vocational education. The Higher Education Act of 1964 altered the governance structure for higher education (Thelin, 2011, p. 338). The

government provided incentive funds to the states if they created a state higher education coordinating board to serve as the liaison between the federal and state governments. Overall the higher education system saw a change in philosophy as students became more committed to attaining a degree.

During this period, President Kerr at the University of Berkeley coined the term *multiversity* (2001). Kerr was also responsible for envisioning the 3-tier concept to classify higher education institutions. Tier 3, the lowest level, encompassed education for all high school graduates in the state of California in 2-year community colleges. Tier 2 included public, 4-year institutions such as the University of California at Irvine, which had established more stringent guidelines for admittance. And finally, tier 1, the most prestigious level, was comprised of elite universities such as the University of California at Berkeley, which admitted only a small percentage of the top performing high school graduates (2001). The multiversity concept is used today all across the United States; the University of Texas and Texas A&M are two tier 1 examples in the state of Texas.

Coming of age in America, 1970–2000. The last period is known as the *Coming of Age* period, which began in 1970 and extends through 2000. Gumport, Iannozzi, Shaman, and Zemsky (1997) referenced the period from 1950 to the mid–1970s as *massification*. The 1960s brought about the expansion of community colleges which were publicly funded and offered associate degrees. Community colleges expanded the opportunity to attend college to all, resulting in a more diverse population of students on college campuses across the United States. This diversity encompasses a variety of factors including ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, and religion. Social and political changes also resulted in an increase in the numbers of underrepresented populations, such as women, minorities, part-time students, and nontraditional

students. Clark Kerr called this period “the great transformation in higher education” (Thelin, 2011, p. 319). Enrollment during the 1970s increased from 8.6 to 12.1 million students.

This period also brought the establishment of the Pell Grant which provides lower income students with financial aid to attend college. Additional developments in financial aid have opened new avenues for students who need financial assistance. Qualified students have the option to file a free application for federal student aid which could result in grants, scholarships, and loans. This has provided a tremendous number of opportunities for students of all ages and backgrounds. Students who found it difficult to afford the tuition prices of the 1960s produced a decline in the student population. As the government began to review the financial status of students, a growing interest in developing college work-study programs ensued. The government promoted students working on college campuses as a means of making a direct contribution to their educational costs.

In 1970, only 33% of all 18 to 24-year-old high school graduates were enrolled in postsecondary education (Geiger & Heller, 2011). At the same time, the population of the country had increased. The 1970 census reported more than 2 million people living in the United States, representing a 13% increase from the prior census. With more people living in the United States, there was a need for more options in higher education. According to Thelin (2011), “enrollments were healthy, having reached a high of 8.65 million students, being taught by 383,000 full-time instructors at 2,573 institutions” (p. 317). These institutions awarded more than 1 million degrees during this period.

Between 1970 and 1985, tensions began to rise on campuses across the United States. These tensions are characterized by two major incidents that occurred at Kent State and Jackson State. On May 4, 1970, the Ohio National Guard fired into a crowd of student demonstrators at

Kent State University, killing four students and injuring nine. The students were protesting an announcement by President Nixon related to the Cambodian campaign. On May 15, 1970, a group of approximately 100 students gathered on Lynch Street, in Jackson, Mississippi. They were confronted by 75 city and state police units. Police opened fire on a dormitory, killing 2 students and injuring another. These massacres led to over 4 million students protesting throughout the United States. Coupled with an economy already stressed by our involvement in the Viet Nam War, these tragedies and the ensuing student unrest threatened to undermine public support for institutions of higher education.

Kerr (2001) noted that colleges and universities faced issues financing their programs and presidents began to look for ways to cut costs. Many campuses suffered from deficient maintenance on their buildings and grounds (Thelin, 2011, p. 321). This impacted students' and parents' decisions to attend certain universities and university presidents had to become creative to identify innovative ways to recruit new students. Moving forward into the 1980s, as the looming issues with the economy continued, governors began to collaborate with university presidents. Between 1985 and 1990, universities and state governments worked together to develop research parks and centers.

Education in the 21st century, 2000–present. Between 2000 and 2015, the nation saw a significant shift in the use of technology on college campuses. In 2009, Salman Khan developed the Khan Academy. His goal was to educate the world by providing free-online education using YouTube videos. Khan created 10,000 instructional videos for students in kindergarten through college. He did this in collaboration with leading teachers and professors. His innovative

technique caught on, and now parents, teachers, coaches, mentors, and others develop curricula for students to learn online.

In 2011, Mozilla launched an Open Badges Program, which recognized a person's skills, achievement, and knowledge level, and enabled them to display this information virtually. At the same time, Stanford professors Sebastian Thrun and Peter Norvig offered an online course on artificial intelligence enrolling 66,000 students from around the globe. Shortly after, Sebastian Thrun, David Stavens, and Mike Sokolsky founded Udacity, which focused on offering massive open online courses or MOOCs. In the beginning, they offered university courses but then shifted their focus to vocational courses. And, in 2014, the Georgia Institute of Technology launched the first massive online open degree in computer science by partnering with Udacity and AT&T (Schaffhauser, 2014). The three organizations that dominate MOOC online learning today are Udacity, edX and Coursera, based on numbers of courses and student enrollment.

Kerr (2001) and Thelin (2011) were among the earliest to identify the impact that technology would exert on the future of higher education. Jack Uldrich, global futurist, identified five trends that were impacting higher education including (a) on-line education, (b) financial aid changes, (c) graduate programs, (d) college exit exams, and (e) self-paced degrees. According to Kerr (2001), there were several new items of business on the agenda, the first being "the use of technology more widely and effectively" (p. 219). Every day, researchers learned more and more about the endless opportunities that technology could offer.

The Institute for Public Policy Research produced a study entitled *An Avalanche is Coming* in which they told their readers that university leaders need to "take control of their own destiny and seize the opportunity opened by technology to offer broader, deeper and more exciting education" (Barber et al., 2013, p. 5). The authors encouraged university administrators

to take the time to identify their market segments and to develop a plan to serve them. They also suggested that government officials reconsider existing education regulations to more effectively address an era that is more global than ever before.

Thelin (2011), Kerr (2001), and Haskins (2007) all noted that demographics, war, changes in the economy, leadership in our country, globalization, technology, and many other factors over the last 300 years have influenced higher education today. As a result, today's society has multiple options for furthering their education as access to higher learning becomes less of an issue for society.

Statement of the Problem

Colleges and universities may experience diminishing enrollment and possible closures if college administrators fail to address the needs and expectations of Generation Z students. Generation Z enters college with different expectations than their predecessors and it will be increasingly important for university administrators to understand this generation in order to attract and retain them. University officials will continue to face new challenges in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse student body and fulfilling an expansive institutional mission (Blake, 2007). According to Blake (2007), these challenges include demographic changes that will continue to develop within the larger society and colleges will be expected to provide more creative ways to serve students. A greater emphasis will also be placed on retention, student success, and graduation rates. Lastly, research points to the development of a strong emphasis on student learning, resulting in higher retention and graduation rates.

College professionals are expected to play key roles in transforming the campus environment. Administrators must be prepared for what the future holds and understand how

they can play a role in educating and supporting students through their programs and services, so the students are successful and graduate from college.

Generation Z will enter college in 2018. Research has shown that that their expectations are different, and it is important for university administrators to understand them in order to attract and retain them. With this information, university officials can create strategies that help students to be successful and ultimately graduate. Universities will need to re-evaluate their practices to be inclusive of all students. It is important for educators and policy makers to be aware of the difficulties students face and to recognize they have a responsibility to help students succeed and reach their goals.

Throughout the past 40 years, researchers have actively investigated different strategies to maintain high levels of student retention. It was in the early 21st century that the topic of retention spread throughout the country and began to impact higher education policy (Seidman, 2012). Retention continues to be a concern on all college campuses. According to a report by American College Testing, 25.9% of freshmen at 4-year universities do not return to school for a second year (Seidman, 2012). Barefoot (2004) found that “small private institutions, both secular and church-affiliated, are often entirely tuition dependent, and the loss of even a few students, whatever the reason, can be catastrophic to the operating budget” (p. 11). The researchers suggested that university officials think about their responsibilities and how staff communicate purpose and engages students.

According to Barber, Donnelly, and Rizvi (2013), an avalanche is heading for higher education and educators will either be buried by the changing student body or they will seize the opportunity. They highlighted that university leaders need to “take control of their own destiny and seize the opportunity opened by technology to offer broader, deeper and more exciting

education” (p. 65). The authors suggested that government officials reconsider existing education regulations in consideration of an era that is more global than ever before.

Statement of Purpose

This study is interested in the next generation of student learners who will enter colleges and universities in the fall of 2018. The purpose of the study is to understand the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. The researcher will identify the academic needs of Generation Z students by adopting an interpretive design inquiry using interviews with middle school and high school teachers, counselors, and administrators. For the purpose of this study, Generation Z will include student’s born after 2000, entering college in the fall of 2018.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the design of this study:

1. What do teachers, counselors, and administrators identify as effective strategies and services that foster student academic success?
 - a. What are some of the more effective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
 - b. What are some ineffective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
2. What do teachers, counselors, and administrators identify as the expectations of Generation Z about their college experience? And, why do you perceive these to be their expectations

Through qualitative interviews, I hope to identify the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z. By identifying their unique academic needs, services and programs

that specifically support this generation can contribute to higher levels of academic success for them. The audience that will benefit from this research includes university administrators, faculty, staff, Generation Z, Generation X parents, and universities.

Summary

Through qualitative interviewing, the researcher seeks to understand how to serve the next generation of student learners who enter colleges and universities in the fall of 2018. By understanding the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by education professionals, colleges and universities will be better equipped to develop and implement policies, procedures, and programs that will address this unique set of expectations.

Review of the Literature

In order to complete the literature review, the following types of information were gathered: journal articles, workshop presentations, book chapters, and information from professional organizations websites. A database search was conducted during the fall of 2015 using ERIC, Academic One Search, Psycinfo, and Project Muse. The following keywords were used: student development theory, higher education, generational theory, generation, generational cohort theory, Generation Z, Generation C, academic services, college services, and university retention. From this search, over 90 articles were generated and 96 were used, based upon relevance to the topics of Generation Z. The objective of this literature review is to provide an overview of the current information regarding Generation Z. The literature review section is organized as follows: an introduction to university retention theory, a review of generational cohort theory, a general overview of Generation X, and Generation Z.

Student Development Theories and Practices

According to Tinto (2007), the retention rate of students is a priority in many institutions and is one of the most widely studied areas in higher education. Between 54% and 58% of students earn their college degrees from the same college or university in which they began within 6 years of their original entry (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Colleges and universities need to better understand when and why a student withdraws from the institution. This information can provide university officials with knowledge to create retention strategies that lead to student success and higher graduation rates. According to Copeland and Levesque-Bristol (2011), student success is a complete journey produced by positive learning environments which strive to meet the basic psychological needs of students, foster self-determined forms of

motivation, and cultivate learning outcomes such as knowledge transfer, meta-cognition, and engagement.

At colleges and universities across the United States, university officials struggle with student retention. According to the United States Department of Education, only one-third of traditional-aged students who began in a 4-year college or university go on to earn a bachelor's degree from that same college or university within the traditional 4-year period (2006). Barefoot (2004) found that "small private institutions, both secular and church-affiliated, are often entirely tuition dependent, and the loss of even a few students, whatever the reason, can be catastrophic to the operating budget" (p. 11). Universities must re-evaluate their practices in order to be inclusive of all students. It is important for educators and policy makers to be aware of the difficulties faced by students and to recognize that they have a responsibility to help their students be successful and reach their goals. Research suggests that exit interviews should be conducted with students who are withdrawing (Tinto, 1987). These interviews can provide the university with feedback and can also increase the possibility that the student may change their mind after meeting with a staff or faculty member.

According to Tinto's (1987) research, students who are assimilated into both the academic and social experiences of an institution are more likely to persist. The research goes on to inform university officials that the decision to withdraw from a college is, "a function of what occurred after entry" (Tinto, 1975, p. 90). Tinto's (1987) research found there are several factors that impact student attrition: (a) whether or not a student feels socially isolated on campus, (b) whether or not the student has difficulty adjusting to their new environment, (c) a student's inability to connect the knowledge received in class to what they already know and understand, and lastly (d) students have trouble in the college environment. In order to understand and

identify the reasons that students are leaving a university, officials should collect information during the withdrawal process. This collection process may look different from institution to institution, but ultimately would allow the university to intervene in the student's decision-making process.

With the continued increase in student enrollment in colleges and universities, the 1970s re-introduced the topic of retention. Spady (1971) introduced the first model of retention studies, which was a sociological model for student dropout in higher education based on Durkheim's suicide model. He identified five variables that could contribute to student's decision to drop out of school based on varying degrees of satisfaction and commitment, these included: academic potential, normative congruence, grade performance, intellectual development, and friendship support (Spady, 1971). In 1971, Spady went on to conduct an empirical study on student departure, which investigated the relationship between the student and the college environment based on formal academic performance. Vincent Tinto (1975, 1983) built upon Spady's model and suggested that the characteristics with which a student enters college along with their commitment to college and graduating impacted their decision to leave an institution. This theoretical model became the basis for most of the research conducted on retention in the following years. Tinto's model theorized that students who socially integrate into a campus community increase their commitment to the institution and therefore are more likely to graduate (1975). This model has changed over the last 40 years and has been used by many other researchers to further understand university retention, student success, and student engagement. The most notable change in Tinto's social integration model is the addition of motivational variables and goal commitment (Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2011). These motivational

variables include: academic preparation, academic engagement, social engagement, financing, and demographic characteristics.

In the 1980s, Seidman (2012) introduced the term enrollment management but it was Jack Maguire, the dean of enrollment at Boston College who put it into practice, by aligning all enrollment management efforts on his campus connecting admissions, financial aid, institutional research, and registration. Soon after, Bean (1983) introduced a model that examined organizational attributes and reward structured impact on student satisfaction and persistence. He found that student perceptions of an “organizational routinization, participation, communications and rewards influence levels of students’ satisfaction, which ultimately affect student persistence” (Seidman, 2012, p. 25). This movement to improve the first-year of college began with these researchers and has continued through today.

Bean (1983) emphasized the importance of prior academic performance, distance from home, socioeconomic status, and student satisfaction as background characteristics that could impact a student’s decision to leave college. Bean also found that men and women leave college for different reasons. During the mid-1980s, Bean re-examined his model and looked at the influence peers had on a student retention and departure (Berger & Lyon, 2005). Astin (1985) then furthered his research and developed a model for student involvement that explained how students develop during their college years. The model includes three elements which influence the student’s persistence in higher education (a) student demographics and prior experiences, (b) environment including experiences a student encounters during college, and (c) student characteristics including knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs post-college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Astin (1977; 1985) also researched university retention by studying college student characteristics through national databases. He concluded that involvement in both social and academic experiences was most important to the retention of a student (Astin, 1985). Across the nation, researchers looked at how the college experience impacted a student's decision to persist. One of the most commonly referenced theories of student development was Chickering's seven vectors of student development. These vectors illustrated how a student's development in the college setting can affect him or her emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually in a college environment and in the formation of identity (Chickering, 1971). Twenty years later Chickering teamed up with Gamson to develop the seven principles of good practice for undergraduate education. These statements established behaviors that are associated with high quality undergraduate education that practitioners, and scholars, which the general public could understand and use. Good practices in undergraduate education include:

1. Encourage contact between students and faculty.
2. Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students.
3. Encourage active learning.
4. Give prompt feedback.
5. Emphasize time on task.
6. Communicate high expectations.
7. Respect diverse talents and ways of learning.

These principles have been integrated into current undergraduate programs. Chickering later worked with Reisser (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) to develop the seven key ingredients for encouraging student development on college campuses, which have been instrumental in engaging students to immerse themselves in their campus communities. These included

developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

Swail (1995) introduced a framework for student retention that called for a more strategic collaboration between campus departments such as admissions, academic services, curriculum and instruction, student services, and financial services and suggested that universities use a system to monitor students. Blimling and Whitt (1998) later advocated for a transformative education that embraces a holistic approach and integrates academic learning and student development. This approach placed the student at the center of the learning experience. The main goal was to encourage all educators to be accountable for developing and assessing student learning outcomes. These practices were incorporated into the everyday tasks and interactions of students, faculty, and staff. The researchers suggested that university officials think about their individual responsibilities in relation to the students. Wyckoff (1998) later proposed that all the interactions a student has within the university community influence their decision to remain at the university. Therefore, effective counseling and advising programs were highly encouraged for all students. Anderson (1997) shared that “academic advising is important to undergraduate retention because it helps students to stay motivated, stimulated and working toward a meaningful goal.” In 1999, Tinto emphasized the importance of academic advising by suggesting it become a part of the student’s first-year experience program. It was during this period that the University of South Carolina created the National Resource Center for First-Year Programs and Transition Programs.

In order to better understand the various student development theories and practices, see Table 1 which explains four of the more commonly referenced theories.

Table 1

Student Development Theories and Practices

Theorists	Date	Theory
Chickering	1969	Seven vectors of student development - how a student's development in the college setting can affect them emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually and in the formation of their identity
Chickering & Reisser	1993	Key institutional influences of student development
Blimling & Whitt	1998	Seven principles of good practice for student affairs departments
Chickering	1999	Seven principles of good practice for undergraduate education

Throughout the 1990s, researchers continued to investigate different strategies for maintaining high levels of student retention. During this time, the topic of retention spread throughout the country and began to impact higher education policy. Researchers suggested that university officials think about responsibilities and how staff communicate purpose and engage student populations. The focus during this period shifted to underrepresented populations and students at-risk of not persisting to graduation. Tinto's research continued to evolve and included focus on subpopulations of students such as African Americans, low-income students, adult, and transfer students. He suggested that colleges and universities develop specific intervention strategies and policies to support them.

The topic of retention has sparked the creation of professional organizations for higher education educators, the development of research journals, and many other opportunities for educators to connect on this issue. In 1995, Swail (1995) introduced a framework for student

retention that suggested a strategic collaboration between recruitment, admissions, academic services, curriculum and instruction, student services, financial aid, and the use of a student monitoring system. During this period, emphasis was placed on the interactions that students had with all university members (peers, faculty, staff, and administrators) and the impact these interactions had on a student's intent to remain at a university. Researchers encouraged effective advising and counseling programs, as these programs were imperative to undergraduate retention because of the impact they have on keeping students motivated, stimulated, and working toward a meaningful goal (Anderson 1997; Tinto 1999; Wyckoff 1998).

During the next era, 2000 to the present, there was an emphasis on cross-departmental and institutional responsibility for retention through wide-range programming (Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2011). There was a shift in higher education that focused on both the inside and outside the classroom experiences. Habley (2004) found that these direct interactions that students had with concerned faculty and staff members directly influenced undergraduate retention. In 2004, Tinto suggested that in order to positively impact undergraduate student retention, institutions must offer easily accessible academic, personal, and social support services. He went on to say that it was these interactions that influenced the student's sense of connection to the university and their ability to navigate the campus culture, meet expectations, and graduate.

In the last 12 years, there has been an increase in software programs to track students on college campuses. At the 2013 annual Educause conference, Straumsheim (2013) reported that conference participants said they were "seeing the benefits of identifying at-risk students before they drop or fail a course, as opposed to after the fact" (para. 1). Many universities are moving

toward using analytics to analyze how students performed in the past and then use the information to make determinations about how to work with students in the future.

In 2012, the University of Kentucky developed a model for addressing university retention. The mobile app was created from their Blackboard system and allowed the university to collect information from students throughout the semester. The system asked students questions, which vary according to the time of semester and the most pressing issues. They have had on average a response rate of 50% to 80% from students and the overall university first-year retention rate is up 1.3% (Straumsheim, 2013).

Purdue University uses course signals. This program uses data-mining techniques and analysis software to track how students approach classwork. The university found that students who participated in the signals classes graduated within 6 years at a rate of 21.48% higher than students who did not participate (Winston, 2013).

Arkansas State has created an internal predictive modeling system that serves as their early alert system. Simons and Fletcher (as cited in Fusch, 2012) suggested that universities follow their three key pieces of advice for ensuring their early alert system is effective: (a) use predictive modeling to proactively identify and reach out to your most at-risk students, (b) empower students to self-identify and self-report when they may be at risk, and (c) reach out to your most successful, not just your least successful students, celebrating milestones in their progress toward their degree. According to ACT's report on private 4-year colleges and universities, the top retention practice that contributes the greatest to retention is an early warning system (ACT, 2010).

It was in the early 21st century that the topic of retention began to impact higher education policy. Retention continues to be a concern on all college campuses, according to a

report by American College Testing, nationwide 25.9% of freshmen at 4-year universities do not return to school for a second year (Seidman, 2012). The researchers suggested that university officials think about responsibilities and how staff communicate purpose and engage students.

University officials will continue to face daunting challenges in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse student body and fulfilling an expansive institutional mission (Blake, 2007; Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004). College professionals are expected to play key roles in the transformation of the campus environment. It is important for administrators to be prepared for what the future holds and to begin to understand how they can play a role in educating and supporting students through their programs and services, so they may be academically successful and graduate from college.

Generational Theory

The major contributors to generational theory in the 20th century were Pierre Bourdieu, 1977, José Ortega y Gasset, 1958, Karl Mannheim, 1952, and Julian Marias, 1970. And, in the 1990s, generational theory became even more popular due to the research of William Strauss and Neil Howe. Generational theory explains how an era in which a person is born affects the development of their worldview (Codrington, 2008). According to Codrington (2008), an individual's value system is formed within the first 10 years of life and influenced by family, friends, community, world events, and the generational era in which they are born. He went on to say that a generation typically spans 20 years, which includes birth to the age at which they become parents. Generations tend to be defined by significant events in the world, which could lead to different dates in different areas. German born, Karl Mannheim was the first to research generational value development (1952). He stated that, "young generations are imperfectly socialized because of a gap between the ideals that they have learned from an older generation

and the realities they experience” (Mannheim, 1928, 1952). As children become more aware of the world around them they go through a phase called fresh contact, during which individuals develop meaning based on personal experiences within a social context. This process of making meaning tends to be different from other generations.

A generation is a group of people of the same age in a similar social location who experience similar social events (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007). There are usually six characteristics that help to determine a generation, including (a) traumatic or formative event, such as war; (b) a dramatic shift in demography that influences the distribution of resources in a society; (c) an interval that connects a generation to success or failure, (d) creation of a sacred space that sustains a collective memory, (e) mentors or heroes; and (f) the work of people who know and support each other (Sessa et al., 2007). The research indicates that each generation has distinct attitudes, behaviors, expectations, habits, and motivational stimuli (Sessa et al., 2007). According to Arsenault (2004), this generational interaction can be both positive and negative. Sharing different perspectives across generations fosters creativity and innovation; negative interactions come from clashing points or when misunderstandings take place and create personal and organizational conflict (Arsenault, 2004).

According to Eeman (2007), generational theory came to prominence in 1991 based on the work of Strauss and Howe. These researchers suggested that a person’s life can be divided into four stages: youth, rising adulthood, midlife, and elderhood. Strauss and Howe said that generations of people go through these same four stages of life and a full cycle lasts approximately 90 years (Eeman, 2007). They defined a generation as a cohort of people that are born within a specified period of time, typically encompassing a space of between 17 and 25 years (Strauss & Howe, 1997).

One of the factors that help to form generations and drive the cycle involves identifying a pattern of parenting that influences how children are raised. Strauss and Howe (1997) reference this pattern as a swinging pendulum, which takes 45 years to swing one way and 45 years to swing back. At one end is a parenting approach that allows a maximum amount of freedom, which encourages children to find themselves, and exposes them to real dangers (Eeman, 2007). Generation X was raised in this manner. Strauss and Howe identified four generational archetypes: prophets, nomads, heroes, and artists (1991). Prophet generations typically emerge near the end of a crisis. This generation typically grows up as indulged children and self-absorbed crusaders. They tend to focus on morals and principles during their midlife. An example of this generation is the Baby Boomers (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

The nomad generation is typically born during an awakening period. They grow up as under-protected children and become pragmatic leaders during a crisis. A recent example of the nomad is Generation X. As nomads become parents they adapt to a stricter parenting style, moving toward safety and protection. Their children are shielded from the dangers of the world and are taught to handle the small stuff, stay in line, behave themselves, and cover the details.

The next generation is the hero generation. They are born after an awakening period and grow up as protected children. They tend to be team-oriented, overly-confident during their midlife, and energetic (Strauss & Howe, 1997). An example of the hero generation is the Millennial generation. They look back at their own childhood raised on the 3Rs: rules, respect, and responsibility. As a result, they loosen their parenting style and celebrate their children,

The last generation is the artist generation. This generation is typically born during a crisis. They grow up overprotected by adults who are preoccupied with the crisis. An example of the artist generation is the Silent generation.

Generational Forecast

This is the first time in history that four generations have worked together in the workplace. These generations include Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials. Veterans were born between 1934 and 1945 and have been called swingers or silent. There are 30 million Veterans and it is said that this group still wields a great deal of power and influence (Sessa et al., 2007). According to Sessa et al. (2007), currently most of the nation's government and business leaders are members of this generation. Some key characteristics of this generation are teamwork, commitment, sacrifice, and financial and social conservatism (Cufaude, 2000).

Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964 and have been known as the source of many cultural and economic changes (Yu & Miller, 2004). Currently there are 78 million Baby Boomers and they are characterized by their idealism, individualism, and for having high expectations (Cufaude, 2000).

Generation X was born between 1965 and 1980 and has been referred to as Gen X-ers or baby busters, due to the drop-in births following the Baby Boomer generation after the WWII. There are approximately 44 million Gen X-ers (Sessa et al., 2007). Generation X is known for having an entrepreneurial spirit, a concern for quality of life, and for valuing diversity (Cufaude, 2000).

Millennials were born between 1981 and 2000 (Sessa et al., 2007) and are often referred to as Gen Y or the dot.com generation. Researchers, Sessa et al. (2007), believe this generation is similar in size to Baby Boomers, estimated at around 70 million. Millennials are known for their optimism and technological adeptness (Cufaude, 2000).

Generation X

Generation X was raised during a time of economic uncertainty, brought on by recession in the early 1980s and 1990s and historically high levels of unemployment and inflation (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2005). As a consequence, many Gen X-ers have been forced to stay at home with their parents for a longer period of time and have accrued a significant amount of debt due to student loans. As children, this generation faced an increase in divorce rates. Therefore, they were either raised in single-parent homes or 2-career families. As a result, they were placed in day care centers during their early years and became latch-key children as they grew older (Lyons et al., 2005). The number of working mothers with children under the age of 6, rose from 20% in 1960 to 47% in 1980, while the number of latchkey children under the age of 14 doubled during the 1970s (Dunne, 1997). The literature suggests that this generation raised themselves, and fast. Generation X entertained themselves with television, video games, and computers. Research has suggested that these factors combined to form a cynical group of people, detached, but opportunistic (Buckley, Beau, Novicevic, & Sigerstad, 2001).

It was through the media that they witnessed life changing events and political scandals such as Watergate, Whitewater, the Rodney King incident, and the fall of communism (Keaveney, 1997). Tulgan (2000) claims that Generation X social attitudes were learned via the primetime sex and AIDS awareness, the war on drugs, and the publicized drug habits of athletes. These events influenced the generation as a whole and have impacted who they are today. The media has referred to Generation X as the first generation in modern history to be worse off than their parent's generation (Lyons et al., 2005). Generation X has become the parents to Generation Z therefore it is important to understand the impact that their childhood will have on their parenting styles.

Traits and characteristics. The research indicated that as a result of their childhood, Generation X has become independent and self-reliant. With no one at home after school to attend to their needs, this generation learned at an early age to be independent and to work for what they wanted. They were raised with financial, family, and societal insecurities, which led them to develop a sense of individualism (Sessa et al., 2007). As working adults, they demand time for themselves, their families, and community service (Krug, 1998). Marshall (2004) stated, “hey work to live, not live to work, they want balance in their lives” (p. 18). X-ers witnessed record high divorce rates and parents who were workaholics therefore they decided to seek a balanced life and a successful family (Keaveney, 1997). They also embrace diversity, think globally, and act civically. As a generation, they are proving to be deeply dedicated to their children and their communities (Jurkiewicz, 2000). Because of societal changes, researchers believe they are more open to diverse family structures and gender roles (Lyons et al., 2005).

In another study, researchers identified work characteristics that are regularly identified in the workplace by GenX-ers (Yu & Miller, 2004). These characteristics include personal satisfaction; X-ers emphasize this rather than just working hard (Yu & Miller, 2004). Generation X views the working relationship as a partnership of mutual respect and trust (Krug, 1998). Although it is important to note that Gen X-ers do not believe in job security, they are less likely to wait around and pay their dues and are always looking to upgrade to a new situation (Losyk, 1997). Generation X is always looking for ways to improve their working skills as they believe this will help them to reach the next level. They often look down on organizations that do not offer these types of opportunities. They are considered loyal to their profession rather than their employer and they always keep their options open. For Generation X, work is only a means to end: money, fun, and leisure (Losyk, 1997). They are also technologically savvy and eager to

apply it to their work environments (Yu & Miller, 2004). This is the first generation of employees to be computer literate and they are requesting the use of telecommuting, teleconferencing, and electronic mail to work efficiently and effectively (Jurkiewicz, 2009).

Generation X prefers to operate in an environment that contains grounded and measurable behavioral guidelines, clearly defined expectations for specific outcomes, clear standards of performance, and the freedom to operate with relative autonomy (Buckley et al., 2001). Researchers, Yu and Miller (2004) identified GenX-ers as more resourceful, individualistic, and irreverent than the generations that came before them. This has made them more aware of their rights and skills and less concerned about their career goals, corporate loyalty, or job status. Yu and Miller's (2004) study found that Gen X-ers seek their own power and voice and see authority as unreasonable toughness.

Leadership style. Several of the journal articles that were reviewed, provided Baby Boomers and Generation X-ers advice on leading the next generations. One researcher suggested the following: (a) focus on the core competencies of the organization, (b) provide training, (c) be specific in determining performance goals, (d) lead through teams, and (e) create and customize an effective work environment (Buckley et al., 2001). Montana and Petit (2008) believed that motivating generations to work together requires leadership to relinquish a one-style fits all approach for their employees. This idea emphasizes the importance in identifying and understanding the factors that motivate and influence each generation.

Research by Yu and Miller (2004), suggested effective leadership in today's workplace needs to move away from hierarchical, position-based influence to a more knowledge-based influence. They go on to say that knowledge workers do not see themselves as subordinates but rather as associates of an organization, thus these workers need to collaborate more with their

leaders, rather than be managed by them (Yu & Miller, 2004). Yu and Miller (2004) propose a relationship-oriented leadership style for Generation X.

A study completed by Arsenault (2004) confirmed that generations have different ways in which they characterize admired leaders based on certain characteristics. He identified leaders such as Bill Gates and Tiger Woods as examples of individuals who exemplify Gen-Xers preferred leadership qualities of being competent change agents (Arsenault, 2004). Arsenault also identified the preferred leadership style of Generation X as including the following characteristics: competent, straightforward approach, honest, open to challenges, sees opportunity for changes, and fair (Arsenault, 2004). This study identified determination and ambition as two of the preferred leadership characteristics for Generation X. Generation X seeks leaders who will not only challenge, but also create change. Keaveney (1997) suggests that Generation X leaders might have a difficult time shifting into the leadership role, as they have shunned the chain of command and titles. Although, they do support a family friendly environment which includes flexible work schedules, cafeteria plans, dress down Fridays, and telecommuting.

Values and perceptions. Generation X is just entering top leadership positions within the workforce. Therefore, the research that was reviewed took a different approach at addressing the preferred leadership style and characteristics of Generation X. The research was focused on developing an understanding of the values, beliefs, and attitudes held by Generation X as a result of the experiences they had as a generation. The research then addressed the impact these factors

have on the individual and then on their family lives. Lastly, the researchers identified a set of suggestions that all leaders should take into account as they lead the next generations.

The literature states there are six characteristics that determine a generation, for Generation X those include events such as the historical unemployment rates, the increase in divorce rates, and the utilization of technology, drug awareness campaigns, the explosion of the Challenger, and the creation of MTV. Based on the research that has been reviewed the following characteristics are symbolic of Generation X and the perceived leadership style that they take on in their communities. As leaders, Generation X values honesty, equality, flexibility, diversity, and community. As a result of these values, Generation X seeks open communication regardless of hierarchy. They search for and provide opportunities that involve experiences for growth and development. They will also take on a leadership style that is inclusive and involves mentoring and coaching.

Parenting style. As parents, Generation X has taken a similar approach to Baby Boomer parents. They are involved in their children's lives and strive to instill the value of close family relationships and serve as role models. They are devoted to the development of a successful family. This is especially important to Generation X, as many of them grew up in single parent homes and were often left to fend for themselves while their parents worked (Seemiller & Grace, 2016, p. 8). As parents, Generation X works to instill the values of individual responsibility and independence. Seemiller and Grace (2016) said this is a result of their own upbringing and what they witnessed with the Enron scandal, the financial crisis of 2008, and many other worldly upsets (p. 7).

Generation Z

This group has been exposed to marketing since an early age. They are experts at multi-tasking and tend to spend their free time communicating online and texting on their cell phones. They enjoy computer games, which leads them to be more imaginative, less rigid, and more flexible than generations that came before them (Marcus, 2008). Since this generation has grown up with anti-discrimination and pro-family legislation all around them, they are expected to be more diverse and accepting of others (Matthews, 2008). As a whole, researchers believe that Generation Z will be concerned with social justice issues, they will be highly educated, technologically savvy, and overall innovative thinkers.

Bershidsky (2014a) said that this generation will be less pampered than the generations that came before them. They will be worried about money as they have been inoculated against debt by the 2008 financial crisis that they experienced during their childhood. They witnessed their older siblings who attended college and graduated only to return home unemployed. As a result, they will be concerned with student debt, yet committed to education. They are interested in entrepreneurship and 42% expect to work for themselves (Bershidsky, 2014a). Generation Z has also grown up with more people in the house. As a result, they have learned about humility and sharing. They have lived in multigenerational households and will be the most tolerant generation ever; they will be colorblind and unconstrained by traditional gender roles found in society today (Bershidsky, 2014a). This is due to a 400% increase in multiracial marriages over the last 30 years between Black and Whites and a 1,000% increase in Asian and White marriages (Sparks and Honey Ad Agency, 2014).

Traits and characteristics. As a result of their upbringing and the state of the world, this generation is over-connected. They have grown up in a technological era that has made them

smart, efficient, and in-tune with the world around them, both online and offline. They have the ability to multitask across five screens, which include televisions, phones, laptops, desktops, and either a tablet or handheld device (Sparks and Honey Ad Agency, 2014). According to the research done by Sparks and Honey Ad Agency (2014), members of Generation Z will spend 41% of their time outside of school with a computer compared to 22% 10 years ago. As a result of their connection, they have a “lack of situational awareness, are oblivious to their surroundings and unable to give directions” (Sparks and Honey Ad Agency, 2014). Due to their online presence, they have a tendency to communicate in symbols using emojis. They are also concerned about privacy and prefer to remain anonymous as they engage online. Sixty-six percent of children ages 6 to 11 say that online gaming is their main source of entertainment. As a result, this may be a sedentary generation that could face high rates of obesity. Playing video games and surfing the web for the latest YouTube video has taken the place of the option to play outside. Due to a shortage of funding, they also saw the elimination of physical education and sometimes organized sports in their schools. This generation will also have social circles that span the globe and will be more globally conscious due to their access. Many of them have seen the world using the Internet and the online tools that have allowed them to explore regions of the world that would have required plane travel for previous generations at this age.

At school, they are used to a different type of instruction. They use YouTube and social media for research and school assignments (Sparks and Honey Ad Agency, 2014). Many of them have reported using video as a classroom tool and 33% of them report watching lessons online (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Research found the attention span for this generation has gone down by 4 seconds in the last 14 years. In 2000, children were said to have a 12 second attention span while today, they have an 8 second attention span (Conran, 2014). And, according to the latest

studies on learning disabilities, 11% have been diagnosed with attention deficiency syndrome compared to 7.8% in 2003 (Bershidsky, 2014b). Due to their childhood experiences, they will be resilient and develop a desire to change their worlds and their communities. They will be collaborative team players and will have a clear sense of winning and losing.

According to SME marketing researchers (Conran, 2014), in order for the world to connect with this generation companies, organizations, institutions, and others will need to build a brand to reach them. This includes communicating with them through bold visual and digital content, interacting and engaging with them across multiple brand platforms, immediately capturing their attention, engaging their entrepreneurial spirit, and embracing change (Conran, 2014). In 2014, Northeastern University announced their study of Generation Z. They surveyed 1,015 teenagers, between October 8-23, 2014 by phone and Internet survey. Their results were released in October and they identified five key findings exhibited by Generation Z:

1. Strong entrepreneurial, independent, self-sustaining spirit with a driving motivation to map out their own futures;
2. Highly self-directed yet certain about importance of higher education to achieve their goals;
3. Concerned about their financial futures, including the cost of college;
4. Despite being highly connected by technology and social media Generation Z still values the importance of interpersonal interaction; and
5. Highly progressive when it comes to social policy, with strong support for universal health care, relaxed immigration laws and equal rights for all people, regardless of sexual orientation.

According to Trunk (2011), “Baby boomers changed politics, Gen X changed family, Gen Y changed work, and Gen Z will change education” (para. 3). This change in education will be a result of the increase in the number of children who are homeschooled. Trunk claimed that Gen Z will have a tremendous impact on the workforce due to several factors. The first is due to a homeschool movement that the country has not witnessed before, Gen X parents are clear that there is an education crisis and they are more willing than Baby Boomer parents to work outside the system. Because Gen X is noncompetitive they are more willing to take time off from their careers. Baby Boomer parents were less likely to stay home because they were career oriented and had worked so hard to be in the workforce. Gen X is more likely to provide their children with tutoring and additional help after school in order to ensure they are well-educated. As a result, homeschooling will become more mainstream and children will grow up with a self-learning and self-directed model. These children will be more accustomed to figuring out what they like for themselves, and they will do it on their own. Gen X will raise children who are more independent and self-directed which will create a more self-directed workforce. Seemiller and Grace (2016), talk about this generation being more responsible, open-minded, and thoughtful as a result of their upbringing. For example, many of them have grown up doing chores, which has led to developing good habits and being more self-determined.

Trunk (2011) went on to say that “homeschooling as kids will become unschooling as adults” (Homeschooling, section 2, para. 7). Gen Y has been clear that college did not prepare them for work. They were told by their Baby Boomer parents to go to school and they did because they are rule followers. But, after college they did not land a job. As a result, the nation has a huge college debt crisis and Gen Y has little ability to pay it back. Because of homeschooling Gen Z will be the first generation of knowledge workers who were trained to do

their jobs before entering the workforce. The example that Trunk provides is Gen Z's ability to synthesize information, rather than memorizing it. This generation has been doing this since they entered school. This shift in learning will allow them to figure out what skills to learn next and they will have the ability to do so on their own. Gen X and Gen Y will continue to work to live, but when Gen Z enters the workforce they will live to work. Their ability to self-learn will allow them to learn what they need in order to keep up with their work. This ability to be self-directed and learn on their own will be a result of their upbringing. Belkin (xx) said there is a new trend on the horizon, parents are no longer spending time and money to enroll their children in classes and programs, but rather these families are hanging out at home instead. As a result, this generation is learning about self-discovery.

Trunk's (2011) third point is that "the college degree will return to their bourgeois roots; entrepreneurship will rule" (College degrees, section 3, para. 11). Gen X parents will support skipping college. Bissonnette (2010), said no one should go into debt to go to college. He went on to say, if parents can afford college, then the student should take the money and invest in a franchise or use it to learn something that will help them as they enter the adult world. Trunk says that Baby Boomers are competitive and will not take the risk of pulling their children out of college, while Gen Y follows the rules, if told go to college, they go. But, Gen X is practical. They are the first generation to have less than their parents did. As a result, they are more likely to tell their children to skip college. Trunk says people will trade in their college degree for on-the-job learning. This will lead to a smarter workforce and the potential end of the university.

The research that has been completed on generations suggests that they are cyclical; one generation will build up an institution while another generation will feel constrained by it and tear it down. Generation Z is coming on board after a period of destruction, they are known as

stabilizers and according to Strauss and Howe, they were born to lead. Gen Z is pragmatic and sensible, born into a world of terrorism, global warming, and a diminishing middle-class, their sense of responsibility drives them to clean up the mess that other generations have created. This generation cares about consensus building and conformity. They will focus on being a part of the whole rather than finding ways to differentiate themselves from others.

Trunk said there are four things that the world can stop worrying about as Generation Z comes on board. First, they have a language of inclusiveness; they are not concerned with gender, they use the word *yo* to reference the person. This is their attempt at starting a language of inclusiveness that will promote the greater good with all tools they have, including the language they use. Second, they are over what technology can do, they are more concerned with the battery life of the device and this is what determines which technology they will use. Unlike Gen Y and X, they are not concerned with the latest gadget, because they have more important things to do. Next, the notion of retirement will be nonexistent. Gen Z has a different understanding of work, so retirement will not mean much to them. They understand that work is a part of life and you work to ensure that your life is full and engaging. This generation will change careers on average five times during their lives and they will leave the workforce at least two times to tend to family responsibilities. Lastly, they will not be concerned with shelf space, they are digital and filling space will be irrelevant. They grew up in an era of reduction and in some cases of elimination, so they are used to managing their space. Instead they will be concerned with, “accumulating patriotism, national spirit and a badge of good citizenship, their shelf space is in their hearts and minds” (Trunk, 2013, Shelf space, section 4). Generation Z will out-communicate any other generation in history. They communicate through videos; YouTube

is their Google. Anytime they want to learn something new, they search online for a video to watch. There is no need to read.

Leadership style. It is still early to predict the leadership style that Generation Z will take on during their lifetime, although according to research there is clear information about how they will choose to operate within society and the workplace. Based on their upbringing and access to information, when Generation Z encounters a problem, they are inclined to find a solution and they know how to use their tools and knowledge to tackle the issue. Researchers believe they will have a strong work ethic like Baby Boomers, with the sense of responsibility and resilience of their Gen X-er parents, and they will be more technologically savvy than their Millennial predecessors. As a result of the high unemployment rates they witnessed during their youth, Generation Z will be more loyal and less likely to hop around between jobs as Millennials do.

As a whole, Generation Z will be more compassionate and understanding because of the amount of access they have to information. For example, Gen Z is able to access the world news at any point in time and learn about the latest crisis or they can log onto social media and quickly become updated on their friends lives (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Researchers believe this will lead them to be more aware and concerned with their world and community. Since they are more thoughtful and open-minded they have the ability to consider a new and different perspective.

Values and perceptions. Generation Z cares about their local community, but most important to them are education, employment, and racial inequality. They believe their education is the foundation for their future success and this will allow them to prosper within their

communities. According to research by Seemiller and Grace (2016), their global view on education aligns with five themes:

1. Education leads to future personal success,
2. Education is an investment in America's future,
3. An educated society is a better society,
4. America's education system is declining, and
5. There is limited access to quality education (p. 98).

With the continuing rise of higher education, 80% of Generation Z students report being concerned about the costs of higher education. Researchers go on to say that access to courses and faculty are what is most important, while residence halls, athletic offerings, and other social experiences are becoming less important. Seemiller and Grace (2016), project that college will become an a la carte experience, while technical and vocational colleges will be other options for Generation Z to consider.

This generation will be more loyal to their employers and to their colleagues than the generation that came before them. Although they are worried about getting a job, they lived through the recession and saw their parents and family struggle. While they believe in education, they are realists and know there is no guarantee they will graduate and find employment. According to Seemiller and Grace (2016), 70% of this generation is motivated by not wanting to let others down and by wanting to advocate for something they believe in, therefore they do not see their employment as just a job, but rather a passion. Two-thirds of those who participated in Seemiller and Grace's (2016) study indicated that they wanted a career that will have positive impact on the world (p. 103).

Sixty-eight percent of the Generation Z respondents in the Seemiller and Grace (2016) study indicated that they cared about racial inequality. They found there were three beliefs that were prevalent with this generation:

1. Equality is the right thing to do.
2. Racism is terrible.
3. Why is racism still around? (Seemiller & Grace, 2016, p. 104).

According to Pandit (2015), “issues of race and gender are less important to them because their perspective is that they should not be issues at all” (p. 111).

Learning environments. According to the research, Generation Z is driven by a different set of motivations, learning styles, characteristics, skill sets, and societal concerns than previous generations (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). In order for colleges and universities to stay relevant they have to adapt their courses, programs, processes, environments, and initiatives to meet this next generation of students. There will be a push to create learning environments that maximize Generation Z’s capacity to learn. Dale, Holland, and Matthews (2006), shared that students now think and process information different from the previous generation, therefore the learning spaces will need to reflect their curriculum preferences and individual learning styles while providing access to a wide variety of media tools. These environments will need to be accessible and provide abundant information. Beard and Dale (2008), identified the importance of providing space that allows students to work independently, in small group with their classmates, and instructors. Some researchers have taken this to include spaces that incorporate music, spaces for student to engage with their peers and professors, and well-lit areas for working and completing projects. Western Michigan University has remodeled their campus library to offer these spaces to their students. According to Jule Garrison, the dean of libraries at Western

Michigan University, campus libraries now have cafes, group study spaces where talking is permitted, and sofa areas for students to take short naps. She goes on to say that some libraries are now open 24-hours a day (James, 2016).

Research has also suggested the need for support services to explore online and virtual offerings. Many colleges and universities across the country currently offer online writing support and tutoring services while others are looking at ways to not only support their online students but all students in a virtual world (Crawley & Fetzner, 2013). Generation Z has grown up using how-to videos and materials and they are used to instantaneous feedback and the ability to retrieve answers at their fingertips. They have also used online education learning tools such as the Khan Academy, Udacity, and Coursera. Therefore, they are familiar with various types of online educational tools and are comfortable working at their own pace.

Generation Z as adults. Tulgan (2013) said that Generation Z will bring the “greatest shift in the workplace” and went on to say that this generation will “present profound challenges to leaders, managers, supervisors, human resource leaders and educators in every sector of the workforce” (p. 2). This generation has been privy to an enormous amount of information from a very young age, therefore they are more informed than any other generation before them. Overall, they will have lower expectations, their confidence levels will be more cautious, and their demands will be modest. These characteristics are a result of five formative trends that help to define them:

1. Social media is the future – they have never known a world where they could not have a conversation with a person anywhere, anytime;
2. Human connections are more important than ever – they will have highly engaged parents, teachers, and counselors, but it will differ from the experience of Millennials. As

a result, they are less likely to resist authority relationships, but they will only perform when they are engaged in intensive relationships;

3. Skill gaps – this generation will suffer from the growing gap between highly skilled and unskilled;
4. Global mindset, local reality – they are well informed about the world, but they are less geographically adventurous. They are connected online to the world, but they will have to be engaged via the local environment; and
5. Infinite diversity – they have a whole new way of thinking about difference. They are less likely to fall into previously recognized categories and more likely to mix and match with different components of identity and points of view that appeal to them.

Tulgan's (2013) research points to seven key strategies for bringing out the best in Generation Z:

1. Promote high intensity relationships – small defined workgroups with a strong peer leader.
2. Provide continuing re-education – build an environment culture of highly defined behavioral norms with ongoing teaching; include personal conduct, work ability, and how to manage working relationships; be aware of the nontechnical skill gap that is emerging with this generation.
3. Define laser focus roles – narrow specialization and system of ranks with corresponding criteria, testing protocols, and rewards and responsibilities attached to each rank.
4. Take control of the virtual ethos – be in charge of who is in the group, what is discussed, and when and the supervisor can monitor and participate.
5. Plan for global outreaching and local nesting – help them to look outward, beyond their local community

6. Build continuity through short-term renewable loyalty – negotiate performance and reward on an ongoing basis in a transparent and open exchange.
7. Retain the superstar for the long term by building dream jobs.

Tulgan (2013) shared the importance of understanding where this generation is coming from and identifying key strategies to help them to be successful. He also stated that his research is ongoing and there will be more to come.

Methodology

A new generation is coming into colleges with different expectations from their predecessors. It will be important for university administrators to understand this generation in order to attract and retain them. Barber et al. (2013) encouraged university administrators to take the time to identify their market segments and to develop a plan to serve them. University officials will continue to face new challenges in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse student body and fulfilling an expansive institutional mission (Blake, 2007). According to Blake (2007), these challenges include demographic changes that will continue to occur within the larger society which will expect colleges to provide more creative ways of serving the students. There will also be a greater emphasis on retention, student success, and graduation rates. And, lastly research points to a strong emphasis on student learning, which results in higher retention and graduation rates, as crucial to the long-term health of our system of colleges and universities.

Statement of Problem

Generation Z enters college in 2018. Research has shown that that their expectations are different from earlier generations. Therefore, it is important for university administrators to understand them in order to attract and retain them. Administrators must be prepared for what the future holds and understand how they can impact support for students through programs and services that enhance graduation rates and student success. In fact, failure to address the unique needs and expectations of Generation Z students could cause colleges and universities to experience diminishing enrollment and possible closures. College professionals are expected to play key roles in the transformation of the campus environment.

Statement of Purpose

I am interested in understanding how to serve the next generation of student learners who will begin entering colleges and universities in the fall of 2018. The purpose of the study was to identify the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. These academic needs will be identified by conducting a series of interviews with middle school and high school teachers, counselors, and administrators. Participants were asked questions that focused on the student experience in middle and high school. For the purpose of this study Generation Z referenced students born after 2000, entering college in the fall of 2018.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the design of this study:

1. What do teachers, counselors, and administrators identify as effective strategies and services that foster student academic success?
 - a. What are some of the more effective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
 - b. What are some ineffective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
2. What do teachers, counselors, and administrators identify as the expectations of Generation Z about their college experience? And, why do you perceive these to be their expectations

Research Design

For this study I used an interpretive design inquiry approach to understand the Generation Z student experience. Creswell (2008) said that research is a process of steps that are used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding. It considers the views of the

participants, asks general questions, collects data consisting primarily of words, then describes and analyzes those words to identify themes (Creswell, 2008, p. 46). According to Merriam (2002), interpretive design inquiry is interested in how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their particular experiences (p. 38). She goes on to say that the true purpose of research is to understand how people make sense of their lives and their experiences. There are symbolic interactions that can help shed light on our interpretations within the larger context of society. Meaning is made based upon a person interacting with other people. Meaning begins to formulate as the person interacts with the larger society. According to Crotty (1998), ultimately the researcher puts themselves in the place of others, seeing things from a different perspective. Overall, qualitative research is interested in how meaning is constructed, or how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. As Merriam (2002) said, the primary goal of interpretive design inquiry is to uncover and interpret those meanings.

This type of research can be used when an instructor is interested in how students make meaning of a situation or phenomenon. It uses an inductive strategy, collecting data from interviews, observations, or document analysis. Creswell (2008) said that research was important for three reasons: it adds to our knowledge, improves our practice, and informs policy debates (p. 4). It is research that often guides society's decision-making process. Knowledge is vital in implementing policy and procedures, the better informed a person or organization is, the easier it may be to implement change.

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose” (as cited in Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 1954). This statement is indicative of qualitative research and the human experience. In this study, I explored Generation Z using interpretive design inquiry

through the human experience perspective using generational cohort theory and student development theory. Both generational cohort theory and student development theory are stage-oriented, suggesting that individuals move through time and are influenced by their environment.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study followed the perspective of interpretivism, which believes in a world where reality is socially constructed, complete, and ever changing (Glesne, 2011, p. 4). Generational cohort theory was developed in order to better understand how a person's view of the world is affected by the characteristics of the times in which they were born (Codrington, 2008). According to Codrington (2008), an individual's value systems is formed within the first 10 years of their life, influenced by family, friends, community, world events, and the generational era in which they are born. He goes on to say that a generation typically spans 20 years, from birth to becoming parents. Generations tend to be defined by significant events in the world, leading to different dates in different areas.

A generation is a group of people of the same age in a similar social environment who experience similar social events (Sessa et al., 2007). There are usually six characteristics that help to determine a generation: (a) a traumatic or formative event, such as war; (b) a dramatic shift in demography that influences the distribution of resources in a society; (c) an interval that connects a generation to success or failure; (d) creation of a sacred space that sustains a collective memory; (e) mentors or heroes; and (f) the work of people who know and support each other (Sessa et al., 2007). Research indicates that each generation has distinct attitudes, behaviors, expectations, habits, and motivational stimuli (Sessa et al., 2007).

According to Eeman (2007), generational theory came to prominence in 1991 based on the work of Strauss and Howe (1997). These researchers suggested that a person's life can be

divided into four stages: youth, rising adulthood, midlife, and elderhood. Strauss and Howe said that generations of people go through these same four stages of life and a full cycle lasts approximately 90 years (Eeman, 2007). They defined a generation as a cohort of people born within specified years, typically encompassing a space of about 17 to 25 years (Strauss & Howe, 1992). Strauss and Howe's (1997) generational cohort theory guided this study.

While generational cohort theory is stage-oriented, arguing individuals move through time and are influenced by their environment, narrative inquiry examines the story three dimensionally in terms of interactions (both personal and social), continuing (including past, present, and future), and situational (defining the particular location in space; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry also includes first-person accounts of experiences related in story format with a beginning, middle, and an end. This research design allowed the opportunity to interview educators who work with Generation Z students, capturing and relating their stories moving the reader emotionally, and providing the opportunity and motivation to view the personal cultural experiences of a new generation through a research window (Merriam, 2002).

At colleges and universities across the United States, university officials are struggling with the retention of students. As a result, colleges and universities should better understand when and why a student leaves their universities. With this information, university officials can create retention strategies that help students to be successful and lead to higher graduation rates. Barefoot (2004), shared that "small private institutions, both secular and church-affiliated, are often entirely tuition dependent, and the loss of even a few students, whatever the reason, can be catastrophic to the operating budget." This is especially important for the university under review. Universities have to re-evaluate their practices in order to be inclusive of all students. It is important for educators and policy makers to be aware of the difficulties faced by students and

to recognize that they have a responsibility to help their students to be successful and reach their goals.

Tinto's (1987) research noted students who are assimilated into both the academic and social experiences of an institution are more likely to persist. The research goes on to inform university officials that the decision to withdraw from a college is, "a function of what occurred after entry" (Tinto, 1975). According to Tinto's (1987) research, several factors impact student attrition: (a) whether or not a student feels socially isolated on campus, (b) whether or not the student has difficulty adjusting to their new environment, (c) a student's inability to connect the knowledge received in class to what they already know and understand, and lastly (d) students have trouble in the college environment (Tinto, 1987). In order to understand and support students in their academic success the university needs to understand the impact of their current academic programs.

Spady (1971) created a sociological model for student departure, which began to investigate the relationship between the student and the college environment. Vincent Tinto (1975, 1993) built upon Spady's model and suggested that the characteristics with which a student enters college along with their commitment to college and to graduating impacted their decision to leave an institution. This theoretical model became the basis for most of the research conducted on retention in the next years. Alexander Astin (1977, 1985) also worked on university retention and studied college student characteristics through national databases. He concluded that involvement in both social and academic experiences was most important to the retention of a student (Astin, 1985). Across the nation, researchers looked at how the college experience impacted a student's decision to persist. One of the most commonly referenced theories of student development was Chickering's seven vectors of student development. These

vectors illustrated how a student's development in the college setting affected him or her emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually in a college environment and in the formation of identity (Chickering, 1971).

Research Perspective

A characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam, 2002, p. 5). As the primary tool, it is important to understand the perspective that is brought to the research study. Because the researcher serves as the human instrument, he or she must instill safeguards to truly capture the participant experience and avoid influencing the data. Lastly, Merriam (2002) said that the product of a qualitative inquiry is richly descriptive (p. 5). This is a result of the wealth of information, typically in the form of words, that are gathered in order to understand the phenomenon and capture the true human experience.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggested that researchers acknowledge their position in terms of race, class, gender and position of power. I am a female Mexican American professional who has worked in higher education for 17 years and has served in the roles of associate dean, chief student conduct officer, director of student retention, and currently as the associate vice president for student academic support services at a private religiously affiliated institution. While I have worked with college-aged students for 17 years, I do not have experience with secondary education. It was through my role in the university retention office that I identified a gap in the literature and a need for further research into the characteristics and expectations of Generation Z.

Site and Participant Selection

Site selection and access. In order to conduct this study, I obtained permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of the Incarnate Word. I also obtained permission from the secondary schools in order to approach the staff and faculty to participate. Creswell (2008) spoke of gatekeepers and the importance of identifying the ones that exist within a community (p. 219). The researcher will need to obtain permission from the school principals and/or the heads of school who serve as the gatekeepers within these organizations. They are important contacts because they can establish credibility and support within the community for my research to gain access to the staff and faculty. I have identified five private schools in central Texas as the sites for the study.

Participants. The targeted population of this study is secondary educators in central Texas. This target population included teachers, administrators, and counselors. These individuals were both male and female, from various ethnic backgrounds and different age groups, and who had at least 7-10 years of experience working with Generation Z in order to fully understand the generation and to ensure expertise. Creswell (2008) said that the researcher can choose participants for varying reasons: they could volunteer, agree to be involved, or the researcher could select them based on being a part of a well-defined intact group (p. 326). There are multiple ways in which the researcher can go about selecting their participants, once they have identified the population. In this study, I worked through the schools to identify potential participants. The use of purposeful sampling was important to ensure that the individuals selected were representative of the population. According to Creswell (2008), researchers should use this type of sampling when conducting qualitative researcher to ensure that individuals and sites are intentionally selected in order to understand the central phenomenon (p. 214). This also

ensured that teachers, administrators, and counselors did not feel coerced to participate in the interviews.

Next, the researcher sent an email to the teachers, counselors and administrators inviting them to participate in the interview process, followed by a phone call. During the phone conversation, I reviewed the purpose of the research, the confidentiality agreement, and the benefits of the study. Once the participants agreed to participate, a meeting day was scheduled, and I sent the participants an email reminder with the list of questions and the informed consent form.

The secondary schools that served as the settings were private religiously affiliated schools in central Texas. They have approximately 200-300 students each. I used 1-hour interviews and met with a sample of the population of teachers, counselors and administrators. It was important to note that some research topics required multiple interviews.

Materials and Procedure

Data collection methods. I used narrative inquiry protocol for the data collection methodology. The research began with qualitative interviews to gather information from teachers, principals, and counselors regarding Generation Z. There were two to three meetings with each interviewee. The purpose of the initial meeting was to allow the interviewee to tell their story. During the second meeting, I asked the interviewee to speak to certain parts of their story or to share additional stories (Reissman & Speedy, 2007). Then, in some instances, a final interview took place. This provided me the opportunity to ask prepared questions based on the emerging analysis (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). These questions remained broad to allow the interviewee's narrative to flow naturally. I also used narrative inquiry to understand the participants' stories. According to the work done by Marshall and Rossman (2011), there is an

assumption that people construct their reality through the narration of stories. This level of engagement between the participant and the researcher calls for a great deal of openness and trust. There has to be mutual respect, collaboration, and a caring relationship. This calls for intense and active listening and giving the narrator full voice. This method has been critiqued in the past because of the focus on the social context. These interviews seek to understand sociological questions about groups and communities through the lived experience as a teacher or administrator (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 153). This form of storytelling relied on the participants' ability to accurately recount events and allowed time for them to focus on subsets of experiences. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), researchers need to, "be prepared to follow their nose and, after the fact, reconstruct their narrative inquiry" (p. 7).

Interviews. I used a narrative inquiry protocol for the data collection methodology for conducting interviews (see Appendix A). According to Brenner (2006) working with a written sequence of interview questions is often easier for the new interviewer. This allowed for flexibility to ask follow-up questions and probe when necessary. According to Yin (2011), the purpose of an interview is to understand how the participant makes meaning of their lives, experiences and cognitive process (p. 135). I used a variety of questions, such as basic descriptive, experiential, examples, comparison, and contrast questions. Jackson, Drummond, and Camara (2007) shared with researchers the importance of being aware of the various levels and ability of their participants to offer in depth responses to questions about how they have constructed or understood their experience questions (p. 23). It was important to use clarification and follow-up type questions to get to the root of the student experience. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. Neither the recordings nor transcriptions included personal identifiable information.

Ethics. Once the participants agreed to participate in the research study, I asked them to sign a consent form (see Appendix B). The consent provided a basic overview of the purpose of the research, explanation of the interview process, and explained they had the right to withdraw at any time should they wish to discontinue their participation. A copy of the signed consent form was provided to all participants.

Data analysis. The study followed an interpretive design inquiry using the life experiences of the participants in their roles as teachers, counselors, and administrators. According to Clandinin (2013), the narrative inquirer studies the person's experiences in the world; these can be reviewed and studied by listening and observing. The researcher utilized the works of Spradley (1980), Yin (2011), and Merriam (2009) for the data analysis of the qualitative interviews. This made it possible to examine their stories in the three dimensionalities of interaction, continuing, and situation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The raw data came from transcriptions of the audio-recorded interviews. Spradley (1980) said that analysis is, "a systematic examination of something to determine its parts, the relationship among parts, and their relationship to the whole" (p. 85). I reviewed and analyzed their data as they moved through their stories, identifying themes, concepts, and categories, as I began the process of formulating questions related to the data and process. According to Merriam (2002), "all qualitative data analysis is inductive," as a result there have been different types of strategies for analysis developed for the different disciplines (p. 14). For these data, I used pragmatic transcriptions of each of the interviews (Evers, 2011) to capture the true essence of what the participants were communicating.

Yin (2011) discusses the five phases to interactively analyze data. The first phase is to compile the data by organizing and sorting it a general order. The next phase involves

disassembling the data by breaking it down into smaller parts and coding the parts into smaller units. The third phase then reassembles the data into more meaningful structures. Yin (2011) tells researchers that the process of reassembling often reveals additional ways to dissemble the data. The next phase is interpreting the data by creating a new narrative derived from all of the narratives. And, finally, the last phase is concluding, which makes all of the final connections and pulls the data together.

The preliminary analysis occurred while the data were being transcribed (Merriam, 2002). Subsequently, I utilized Spradley's (1980) step five of domain analysis which encourages the researcher to draw pictures that can serve as field note observations. These pictures help the researcher think about the cultural meaning of things such as place, objects, and the participants. I also utilized Spradley's (1980) process of creating a taxonomy to help sort and re-build the data to tell one overall study. Finally, I generalized the concepts and connected them back to the literature and theory (Roper & Shapira, 2000). In order to complete this step, it was important to be educated on my research topic as I had to look back to the research to support findings and to make sense out of the information.

Transcription. Once the interviews were completed, I began the process of transcribing the interviews and analyzing the data. In this process, I listened to the audio recordings several times to become familiar with the data (Yin, 2011). As I listened, I noted questions and statements that needed further review. As I created a rough transcription of the audio recordings (Reissman, 1993) I continued to review interview notes and highlight statements that contained strong points. Reissman (1993) tells researchers to make note of the tone, sighs, and other verbal and physical gestures of the interviewee. Finally, I transcribed the audio recordings verbatim. As

necessary, I used member checks to clarify points and to ensure I had captured the true meaning of their story (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Findings

The purpose of this study was to understand how educational professionals perceive Generation Z's academic needs, desires, and expectations for college life. The primary research question was, what do teachers, counselors, and administrators identify as effective strategies and services that foster student academic success? Moreover, what are some of the more effective practices for working with Generation Z and why? What are some ineffective practices for working with Generation Z and why? The secondary question was what do teachers, counselors, and administrators identify as the expectations of Generation Z about their college experience? And, why do they perceive these to be their expectations?

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the participants and the study that was conducted. This includes a review of the two research questions and a summary of the category findings for each question. Next, I provide the reader with the themes that have been identified through the category of findings.

Participant Overview and Summary of Activities

Five primary and secondary schools participated in this study. I contacted the gatekeepers at the five schools in Central Texas, each of whom identified one or two participants, which resulted in a total of six respondents. Each participant received an email invitation with a general overview of the study and a request to speak by phone. During the phone conversation, I provided a general overview of the study, the research questions, and the confidentiality agreement. Once the individual agreed to participate, the first interview was scheduled, followed by a confirming email that included the confidentiality agreement, the IRB statement, and the interview protocol. Two interviews were then completed with each of the six participants. Of the six participants, two were male, and four were female. Their ages ranged from the early 40s to

late 60s. Five of the participants worked at private Catholic schools, and one worked at a private Episcopal school. Of the six, five had been primary or secondary teachers at some point during their work life, two had taught at the college level, and three had worked in a college setting at some point during their professional career.

Transcription

After completing the interviews, I transcribed the recordings and began analyzing the data. To begin this process, after the first round of interviews I listened to the audio recordings a few times to familiarize myself with the data (Yin, 2011). I first listened to the audio recordings in my vehicle the day after each interview to ensure full comprehension of what the participant was trying to convey. While listening, I noted questions and statements that would need further review. Next, I transcribed the audio recording verbatim according to ensure that I had a reliable database for analysis (Merriam, 2009). I completed pragmatic transcriptions of each of the interviews (Evers, 2011) and decided to use this technique to try and capture the true essence of what the participants were communicating. The third step was to review my interview notes and highlight statements I believed were strong points. Lastly, after the transcriptions were completed, I spent several days reviewing the transcripts, making notes, and writing memos to myself about what I heard, read, and saw. The use of memo writing according to Maxwell (2013) is different from field notes in that the notes are taken during the data collection stage, and memos are written after the interviews are completed. For this study, memos were regularly written during the transcription and coding stages. These memos were later analyzed, and this helped to identify the broader categories and themes for the study.

Data Analysis

Narrative inquiry analysis was used to review and analyze the data. This included utilizing Yin's (2011) five analytic phases, Merriam's (2002) steps of analysis and Spradley's (1980) use of domain analysis. During the interview stage, I begin to use Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis, which includes compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. After each interview, I focused on familiarizing myself with all of the information that had been gathered, which included audio recordings, transcriptions, field notes, handwritten notes from the interviews, and drawings. I started the process in June after my initial interview, and it took approximately three months for me to get through this step. During this time, it was important to continually ask myself the following questions: (1) What were the unique features of my study? (2) How do the data connect to my research questions? and (3) Have any new insights emerged? These questions helped me to stay focused and not become distracted by unrelated data points.

Yin (2011) shared the importance of working through these steps but also recognized analysis is not a linear process but rather an interactive one. In fact, I went back to step 1 in October as I re-visited my themes. Step 2 of Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis includes disassembling the data and beginning to categorize the data. I utilized Excel to document the categories that I was beginning to identify. In this step, I began to code the data, which is the process of grouping the information into categories. From this, I learned the importance for researchers to review and analyze their data as they move through their study. This step allowed me to identify themes, concepts, and categories and I was able to formulate questions related to my data and the process as I moved between interviews. This was especially helpful to me as there was often 2 to 4 weeks between the first and second interviews with participants. As a

result, I was able to familiarize myself with the first set of data and to identify areas for growth as an interviewer. This also allowed me to formulate questions to follow up during interview two and to refine my interviewing skills. In step 3 the researcher reassembles their data. Spradley (1980) said that analysis is, “a systematic examination of something to determine its parts, the relationship among parts, and their relationship to the whole” (p. 85). Therefore, it was necessary for me as a researcher, to utilize Yin's process because I was able to break the data down and reassemble. I utilized Excel to break down the categories and subcategories and to identify statements that connected. In step 4, I interpreted the reassembled data. Lastly, I made conclusions related to the overall study. Yin (2011) emphasized the recursive and interactive relationship between the five steps (p. 179).

During the interviews, I took field notes and drew pictures of the meeting rooms and other campus spaces I toured (Appendices D and E). According to Merriam, 2009, “observational data can represent a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest rather than a second-hand account” (p. 117). Observational field notes were completed at various points during my visits to the campus. I used Merriam's checklist of items to observe which includes, physical settings, participants, activities and interactions, conversation, subtle factors, and my behavior as an interviewer, as well as date, time, location, main ideas, and subtle factors or changes within the participant. This allowed me, as a researcher, the opportunity to triangulate the findings that were beginning to emerge through my interviews. Merriam (2009) also told researchers to know the difference between interviews and observations. She said that observations take place where the phenomenon occurs rather than where the interviews take place. This was important in my research since all of my interviews occurred in an office or private meeting space, not in a public area. As I walked around each campus and through the

buildings, I was always fully aware of my surroundings and observant of the settings, paying careful attention to the checklist of items. This checklist was useful during analysis, as I had made several observations related to furniture, classrooms, and student spaces that I later found useful as I began to uncover and develop themes.

I also utilized several steps from Bogdan and Biklen (2007) related to analyzing data during the collection process. They identified 10 steps for researchers to use which helped to narrow the focus and clarify next steps to take during the analysis phase. Step 1 encourages the researcher to narrow their study and to think about what should follow and where to draw the line. As I reviewed transcriptions after the first interview, I considered going back and asking additional questions about the misuse of cellphones during the school day. However, I recognized that this was beyond the scope of my study. In step 2, the researchers encourage you to make decisions about the type of study you want to complete. After completing the second round of interviews, I consulted with one of my committee members regarding some of the emerging themes. I considered going back to my participants for a third round of interviews to pursue outlier data. As I walked through the study and the data that had been collected with her, she asked me to stop and consider why I wanted to pursue the outlier versus noting the theme and connecting it to the literature that had emerged over the last year in support of the theme. I recognized that I needed to be clear about what I wanted to accomplish in my study. In step 4 Bogdan and Biklen (2007) tell their readers to pursue leads based on your review of your previous observations. As a result, I decided to pursue the concept of flexible classrooms, due to several observations that were made during my visits and due to statements which were made by the participants in the first round of interviews. Had it not been for step 5, which encourages the researcher to write the observer comments, I might not have pursued this topic and would have

failed to identify a theme related to flexible learning environments. In steps 6 and 7, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) recommend the use of memos to document what you are learning as a researcher and then try it out with your participants. These steps were especially useful as I unpacked the topic of campus safety. Initially, this appeared to be the outlier of the study but in the end, it turned out to be an emerging theme in all six interviews.

To ensure accuracy of the transcription, I spent additional time with the participants during the second interviews discussing their meaning and using member checks to ensure that I had captured the essence of their words in my choice of quotes (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Through this process, I began to compare the data between the participant interviews and to identify insights, understandings, and ideas as they began to emerge. This helped me to begin to formulate a process for coding the data.

Merriam (2002), shared that “all qualitative data analysis is inductive,” as a result there have been different types of strategies for analysis developed for the different disciplines (p. 14). With this in mind, I utilized several different strategies to analyze my data. Roper and Shapira (2000) suggested several steps for analysis that were useful. The first step is to code for descriptive labels. To complete this step, I broke the transcriptions down into numbered sentences so that I could easily identify labels. According to Yin (2011), this step allows the researcher to move to a higher conceptual level. Next, Roper and Shapira (2000) encouraged the researcher to begin to identify items such as setting, types of activities, events, relationships, and repeated phrases experience (Appendix F). These factors are what created the eight categories I identified: (a) expectations, (b) norms, (c) student well-being, (d) campus safety, (e) parental involvement, (f) learning styles, (g) technology, and (h) student characteristics (Appendix G). The first level of categories was determined from comments that connected to the overarching

themes of the student experience at school. I first looked at those comments related back to characteristics of the generation. According to Merriam (2009), a researcher can use words, letters, or colors to identify similarities in their data sets. I used colors to categorize my data based on the eight categories that had been identified. At this point in the analysis, I referred to Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding.

Expectations. The participants discussed the expectations of the students and families in detail with regard to factors such as academic expectations, social expectations, and classroom expectations. Certain factors were illustrated by the participants in the followings statements. Jackie shared the following:

They want visuals; they want pictures, and they want animation. They are able to stay connected longer when you integrate these tools. Whereas students in the past that I've taught had longer attention spans. I think a lot of it has to do with the integration of technology. They are so familiar with it that it's become an expectation that it's integrated into everything that you do. I taught 30 years ago, came back and taught, and that was one huge difference. Students today are expecting instant gratification.

Lauren spoke to Generation Z expectations around teaching and learning:

I feel like this generation could just burn through every test. This generation wants to show what they know versus memorizing what they know. They want to build, to create, to write, and express themselves differently than a multiple choice or true/false exam.

Jason also talked about interactions and the need for instant feedback:

They want to have personal interactions with administrators. They do not have as many boundaries as maybe we expect or are used to. They want the personal interactions. They want to know from a respected person that they did a good job. So, I think they are now more intrinsic. I think kids are motivated by personal experiences rather than a trophy. So, if a kid scores a goal, hits a home run, or shoots a game-winning shot, they are looking for that praise from the coach or parent over anything else.

Ellen shared the following about rewarding students:

I think that we've created this expectation among kids that they will be rewarded for doing the regular things. For example, there is an expectation that if you're doing your

homework, you should receive a star. I think this motivates them. I think that it is motivating and pushing them academically, but the expectations are not always there for doing the very simple things:

Ray spoke to the desire to have the information and to understand it:

They want to know what's going on and what's going to happen. If things are changed to much, it is hard for them to adjust. They like to be heard and they want to be able to express themselves.

Kathy shared that teachers are expected to respond to students needs in a timely fashion after hours:

If they [students] have a question at night, they will chat with their teacher, even at 9:00 pm at night, the teachers answer them, always, always. That's the culture here of immediate response. We have summer hours, but everybody's still available all the time. Which is really driving this expectation for kids to expect that someone's always going to be there to answer their questions and they don't have to wait.

Ellen and Kathy spoke to the parent expectations:

My impression is that there are very high expectations of them. I feel like they're expected to read at a much younger age. There are very high academic expectations of the children, but on the other side of that, I think that socially that's not being addressed at all. For example, yesterday I met with a family that has a child that is reading at 3, but she is not potty trained. The mom was not concerned about this at all and said she will do that in her own time.

Kathy shared the following:

Parents care about outcomes. They want their kids to be happy, but they also want them to be successful. And they want them to be stable, to be safe. They want them to be safe, that's a big deal. Safety is a huge, huge issue for parents. They want to know that their kids are going to be safe.

Norms. Each of the participants spoke to the level of expectations being made by students and parents. Several of the expectations were related to technology and its increased usage by parents and students. The next category identified was social norms, this included topics such as child development, student development, grit, and resilience. Lauren shared the following:

I think a good teacher who cares about a student will motivate them all day long. They [students] want to know that somebody cares about them, if somebody demonstrates interests in them as a person, and what they do academically, and what they do socially, they will perform all day long.

Kathy spoke to the norms related to student development about the generational characteristics:

They are scattered. Overscheduled. Independent. They need individualized attention. Moreover, with that, doesn't necessarily mean one on one, but it means they need to be in a school environment and in a home environment that takes into consideration their individual needs and doesn't just have a blanket approach to teaching or discipline.

Ray, Jason, and Ellen spoke to the lack of grit and resilience they notice in this generation:

They are not dependent. They really rely on a lot of help for some reason. But, it seems like they're confidence level is not very high. They seem to be a little sensitive, like hypersensitive to some issues. Especially personal and social issues. It seems that with bullying issues they internalize these feelings. They are really affected by their peers, it seems more so than what I remember of other generations. And, they seem to not be vocal whenever those issues or concerns happen. So, I think whenever I see children being picked on or in social interactions that they're not comfortable with, that they feel there is an injustice, they don't speak out as much. They seem to just hold it in and let it affect them in negative ways.

Jason shared a personal story about his son who struggles to do things that are difficult for him: "He has a hard time doing things that are hard for him. So, he gives up quickly, which frustrates me as a Dad, because he only wants to do things that he's good at." He went on to speak to the students at his school, "You know, they don't try to push themselves in areas that they are unfamiliar with. They fail to go out on a limb by not trying things that they are not good at."

Ellen said,

I think there is a fear of bullying and suicide, and it has just gotten so bad among parents that we are just reacting a lot quicker. And, I guess in a way that's good because we've seen a rise in depression at a much younger age. I do feel like a part of this has to do with them not experiencing loss, we are not letting children lose at a young age so they are not used to the feelings of disappointment. This is normal and should be normal for all of us. Instead we are jumping in and fixing their problems before they can experience loss or disappointment.

Jackie shared the following statement when asked about Generation Z's needs: "I think Generation Z needs a loving environment." All of the participants spoke to the concept of winning versus losing or their inability to take chances and try new things. As a result, they lack a sense of grit and resilience that previous generations had.

Student well-being. The next category identified through the coding process was student well-being. This concept focused primarily on mental health, learning disabilities, and medical disabilities. Jackie and Jason spoke to the lack of student services and staff to address socio-emotional issues and the processes and roles that are being developed and implemented in order to address the gap.

Jackie shared,

We don't have a counselor on staff, so it's just us. We are the guidance program. We are not tracking what's happening, so that is part of our problem because we have kids coming having experienced traumatic situations at home and we are not equipped for that. If you are actively monitoring and getting feedback than you can start to impact.

Jason shared that he is the first dean of students on his campus, the campus is 31 years old. He shared that his position was developed for various reasons, one of them being the need to create a distinction between the principal and the counselor. He said that the lines were blurred for students who were going to the guidance counselor for socio-emotional issues and for student conduct issues. As a result, students were often confused and began to question if something was wrong with them. Kathy spoke to the need for specialized teaching and accommodations due to the increase in numbers of diagnoses of medical, mental health and learning disabilities. She shared the following, "The increased diagnosis of ADHD and other learning disabilities has really heightened the need for and the prevalence of individualized teaching." She went on to talk about the increased diagnosis of autism and Asperger's than in previous years and the impact that this is having on education. There are some schools in the area that have opened just to

accommodate Asperger's kids. There is one here in town that works one on one with children there are 24 children and 24 teachers.

Ellen spoke to the shifts in norms and the impact that it is having on children. She shared that she sees a large gap across academic capability:

...academically the gap is very, very wide because there are some parents who are pushing their students academically at a much younger age. And, then there are the students who are the norm, what you typically see as the norm, which now is seen as being behind, but they are not. I feel like we are in the middle of a shift where academically we have to put in place, reading readiness at a much younger age. The expectation from parents is that by the end of kindergarten they are reading, whereas when we were in school, we did not start reading until first grade... there is a clash between what they can do, and then what we are expecting them to do. Moreover, now at a younger age, you can tell when a child has ADHD because we are expecting them to sit down and read a book at younger age. When they can't do this, we say let's take him to a doctor and figure out what's wrong.

Campus safety. The fourth category uncovered was campus safety. I was surprised by this information as the research was directed toward academic services to enhance student success and overall performance for Generation Z. Nonetheless, each of the participants spoke at length about campus safety and the overall concern that both parents and students have related to bullying, sexting, terrorism, campus safety, and violence. Lauren shared that her school is in the process of hiring a campus security guard to ensure campus safety and policy enforcement for their community. As mentioned above, Jason shared that his position as Dean of Students was new to the school. He went on to speak to campus concerns voiced by parents regarding the need to review safety and security protocol for their school.

Jackie and Jason both spoke to the implementation of a virtue-based restorative model for addressing student conduct on their campuses. They said that as a faith-based school, their conduct systems are specific to their values and virtues that are instituted by their Catholic faith.

They also spoke to the implementation of a code of honor for their schools and the infusion of the codes of honor into the family unit. Jason shared the following:

I am going to look at it from a bigger perspective, a climate, a culture change that I think is needed here. So, we are going to push a lot of the virtues here. Not only with the kids regarding discipline, but in the way, we talk with kids, and at the same time trying to infuse it into the community. Every family will be asked to look at the virtues and try to pick a virtue that they would like to focus on for the year.

Similarly, Jackie spoke to the implementation of a restorative justice model;

It's focused on building positive relationships with kids and having common expectations as a campus and in common areas. I think the clearer we are and the more that we teach it directly, the fewer problems we'll have. I think we take for granted that children know what we expect. I'd like to try this year with the kids who are habitually bullying, where they can see the affect they're having. And, let the kids tell them. So, I think there is a lot of value in it. it's kind of therapeutic, you know. We just don't have enough funds to provide counseling, but this is a way to do similar work with the kids.

Kathy shared that kids have safety fears regarding terrorism and school shootings and as a result, they have unannounced lockdown drills every month. She also shared that every faculty and staff member at her school are required to participate in a 5-hour training annually through Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Evacuate training.

Five of the six participants spoke to concerns related to bullying, sexting, and cell phones on their campuses. Several of the campuses are struggling with their cell phone policies. For example, Ray shared that they review their technology policy on a yearly basis:

Right now, we're in the middle of the process of what do we do with cell phones next year. That's our big issue right now. It seems that there's a level of addiction when it comes to cell phones with children or our age group, they seem not to be able to put it down. They experience most of their social interactions through a digital source, through their cell phone. And, they'll take some big measures to get to that source. We have a policy at our school and they still break the rules when it comes to cell phones.

This participant shared that they would be continuing their discussions around the cell policy for the 2017-2018 academic years, as there were other implications for allowing cell phones on campus, "I find that kids are becoming a little mischievous, especially around sexual issues, even

younger, with camera phones more than before. We've had those issues this year, where junior high students are exchanging inappropriate pictures.”

Kathy shared that her school allows students to have their cell phones in their lockers turned off, but that parents often pressure the administration to instill policies around the use:

There have been instances over the last couple of years where parents have come to the administrators, with complaints about online bullying and other issues that are happening online. They come asking for help, often requesting that we create a policy so that kids won't be on social media. Our administrators say that is not something that we should be doing.

Parenting. Each of the participants spoke to both the students' and parents' increased awareness of and concern for campus safety. This discussion led to the identification of the parental involvement category. All of the participants spoke in detail about various programs, software systems, and communication tactics they have in place to communicate with parents.

Lauren spoke to the need for constant communication between the staff and the parents:

I think sometimes parents step in, and they don't allow the natural progression of events to take place, and the student is shorted a little bit. I do think parents expect a ton of communication. I think parents expect that, especially here, that there is a point of contact, which in our case is advisors, who know every week what's going on with their kid, what their grades look like, what happened, what got turned in, what didn't, why did they do so well on this test, or why didn't they do well, or they're not getting along with so and so like, there is that expectation to have somebody on sight who is aware of what going with your kid regularly.

Jackie spoke to her 30 years of experience and how this past academic year was so different from any other year that she has taught, “They [parents] were really involved. The most involved I've ever seen. You asked for help and you got help.” She elaborated on their need for information and how she supported this parent request with a weekly newsletter that was translated into Spanish for those needing it. All of the schools spoke to the software systems that they have in place to communicate grades and attendance with their parents. These systems

allow parents to track their student's progress and interact with teachers and administrators when there are questions or concerns.

Learning styles. The next category identified was learning styles for this generation and the need for flexibility within the school environment. Lauren spoke to the generation being technologically adept and connected:

Teachers have to figure out a way to teach differently. I don't believe that students need to memorize anymore. The days of memorization and regurgitation are gone. Anything they need to know, they can look up in 3 seconds on that phone. Moreover, so then, what skill sets do they need to know, if they do not have to know that 8×7 is 56 because they can do that on a calculator, or, you know, what happened in World War II, you can Google it.

This participant went on to talk about the winter term that her school had implemented to address the different types of learning styles. They use a three-pronged approach that provides students with various opportunities dependent on their learning preference. Students can travel abroad through global learning that focuses on language, culture immersion, and sightseeing. They also have the option of participating in a domestic internship in an area that they are interested in exploring. And, lastly, they can choose to complete a mini-course related to something that interest them. All of the students are expected to participate in the winter term program.

Three of the six schools referenced the use of online software systems for math, reading, science, and enrichment. Ray talked about teaching at the different grade levels:

You may have a class of twenty 6th graders, but there are 4 or 5 different assignments being given within that class, based on their learning styles, the pace that they can learn at, and the level that they are at...So, it basically puts you on track to be able to be successful at whatever level you're at.

Jason spoke to the need to teach various learning styles. He shared that 3 years ago the school adopted a blended learning model and the teacher is constantly changing their style and

methods to engage all types of learners. For example, the teacher might offer lectures, group work, independent work, and one on one with the teacher:

We try to keep that blended model as active as we can. Because I think many of them. are served well when their learning style is changed, or in a group, or the group as a whole learns better when we move, when we're not stuck in the one teaching style or method.

Technology. The next category uncovered was technology. Each of the participants spoke to the use of technology by parents and students and the desire to incorporate it into the classroom experience. All of the schools provide some form of technology to their students such as computers, Chromebooks, laptops, or iPads for students' daily use. Lauren shared that this generation was "born into an age where technology is at their fingertips, so it's something they know very well." Jackie shared the following about technology, "it has really made weekly readers come to life just by adding a little video and the games." Ellen said that the teachers in her school are required to integrate technology into the classroom starting in prekindergarten through the use of iPads. Kathy shared that at her school, "everything is technology based. What's so interesting is that all of their assignments and all of their homework are on an online portal. And, parents have access to everything."

Student characteristics. The last category that was identified during the coding process was student characteristics. Each of the participants spoke to the shift in the generation and the changes that this has brought to their campuses. Some have implemented new policies to address the use of technology, while others have struggled with developing new policies to address the challenges that they are seeing. Also, others are developing conduct processes to address student behavior in more creative ways. Still, others are trying to determine what their best practices for working with students with varying needs and disabilities should be. Lauren shared the

following, “They're very technologically driven, and that's all they know. I mean from the day they were born, technology's been in their world.”

The next step was to take the data and began to sort through it for patterns to identify connections within the data. At the same time, I noted the outliers and tried to determine their relevance. Roper and Shapira (2000) discussed the importance of outliers as the researcher may need to go back and collect more information to clarify. I noted in my audio recordings the times and the topics that were being discussed in which outliers existed. As I analyzed these examples, I was able to confirm their relation to the context of the conversation. For example, the participants spoke to campus safety in relation to the increased use of technology.

I also utilized Spradley's (1980) fifth step, making a domain analysis. Step 5 encourages the researcher to draw pictures that can serve as field note observations. These pictures can help you think about the cultural meaning of place, objects, and students. I utilized my field notes for this activity. This step was especially useful as I listened to the interview and identified statements that demonstrate emotion. For example, several of the participants were especially passionate about campus safety and as I listened to the interviews, I was reminded by my notes of the emotion they had regarding the care and safety of their students. After this review, I was able to compile three follow-up questions for further review with the participants. The three follow-up questions asked the participants to elaborate on best learning environments, technology, and parent involvement.

After I completed the second round of interviews with all of the participants, I went back to steps 1 through 3 of Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis. From there I was able to drill down into the categories through participant statements and identified five themes (Appendix G). The themes were student well-being, technology, parent involvement, flexible classroom modalities,

and campus safety. All of the themes that have been identified were discussed by each of the participants either separately or in relation to one of the other themes.

After completing steps 1 through 3 of Yin's (2011) five phases, I reviewed the works of Strauss and Corbin (1998) related to saturation. They shared with researchers the need to continue adding participants until no new information emerges. As I reviewed my subcategories, I believed that the data were clear and the participants had all been consistent in their responses, including the outlier. According to Charmaz (2006) the researcher should stop collecting data when the categories are saturated and fresh data no longer sparks new insights. At this point, I determined no additional participants were needed, but agreed to revisit the topic of saturation once the themes had been identified.

Technology. The first theme that was uncovered was technology. Each participant spoke about the impact technology has had on Generation Z and the ways it has impacted the school environment. For example, participants spoke to the shifts in policies and practices with regard to cell phones. Several of the schools indicated that they allow cell phones on school property, but students are required to keep them turned off in their lockers. Nonetheless, cell phones continue to be used during the day, and several indicated they had issues related to sexting and bullying via social media. One school shared that they were in the middle of a cell phone policy review with their teachers and would be determining an updated policy for the 2017-18 year.

Everyone shared that they are using technology both inside and outside the classroom. All of the participants spoke to the use of computers throughout the class day. Schools use different software systems to educate students on various subjects and also to help with enrichment. Ellen spoke to the use of Lexia Reading software. She shared the purpose is to help students improve their reading skills. As a result of using the tool, students are exposed to the

world. They learn about other countries as they work through the different levels of the program. She shared a story about a student who spoke to her about his online travels to Los Angeles and the museums that he walked through virtually.

Lauren spoke to the inability for students to sit for long periods of time, “they want to build, to create, write, and express themselves differently than with a multiple-choice exam.” She went on to talk about Generation Z not growing up with a lot of pen and paper, but rather an iPad or an iPhone in their hands. She then said,

I think this generation is learning how to make their note cards electronically, and how to type their notes. And, so while they might not have pen and paper, it's a little different. And, I think we may find that their learning strategies look different than the generations before them.

Lastly, several spoke to the use of technology to communicate with school administrators and teachers. This communication is happening not just with the students, but also the parents. They all spoke to the level of access, and one participant spoke to the blurred boundaries as a result. Jason shared, “they have to have personal interactions with administrators... they don't have as many boundaries as maybe we expect or are used to.”

Flexible classroom modalities. The second theme that was identified was flexible classroom modalities. Each of the participants spoke to the changing characteristics between Generation Z and other generations and how these changes have started to impact the classroom environment. Ray shared,

different teachers have different comfort levels, the best that I have seen is when there are four different levels (of learning), so the teacher set-ups four different styles at one time, in a class of 18-20 with three or four students at each table. One group will work independently, and another group can do work online using Lexia or GoMath. The third group will do group work, while the fourth group will work with the teacher.

Everyone talked about the need for the classroom to be engaging. Jackie shared, “the learning environment needs to be stimulating.” While Ray spoke to the need for “flexible

furniture in the classroom, such as ball seats.” And, Kathy, said, “classrooms need to be digital based and small, no more than 20 in a class.” While Lauren said, “there is value in standing desks, the classroom needs to have lots of movement.” Jason talked about assessing the needs,

I'm real big into assessing what type of learner they are. Whether visual, auditory or kinesthetic, and I know that each class has different types, so you have to breakup into the different learners and be able to teach in a way that hits everyone in the most ideal way.

Multiple participants spoke to the increased number of students with learning disabilities and the complexity of the cases that they are presenting and the impact that this has on the school and especially the classroom environment. Participants spoke to learning disabilities impacting the need for interactive learning and flexible furniture. Ellen said, “I would imagine interactive classrooms are going to be pretty important for these children ... one because of their shortened attention spans.” Kathy spoke to what works in the classroom and what should be done outside of the classroom,

in the classroom, focus on discussions, interactions and creative problem-solving. Some technology can be integrated but the focus should be on the personal interactions. Homework assignments and follow-up with teachers and classmates can be done through a student portal (Canvas and Veracross) after school.

Student well-being. The third theme uncovered was student well-being. This theme was identified during a second round of compiling and reassembling the data. My committee chair suggested that I review my data to determine whether or not there were other themes. After reviewing the data and conferring with another committee member, I found that I had packed student well-being under flexible learning modalities. As a result, redefined this theme based on the information that was collected during the interviews, which included student development regarding grit and resilience, academic and social development, and mental health, learning, and medical disabilities. Each of the participants spoke to student well-being in terms of the

particular characteristics of the generation. Ellen, shared that she has observed her students have a more difficult time adapting to change. While another participant said that the generation needs more communication and reinforcement than prior generations, they shared that their students view positive reinforcement as a form of motivation. Several of the participants spoke to this generation as having lower confidence levels. Ray, shared, “this generation seems be negatively affected by their peers more than any other generation” that he can recall in his time an educator.

They also talked about student well-being impacting the accommodation requests within the school environment. Jackie said they want pictures, visuals, and animation. While Kathy said that they expect the classroom environment to be engaging and interactive and since their attention spans are so short, so this helps to keep them on track and engaged. Lastly, they talked about student well-being in connection with flexible classroom modalities. Jason shared the following, “We are seeing more students with social and emotional issues, and lately we have started to see more students with sensory disorders, and we have had to alter our teaching methods to accommodate this disability in the classrooms.” Ray shared,

recently the teachers in the younger grades purchased stand up desks. Some of these changes are due to behavior modification, students are not able to focus for long periods of time, but they can do it when they stand up or bounce a little.

Kathy shared that, “The increased diagnosis of ADHD and other learning disabilities has really heightened the need for and the prevalence of individualized teaching.”

Parent involvement. The fourth theme that I identified was parent involvement. All participants spoke to the high degree of parent engagement and the impact that this has had on their students and the school community. Ray shared that they have a parent portal and use newsletters to communicate with families. He went on to say, “kids are more happy and successful if parents are involved. We can tackle problems and avoid disasters if they

communicate with us.” While Lauren shared, “Parents want communication, they are hungry to be plugged in and need the rah, the academic, and the extracurricular information.”

The topic of parent involvement spanned topics such as volunteer hours, monetary resources, supplies, and communication. Some schools spoke to the amount of time parents volunteered to assist with the daily operations of the school. Jackie spoke to parents volunteering time on the weekends to assist with set-up and building items for events. Others talked about the monetary donations provided for classroom supplies and furniture. While others spoke to parents being highly engaged in the day-to-day lives of their students. Ellen shared that she is a parent of a student at the school where she is currently employed, yet often is unaware of the everyday drama that occurs in the school environment, but other working parents are fully plugged into. Ellen said, “We are jumping in and fixing their problems. We are calling the principal and meeting with teachers because our kids are not getting along.”

Campus safety. The fifth theme identified was campus safety. This theme came as a surprise since the purpose of the research was focused on academic services that positively impact the success of the student. I speak to this process in more detail in Chapter V. The topic of campus safety was discussed by all participants in terms of the impact that it has on the other four themes. For example, Ray shared the following,

We have had to shift our campus conduct systems. This year we sent five teachers to Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) training. The purpose of the model is to utilize three rules on campus, to be safe, to be respectful, and to be responsible.

This response was about the changes that they see generationally in how this group interacts with their peers and their need for consistency. This school will have the three campus rules, and each teacher will work with their class to identify additional rules for their particular classroom if necessary. Jason shared that they will be, “implementing a virtues-based discipline

model.” This model will span the campus but will also be integrated into the home environment and parents will be asked to support the model by agreeing to adopt a virtue for the family to focus on during the 2017-2018 year.

Other participants spoke to campus safety in terms of parent involvement. Participants shared they are concerned for the safety and well-being of their children and want to ensure that their children will be safe while they are on school property. As indicated before, several schools will be hiring campus security for the first time in their school's history. Many participants spoke to campus safety with regard to their student's use of technology. Ellen shared that she has witnessed parents getting involved quicker than in previous years:

I think that there's this fear bullying and of suicide and it is just gotten so bad among parents that we're just reacting a lot quicker. And, I guess that in a way that's good, because we've seen sort of a rise in depression at a much young age.

While Ray spoke to parents being more concerned with safety because their students, “may be overburdened by issues of bullying or they feel vulnerable.”

Validity

Process. For this study, I used Creswell’s (2014) definition of qualitative validity. He shared researchers should check for accuracy by implementing particular procedures (Creswell, 2014). These procedures allow the researcher to determine whether or not their findings are accurate from the standpoint of both the researcher and the participant. As a result, I used triangulation, member checks, and rich thick descriptions to communicate the findings.

Analyzing. I used member checks of the information and understanding of the data. Throughout the process, coded excerpts and interpretations were reviewed with the participants to ensure accuracy (Creswell, 2014). I also reread transcriptions and replayed audio recordings to ensure accurate transcription.

Validation. To ensure validity, I utilized journaling and memo-taking to demonstrate researcher creditability.

Reporting. This step includes communication of results. The information was shared during a public defense at the university where I studied.

Saturation. At this point in the research process, I revisited the topic of saturation and determined that I had reached a reasonable level of saturation (Charmaz, 2006). As I sorted through the data and identified my subcategories, categories, and themes, it was clear that there were no new insights. There was consistency in determining the five themes, including the identification of an outlier. According to Charmaz (2006), researchers should aim for theoretical saturation which is a result of theoretical sampling by ensuring data categories are well established and validated.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. Questions were asked of the primary and secondary school administrators experiences in working with both students and parents of this generation. They were asked about strategies for success, services that foster academic success, ineffective practices, and perceived expectations about college experiences for Generation Z. Participants were primary and secondary educators in central Texas private religiously affiliated schools. Each educator participated in two interviews over the course of 3 months.

I shared the findings by first identifying the factors that impacted the development of the student and contributed to their overall school experience. These factors are what created the eight major categories by which the conversations flowed: (a) expectations, (b) norms, (c)

student welfare, (d) campus safety, (e) parental involvement, (f) learning styles, (g) technology, and (h) student characteristics. The first level of categories was based on comments that connected to the larger overarching themes of the student experience at school. After I completed a second round of interviews with all of the participants, I went back to steps 1 through 3 of Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis. From here I was able to drill down into the categories through participant statements and identified five themes. The themes are student well-being, technology, parent involvement, flexible classroom modalities, and campus safety.

Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to understand the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. The focus of the inquiry included:

1. What do teachers, counselors and administrators identify as effective strategies and services that foster student academic success?
 - a. What are some of the more effective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
 - b. What are some ineffective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
2. What do teachers, counselors and administrators identify as the expectations of Generation Z about their college experience? And, why do they perceive these to be their expectations?

The chapter begins with a summary of the research study. Then, I review Strauss and Howe's (1997) generational cohort theory, which is relevant to this study. Additionally, I review student development theories and practices relevant to this study, including Tinto's models of student development (2004, 2017). After reviewing these theories, I address the research questions and findings that are relevant to the theories. Next, I make recommendations to higher education educators who will be working with Generation Z. After the recommendations, I discuss future studies that could enhance the field of higher education regarding academic services that support Generation Z. Finally, I close Chapter 5 with a summary and conclusions regarding this study.

Summary of the Research Study

For this research, I used Strauss and Howe's research on generational cohort theory (1997) as the conceptual framework. This theory is stage oriented and explains how an era in which a person is born affects the development of their view of the world in which they live (Codrington, 2008). Typically, a person's value system is formed in the first 10 years of their life and is influenced by their family unit, friends, and the community in which the individual lives. This value system is also influenced by world events and the generational era in which the individual was born. Generational cohort theory suggests there are repeating cycles of generational values and over time each generation repeats itself. This framework is stage oriented, in that individuals move through time and are influenced by their environment. As the individual moves through the four stages of life, they are influenced by environmental factors that surround them. I also utilized Tinto's research on student development and progression (2004). Tinto stated that in order to positively impact undergraduate student retention, institutions must offer easily accessible academic, personal, and social support services. He went on to say that it is these interactions that influence the student's sense of connection to the university and their ability to navigate the campus culture, meet expectations, and graduate.

This qualitative study followed an interpretive design inquiry utilizing narrative inquiry protocol for the data collection methodology. I chose the interpretive design inquiry with the narrative inquiry protocol because it aligned with the conceptual framework. Both the narrative inquiry protocol and the conceptual framework are stage oriented in that individuals move through time and are influenced by their environments. Narrative inquiry protocol provides first person accounts of experiences in story format that have a beginning, middle, and end. The protocol examines the story three dimensionally in terms of interaction, continuity, and situation

(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Six participants were interviewed twice. The data collection included semi-structured interviews. In the first interview, participants were guided by an interview protocol asking them a series of questions related to their experiences as educators. During the second interview participants were asked a series of questions; member checks were completed to ensure accurate information was gathered during the first interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 2009).

I used three layers to analyze the data that were gathered from the interviews. The main data analysis used was Yin's (2011) five phases which are: (1) compiling data by organizing, (2) disassembling the data by breaking it into smaller fragments, (3) reassembling the data to make meaningful structures by creating different groupings and sequences, (4) interpreting the data by creating a new narrative based upon the reassembled data, and (5) concluding by drawing final conclusions from your entire study based upon the previous phases. Another layer of analysis that was utilized was Merriam's (2002) recommendation of analyzing the data while transcribing. This was especially helpful as I was able to review the data between the two interviews and this helped to guide my member checks. Lastly, I used Spradley's (1980) steps for creating a domain analysis to help connect the field notes and observations in the compiling phase.

I shared the findings by first identifying the factors that impacted the development of the student and contributed to their overall school experience. These factors were what created the eight major categories by which the conversations flowed: (a) expectations, (b) norms, (c) student welfare, (d) campus safety, (e) parental involvement, (f) learning styles, (g) technology, and (h) student characteristics. The first level of categories was based on comments that connected to the larger overarching themes of the student experience at school. After I completed

a second round of interviews with all of the participants, I went back to steps 1 through 3 of Yin's (2011) five phases of analysis. From there I was able to drill down into the categories through the participant statements and identified five themes. The themes are student well-being, technology, parent involvement, flexible classroom modalities, and campus safety.

Generational Cohort Theory and Findings

In this section, I describe Strauss and Howe's (2007) generational cohort theory and compare the theory to the findings. The researchers speak to the four turnings or the social moods that change over time as generational archetypes enter a new constellation. The turnings last approximately 20 to 22 years and a complete cycle of all four turnings is referred to as a saeculum which is a natural century, typically lasting 80 years. The researchers said that within each turning a new generation is born and shaped by the mood and orientation of the turning in which they were raised. The first turning is referenced as the high, the second turning is the awakening, the third is the unraveling, and the fourth is the crisis. Each turning occurs during an era and has distinct characteristics and behaviors associated with it. And, within each turning the individuals move through 80 years of life passing through four phases starting with childhood, into young adulthood, then midlife, and lastly elder hood. Strauss and Howe (1997) believe that, "two different turnings associated with two different formative age locations build four generational archetypes that repeat sequentially" (p. 99). These archetypes are called the prophet, nomad, hero, and artist. These four archetypes or universal patterns have distinctions and individuals grow, develop and mature with these traits. For example, the prophet is raised as a child in a secure environment and encouraged to explore their social values. They grow up into a generation that is obsessed with meaning and become distrustful of authority. Nomads grow up during the second turning, are they are left to themselves and become occupied with self-

discovery and new movements. They grow up under-protected and become tough and wild and earn a bad reputation. The third turning brings about the hero generation, they are protected as children and grow up to be civic minded and optimistic as adults. The last turning is called the crisis period and is considered to be a more dangerous and difficult time for society. The children of this era are heavily protected and become the artist generation.

The first turning is referenced as high, it is typically an upbeat era in which institutions strengthen, and the individualist point of view weakens. Overall society is more confident of their collective destination. During this turning, nomads enter elderhood, the heroes are in midlife, artists are young adults, and prophets enter childhood. The second turning is referenced as the awakening. It is typically an era of passionate spiritual upheaval. During this time institutions are attacked for personal and spiritual autonomy and people become tired of the social discipline of the era. Heroes enter elderhood, artists enter midlife, prophets move into young adulthood, and nomads move into childhood. Third turning or the unraveling is a downcast era where individualism strengthens, and institutions are weak and distrusted. The artists enter elderhood, prophets move into midlife, nomads move into young adulthood, and heroes come into childhood. The fourth turning is the last and is a period of crisis. During this decisive era of secular upheaval, institutions are destroyed and rebuilt in response to a perceived threat. Typically, the civic authority of society is revived, and national identity is redefined; society must come together and work to deal with political, social, or economic issue.

If we apply Strauss and Howe's (1997) generational cohort theory to the current state of the world, this would mean we are in the fourth turning, which is a period of crisis. This period of crisis could be a result of the current global financial crisis and the war on terrorism. This time period has many similarities to that of 1929-1946, which was the last fourth turning in our

history. This period included crises such as the Great Depression and World War II. Researchers have referenced the cyclical nature of generations, and there seems to be several similarities between the experience of Generation Z and that of the Silent Generation (Codrington, 2008; Strauss & Howe, 1997).

During a time of crisis there is typically social upheaval and a period of renewal that occurs following the crisis. Strauss and Howe (1997) spoke to the morphology of an era. These researchers said there are four steps within the era, starting with a catalyst, which is an event that produces a sudden shift in a mood. Once catalyzed, society goes through a regeneracy, which reenergizes civic life. Next the regenerated society moves toward a climax, which is a moment in time that confirms the death of the old order and the birth of the new order. This climax results in a resolution, which can be either triumphant or tragic, and establishes the new order. According to research, the current crisis came around 2005, which was the beginning of the war on terrorism, the great financial recession of 2007 had just begun, and President Barack Obama was elected in 2008. The Silent Generation experienced Black Tuesday when the stock market crashed in 1929 serving as the catalyst for a fourth turning. It is suggested that that the climax will be due around 2020, and the resolution period will come around 2026. The Silent Generation experienced a period of regeneracy with the election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The first years of his presidency were said to be bleak, while the crises erupted with World War II and the Great Depression. The final period of resolution brought about NATO, the United Nations, the World Bank, and many other important and vital organizations. The Silents were just entering childhood, similar to Generation Z today, and beginning to develop and formulate their own value systems. According to researchers the fourth turning is necessary for society, it provides an opportunity for strength and renewal (Strauss & Howe, 1997).

Researchers believe that Generation Z will respond similar to their grandparents or in some cases their great-grandparents. Shaped by World War II and the Great Depression, the Silent Generation grew up to be diligent and hardworking. According to Neil Howe, “the parallels with the Silent Generation are obvious, there has been a recession, jobs are hard to get, you can’t take risks. You’ve got to be careful what you put on Facebook, you don’t want to taint your record” (Williams, 2015, p. ST1). Generation Z is said to be predisposed to making videos of themselves doing cartwheels over their cats, similar to the Silents who became well known for their actions (Williams, 2015). Sparks and Honey Ad Agency reports that for Generation Z “entrepreneurship is in their DNA” (Sparks and Honey Ad Agency, 2016, slide 26). This generation has grown up to believe that the government’s purpose is to keep them safe, as they have only known a time of war and terrorism. They have been carefully raised by their Generation X parents at home in their digital platform. According to the Life Course research there are new behavioral regimens being introduced in their schools to develop them into sensitive, helpful young adults who play by the rules (Howe, 2018).

There are significant overlaps between current research on Generation Z, generational cohort theory, and the results of this study. Next, I address three themes that have similarities to the current research: parent involvement, student well-being, and campus safety (Appendix H).

Parent involvement. Research (Hamilton, 2086; Savage & Petree, 2015, 2016; Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Twenge, 2017) speaks to the increase in parent involvement at varying points of the educational experience and the need for parents to have access to different types of information. The fourth theme that was uncovered through my interviews was parent involvement. All participants spoke to the high degree of parent engagement and the impact this has had on their students and school community.

Researchers have also distinguished the shift between the Baby Boomer helicopter parents and Generation X parents. Generational cohort theory would suggest that history is cyclical, therefore the childhoods of Generation X parents, also referenced as the latchkey generation, have influenced who they have become as parents to Generation Z. As a result of their experiences growing up in single family homes or as children in divorced families they have shifted their focus to be more family oriented and involved in their children's lives than their own parents.

As parents of college students, Savage (2016) says they are not helicopters, but rather allies in the educational system. Therefore, there are many benefits to working with these parents and keeping them informed rather than uninformed. It has also been noted that this generation of students turn to their parents during times of need for advice and support, they view their parents as their best advisors and have referenced them accordingly as their role models and trusted mentors (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). In fact, "88% have reported being very close to their parents" (p. 157). Savage and Petree's 2015 National Survey of College and University Parent Programs identified three major outcomes: (a) keep parents involved, (b) identify an office to manage parent services, and (c) find ways to communicate with them.

I would like to address the first point, which is finding ways to keep parents involved. This is especially important, because parents view college as a family investment, and they believe they have a responsibility to receive information from and provide input about the investment (Savage, 2016). Therefore, the need to keep parents informed is important for universities to consider. Savage (2016) shared that parents can play key roles in their students' academic life, if they have an understanding of the student experience and are aware of the resources that are available to their students. It is also helpful for parents to know when to step in

and assist and when to encourage their students to take the next step. And, lastly it is important for parents to develop an affinity for the university and participate in campus events. Hamilton's (2016) research on different parenting approaches taken during the college years offers readers a differing point of view of who they are and what their needs and expectations are in comparison to how they serve their students. She breaks down college parenting into four easy-to-understand categories. Research by others has shown that parents play a vital role in their students' decision to attend a particular college and often in their decision to leave a university, therefore it is important for universities to find ways to partner with parents. Savage (2016) goes on to say, "the cost of parent relations are generally minimal, but the benefits include recruitment, retention, and student success, along with the potential for financial returns" (p. 4).

The third outcome of the study was the need to find ways to communicate with parents. Technology has paved the way for students and parents to stay in constant communication and has also provided a venue for parents to stay informed with their students' universities. Information can be communicated in different ways such as orientation programs, parent weekends, social media, parent newsletters, or provided online via a parent portal. An article in *The Atlantic* (Hamilton, 2017) indicated that institutions now have parent tabs on the front of their web pages to keep them engaged and updated on campus events. Anderson, vice president at Connecticut's Fairfield University said it "gives the parents the feeling that the college cares and that their kid is on the right track... parents who learn about events through the weekly newsletter can then nudge their students to attend those events" (as cited in Hamilton, 2017). Generation X's parenting style has been influenced by their own childhoods and the era in which they grew up. As a result, we are seeing parents who seek to be informed and to be a part of the

campus community. They have strong relationships with their students, so they know when to intervene and when to step aside and let their children navigate the system.

Student well-being. Research (Boyle & Greeley, 2017; Coombs, 2015, 2016, 2017; Gomez, 2015; Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Twenge, 2015, 2017) all speaks to an increase in concerns surrounding student well-being in educational settings. The third theme that I defined is student well-being, this theme is based upon the information that was collected during the interviews, which included grit and resilience, academic and social development, mental health, and learning and medical disabilities. Each of the participants spoke to student well-being in terms of the particular characteristics of the generation. They are less entitled and less narcissistic, but more vulnerable, and overall they are less optimistic and less happy.

The 2015 annual survey published by the Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors showed that counseling centers across the nation were overwhelmed by their seasonal workload and they had to utilize waitlists during certain periods of the year. According to the research, members of this generation who spend more than 2- hours a day on electronic devices are significantly more likely to show symptoms of depression. Around 2012, significant shifts in teen's behaviors, attitudes, and mental health began to occur. This was the same time the majority of American adults reported owning a smartphone (Twenge, 2017). Research shows this is a result of teens feeling left out; while previous generations would hear what they missed after the weekend when they returned to school, current generations get up to date pictures of what they are missing in real-time. This generation has coined the term, FOMO or "fear of missing out" (Twenge, 2017, p. 97). We see more and more children spending more time online and less in-person social interactions which leads to more loneliness.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2014-2015 survey (Twenge, 2017), 56% more teens expressed a major depressive episode in 2015 than in 2010 and 60% more experienced severe impairment (Twenge, 2017). Between 2009 and 2015, the number of high school girls who attempted suicide increased by 43%. The number of college students who considered suicide jumped 60% between 2011 and 2016. Researchers all point out that while anxiety, depression, and suicide have all risen at the same time as the rise in use of smartphones, we have to also take into account other potential causes such as societal pressures and world events.

In the fall of 2017, the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities published an article (Boyle & Greeley, 2017) in which they addressed the need for change in how we work with students with disabilities. In the Pastoral Statement, bishops called for Catholic elementary and secondary teachers to receive, “in service training in how to best integrate disabled students into programs” (p. 14). The bishops called for Catholic primary and secondary schools to collaborate with Catholic higher education to develop and implement a process for schools to utilize. This is similar to the work that has been published by the Jed Foundation (Albright & Schwartz, 2017), which reported that 60% of faculty and staff do not feel prepared to recognize students in distress. And, in 2016 the Chronicle of Higher Education released its Mental Health Issue, which stated that professors need support and training to know how to work with and handle or connect students to services. As a nation we are seeing more and more students struggle with issues of well-being, yet our faculty and staff feel ill-prepared to manage and connect students.

As a result of the shifts in the needs of college students on the student well-being front, universities across the nation are getting creative with their services. For example, more

campuses offer telepsychology or video chat and other forms of technology to work with students. While other institutions such as McDaniel College in Maryland have developed bridge programs for students with disabilities to help them successfully transition into college. As a result of their efforts, they have seen 90% continue their enrollment after a year and 96.3% of them maintained good academic standing (Gomez, 2015). And, a number of institutions have implemented question, persuade, and refer training for campus faculty, staff, and students on suicide prevention. According to the work of generational cohort theorists, this generation has moved through childhood during a period of crisis. Their childhoods have consisted of car seats, being picked up from school instead of walking home alone, playing on sanitized plastic playgrounds, and being supervised during every minute of their life. They have never been allowed to roam freely and have lived under constant threat of terrorist attacks. As a result, they are more anxious than other generations and their state of well-being is constantly in question.

Campus safety. The fifth theme that was identified was campus safety. This theme is important for administrators to look at students in a more holistic way and ensure that they address the physical and psychological safety of students in order for them to be successful. The theme of campus safety was discussed by all participants in terms of the impact it has had on the other four themes, but more importantly the impact safety has on a student's ability to be successful in an academic environment if they do not feel safe in that environment. This generation understands issues of violence, cyber bullying, and discrimination as they grew up with it. They were also educated in their schools and learned prevention techniques. Much of the research in the last few years on campus safety has been aimed at creating safe spaces for students, developing safety protocols and communication plans to deal with campus violence, and implementing tools for faculty and staff to utilize when addressing disruptive and dangerous

behaviors on campus. As a generation this cohort of students has lived through the aftermath of the University of Texas, Virginia Tech, and Northern Illinois shootings and their Generation X parents have watched as federal and state governments have formed taskforces and organizations to address issues of campus violence (Schafer, Lee, Burrus, & Giblin, 2016). In a 2016 survey by Wearsafe, 70% of parents of college students reported campus safety as being critical in choosing a school (Williams, 2015). As a result of the media attention, student and parent concerns, and institutional commitment, universities have been advised to implement campus alert systems for faculty, staff, students, and parents to stay updated on campus emergencies; to publicize campus safety and security statistics on a yearly basis; to train campus safety officers and community members on emergency management protocols and dealing with violent crimes and campus hazards; and to work to improve campus relations between campus safety and the broader community (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

If we take a step back and look at Generation Z as a whole, the research would suggest they are safer and less likely to be risk takers. There has been a significant decline since 1976 in the percentage of high school students who binge drink. Today, “less than 16% reported that they binge drank in the last 2 weeks, compared to 38% in 1976” (Twenge, 2017, p. 36). And, there has been a decline in physical fights. In 1991, half of all 9th graders had been in a fight in the previous twelve months while in 2015 only one in four reported being in a fight (Twenge, 2017) suggesting because of their fragile nature they are likely to melt under the slightest amount of pressure.

In a 2015 *Politico Magazine* article, Josh Zeitz wrote, “Yesterday’s student activists wanted to be treated like adults. Today’s want to be treated like children” (para. 1) This is a result of the requests and the expectations that they are placing on college officials. Campus safe

spaces were created as a place for minority students and LGBT students to congregate without fear or judgment. Today, Generation Z has broadened the term to include, “protecting anyone from any viewpoint that might offend them” (Twenge, 2017, p. 154). What this means for campus administrators is that they are being told that it is their job to protect this generation and to keep them safe and parents expect the same.

This interest in safety stems from their childhoods during which they have been treated as younger than their age. Consequently, the 18-year-old is really more of a 14-year-old, so as they enter college they feel less protected and vulnerable (Twenge, 2017). In a 2016 poll, 70% of adults reported the world is less safe than when they were children; everything would suggest that the world is much safer now (Twenge, 2017).

Institutions have also had to take a look at their campus conduct policies because of increasing concerns related to cyber bullying. According to the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (McNair, Albertine, Cooper, McDonald, & Major, 2016), many institutions across the nation have reviewed technology usage practices, policies related to speakers and demonstrations, policies related to hate speech, and workplace violence among others (2017). According to a recent guide on addressing disruptive and dangerous behaviors, the authors said, “campus staff should embrace transparency about college processes and information about how these actions enhance overall safety and opportunity for students in order to better engage Generation Z” (Brunt & Murphy, 2018, p. 19). Universities will need to look at ways to partner with students and their parents around campus safety. As the cost of higher education continues to increase and the state of the world continues to be unstable, expectations will continue to heighten in relation to Generation Z safety on college campuses.

Student Development Theory and Findings

In this section, I describe Vincent Tinto's theory of student departure (1975, 1987, 1993, 2004) and his model of student motivation and persistence (2017). Tinto's student departure theory is focused on his early research, which looked at the reasons students drop out of college (1987, 1993, 2004). He explained his model as a process of interactions between the student and the institution. Phase 1 is focused on the pre-entry attributes or what the student enters the university setting with in terms of skill, ability, and family background. Phase 2 is focused on the student's goals and commitment in terms of their intentions and their level of overall commitment to the university. Phase 3 is focused on the institutional experience encompassing both formal and informal interactions with members of the community such as faculty and staff. Tinto said the higher the level of integration the higher the level of commitment to the institution. This commitment impacts the decision to drop out or persist. The fourth phase is focused on personal integration into the academic and social aspects of the community. The focus here is on support services and extracurricular activities offered by each university. The last phase is focused on the student's goals and commitments external to the university. This could be their commitment to family, an off-campus job, or other factors. All of this influences the outcome or their decision to leave the university.

In 2004, Tinto suggested that in order to positively impact undergraduate student retention, institutions must offer easily accessible academic, personal, and social support services. He went on to say it is these interactions that influence the student's sense of connection to the university and their ability to navigate the campus culture, meet expectations, and eventually graduate. In 2017, Tinto released an article focused on student persistence through the lens of the student and he included a conceptual model of student institutional

persistence as seen through the eyes of the student. First, I explain the model as created by Tinto and then I apply the model to findings from my study to understand the needs and expectations of Generation Z in order to be successful in college.

Tinto (2017) shared for many year's colleges and universities have focused on what they can do to retain their students through the lens of institutional action. He went on to say that students do not wish to be retained but rather they seek to persist. As a result, there are competing interests and outcomes between the university and the student. More specifically, Tinto (2017) states, "the institution's interest is to increase the proportion of their students who graduate from the institution, the student's interest is to complete a degree often without regard to the institution in which it is earned" (p. 254). He was clear his research was about highlighting factors that could shape a student's level of motivation that are within the capacity of the university to influence. The goal is for the institutional action to promote "student motivation to persist and in turn increases persistence to completion" (Tinto, p. 255).

The first level includes what the student brings to into the university, their personal goals, levels of motivation, and persistence. Both goals and motivation influence persistence; without motivation and the effort that it takes, persistence is not likely. However, motivation is malleable and can be influenced by university experiences. It is important to note having the goal of completing college is necessary, but it is not the only critical factor. Different experiences in college can influence a student's goals and their motivation. For example, some students may enter the university with the intention to transfer, while others may have entered with the intent to complete their degree. In some cases, the institution is the first choice or students may be committed to completing a degree but not committed to the institution. Regarding motivation, each student has different motivations for attending college. Students could be influenced by the

intrinsic benefits of going to college, such as the desire to learn, develop, and or become affiliated. Others could be concerned with the extrinsic benefits of attending college, including the impact on future income, to further their education, or to develop an occupation. Diesche (2009) shared that a student's lack of clarity related to their reasons for attending college can undermine their ability to complete.

Next, Tinto spoke to the factors that influence a student's motivation, including self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and the student's perception of the curriculum (2017). Bandura (1977, 1994) defined self-efficacy as a person's belief in their ability to succeed in a specific situation or at a particular task—this is a learned behavior not an inherited behavior. A person's sense of self-efficacy in turn will influence how they tackle goals, tasks, and challenges as they confronted them. Researchers have said that self-efficacy is the foundation on which student persistence is built and a student must believe they can succeed in college (Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001).

The second factor in Tinto's model is sense of belonging. Students must view themselves as members of community. This includes connections to faculty, staff, and other students who in turn value their participation (Bean & Eaton, 2000; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005). Research shows that students who perceive themselves as belonging are more likely to persist because of enhanced motivation and, because they are willing to engage with others in ways that further their persistence (Hausmann, Schofield, & Woods, 2007). Walton and Cohen (2007) went on to say that a student's sense of not belonging or feeling out of place leads to withdrawal and it undermines their motivation to persist. The last factor is the student's perception of the curriculum or relevance to their studies. This also has direct impact on their sense of belonging and has to do with the teaching methods, the perceived institutional quality, and student learning

style preferences and values. As a result, students need to feel that they are learning quality material and that it warrants their time and effort (Frick, Chadha, Watson, Wang, & Green, 2009). This will lead to motivation and long-term persistence.

Tinto (2017) suggests that once institutions understand the student view of persistence, then they can ask themselves what they can do to enhance the likelihood that more of their students will persist to completion. If we look at student self-efficacy, Tinto suggested that universities consider the different ways in which we work with our students to understand their identity, monitor their performance, and provide academic support when needed. Many institutions have early alert systems for monitoring grades, attendance, and providing interventions as needed. There are typically resources provided to students who struggle in their classes. This could include supplemental instruction, tutoring services, writing services, and many others. These services are especially important during the first year as they help students learn to assess and monitor themselves and teach them to identify and adjust behaviors as needed. Another component necessary for persistence is social support. Different groups of students have different needs, but overall students benefit from first year advising models, counseling, and mentoring. A student's sense of belonging is influenced by a variety of things within the university environment, including the administration trying as best as they can to ensure the makeup of the administration is representative of the study body (Tinto, 2017).

It is important for the administration to remember that all interactions matter, everything speaks. Some of the more common practices that we see on college campuses in the academic realm include cohort programs, learning communities, and cooperative learning in the classroom. In the co-curricular realm, we see a diversity among social groups and organizations. This is especially important as it allows for students to find a smaller group that they can connect with.

Lastly, Tinto (2017) addresses the student's perception of the curriculum. He said there are three things that must occur: (1) students must find an appropriate field of study that meets their needs and interests and is challenging, (2) the curriculum in the social sciences and humanities is inclusive of the students they serve and their histories, and (3) institutions must be intentional in demonstrating how the material can be applied to meaningful situations. A suggestion is to use project-based pedagogies.

As I reviewed Tinto's (2017) model of student persistence, I reminded myself to reflect about who Generation Z is as a whole. I know they comprise approximately 25.9% of the U.S. population. They have grown up in a society post 9/11. They have always had technology at their fingertips and have been exposed to its evolution since birth. They have a different understanding of the family unit; they were raised in multi-generational homes that are often multi-racial and as a result, they are color blind. The lines related to gender and sexuality are also blurred for them. According to White (2017), there are five defining characteristics for this generation:

- (1) Recession marked – they experienced their childhoods during one of the worst financial crisis to hit the United States since World War II;
- (2) Wi-fi enabled – they have always lived in a world with constant, immediate, and convenient access to the web;
- (3) Multi-racial – this generation is the most racially diverse generation to date;
- (4) Sexually fluid – they are accepting of gay marriage, transgender rights, and they refuse to use labels; and
- (5) post-Christian – they believe in an existence of a higher being, but few practice or attend religious services.

This process of reflection helped me to organize my thoughts and ideas as they related to persistence. I would like to further discuss Tinto's model of persistence by addressing the five themes as they directly relate to the model (Appendix I).

Student well-being. The first theme that was uncovered through this study was student well-being. This theme connects with Tinto's model of student persistence, as a student's well-being impacts their ability to be successful inside and outside of the classroom and ultimately influences their level of self-efficacy. Today's Generation Z students are more vulnerable, less optimistic, and overall less happy than the generations that came before them (Twenge, 2017). According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2014-2015 survey, 56% more teens experienced a major depressive episode than in 2010. As a result, they are more anxious than other generations and their state of well-being is constantly in question. Therefore, it will be important for university administrators to be able to identify and connect students who are in crisis or struggling.

The Jed Foundation (Albright & Schwartz, 2017), reported 60% of faculty and staff do not feel prepared to recognize students in distress. In 2016 the Chronicle of Higher Education released its Mental Health Issue, which stated that professors need training on how to work with students who are in crisis. As a nation we see more and more students struggle with issues related to their well-being, yet our faculty and staff feel ill-prepared to manage and connect students. Universities will need to look at developing and implementing programs to identify and work with students who are in crisis or in need of support services.

Campus safety. The second theme that was uncovered through this study was campus safety. The participants communicated about ongoing concerns that both parents and students have related to campus security. Generation Z has grown-up with issues of violence, cyber-

bullying, and discrimination all around them. As a result, they have learned prevention techniques in schools which allow them to identify issues and report them to the proper authorities. Both parents and students have been provided with communication systems, social media sites, and email notifications which alert them to school issues and calendar events. As a result, students and parents will be entering the college community expecting a similar level of security and communication. This theme is in alignment with Tinto's (2017) model as it relates to self-efficacy and developing a sense of belonging.

Generation Z expects that universities will create safety plans and communication streams related to campus issues (Brunt & Murphy, 2018). Students sense of self-efficacy is impacted by their sense of security. If students do not feel safe and comfortable in their environment, they are less likely to be successful in their academic careers which impacts their level of self-efficacy and their sense of belonging. This has also become a topic of concern for Generation X parents, they expect that their children will be protected and kept safe (Twenge, 2017). Institutions will be required to focus resources on reviewing and enhancing their campus safety plans.

Technology. The third theme that was uncovered in my research was technology. Each of the participants spoke to the use of technology by both parents and students and the desire to incorporate it into the college experience. Generation Z has spent most of their lives in the presence of smart phones, so what does this mean for campus educators? Meanwhile, the typical Gen Z home has on average four televisions (one in their bedroom, so they have convenient and private access), three DVD players, a digital video recorder, two CD players, two radios, two computers, and at least two video-game consoles (Twenge, 2017). If we look at Tinto's model, I would suggest that technology plays into the perception of the curriculum and developing a sense

of belonging. According to Grajek's research completed in 2016, most of Generation Z prefers to have classes with some type of online component; they believe technology helps them to succeed. However, only 57% of professors say they encourage online collaboration in their courses and 61% report using technology during their classes to make connections to learning the material (Grajek, 2016). So, what does this mean for our students as their perception of the value of their studies is based on their perceptions of the curriculum?

According to Yamagata-Lynch (2014) creating learning experiences which complement the classroom experience will be important for Generation Z. This will help to create a strong sense of connection between students and their peers and allow them to stay engaged with course activities. This connection will also allow educators to ensure their classroom is accessible for all types of learners, and is pedagogically innovative, flexible, and economical. This is important as Generation Z formulates their perception of the value of their education and sees the relevance in continuing their studies. This will hopefully lead to more motivated students who are interested and engaged in the curriculum.

As we continue to look ahead to the future and the self-efficacy that can be influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, *Education Dive* shared five trends poised to shake up higher education in 2018. The three most important to this research which have the ability to influence a student's motivation to continue toward their degree are (1) reimaging physical campus space, (2) more unbundling and micro-credentials, and (3) continued focus on accelerating mobile apps. What does this mean for higher education? If we take a moment and look at the notion of space and classroom delivery, universities will need to address the increase in non-traditional students and will be forced to deliver a more comprehensive student experience (Ellucian Research, 2018). This goes beyond the classroom, too. Universities will need to recreate the campus

experience through apps and other forms of technology to help students feel a part of the campus. This is in alignment with Tinto's sense of belonging.

And, with the continued focus on accelerating mobile apps institutions will be forced to address their use. In 2013, the Campus Computing Survey found 79% of colleges and universities had activated or planned to activate a mobile app by end of the academic year, yet today many are still trying to figure out how to make best use. Some institutions have been able to move the use of apps along and have utilized them to access campus tours, campus parking, student services scheduling, and campus event information. Classroom spaces will need to continue to evolve as well to ensure there is opportunity for collaborative and interactive learning.

During an Educause presentation in 2017, it was reported that Generation Z expects public push notifications and messages as well as personalized notifications related to account holds, academic reminders, and grade information. This information allows students to be informed and ultimately leads to a student's ability to be successful in college. They have to be informed and clear about goals and outcomes in order to stay motivated and to persist.

Institutions will be forced to address the idea of unbundling and micro-credentials as the conversations around free community colleges continue. Generation Z is ultimately interested in outcomes and may not always be looking to complete their degree, but rather learn the skills needed to be competent and obtain employment. Institutions must continue to work to develop programs that are focused on providing skills and competencies in a timely way.

Flexible classroom modalities. The fourth theme that was identified through my research was flexible classroom modalities. Each of the participants spoke to the changing characteristics of Generation Z and how these changes have started to impact the classroom

environment. As I reflect upon the model of student persistence that Tinto (2017) developed, I am reminded of the importance of providing flexible classroom modalities in order to create a sense of belonging, to impact self-efficacy, and to positively impact the student's perception of the curriculum. Halverson, Graham, Spring, Drysdale and Henrie (2014) researched what has been completed to date in the area of blended learning research and the focus that has been placed on the effect of introducing an online tool or technology to support student learning. They found that the introduction of technology in the classroom environment impacts: (1) instructional design such as strategies and best practices; (2) disposition, meaning the perceptions, attitudes, and expectations of the students; (3) exploration of the nature and role of blended learning benefits; (4) learner outcomes such as performance, satisfaction, motivation, retention rates, failure rates, and engagement; (5) comparison of blended, face-to-face, and online formats; (6) types and uses of technology and the level of faculty comfort relative to the role of technology and its effect on learning; and (7) interactions, including student-to-student, student-to-instructor, collaboration, community, and social presence. Overall the researchers support the need for a change in the college classroom. The University of Vermont's Medical School announced in August of 2017 that they would do away with the traditional lecture style classrooms and move toward 100% of their classrooms utilizing active learning methods by 2019.

Similarly, the National Center on Time & Learning released a case study in 2014, related to supporting student success through time and technology. They looked at blended learning in relationship to expanded time and the use of technology and identified seven implementation steps for schools to utilize as they move forward: (1) set a clear vision, (2) determine readiness, (3) design a model, (4) select technology, (5) create a staff development plan, (6) develop systems for troubleshooting, and (7) reflect, adjust, and improve (Chan, 2014). These

implementation steps were said to be vital to the successful implementation of a blended learning model for both students and teachers.

DeRuisseau's (2016) research explored the benefits of flipped classrooms and found they allowed for more time to be spent on active learning. This included using a transition to assessment questions which included advanced thinking activities. He also found that course grades, exams, and quiz grades were higher and there was a reduced number of low scoring grades at the end of semester in a flipped classroom. The most important outcome was the comparison he made between the GPA and the letter grades in the class. As a result, the overall GPA was a predictor for future academic performance in other major courses. Again, this research is in direct support of and alignment with a student's need and desire to have identified goals and to be motivated to persist if they are being challenged inside and outside of the classroom in meaningful ways.

There are several examples of universities that are creating dedicated space to engage faculty and students in meaningful ways. The University of Minnesota–Twin Cities completed a study on active classrooms and found them to be beneficial to both faculty and students as long as they were used in an intentional and innovative manner (Najmabadi, 2017). They also determined the ongoing need to monitor trends and look at new technologies and practices to implement. This is very much in alignment with what is known about Generation Z and their desire to stay current with new technological trends. The University of Maryland now has the Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center; Educause stated that these active learning classrooms are the “top strategic technology of the year” (Najmabadi, 2017, para. 9). Institutions are looking outside of the classroom buildings at other facilities on their campuses and the impact to be made on retention if they renovate these buildings to be more student friendly. For

example, Biemiller (2017) recently wrote about buildings that help students make friends, since this is the first generation of students to arrive on campus with all of their high-school friends on their phone. President Bowen of Goucher College, said, “Students are more socially isolated when they arrive, and we have to nudge them a little harder to get them to make new friends. The temptation is to return to your old friends” (Biemiller, 2017, para. 7). As a result, Goucher College is developing a freshman village with the intent to help students meet their classmates. The newly designed buildings allow for intentional meeting spaces, such as staircases that open into lounges or laundry rooms near the lounge areas.

The University of Minnesota began a study in 2006 addressing active learning classrooms on their campus. They started this process by looking at remodeling spaces in basements of their classroom buildings. As a result of their work, they found these spaces allow for a particular type of experience. This includes (a) spaces built on principles of flexible, reconfigurable design; (b) learning environments incorporating technology that permits display of student work to small groups or whole class; (c) new spatial configurations that reorient relationships between the student and the professor and among themselves; and (d) spaces that encourage students to take ownership of their learning and are available for informal use. As a result, they found these learning spaces have positive effects on these services, with the top two being (1) improved student engagement in the spaces, and (2) helping students to outperform final grade expectations (Najmabadi, 2017).

Another important part of flexible classroom modalities includes accessibility for students. The Disability Compliance for Higher Education 2015 issue included an article on universal design. They said, the “goal of universal design when applied to education is to make learning inclusive for all students, not just for those with disabilities” (Coombs, 2015, p. 3). This

approach to classroom design allows for the products and services to be usable by all students and spans a wide range of both functional capabilities and learning styles. The Center for Universal Design has identified seven principles for universal design which has been identified as a flexible approach to curriculum design, providing all learners with full and equal opportunities to learn (Coombs, 2015).

College and university educators will be forced to find ways to teach and engage the different learning styles in their classrooms. Research has identified experiential learning as the preferred style for Generation Z. They like learning independently and at their own pace (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Institutions must continue to work to identify and create learning environments that can maximize Generation Z's ability and capacity to learn.

Parent involvement. The final theme that was identified and connected to Tinto's model of student persistence was parent involvement. This theme spans the model as Generation Z students are highly connected to their parents. It will be important for universities to investigate and understand Generation X parents. Once they have a clear understanding of who they are working with they will need to investigate ways to connect with parents and to develop initiatives that will focus on engaging and communicating with this population of parents. As Savage (2016) shared, parents should be viewed as allies in the educational system. This is a shift for universities that have been accustomed to working with Millennial parents. They will need to be creative as they develop programs to engage families (Savage, 2016).

Research has shown that Generation X parents are allies in the educational system; they are more family orientated than any other generation before them. As a result, they recognize that higher education is a financial investment and they want their students to make an informed

decision about their future commitment and must feel comfortable with their decision (Hamilton, 2016).

Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to understand the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. The following findings are tied to the purpose and the foci of the inquiry: (1) understand the Generation X parent and create programs and initiatives that are focused on communicating and engaging with them; (2) create campus safety plans and communication streams for working with students and engaging parents; (3) research, design, and implement flexible classroom modalities; (4) research, review, analyze, and implement technology tools that support student success across the student experience; and (5) develop and implement models of student well-being to support the whole student.

Recommendation 1: Understand Generation X parent and create programs and initiatives that are focused on communicating and engaging with them. Faculty and staff in higher education need to understand who they are working with and this includes understanding the Generation X parent. Once they better understand this new client they will be better prepared to create programs and initiatives focused on communicating and engaging with them. The findings from this study indicate the emerging practices and strategies for engaging and communicating with this parent population due to their increased involvement at the primary and secondary levels. Generation X parents have always had some degree of connection with their children due to the increased use of technology and the various platforms that have been utilized at the primary and secondary level within their children's schools. The research has also

determined that parents are the most influential people in Generation Z's life, therefore finding ways to foster this relationship will only benefit the institution, the student, and the parent.

Recommendation 2: Create campus safety plans and communication streams for working with students and engaging with parents. College and university educators should consider the experience of Generation Z and their Generation X parents with regard to campus safety plans. According to Strauss and Howe (1997), this generation has grown up during the fourth turning, which is a period of crisis. This is a dangerous and difficult time for our nation and the children who are in the childhood stage of this period are heavily protected. As a result, Generation Z childhood experiences have included surviving the global crisis, 9/11, and they have always known terrorism. They have been educated in their schools about these issues and have learned prevention techniques. Parents and students entering college today shifted to focus and ask questions related to campus safety plans, security statistics, disaster plans, campus communication plans, student code of conduct policies, and procedures dealing with cyber bullying, and safe spaces. Students expect to expect to find a safe environment to pursue their education.

Recommendation 3: Research, design, and implement flexible classroom modalities. Higher education professionals should research, design, and implement flexible classroom modalities. According to Tinto's model of student motivation and persistence, we know their perception of the curriculum is shaped by the students' perception of the value of the material they are being asked to learn (2017). While we know there is less clarity for institutions on how to do this, I would recommend looking at how students learn in the classroom in terms of how they connect with topics being discussed and pedagogies being utilized. This is an opportunity for educators to be creative and to use flexible modalities to engage students in more meaningful

ways around the content of the course. Tinto (2017) revealed the influence a student's level of self-efficacy has on motivation and ultimately how it impacts persistence. Therefore, colleges and universities must get ahead of the curve and look at ways to support students in more meaningful and innovative environments. Seemiller and Grace (2016) shared with their readers Generation Z students are drawn toward learning that can be useful and relevant to getting a job after graduation. They desire learning environments that incorporate independent hands-on work with engaging faculty and supportive classmates (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). We know students seek to persist and if they are not engaged and their needs are not being met, they have no problem leaving the institution and finding another to attend. Therefore, universities need to research, design, and implement the types of learning environments most conducive to this generation.

Recommendation 4: Research, review, analyze, and implement technology tools in support of student success across the student experience. Faculty and staff in higher education will need to research, review, analyze, and implement technology tools in support of student success across the student experience. Generation Z has grown up with a smartphone in their hand and they have a desire for technology to be incorporated into their college environment. This will help to create a strong sense of connection between the faculty, students, and their peers and allow them to stay engaged with the course activities. This is especially important as they formulate their perception of the value of their education and begin to see the relevance in continuing their studies, and, according to Tinto, impact their decision to persist at the university.

Recommendation 5: Educate faculty and staff regarding the increased changes in mental health and disabilities in order to serve Generation Z. Lastly, universities will be

responsible for educating faculty and staff regarding the increased changes in mental health and disabilities across the nation in order to serve Generation Z and to provide them with the pathways necessary to be successful in college. Researchers have found this generation is less entitled and less narcissistic, but more vulnerable and less optimistic and less happy. According to the American College Health Association, 40% of college students today report symptoms of depression and one in three deals with a mental health illness at any given time (Twenge, 2016). These feelings of a sense of belonging and self-efficacy are so important to the student's overall ability to stay motivated to reach their goals and to persist in college according to Tinto's model. It is absolutely necessary for colleges and universities to educate and train their faculty and staff to be able to identify and connect students with resources in a timely manner, as well as to provide students with the quality services and tools to manage when they are struggling with these issues.

Contributions to the Gap in the Literature

Overall, I believe that my study contributed to the gap in the literature in four different ways. First, this study provides university administrators with a general understanding of Generation Z and helps to reinforce that they are a different generation from those that came before them. As a result, this generation has a different set of needs, motivations, and expectations. Second, this study contributed to a small body of research investigating parents by reinforcing the need to see Generation X parents as partners. Third, this study provided research from the perspective of primary and secondary administrators, contributing to a better understanding of Generation Z. Lastly, this study identified a need for universities to review and implement campus safety plans that are inclusive of both their parent and student populations.

Future Studies

Some of the questions and concerns that the participants raised during their interviews provide possibilities for future studies. This includes studies regarding student well-being, parent involvement, mental health, and student disabilities and their broader impacts and implications on college campuses. The methods used in this study provide possibilities for future studies about Generation Z and their impact on the college environment.

Student well-being. All of the participants spoke to the increased concern regarding student well-being and the varying levels of support that are offered by their schools. More studies need to be completed on increasing numbers of students who deal with mental health concerns and student disabilities. Colleges and universities need to research and identify the types of services that should be provided to assist with identifying students in crisis, connecting students to services, and working with their families to ensure safety and success. This includes examining and researching current services and determining other opportunities for serving students outside of the box. I would recommend reviews of service models, including both how they work with their students as well as the types of venues used, such as in-person, online, and in the residence halls.

Parent involvement. All of the participants spoke to the high degree of communication and the strong relationships between Generation Z and their Generation X parents. They spoke to the increased level of parent involvement and parent support on their campuses. They encouraged colleges and universities to examine the ways in which they partner with their parents and families rather than work to keep them separated. As I reviewed the literature, I found a gap in the research that has been completed in the last 10 years. More information needs

to be provided to faculty and staff in higher education in order to determine the best ways to communicate, partner, and leverage the parent relationship.

Mental health and disabilities. The participants in the study spoke to the increased numbers of students that have mental health concerns and disabilities and the ways in which they are being challenged to support them to be successful inside and outside of the classroom environment. Several of the participants shared stories related to diagnosed disabilities, which they had not seen on their campuses before, and others spoke to the impact the disabilities have on the classroom environment and the need to be able to offer flexible classrooms. For this study, I focused on mental health and disability when speaking to student well-being, yet there is a new body of research that would suggest student well-being is broader than these two topics. College administrators need to conduct studies on models that would positively impact the overall student well-being and ultimately impact student success in college.

Public schools. For the purpose of this study, I interviewed private school educators in Central Texas. This was a result of my commitment to private education and the level of access I had to private school gatekeepers. As a result, there is a gap in the literature and I would encourage researchers to look at the study from the perspective of the public-school educator. This will encourage higher education professionals to have a more holistic view of working with Generation Z students.

Conclusion

In this section, I address what can be learned from this study with regard to the purpose statement and the focus of the inquiry. The purpose of this study was to understand the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. The focus of the inquiry addressed the following:

1. What do teachers, counselors and administrators identify as effective strategies and services that foster student academic success?
 - a. What are some of the more effective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
 - b. What are some ineffective practices for working with Generation Z and why?
2. What do teachers, counselors, and administrators identify as the expectations of Generation Z about their college experience? And, why do they perceive these to be their expectations?

I found there were four conclusions associated with the purpose statement and the focus of the inquiry which can be learned from the participant interviews: (1) universities must take the time to research and understand Generation Z in order to prepare and be a Generation Z ready college; (2) universities must find a way to engage parents as partners in order to foster student academic success; (3) universities should research, review, analyze, and implement academic services and tools that support student success across the student experience for this generation; and (4) universities need to identify service models that provide support for overall student well-being.

Universities must take the time to research and understand Generation Z in order to prepare and be a Generation Z ready college. When I determined the direction for this study I was determined to identify strategies for fostering the success of Generation Z. As I moved forward with my interviews I learned that many of the participants were not well versed on generational differences. Many of them understood there were differences among generations, but they had not educated themselves on the particularities of this generation. As stated by Seemiller and Grace, “Generation Z students are similar to every other generation and yet vastly

different at the same time” (2016, p. 224). The point is there is a lot of research that can help educators prepare for and identify practices and success models that can positively impact this generation of college students. McNair et al. (2016) shared in their book, “it is critical that we transform our institutional culture and practices to be student-ready-responsive to contemporary students’ needs and realities” (p. 9). I would take that statement a step further and say it is ultimately the responsibility of the university to engage themselves in conversations about becoming a Generation Z college-ready campus in order to identify strategies that both foster and support student success.

Universities must find ways to engage parents as partners in order to foster student academic success. The participants shared countless stories about the level of engagement and the expectations parents have of schools to partner and communicate with them. Each of the participants challenged higher education to figure out how to partner with rather than push parents away before Generation Z arrives. Ray shared, “kids are more happy and successful if parents are involved. We can tackle problems and avoid disasters if they communicate with us.” While Lauren shared that, “Parents want communication, they are hungry to be plugged in and need the rah rah, the academic, and the extracurricular information.” According to Savage (2016), parents can play a key role in their student’s college experience if the role between the university and the parent is clearly communicated and well managed. Universities have an opportunity to impact enrollment, retention, and institutional affinity if they can figure out the right approach for their institution.

Universities should research, review, analyze, and implement academic services and tools that support student success across the student experience for this generation. The participants in this study spoke to the ongoing adoption of current practices in order to meet the

needs and expectations of Generation Z and to positively affect student success. Based upon their understanding of Generation Z, universities can apply knowledge to developing practices, services, and models that foster student success. In the study, Jason talked about assessing the needs and expectations of their students, saying

I'm real big into assessing what type of learner they are. Whether visual, auditory or kinesthetic, and I know that each class has different types, so you have to break up into the different learners and be able to teach in a way that hits everyone in the most ideal way.

Without this general understanding and willingness to adapt, universities will not be able to impact student success and ultimately student persistence.

Universities need to identify service models that provide support for overall student well-being. The participants in this study spoke to the increasing number of students entering their schools with mental health issues and or disabilities. They shared stories about the number of disabilities they see and the complexity of the cases the students are presenting with. Jason shared the following,

We are seeing more students with social and emotional issues, and lately we have started to see more students with sensory disorders and we have had to alter our teaching methods in order to accommodate this disability in the classrooms.

This participant went on to say how this disability is a new one for the school and while there are numerous student cases they are still trying to find ways to accommodate these students. Kathy shared that, "The increased diagnosis of ADHD and other learning disabilities has really heightened the need for and the prevalence of individualized teaching." As a result, universities

need to expand their understanding of student well-being to be more holistic and inclusive of all the components of student wellness.

Closing Remarks

In closing, I will address how my experience and service in higher education has influenced my approach to this study. I believe having had the experiences of serving in both student affairs and academic affairs has allowed me to be more holistic in my approach and more understanding of the strategies that foster student success. However, it also hindered my ability to see the full student experience as I had compartmentalized areas that contribute to the overall college experience. For example, my research questions were focused on student academic success. For the sake of this study, it was necessary to be specific and to approach the study from a particular lens. In hindsight, I recognize in order for university educators to truly examine programs and strategies that foster student success, they must work from a more holistic lens. In other words, all of the components of the student's college experience ultimately impact the success of the student. For example, if students do not feel safe in their communities, they will not be able to function at the level necessary for them to engage and be successful inside or outside of their classrooms. Ultimately all of these experiences impact the classroom environment. Therefore, when universities approach these types of questions, I would recommend an integrated methodology that includes representation from across the campus community.

I am reminded of the basics I learned in my first semester of this program regarding interpretive design inquiry. Crotty said, "from a researcher's perspective the emphasis is on putting oneself in the place of the other and seeing things from the perspective of others" (1998, p. 76.) Through this study, I have learned more about myself and the need to sit back and to

listen and see things from the multiple sides. This is truly the art of interpretive design. Bogdan and Bilken (1992) said, “people can change and grow as they learn more about themselves through this interactive process” (p. 37). I would agree, I have learned so much while on this journey and look forward to sharing the knowledge that was gained with university educators as they prepare to journey with Generation Z.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Protocol

1. What do teachers, counselors and administrators perceive as common characteristics of Generation Z?
2. What are some of the behaviors, policies and practices that illustrate these characteristics?
3. How do they prefer to learn?
4. What motivates them? And, what demotivates them?
5. What types of technology do they use?
6. Do you utilize technology in the classroom? If so, what types?
7. How might these perceptions inform recruitment and retention practices in higher education?
8. What do Generation Z students identify as their academic, career and long-term goals?
9. What are the issues that they are most concerned about?
10. What do teachers, counselors and administrators identify as the expectations of Generation Z parents about their student's college experience?
11. What do teachers, counselors and administrators perceive as being important in assisting with Generation Z's academic success?
12. What academic services do teachers, counselors and administrators perceive as being important to Generation Z's future academic and career success?
13. What types of learning environments do you offer? Which are most useful or impactful on them?
14. What contributes to learning for this generation?

Appendix B

Consent Form

The researcher, Nicole Guerrero Trevino, is a graduate student at the University of the Incarnate Word. She is working towards a doctorate degree in education with a concentration in higher education.

You are being asked to take part in a research study that is seeking to understand the academic needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Z in relation to their college experience as perceived by educational professionals. The researcher seeks to learn how to support Generation Z students as they progress into college. You are being asked to take part in this study because you currently work with these students and your insight and feedback is valuable.

If you decide to take part, the researcher will invite you in for a 1-hour interview. During that interview you will be asked approximately 15-20 questions regarding your experience with Generation Z students. At the beginning of the interview, you will be asked for permission to audio record the interview.

The researcher has not identified any risk to participating in this study. The researcher hopes to better understand the needs of this generation in order to create an academic environment that is supportive of the student. The audience that will benefit from this research includes university faculty, staff and students at colleges and universities.

Everything that is learned about you in the study will be confidential. If the researcher decides to publish the results of the study, you will not be identified in any way.

Your decision to take part in the study is voluntary. You are free to choose not to take part in the study or to stop taking part at any time.

If you have questions now, feel free to ask us. If you have additional questions later or you wish to report a problem that may be related to this study, contact Dr. Norman St. Clair at 210-829-3138.

The University of the Incarnate Word committee that reviews research on human subjects, the Institutional Review Board, will answer any questions about your rights as a research subject (210-829-2757—Dean of Graduate Studies and Research).

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

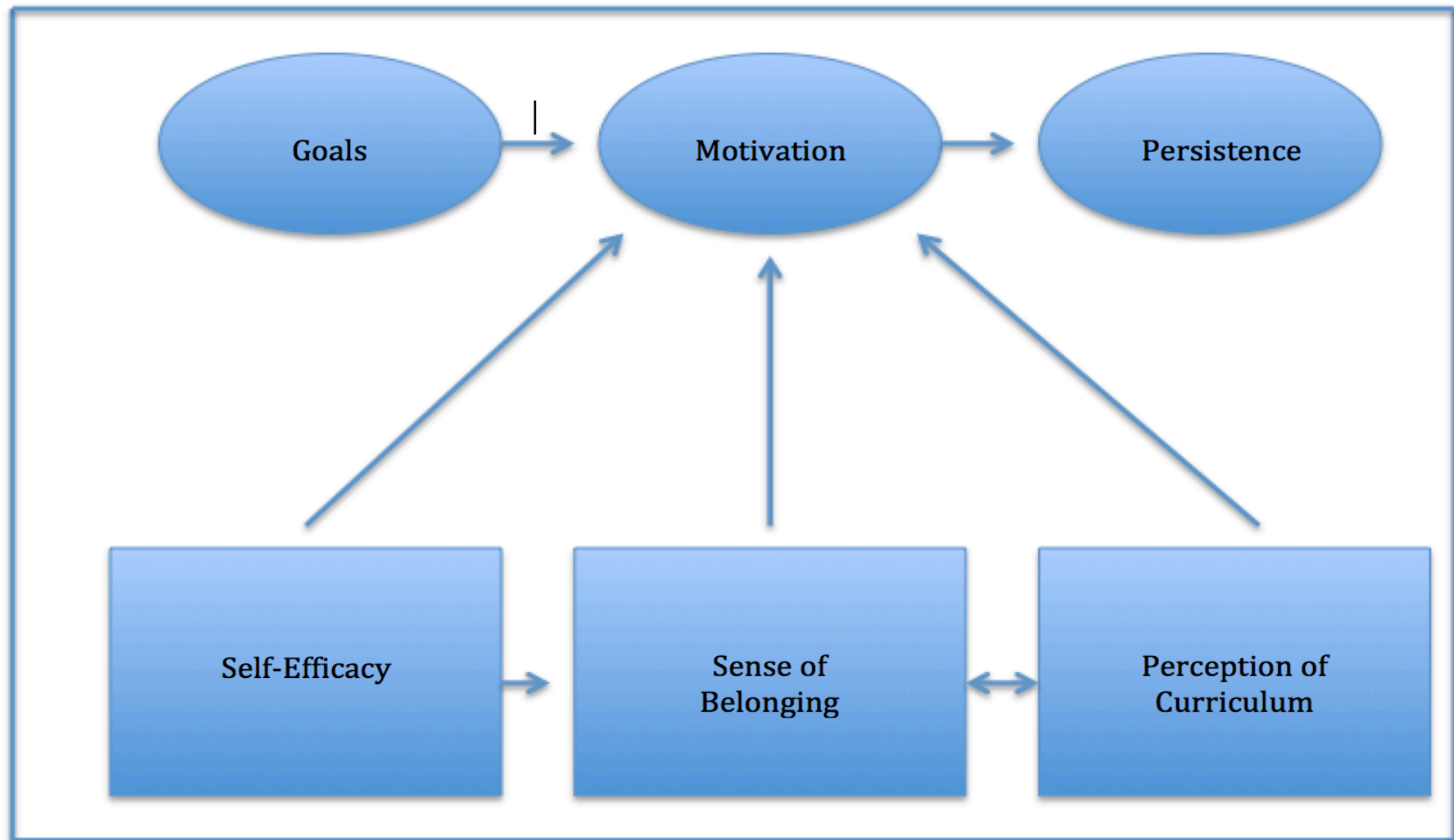
YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT YOU CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY AND THAT YOU HAVE READ IT.

Signature of Participant

Signature of Witness

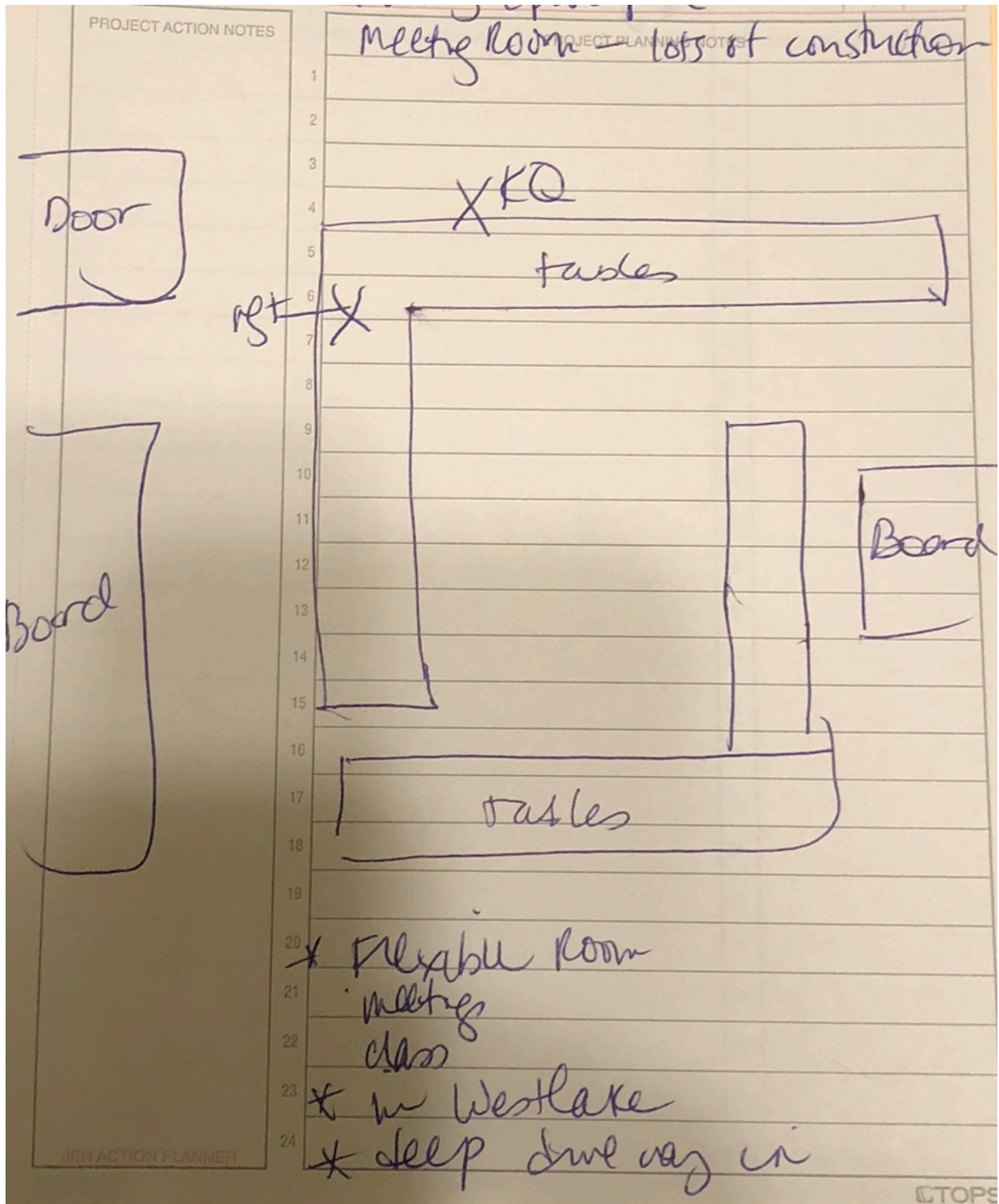
Appendix C

Tinto's Model of Persistence



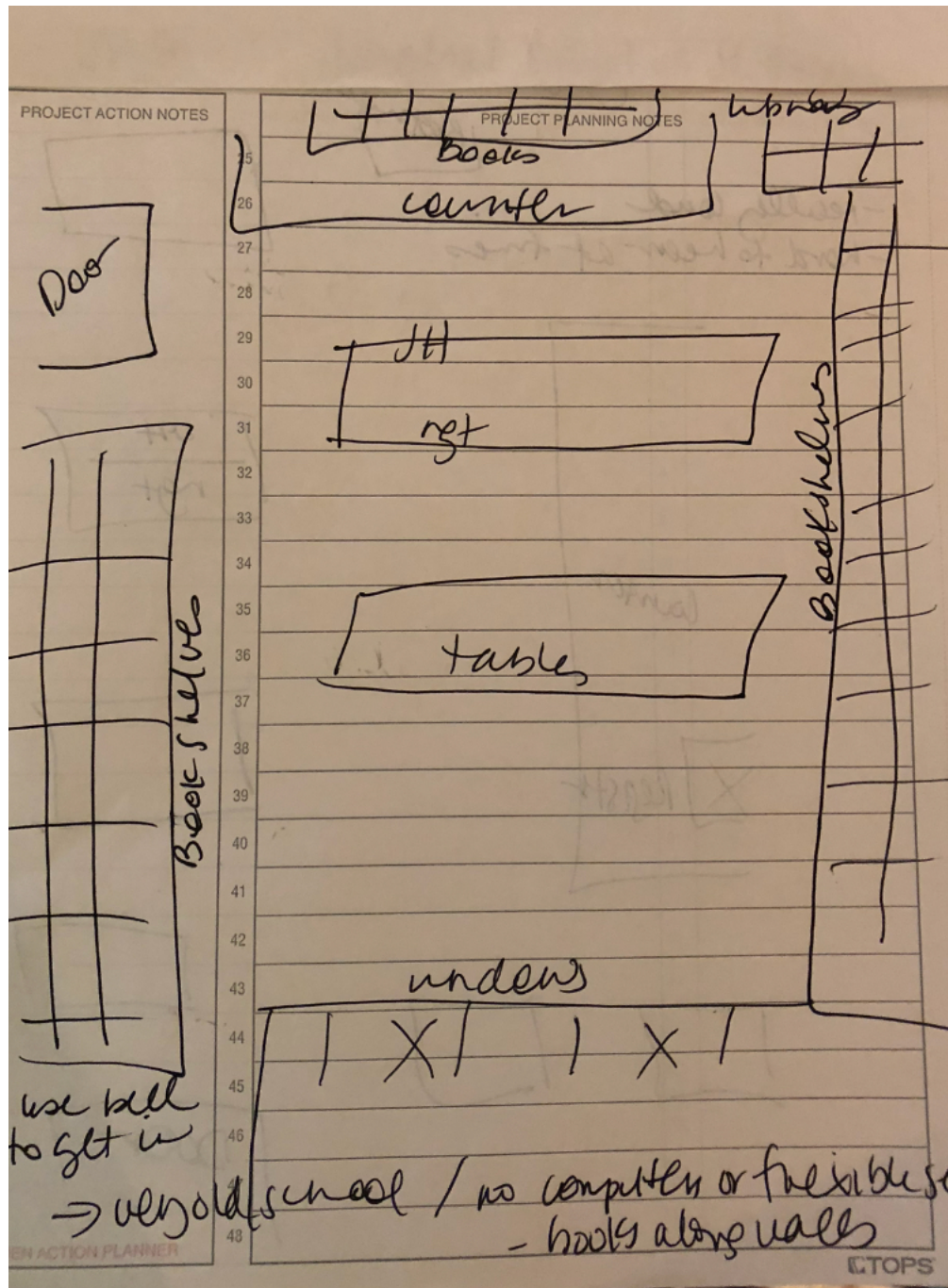
Appendix D

Drawing A



Appendix E

Drawing B

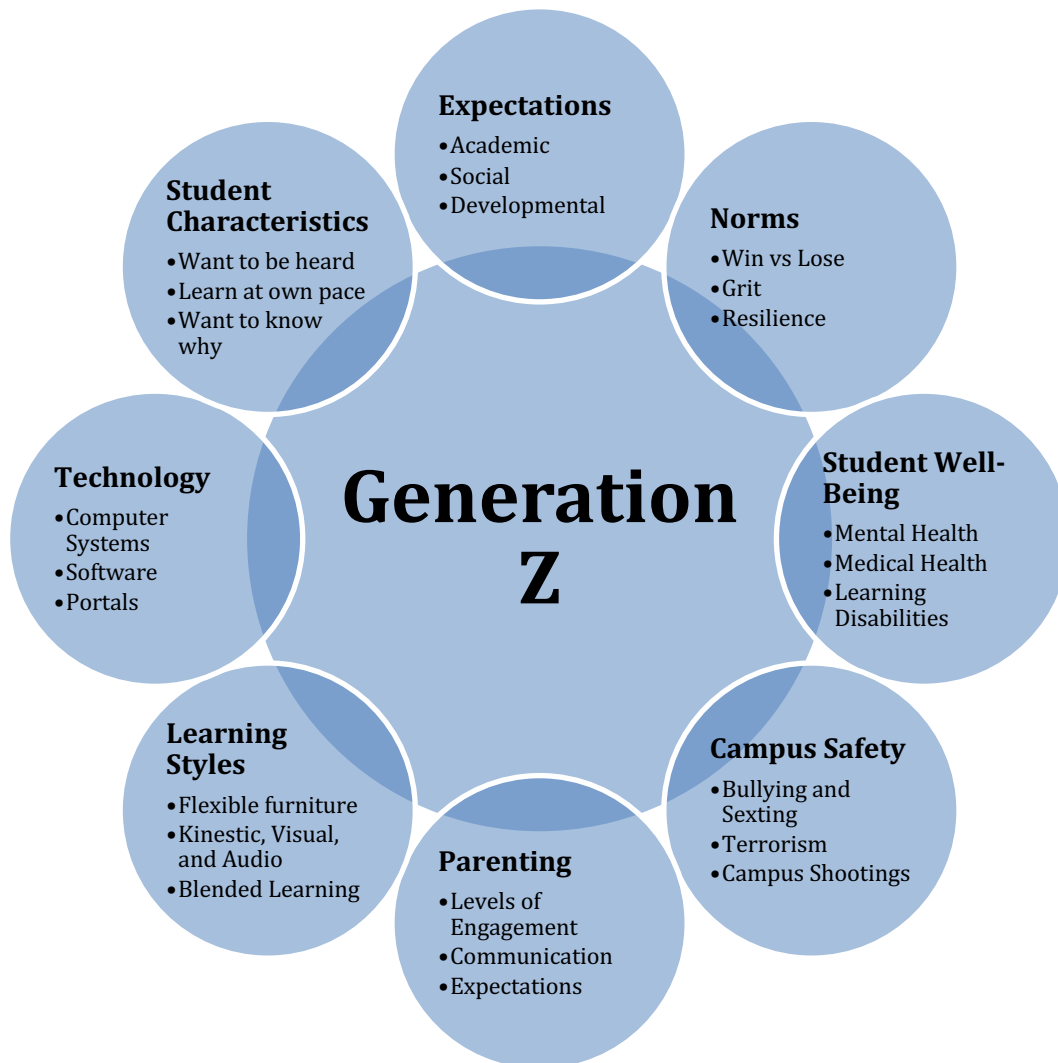


Appendix F
Coding Levels

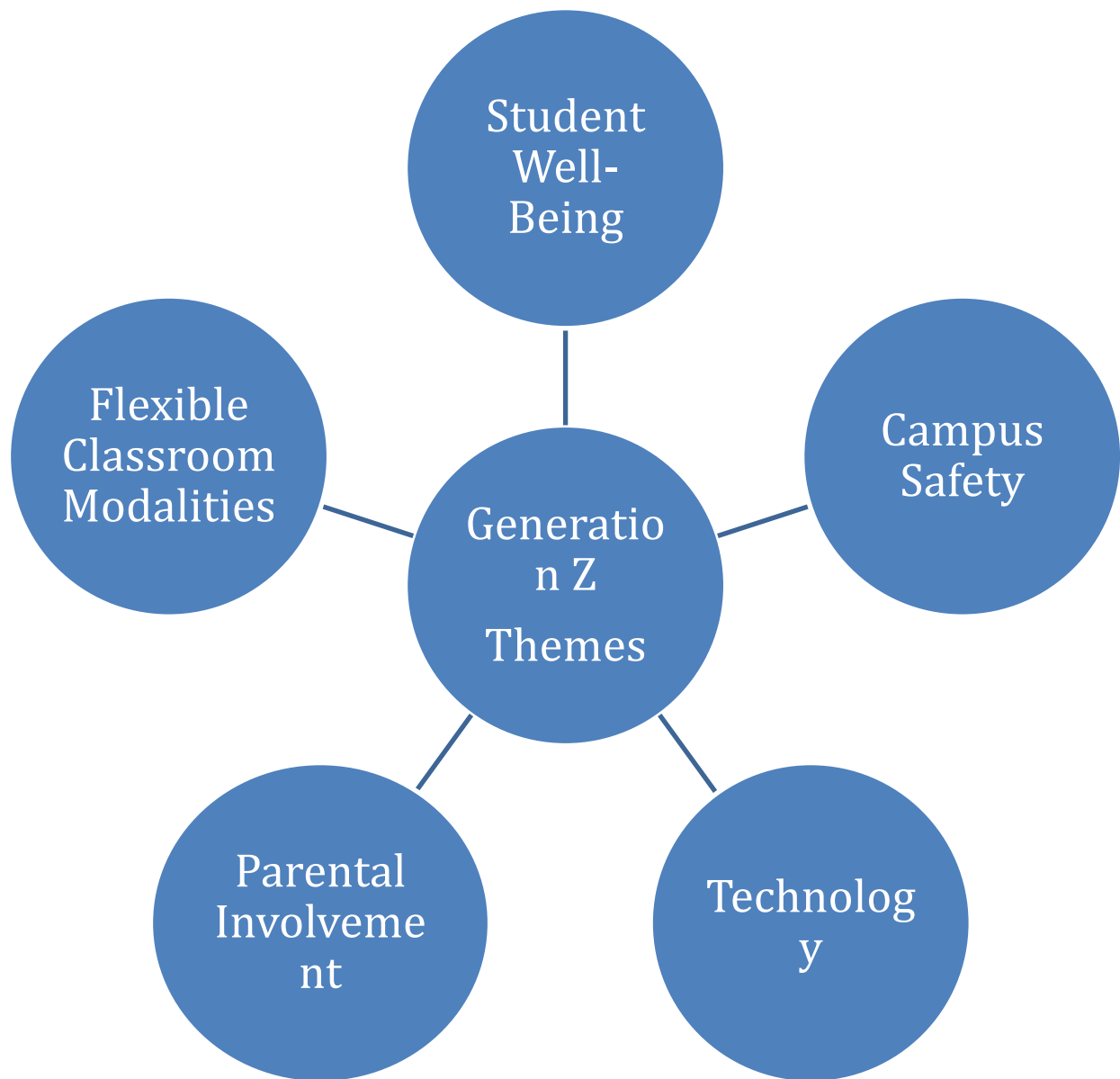
COLORS	MEANINGS	SUBCATEGORIES OF THE MEANINGS
BLUE	Expectations	Academic, Social, Developmental, Grit, Resilience
PINK	Norms	Win vs. Lose, student developmental
YELLOW	Student Welfare	Mental health, learning disabilities, medical disabilities
PURPLE	Campus Safety	Bullying, sexting, terrorism, campus safety
LIGHT BLUE	Parenting	Engagement level, involvement in academics, engagement in social, communication and frequency
ORANGE	Types of Learning Styles	Play, computer, software, lecture, mixed classes, blended learning, learning at own pace (kinesthetic, visual, audio), individual pace
GREEN	Technology	Computers, software, IPADS, in classroom
RED	Student Characteristics	want to be heard, learn at own pace, development at own pace, positive reinforcement, want to know the why

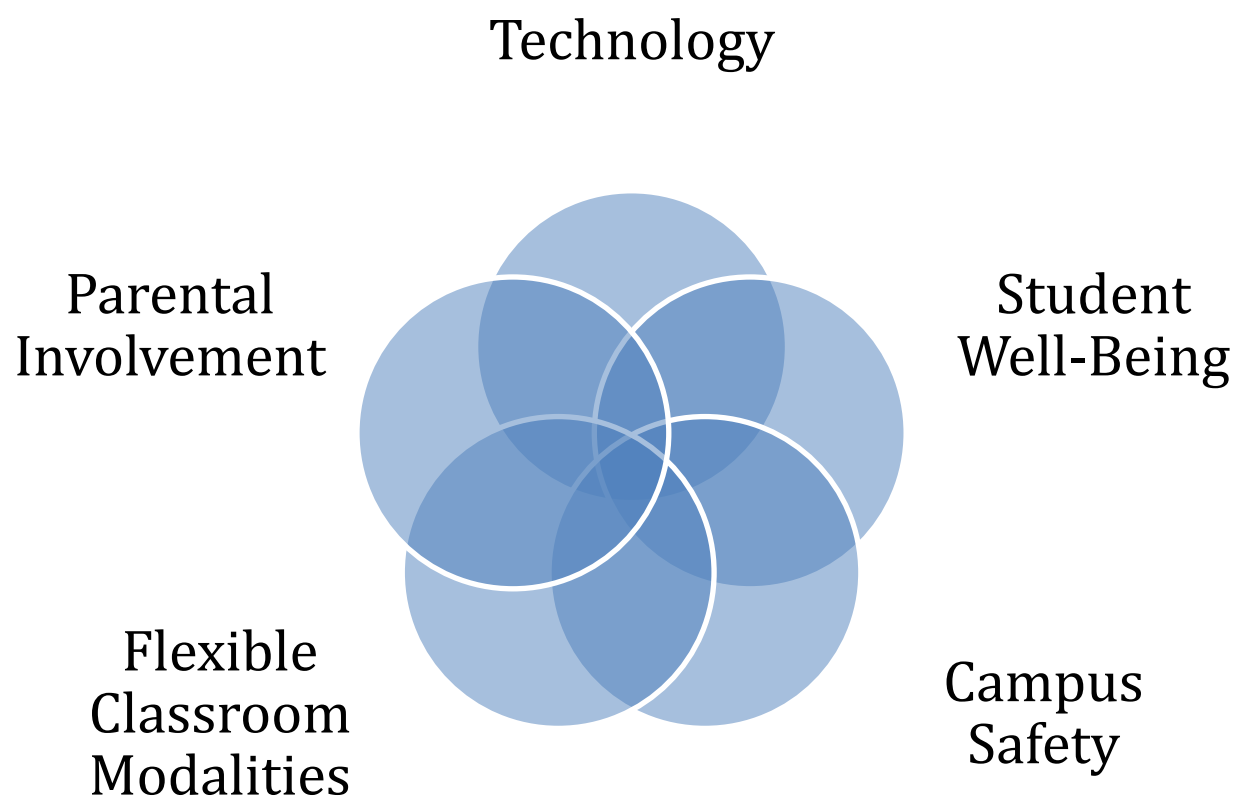
Appendix G

Subcategories



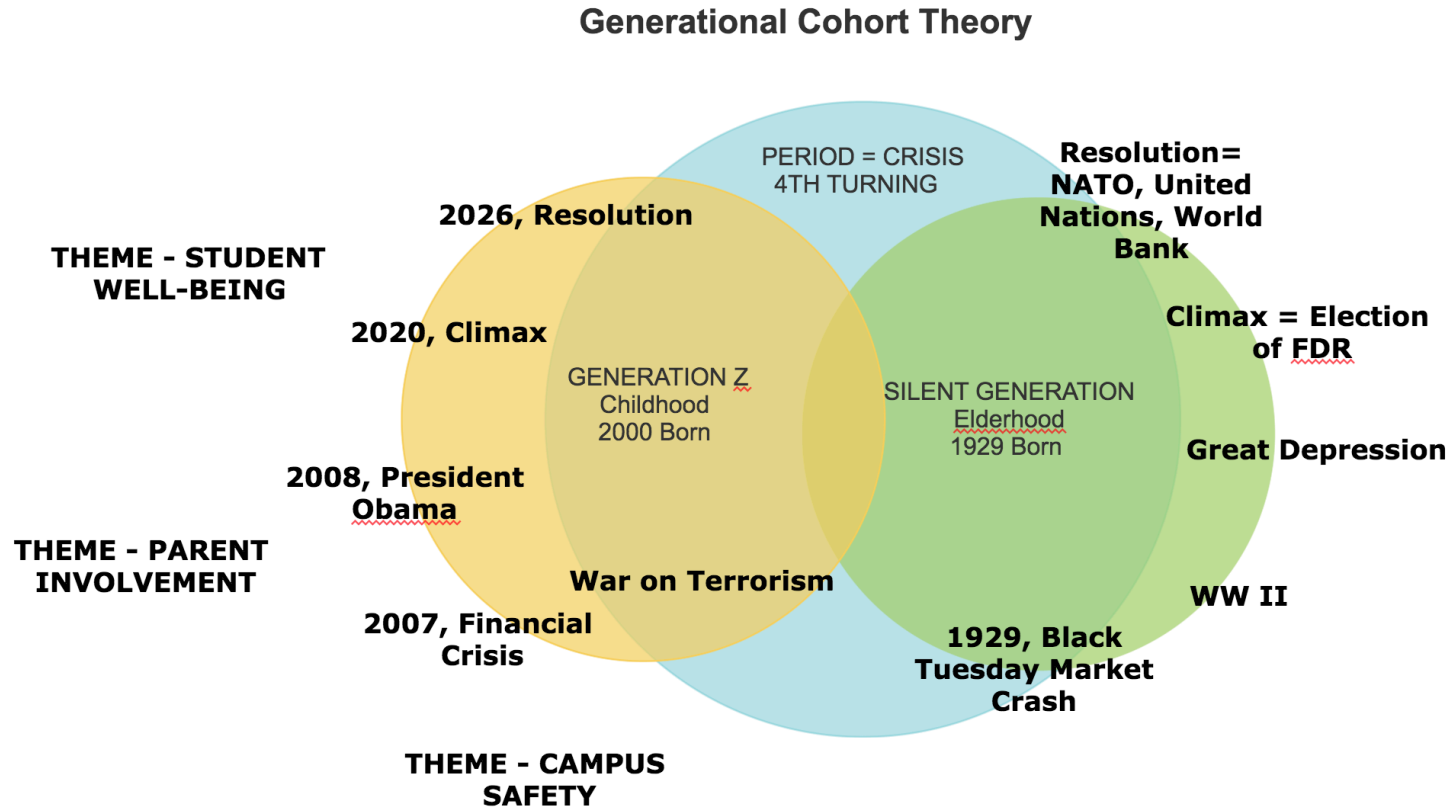
Appendix H
Themes





Appendix I

Generational Cohort Theory



Appendix J

Tinto's Model of Student Motivation and Persistence

