7-2020

The Motivations Toward Decisions in Delaying to Apply for College: High School Seniors of Single Parent Households

John R. Leach Jr.
jrl17b@acu.edu

This dissertation, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the College of Graduate and Professional Studies of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

Dr. Joey Cope, Dean of the College
of Graduate and Professional Studies

Date: 07 / 07 / 2020

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Bradley Thompson, Chair

Dr. Tara Hornor

Dr. Bill Hunt

Abilene Christian University

School of Educational Leadership

The Motivations Toward Decisions in Delaying to Apply for College: High School Seniors of Single Parent Households

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

John R. Leach, Jr.

July 2020

Dedication

The greatest advocate for my pursuit of a doctorate and my best friend is my wife. Without her love and dedication to family, our lives would be an empty shell. The strength she demonstrates everyday motivates others to accomplish the unimaginable. I have to thank my family for allowing me the time researching, analyzing, and the countless hours of writing along this journey.

We are not only a product of our DNA markers, but of the experiences that shape our lives. Amid this journey, I lost both my father and father-in-law within three days of each other. My father lost his mother at two months of age, suffered from illnesses early, and was adopted by another family. His adoptive parents divorced and my father was raised in a single-parent household. He became unmotivated and dropped out of college after one year. He eventually continued his studies and worked to become a director at the National Institutes of Health. His experience through all of this helped him identify the need to reach out to high school students and encourage them to continue learning.

My father-in-law, a World War II veteran of the Pacific theater, is buried at Arlington National Cemetery and was a first-generation American. Volunteering for the service, he was subsequently assigned to the Army Corp of Engineers and when victory in the Pacific was announced he was assigned to guard the Imperial Palace. His brother-in-law was assigned to the U.S. West Virginia at Pearl Harbor. Neither one of them ever harbored resentment, contentment, or anger toward the people of Japan. Both would say their skills were matched to the need at the time. I dedicate this research to those above and those that guided me along the way—your skills were matched to my need.

Acknowledgments

Many times, God provided me with the resiliency to press forward, and He regularly sent help through angels on Earth. Though their wings were not visible, their guise as advisors helped guide me through the virtual time and space of this research concept and delivery.

As a theoretical physicist, Einstein's contribution to science is well documented with the theory of relativity. The theory forever changed how we see time and space. When Einstein came up with his theory of happiness stating, "a calm and modest life brings more happiness than the pursuit of success combined with constant restlessness." Einstein never claimed to be a researcher of the human mind so that theory would not carry the same level of credibility.

Credibility should be conferred upon the following professors; Dr. Simone Elias, for setting the direction of my mind with theories and heart-felt instruction. Dr. Wade Fish, for setting my initial direction for this journey. Dr. Elena Polush, for her compassion, discussion, steadfast resolve, and support during a difficult personal journey. Dr. Scott Self for helping me smile and find alignment entering the final dissertation sequence. Dr. Sean Spear, for thought-provoking discussion around leadership. Dr. Leah Wickersham-Fish, for inspiration and seeing my ovation in innovation. My dissertation committee is of special value to the quality of the work presented. A heartfelt thank you to Dr. Tara Hornor and Dr. Bill Hunt for the support and guidance throughout the process. Thank you, Dr. Bradley Thompson, chairperson, for reassuring my direction and creating a positive mindset infused with telling a story through this research. Finally, as compelling as scribing this story has been, I must confer my deepest gratitude to Mrs. Julie Johnson Archer and Mr. Jeff Thomas for their professional application as editors.

Abstract

It has been said that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that 30% of students who graduated from high school do not enroll in college (NCES, 2018). This phenomenological study integrates several instruments to identify the motivational elements of amotivation, autonomy, extrinsic, and intrinsic motivational stimuli. The research data reveal that intrinsic motivational factors play a more significant role in the decision-making process. The participants in this study revealed their extrinsic and intrinsic motivation for postsecondary endeavors by articulating how they perceive decision-making for their actions. Participants of dual- and single-parent households scored higher for extrinsic over intrinsic factors. The data leads to the conclusion that students of dual-parent households have a great idea of individualism, but a greater need to prove themselves to others through a fear of failure. It was also determined that students of single-parent households are reluctant to make decisions on their own through an increased fear of failure. Engagement, and the values of desire and hope, lead to the application of intrinsic decision-making. Educators and learners have reached a fork in the road.

Keywords: amotivation, autonomy, engagement, extrinsic, intrinsic, motivation

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

It is difficult to calculate the number of first-year college students who may have heard a professor say—look to your left, now look to your right, one of the three of you will not be here next year. At this level, motivation could have been thwarted by a three-second comment. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; 2018) reported that between 1986 and 1996, the percentage of high school graduates going directly to college increased from 54 to 65%. From 1997 to 2017, the percentage increased to 70%. The NCES report states that 41% of first-time, full-time students who enroll in college did not return the subsequent fall. Over the past 30 years, the attrition rate for first-year college students has averaged 38% (NCES, 2018).

There are numerous explanations for the cause of a student not returning to an institution: academic, financial, or other personal circumstances. Preparing students for college entails they graduate from high school equipped with academic knowledge, an engaged mindset, and proper social skills to succeed (Van der Zanden et al., 2018). The processes of transitioning from secondary to postsecondary education begin when the student first considers the possibility of going to college and ends when the student fully adjusts to the new situation (Schlossberg et al., 1991).

High school educators can provide a student *what* is learned through content, provide *how* a person learns best through various inventory assessments, but not the *why*—understanding the *why* is the individual's innate motivational behavior. Kashdan (2012) explained that one must act on curiosity to be fully engaged. Usher and Kober (2012) of George Washington University's Center on Education Policy (CEP), reported that 40% of high school students identified themselves as unmotivated.

Statement of the Problem

Motivation at the secondary level is a crucial part of education reform for postsecondary endeavors (Marrow & Ackermann, 2012). College administrators seek conclusive narratives for *why* students do not persevere (Pan et al., 2008). Vital to education reform is identifying the factors that promote long-term learning and achievement that center on the noncognitive functions of academic tenacity (Dweck et al., 2014). Academic tenacity for high school seniors is about having the motivation to engage in their learning.

Research studies (Cook et al., 2017; McClintic-Gilbert et al., 2013; Paterson, 2018) illustrate that while high school students may have been prepared academically, they have not been adequately prepared to succeed in postsecondary institutions. Research findings support the need to identify the motivational factors for students before they transition from high school to the college experience (Cook et al., 2017; McClintic-Gilbert et al., 2013; Paterson, 2018). These studies illustrate the need to investigate how motivational factors contribute to the decision-making process and student engagement (Pintrich, 2003) of high school seniors.

A student that delays the enrollment process is 64% less likely to earn a bachelor's degree (Bozick & DeLuca, 2005; Niu & Tienda, 2013). Decisions to not apply for college by the regular decision deadline could set the tone for long-term goals as well as impact collegiate options in the short-term (NCES, 2018). The information in this research focuses on several key elements. Specifically, it facilitates the (a) decision-making process of high school seniors of single parents, and (b) who do not apply for college by the standard college decision deadline.

Purpose of the Study

Since the 2000s, there have been multiple studies regarding high school motivation (DeBerard et al., 2004; Laskey & Hetzel, 2011; Pritchard & Wilson, 2007) and current research

maintains the focus on ensuring that students persist in the engagement of their course of study (McCracken, 2015). A college-bound student's resolve to graduate not only affects the economic climate of the institution but the potential earnings of the student. Research has been extensively studied (Perry, 2010; Pritchard & Wilson, 2007) that focused on academic factors (ACT, GPA, SAT), and college first-year experience programs (Burks & Barrett, 2009).

The road for student achievement has been paved with good intentions by educators. Districts provide a roadmap of the curriculum to drive a student toward success. Often, it is the educator in the driver's seat. By placing the student behind the wheel of their learning vehicle, the student must be observationally engaged to all of their surroundings (Appleton et al., 2006). When a student is engaged correctly, they can determine which route to take when approaching a fork in the road. Kashdan (2012) explained that one must act on curiosity to be fully engaged.

The primary purpose of this research is to identify how motivational factors contribute to the decision-making process of high school seniors of single parent households who did not apply for a college by the January 31 deadline of their senior year. The information presented in this research is guided on the premise of multiple pillars supporting the decisions of high school seniors. The first pillar reinforces the mental effort of engagement that a student devotes to her or his educational direction. The second pillar supports the motivational factors that guide the decision-making process.

Pillar 1—Engagement

The general definition of engagement is the level of motivation that students perceive their learning through active involvement. The theory of change (Weiss, 1995) is a set of expectations and the connections of process actions and program outcomes. Change in education, whether to alter a mission statement or enhance instructional practices, centers on the desire to

fulfill the need yet to be met (Chen, 2015). Identifying the factors that influence a person to reach a decision can alter psychosocial positions. Appleton et al. (2006) contended the need to understanding the behavior of engagement as the relationship between the person and an activity. Astin (1999) proposed the foundation of engagement establishes a connection to how a student changes and develops as a result of active involvement academically.

Pillar 2—Motivation

There are multiple psychosocial developmental theories related to the motivational issues that high school seniors experience. Erickson (2003) identified competence, connection, and contribution as critical ingredients for youth development. These are essential for educating any student, and most importantly, for reversing blocked motivation done earlier to self-esteem. Learning is exciting to a five-year-old. Though some are academic naturals, others may struggle. Three significant transitions occur during a child's development; elementary to middle school, middle to high school, and high school to college (Glossary of Education Reform, 2018). As a student migrates from elementary through middle and on to high school, that excitement can ultimately be tested out. Well-meaning educators intervene, praise, and offer rewards.

As people mature, learning becomes work, and studies show that 80% of first-graders possess high self-esteem (Engel, 2015). When they reach high school graduation, the level drops to only 5% (Von Stumm et al., 2011). Many students may have faced so much failure that success seems unattainable. Ryan and Deci reported the two primary types of motivation as extrinsic and intrinsic (2000a). Domene et al. (2011) identified the additional motivation for the decision. Recent research has focused on academic engagement and classroom learning. Ryan and Deci analyzed schools that emphasized control and evaluation over development and support (2000b).

Amotivation. When a student has a deficient level of motivation for the given activity and does not exhibit intrinsic or extrinsic behaviors (Vallerand et al., 1993). An amotivated student will not know why they need to be engaged in the activity or task. The outcome is the behavior that relates to a lack of competence and commitment towards engagement (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Extrinsic Motivation. Categorized as learning-oriented and denotes the motives that are established outside of the behaviors they create. In essence, the motives for the behavior are not essential to the behavior itself (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). If a student is promised something as a reward for getting a good grade on a test, they only work hard for that one good grade, and therefore the motive is not to obtain knowledge. A prerequisite to learning is studying information, by coupling that with an extrinsic incentive to complete a given task has been found to decrease learner motivation (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984).

Intrinsic Motivation. Categorized as goal-oriented and requires effort and persistence to be put forth by each student. Intrinsically motivated students develop the goal to achieve and learn. When the student has a mastery goal united with the desire to obtain an understanding of a topic, the results have been found to align with active learning strategies and positive attitudes toward formal school education (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Research Questions

Q1. How do high school seniors of single parent households describe the college application process?

Q2. How do seniors describe the motivation of the decision to delay applying to college?

Q3. How do seniors who have not applied to a college describe the term flourish?

Definition of Key Terms

Amotivation. The absence of intent to engage in an activity due to an individual's behavior (Vallerand et al., 1993).

Attitude. The psychological propensity to act in ways that determine likes and dislikes. In the context of this study, attitudes indicate what students think to or not to enroll, how they feel about the effort, and how they intend to behave toward the objective of enrolling.

Autonomy. The sense that an individual is in control of their life and that a person's behavior is self-directed and guided from a direct interest (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Causality. One variable directly affects a change in the other. This cause-and-effect can be an event or even a phenomenon associated with a recipient (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

Competence. The feeling of a person that an individual can bring about desired outcomes. The first need described in the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Engagement. Level of motivation students has to learn and progress in their education. (Glossary of Education Reform, 2018).

Extrinsic. Motivators that revolve around perceived or tangible external rewards (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Flourish. The position of perceived success in an endeavor or task (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2019).

Hope. To want something to occur or be true (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2019).

Intrinsic. The internal motivation requiring effort and persistence (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Motivation. An individual's drive to reach the desired result (Glossary of Education Reform, 2018).

Relatedness. The need for an individual to engage in positive relations with other people. The second need promoted by the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

Resiliency. Enables an individual to refocus efforts on the end goal after a setback (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

Transitioning. The academic, developmental, emotional, physical, and social changes of students that transpire between the three main points in education: elementary to middle school, middle to high school, and high school to college (Glossary of Education Reform, 2018).

Summary

The information provided through this study provides insight into the motivation toward the decision of high school seniors who do not apply for college by the given deadline. Studies illustrate that while high school students may have been prepared academically, they have not been adequately prepared with an engagement mindset of motivation in postsecondary institutions (Cook et al., 2017; Paterson, 2018). There are key benefits for giving voices to high school seniors of single parents who delay applying for a college. Through this research, that data facilitates the discussion and adds to the literature for high school seniors' preparation for college. Students can have long-term economic benefits and to help enhance a student's self-esteem.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

According to the United States Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, 70% of students who graduated from high school enroll in college (NCES, 2018). The use of the term colleges shall refer to a 2- or 4-year college or university. High school guidance offices of county public schools in Maryland provide students with resources oriented toward college awareness. The awareness provides students with an understanding of available college application options, as well as the application process.

Traditionally, the process of college choice has been outlined from three standpoints: economic, psychological, and sociological (Hossler et al., 1989, 1999). As college choice is frequently examined within one of these three concepts, multiple paradigms have been established to understand the process better. Developed by Hossler and Gallagher (1987), the three-stage model illustrates the sequential stages of a student's college choice. The first stage of predisposition is grounded in this stage and usually occurs between grades 7 and 10 when a student decides whether or not to go to college. The second stage occurs between grades 10 and 12 as they search for additional information about several schools of interest through institutional visits and fairs, and online searches (Hossler & Stage, 1992). Students that decide in stage one to delay the decision of postsecondary articulation do not proceed to the second stage. This second stage establishes the foundation to identify the characteristics of a postsecondary institution. The last stage of choice occurs in grades 11 and 12 and refers to the decision-making processes toward a particular institution (Hossler et al., 1989). Factors such as family (cost of attendance, institutional reputation), institutional (academic programs, size), and self-determined factors (social atmosphere) can influence the decision-making process of college choice of students (Chapman, 1981; Chapman & Jackson, 1987; Hossler et al., 1989; Hossler et al., 1999).

According to data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) at the Higher Education Research Institute of UCLA and the published American Freshman: Fifty-year Trends report (Eagan et al., 2016); as an approach to make the application process for college more competitive, students are placing an increased pressure on themselves through enrollment in more rigorous classes while in high school. The research reports that high school and college faculty should investigate how these academic pressures affect the emotional health of students. A students' drive to achieve academically has increased over time while their emotional health has declined. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2019) reported that high school counselors and community resources facilitate the preparation of students for postsecondary endeavors by ensuring students have the necessary mindsets and behaviors to achieve academic outcome.

Each high school in the surveyed district provides resources from Naviance (formerly the Student Loan Marketing Association) requiring the student to be self-regulating in tracking requested information. The school district, as the source of participants for this research, highlights the resource from Naviance as a comprehensive resource to facilitate possible career and college choices. The district believes this permits the students to develop a four-year plan for various available options. A variety of colleges conduct some orientation to the respective institutions in addition to financial information. Students, unfortunately, have to maintain a schedule of college visits, scholarships, and various opportunities throughout their high school years. Students may not have outlined a career or college path that would identify postsecondary endeavors.

Planning for career and college provides all students with the opportunity to identify areas in need of improvement and interest, and strengths, so students can set postsecondary goals

and make informed choices in achieving their desired goals (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014). According to Savitz-Romer and Bouffary (2013), academic and career planning incorporates supporting the developmental processes (e.g., goal setting, identity development, motivation, relationship development, self-concept, and self- regulation).

The College Board (2019) lists varying deadlines associated with each option of the college application process. Approximately 450 colleges offer the first option of early admission with most application deadline for consideration of October 31 of the senior year. The second option is early action, with an application deadline of November 15. Regular admissions are the third and most often utilized with a deadline date of January 31. The fourth and final is the rolling admission option, which has a first-come, first-served acceptance focus. Student decisions of school choice for enrollment are set at the national response date of May 1.

Engaged students demonstrate an awareness of their academic journey. A report from the Indiana University Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) highlights that 84% of students can identify their academic scope through their senior year in high school. Of the students surveyed, 41.9% identified their classes as general, 37.5% as advanced placement, and 4.6% as vocational (Yazzie-Mintz, 2009). High school seniors face choices every day. The level of difficulty of decision-making can run from low to high. The level of engagement can also vary every day, along with the individual's motivation to be engaged. The decision of a high school senior to engage in the process of applying to college begins before their senior year. "It's not about making the right choice. It's about making a choice and making it right" (Mosher et al., 2015, p. 8).

A decision by a student not to enroll or when to enroll in college can be analyzed and weighed for a lengthy period. The result for some is the realization that there is no such thing as

a right decision. The outcome was not a result of the initial choice, but rather the effort through a perception of autonomy (Dweck et al., 2014). Aldeman's research (2006) found that high school students expected greater life-time earnings rose from 22% in 1982 to 59% in 1992 by attending college. IQS Research (2010) reported that 96% of Louisville students surveyed understood the significance of a degree. Students with a career goal, that does not require postsecondary education, professed little desire to take high school courses that required additional work (Bonous-Hammarth & Allen, 2005). Short and long-term data reported by Lin and Liu (2019) illustrated that 13 years after high school graduation; students that enroll directly in college earned an average of $35,000, students that delayed college enrollment earned just over $30,000, and students that did not enroll to college earned approximately $25,000.

Multiple empirical studies report that distance, match, and price are relevant factors in the college application process (Avery & Hoxby, 2004; Drewes & Michael, 2006; Hoxby & Avery, 2012; Long, 2004; Lovenheim & Reynolds, 2011; Niu & Tienda, 2008). According to Bettinger et al. (2012), a high school student with a financial application concern could have an impact on the decision to delay enrolling. Royster et al. (2015) reported that college-eligible students, with access to college-preparatory classes, must possess the desire to enroll in college. Research shows that students that delay college enrollment have initial earnings benefits; however, the potential future earnings become affected within a few years (Lin & Liu, 2019).

Educators may have identified the goal of preparing a student that is college-ready through successfully mapping the academic achievement but fall short in addressing the situation of students who delay in applying to a college. Vansteenkiste et al. (2006) reported that in order to help students understand the concept of preparedness, a connection to education should be established through engagement and motivational dimensions that directly affect a students' life.

The George Washington University's Center on Education Policy (CEP) reported that even though 87% of high school students want to go to college, only 45% feel prepared for college, and 40% identified themselves as unmotivated (Usher & Kober, 2012).

At the Center for Evaluation & Education Policy at Indiana University (CEEP), researchers investigated student engagement (Yazzie-Mintz, 2007) through the High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE). Forty states and over 350,000 students have participated in this research as students were asked why they were disengaged. The most common responses: students indicate they are bored and do not perceive the relevance of the delivered information to their lives. Focusing on work can be tiring; students often decide to turn-off or tune-out if they do not find the effort rewarding enough. Engagement is the attention, interest, and focus required to build new knowledge or skills (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Motivation is an individual's drive to reach the desired result (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The focus of this research is to give a voice to college eligible students who have elected to not enroll in a college by the regular decision deadline date.

Engagement

A high school senior who has delayed the college enrollment process could be a result of disengagement, fear, or the stress of the workload (Rodriquez et al., 2017). Various categories contribute individually or combine in various ways as a catalyst to engagement (Appleton et al., 2008). The primary categories are academic, behavioral, cognitive, and psychological engagements. For this research, knowing that a students' level of engagement contains elements of each category is beneficial when studying how motivation influences engagement. From the role in students transitioning from feeling motivated to the connecting and growing of learning, the analysis from previous research concluded the effects and function that lead to an increase in

the engagement level of high school seniors (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Several engagement categories are provided to progress the discourse of the decision-making process of high school seniors delaying enrolling in college.

Academic Engagement

The academic engagement factor is a vigorous indicator in the classroom of student behavior and performance (Klem & Connell, 2004), an answer to student isolation (Fredericks et al., 2004), and an originator to academic achievement (Connell et al., 1994). Students exhibiting a low level of engagement commonly experience continuing unfavorable aftereffects such as absenteeism and disruptive behavior (Archambault et al., 2009; Rodríguez & Conchas, 2009; Rumberger, 2010). At this lower level, an engaged student is a significant experience toward the prediction and understanding of college attainment (Appleton et al., 2008). In contrast, students engaged in school have better attendance (Klem & Connell, 2004), are likely to develop higher grades (Goodenow, 1993), and exhibit higher college enrollment (Ekstrom et al., 1986).

Behavior Engagement

Classroom behaviors (Klem & Connell, 2004) illustrate that students that are more engaged pay more attention, exhibit more interest, and when a challenge arises, act with more persistence. The cyclical pattern in engagement research, known as the rich-get-richer (Appleton et al., 2008) illustrates when a student decides to be more engaged, the student will find it more accessible, more desirable, and therefore continue to engage in similar context later. Suggesting when a student receives proper support of engagement, the original behavior produces greater force leading to increasingly higher achievement.

Cognitive Engagement

Three areas within the area of cognitive engagement concentrate on; the importance of the objective to be learned, learning goals, and the perceived relevance of schoolwork to future goals (Appleton et al., 2006). A dynamic relationship is established between the cognitive engagement and a student's personal goal as well as their investment in learning (Greene et al., 2004). Incentive motivation is influenced by cognitive engagement. A student with an increased need for reward illustrates an increased activity. Motivation plays an essential role in the control of the cognitive process (Ng, 2018).

Psychological Engagement

Student engagement is generally an essential element that results from the motivational processes (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Engagement can be facilitated through conscious and subconscious activities and generally referred to as the collection of behaviors that propel a student toward growth. Fay (2000) highlighted the significance of evaluating three factors of a student's life; the behavior and knowledge a student brings to school, personal value a student perceives to past and present experiences and the critical relationships with peers and educators.

The experiences of autonomy, feelings of belonging, and relationships with peers and teachers play an essential part in engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Teachers often use a method of dip-sticking or scanning the classroom for student success. Teachers are continually looking for signs for student engagement. Teachers provide motivational feedback to students who demonstrate engagement through acute questions, completion of assignments, or on-task behaviors. Students that are engaged are provided with more motivational support from the instructional staff (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Skinner et al., 2009).

Each category of engagement could contribute to the decision-making process; the influence of each should be carefully evaluated. The identified participants are students with an eligible 2.5 GPA, so the academic motivation could provide insight into the level of confidence or self-efficacy that the student has the knowledge or skills to embark on the college journey. The behavior model could contribute to the decision through momentum or a continuum of effort from classes in high school. The cognitive category highlights a personal goal and investment in learning. A student with cognitive engagement often views the result as the goal. The three factors of behavior, past and present experiences, and the critical relationships all parallel the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) in context to student engagement. The experiences of autonomy and a feeling of belonging within the psychological model provide a clear example of how a student is in control of their life and that a person's behavior is self-directed and guided from a direct interest (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Motivation

As we mature, obstacles increase, resulting in less desire to learn as incentives or the fear of failure move to the forefront (Eccles et al., 1998). Over time most of school becomes work as early curiosity is tested away (Engel, 2015). From first grade to high school, a high level of self-esteem is reduced from 80% to only 5% (Von Stumm et al., 2011). Influencing the process are the three realms of motivation; amotivation, extrinsic, and intrinsic (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1991). As reported by De Castella and Byrne (2015), 40% of high school seniors who delay the college enrollment process can be attributed to being unmotivated.

When students do not enjoy learning, a lower interest level is exhibited, and in turn, the effort toward reaching a goal is reduced and that student is more likely to perform poorly or drop out of school (Deci, 1975; Vallerand et al., 1993). When students enjoy learning the interest level

is at a higher level and the effort toward achievement is heightened and outcomes are more likely to be achieved (Miserandino, 1996). Students that demonstrate an internal aspect toward motivation capitalize on psychological needs as the basis for their motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1991). Combining traditional methods with the internal resource of motivation was introduced by Deci and Ryan (1985) as the self-determination theory (SDT). In particular, the need for autonomy (deCharms, 1968; Deci, 1975), competence (Harter, 1978; White, 1963), and relatedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1997) are essential for enhancing motivation (Reis et al., 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). A representation for the level of motivation can be visualized with amotivation on the left, extrinsic in the middle, and intrinsic on the right.

Previous studies around extrinsic and intrinsic motivation gather students into three main academic orientations; ego, task, or work avoidance. Task orientation references a student engaged in completing an objective to gain knowledge or a specific skill. The task engagement motive is not for a student to satisfy a personal need. Intrinsic motivation is present when the need of the student to be competent and self-determining results in an orientation toward task rather than learning and the need for achievement (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When a student is orientated around work avoidance, he or she has made the internal decision for this approach.

Amotivation Motivation

Occurs when an individual has deficient levels of motivation towards any given task. The individual will display neither intrinsic nor extrinsic based behavior (Vallerand et al., 1993). An amotivated student does not know why they need to be engaged within a given academic subject. Behavioral outcomes that relate to the feeling of amotivation lacks competence and commitment towards engagement (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Amotivation is placed on the left of the self-determination continuum, indicating it has low if any self-determination towards the activity.

Decision Motivation

Referred to as the decision task is considered the classic unmotivated learner. Decision motivation is when the student understands that an objective is to be completed but chooses to proceed or not to proceed. Whether they decide to complete a task such as enrolling in college or not could highlight the perceived importance of the task toward short or long-term goals (Elsworth, 2009).

Decision motivation concentrates on how people choose between different actions or different goals. Mook (1996) maintained that action requires a decision on the cognitive level, so a person envisions the possible action, then considers the consequence to the action. This position occurred primarily from the work of Atkinson (1966), Heckhausen and Gollwitzer (1987), and Kuhl (1984). Atkinson's theory applies to high school seniors who apply or do not apply for a college by the March 1 deadline, as the student would be motivated through either approach tendency or avoidance tendency. Approach tendency results from the perceived opportunity to achieve success and maximize satisfaction. Avoidance tendency results from perceived adverse outcomes, such as the expectation of failure.

Moving toward a goal is the approach tendency; moving away from the goal is avoidance. A student cannot move toward a goal while moving away from the same goal at the same time. The conflict of approach-avoidance is raised when a goal has both negative and positive elements. At that point, approach and avoidance movement interact at the same time. A person may want a positive experience of eating dessert; at the same time, it would have a negative effect on the person attempting to lose weight.

Elliot and Church (1997) proposed achievement goals centered on approach and avoidance. Elliot followed-up with the Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance

Motivation (1999). Elliot's model theorized a link is established between qualifications of behavior, cognition, and emotions to stimulate the adoption of achievement goals.

Decision-making is the act of evaluating options and selecting the one most in-line to reaching the goal. Students that delay applying for a college could be labeled as procrastinators. Individuals defined as continual procrastinators fundamentally engage in the behavior when a task was perceived as somehow threatening. The task itself could influence the behavior. More often, the task represents a barrier to a goal and the perceived fear of failure toward the task (Ferrari et al., 1995; Tice & Baumeister, 1997). In the case of applying to a college, procrastination can be the conscious decision to use the time for other activities before the deadline. Procrastination can have a negative impact on the quality of a student's work and has been connected to a diversity of adverse outcomes.

A hedonistic treadmill is a process by which an individual becomes accustomed to a situation. Over time, positive and negative factors are reduced and are entirely natural. Another natural occurrence is the neurochemical process within the limbic system of the brain. The limbic system transmits to the body what is bad or good for the individual. When the individual is presented with a good experience, the brain releases four primary chemicals; dopamine, endorphin, oxytocin, and serotonin (Swenson, 2006; Turner, 2018).

In the domain of motivational factors associated with decision-making, the chemical Dopamine is released to facilitate the energy needed to obtain rewards. When confronting fear to continue a task, the right amount of endorphin can be released when completing a sequential step for the task. The focus is on the determination and achievement step to make one feel good about their effort. One aspect of the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is a sense off belongingness. Oxytocin is released by the brain when a person perceives a high level of trust

with others. While trust can take time to establish, the verification of trust will enhance the continuance of building trust with others. The fourth chemical that the brain releases, to increase a sense of safety, is serotonin. A positive attitude toward decision-making, and an understanding of options, a student can take pride in reaching the decision. If the student makes no decision, there will be no release of serotonin, and a reverse effect can occur (Ng, 2018).

Extrinsic Motivation

The motives that are separate from and on the outside of the behaviors they cause. Illustrating it is not essential for the behavior to be the result of the motive (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). The paramount if-then statement. If a student studies vigorously to do well on a test because the result is a new cell phone, then the motive behind preparing for the test is not the intended outcome of obtaining knowledge. A requirement of learning is the studying of information. The aspect of studying can be influenced through the use of extrinsic incentives; such as acceptance, money, or power, to produce varying results. Completing a task with external incentives has been found to decrease intrinsic motivation (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). It is essential to define the factors that affect motivation by researching extrinsic variables (Dev, 1977). Students who require extrinsic motivation tend to prove competence, while students who utilize intrinsic motivation improve competence and learning (Schraw et al., 1995).

Fear of Failure. Avoidance of learning situations is an attempt to avoid the fear of the situation. A student can avoid failure or the appearance of embarrassment by merely avoiding the achievement tasks. Fear of failure is reported to be most notable when a student attempts a moderate to a difficult task (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). The way for the student to avoid failure is to avoid those types of higher-level achievement tasks. The behavior is not an element

of intrinsic motivation, as students expect to fail at the higher-level task. The same student will succeed in more straightforward tasks.

Fear of failure can restrict the qualities of intrinsic motivation. They can reduce positive behavior and may escalate a student avoiding academics altogether. To determine if the two variables are extrinsic motivators is to develop a study utilizing an inventory that includes the extrinsic and intrinsic factors of motivation (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). A student that associates with the trait of fear of failure could avoid enrolling in college as a means to avoid what is perceived as a high level of risk.

Incentives. It is defined as the reward effect. First published studies (Deci, 1975) of intrinsic motivation examined the effects of monetary rewards on the motivation of college students. In succeeding studies, participants included preschool through high school students, and the effects of other tangible rewards, such as certificates and prizes, were examined. Those studies consistently revealed that extrinsic material rewards destabilized intrinsic motivation. Research reveals that when a student perceives an activity as initially enjoyable, then rewards are essential and expected when performing the activity. Deci et al. (1998) published the analysis of reward effects involving 128 experiments and illustrated conclusively that tangible extrinsic rewards do clearly and reliably destabilize intrinsic motivation. Deci further explained that students perceive extrinsic rewards to feeling controlled by the rewards. Promoting an incentive of increased wages associated with a college degree could overcome an initial reluctance to enroll. If a student perceives the reward is too distant, the reward itself could subvert intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1998).

Intrinsic Motivation

Multiple applications for intrinsic motivators have been articulated; curiosity improves participation in an activity; desire, contributes to the activity's success; and engagement for participating in or completing a task (Dev, 1997). A requirement of intrinsic motivation is the effort and persistence by an individual student to develop goals toward achievement or to learn; a goal of mastery of a topic has been found to have a direct correlation with achievement. The choice of simple versus difficult tasks revolves around effective learning strategies, effort, initiative, perceived ability, persistence positive attitudes toward school, and self-regulation (Archer, 1994; Garcia & Pintrich, 1996a, 1996b).

Desire to Succeed. Confucius articulated it well; "the will to win the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential. These are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence." The little muse illustrates the motivation to excel and move beyond a current level of ability. The application of approach tendency (Elliot, 1999) can fill the hole for self-efficacy and motivation to flourish, thus a desire to succeed. Establishing progressive tasks of difficulty reduce the fear of failure and guide the student toward success (Ferrer-Caja & Weiss, 2002).

Hope. Snyder (2000) provided details of hope as a motivational factor. The model is composed of two processes aimed at goal achievement: (a) Pathways are the potential routes identified by a person's cognitive-based ability toward goals, and (b) agency thoughts are the affective desire to institute the identified pathways. Hope is defined as the perceived capability to develop various routes to reach desired goals and motivate oneself through agency by thinking to use those pathways (Snyder et al., 2003). In the context of delaying enrolling to college, a students' perceptions toward their capability to (a) identify the goal of continuing educational endeavors, (b) develop strategies specific to reaching the goal (pathways) by instigating, and (c)

maintain the motivation for using those strategies (agency). Pathways and agency elements are both crucial; each by itself is sufficient to pursue the goal and are positively related.

Lopez (2013) articulated hope as an ancient virtue alongside faith and love. Lopez indicated that hope matters, people want hope in their future, and that hope is more important than one's intelligence quotient (IQ). In referencing The Handbook of Positive Psychology, Snyder et al. (2002) reported that "hopeful thought reflects the belief that one can find pathways to desired goals and become motivated to use those pathways" (p. 257).

Grit. Duckworth (2012) described grit as an essential aspect of establishing the passion and perseverance for long-term goals. In this context, grit is the element that propels an individual toward an engaged effort and the desired result to flourish in the postsecondary experience. Saunders-Scott et al. (2018) reported a direct effect of grit and SAT scores for student engagement.

Resiliency. Dr. Norman Garmezy, a clinical psychologist, is often referred to as the founder of resilience research. Garmezy (1991) defined resilience as the capacity for recovery and to maintain adaptive behavior that may follow an initial retreat or incapacity upon introducing a stressful event. Garmezy contends protective factors influence resilience. Some of these influences include individual, attributes such as activity level, cognitive skills, and positive responsiveness to others; familial, a caring adult (parents or grandparents), and family structure; support, external factors to a family such as a supportive teacher, or a community structure within the greater community. Garmezy et al. (1984) developed the challenge model that explained as stress increases; competence is lowered. This model can help youths to develop coping skills and seek external and internal resources.

An individual may encounter a temporary setback, and it is the component of resiliency that enables that individual to refocus their efforts on the end goal. The Institute of Education Sciences (2010) evaluated multiple institutional interventions to determine that some interventions have failed to produce significant gains in postimplementation achievement (Garet et al., 2010; James-Burdumy et al., 2010; Somers et al., 2010).

Analysis of the programs highlights the need for attention to the underlying psychology resilient responses to academic and social challenges (Duckworth et al., 2007). Based on the theoretical framework of risk and resiliency of Leclerc et al. (1998), Tichy (2017) ascertained that student perspective of the guidance and support that a school provides to a student experiencing a life event did not broadly impact academic achievement, it did provide the psychology resiliency.

Theoretical Framework Discussion

Self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) reported that an individual is motivated to grow and change by psychological needs. Research in self-empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995), and self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1995) revealed that involvement could be illustrated as a configuration of intrinsic motivation toward completing tasks exhibited through several factors; meaning or relatedness (Spreitzer, 1995), competence (White, 1963), autonomy, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995) affect motivation. Research distinguishes between controlling and autonomy-supportive environments (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci et al., 1981). The researchers hypothesized that controlling climates would undermine intrinsic motivation, and that autonomy-supportive climates (parents or teachers) would heighten intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci et al., 1981; Flink et al., 1990; Pelletier & Vallerand, 1996; Pittman et al., 1982; Ryan & Grolnick, 1986).

The factor of meaning, or relatedness, is when individuals perceive future endeavors of career or college as having importance or value (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). The competence factor is the individual's attitude of confidence or self-efficacy. The person has the knowledge and skills to complete the objective (Bandura, 1986; Conger & Kanungo, 1988). The self-determination factor of autonomy denotes whether the student feels that they possess the freedom to choose how they complete their work (Avolio et al., 2004). In the end, the impact factor reflects the magnitude a person perceives their work influences achieving the purposes of a given task (Avolio et al., 2004; Spreitzer, 1995).

Research into the development of motivation reports that self-determination is a contributing factor, and boundaries between amotivation, extrinsic, and intrinsic motivation exists. Self-determination theory challenges the instructional practices that appeal only to a students' internal motivations that contribute to academic tasks. The catalyst for behavior may be external to the individual, but the expectations from external conditions can be internal and result in functioning on the autonomous level (Appleton et al., 2008).

By isolating the three areas of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000b), the concept of extrinsic motivation is expanded as it represents the "performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome" (p. 71) and has four distinctive subtypes. Reviewing the domain of amotivation, this is when a student has a deficient level of motivation for the given activity and does not exhibit intrinsic or extrinsic behaviors (Vallerand et al., 1993). A student in this domain will not know why they need to be engaged in the activity or task. The outcome is the behavior that relates to a lack of competence and commitment towards engagement (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The first extrinsic motivational factor is external regulation. This is the functioning behavior(s) that "satisfy an external demand or reward contingency" (p. 72), referred to as incentives for this

study. The second extrinsic factor of introjected regulation engages a possibility of self-worth and results when behaviors are "performed to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego enhancements such as pride" (p. 72), referred to as a fear of failure for this study. An example would be a student who studies for an exam to promote a feeling of sufficiency.

The first intrinsic factor identified regulation, is initiated from a "conscious valuing of a behavioral goal or regulation, such that the action is accepted or owned as personally important" (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 72). This subtype can be presented when students value learning the material by studying for an exam instead of devoting time with their peers because they perceive the importance of their continuing education to perform well on the assessment; referenced for this study as the desire to succeed. Finally, for this study, the term hope refers to the intrinsic motivation that occurs when "identified regulations are fully assimilated to the self, which means they have been evaluated and brought into congruence with one's other values and needs" (p. 73).

Education is somewhat designed to assist students in understanding the content within specific subject areas and acknowledging the social mores of a community. Educators have begun to investigate how students transition from compliance behavior to various configurations of self-regulated cooperation to assure the student's needs. Ryan and Deci (2000b) provided evidence for students that experience various motivational levels that relay on the degree to which self-determination is their perception of their actions. A student that feels they control some of how an activity is conducted function within an autonomous position. Students that believe they can complete a task with a high-level exhibit the competence function of self-determination. Finally, when a student feels connected to others in the same situation through a meaningful exchange, they are satisfying relatedness. When all three have been satisfied,

students are distinguished as being self-determined. The more self-determining experiences a student is involved with, the higher and long-lasting the motivation tends to be.

Conceptual Framework Discussion

There are multiple psychosocial development theories (Table 1) related to the motivational and transitional issues for postsecondary endeavors: Astin's student involvement theory (1999); Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (1985); Schlossberg's transitional theory (1981); and Tinto's interactionalist theory (1993). If adolescents do not develop a positive self-concept, then as adults, they may experience feelings of emotional isolation. The transition to college can be a factor in recognizing one's esteem.

Table 1

Comparison of Applicable Change Theories

Astin (1999)	Deci & Ryan (1985)	Schlossberg (1981)	Tinto (1993)
Student involvement	Self-determination	Transition	Interactionalist
Outcomes for higher education institutions about how students change as a result of academic involvement.	A person's nature to be academically curious to develop knowledge in an academic setting.	The individual must modify the positive and negative elements that assist the individual to a successful conclusion.	The effects of formal and informal attributes on student engagement and retention

Note. Adapted from Astin, A. (1999). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, *40*(5), 518–529.

Note. Adapted from Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2002). *Handbook of self-determination research*. University Rochester Press.

Note. Adapted from Schlossberg, N., Waters, E., & Goodman, J. (1995). *Counseling Adults in Transition: Linking Practice with Theory.* Springer.

Note. Adapted from Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition* (2nd ed.).

Theories of Change

The theory of change (Weiss, 1995) is a set of expectations and the connections of process actions and program outcomes. Change in education, whether to alter a mission statement or enhance instructional practices, centers on the desire to fulfill the need yet to be met

(Chen, 2015). Identifying the transitional process which a person moves through can help establish an engaged mindset of the person.

Student Involvement Theory. Astin (1999) articulated that student involvement can be both quantitative and qualitative. Students can be highly involved (quantitative) and get a lot out of as they put a lot into these activities (qualitative). Astin's theory supports that students who are more involved in the educational surroundings tend to perform better in an academic setting. Astin expounds that student involvement can be both quantitative and qualitative. Students can be highly involved (quantitative) and get a lot out of/put a lot into these activities (qualitative).

Astin (1999) highlighted the foundation of engagement establishes a connection to how a student changes and develops as a result of active academic involvement. Astin explained that student development centers on three elements (Kelly, 1996). First are fundamental assets, such as background, demographics and previous experiences. Second is student environment, representing those experiences developed at the educational institution. Finally, there is end result or outcomes of attitudes, believes, characteristics, knowledge, and values that the student represents after successfully completing an educational experience.

Self-determination Theory. Students with a perceived causality position, where the variable of motivation directly affects a change in achievement, can be more internal than external and requires a student to have a higher psychological investment in the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Considering high school students are developing a more complex thinking ability and a sense of identity, it can be concluded that the student would perceive an increase in motivation by completing objectives in which they get a chance to direct part of the decision-making for success (Miller, 1989).

While the overarching framework of the research presented is based on the theory of self-determination, evaluating the influence of avoidance tendency could provide evidence for the premise of this research. Understanding this aspect by providing student's voices could highlight underlying motivational factors that contribute to influencing when a student delays, hesitates, or procrastinates enrolling in a college. The research will address how high school seniors describe their postsecondary plans and their idea of success with the decision to delay in applying for college by the standard submission deadline.

Transition Theory. Schlossberg (1981) suggested that throughout their lifetime individuals face a succession of transitions. It is an individual's insights into specific transitions which have the most significant influence on her or his capacity to modify (Schlossberg, 1981). In the context of engagement and motivation, transition theory focuses on the idea that a student can create the movement of mindset through self-efficacy. The ability to reach her or his future goals helps define a perception of the functionality of the current task, which, in turn, helps determine how much a person will engage in the task. The engagement in a task is directly related to the performance outcome of the task (Brickman & Miller, 2000) and provides meaning and value to current learning. The growth of engagement through motivation and resiliency is the foundational supports for students. A student's perception of their self-efficacy is shaped by past behavior and performance (Bandura, 1977). The transition theory reveals that a situation depends mainly when a person believes that he or she is capable of adapting through proper decision-making skills, then the individual has control over the specific transitional process (Schlossberg et al., 1991).

Interactional Theory. Tinto (1993) stated students enter college with specific qualities and abilities that affect their primary responsibility to their educational goals. The commitment is then decreased or increased based on the quality of their academic and social experiences.

Research Methodology

Specific research based on phenomenology cannot be applied to all qualitative studies, however, all qualitative research has elements of phenomenological research. The philosophical basis of qualitative investigation originates from phenomenology (as a philosophy), from existentialism and hermeneutics (Lucca Irizarry & Berríos Rivera, 2013). The clearest definition for phenomenology is that it is a point-of-view promoting the study of an individuals' experiences because human behavior is not determined by the described external reality of the individual, rather the phenomena of the experience (Cohen et al., 2007). It can be seen as a methodology when utilized to gather meanings for individuals through the analysis of their story (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008; Langdridge, 2007). Creswell (2012) advanced for the use of phenomenology when the research problem requires an insightful understanding of human experiences shared among specific group.

Edmond Husserl, the founder of phenomenological inquiry, suggested that it would be impossible to separate the research participant from the environment of his or her lived experiences (Parodi, 2008); therefore, findings cannot occur outside of the environment (Larkin et al., 2006). Heidegger, a student of Husserl, also believed that the participant could not be separated from the environment but expanded the concept of phenomenology by declaring the researcher could not be separated from the environment either; the findings of phenomenological research are indivisible from the experiences of the participants and the experiences of the researchers (Larkin et al., 2006).

Philosopher Aristotle once said, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. By looking at elements of the decision-making process, the direction of how to measure those elements is as vital to the equation as the analysis. “Phenomenology is concerned with wholeness, with examining entities from many sides, angles, and perspectives until a unified vision of the essences of a phenomenon or experience is achieved” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 27). As a research method, Husserl proposed epokhé; a Greek word meaning doubt. The pioneer of contemporary phenomenology Moustakas highlighted several procedural areas: epoch (identifying the common meaning), structural (the interpretation of how an experience is expressed), and textural (the description of what is expressed).

The nature of human science presumes that the process of a human experience is more intricate than a singular narrative of life (van Manen, 1997). Researchers of psychological phenomena require methods that dive into unique experiences and specific situations instead of testing universal laws (Willis, 2007). Montgomery et al. (2002) described the character of phenomenological research as an examination of empirical studies. Takahashi and Overton (2002) concluded their quantitative study that “Designing a qualitative measure with questions from real-life events of research participants ... is a viable option.” Phenomenological research serves as a foundation for analysis of the effects and correlation of the participants’ experience. Both studies portray phenomenological research as acknowledging the phenomena under investigation to declare data for itself, and the researcher, careful to prevent impressing her or his biases on the experience.

Summary

The essential element that constitute phenomenology as an educational qualitative research design (Creswell, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Ponce, 2014) incorporate open-

ended interviews to collect data (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009) and the possibility to follow new and emerging themes (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2010). Educational research has shown that self-beliefs can have profound influences on learning achievement and behavior. Self-beliefs about students' mindset, the way individuals perceive themselves as learners, could also have a material impact on behavior and academic achievement. Learning is just one aspect of academic success as a result of a student at the secondary school level. At this level, several factors can be practical; belief in their competence, the student-teacher relationship, and the perceived value of school (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Wigfield et al., 1997).

It is equally essential between the form and amount of motivation students have in their engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000b; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Researchers debate on the differences between the forms of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation as to the consequences for altering learning (Deci et al., 1999; Harter, 1978; Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000). Learning as a means to an end (extrinsic) serves as a negative indicator of an achievement outcome (Lepper et al., 2005; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Learning for the sake of learning (intrinsic) does predict the engagement of cognitive functions (Walker et al., 2006). Regardless of the form, motivation can promote engagement leading to higher academic achievement. In-turn, engagement can influence the decision-making process as the student would be motivated through either approach tendency or avoidance tendency.

Chapter 3: Research Method

While the recipe for success in this endeavor results in hearing the voices of high school seniors, it calls for a multitude of ingredients such as; a theoretical framework as described in Chapter 2 with the theory of self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985), an applicable methodology, and proper methods to obtain valid data for analysis. Researchers require an awareness of the underlying suppositions to make important methodological decisions. The supposition to understand the foundation of the approach used (Dowling & Cooney, 2012). It may be challenging to comprehend and apply the correct phenomenological approach in the research process. Phenomenology comprises a complex philosophical convention in the study of human science. Phenomenological methods central theme is the diversity between descriptive versus interpretive phenomenology (Dowling & Cooney, 2012; Norlyk & Harder, 2010). The descriptive approach was derived from the works of Husserl and enhanced by Merleau-Ponty. The philosophical posture must be clarified and comprehended for the reader of a study. The methodological principles of emphasizing openness, investigation pre-understanding, and embracing a reflective attitude.

The focused research emphasized having an open mind to search for meaning. The necessity for openness requires the researcher to be attentive, observant, and sensitive to the articulation of experiences (Dahlberg et al., 2008). Additionally, the study questioned the interpretation and assignment of the resulting response data (Dahlberg & Dahlberg, 2003). I endeavored to retain a position that includes the conjecture that the researcher does not recognize the participant's experience, and I wanted to comprehend the phenomenon in the study in a new tone to hear facets of the experience through the voice of the participants. The participants for this research were high school seniors and could be under 18 years of age; only those over 18

were asked to participate in the survey and proper consent through written authorization from the participant was documented. The research centered on a triad of informative questions:

Q1. How do high school seniors of single parent households describe the college application process?

Q2. How do seniors describe the motivation of the decision to delay applying to college?

Q3. How do seniors who have not applied to a college describe the term flourish?

Methodological Approach

The principle goal of this research was to get a rich description of the decision-making processes of a college-eligible high school senior delaying the enrollment process through a phenomenological study. The study was designed to provide a voice to students on the connection between the motivation of high school students and the decision-making process. I hoped to provide insight to understand better students' perceptions about motivation concerning the decision-making processes by obtaining detailed descriptions of respondents' experiences. This type of design permitted me to discover variations associated with an experience (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2010).

A qualitative study highlights the examination of phenomena that have not been studied in detail and requires the evaluation of concepts that cannot be mathematically measured (Shank, 2006). The term qualitative research does not represent a singular agreed-upon approach; more a variety of perspectives. Qualitative research is defined by the importance attached to an interpretive inquiry. In the full range of qualitative researcher opinions, there is a common understanding of the presence of many realities altered by the experiences of their participants. Qualitative research can contain a combination of observations, interviews, and document reviews. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) described qualitative research as "primarily an

inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories" (p. 479). Mason (2002) described qualitative research approaches in this context as all having the following in common:

- Being guided in an interpretive stance by illustrating the concern with how the phenomena of delay enrollment can be experienced, interpreted, and understood.
- Based on research methods that are malleable and sensitive to a social construct.
- Based on analytic methods that consider the complexity, context, and detail.

This study employed a phenomenological methodology to investigate the decision-making process of academically eligible high school students who delay enrolling in college past the established deadline. The lack of understanding of the phenomena of delayed enrollment may exist because the phenomenon has not been described, explained, or the impact it makes may be unclear. The designed research may not provide definitive rationalizations, but it could raise awareness and insight about the phenomena of delayed enrollment decisions. This study relied on the participants' perceptions to provide an understanding of their motivations.

Qualitative methodology is beneficial when participants determine to guide their decision-making process (Grbich, 2007). Utilizing the phenomenological approach can serve as a source for more significant analysis of the inferences and magnitude of the participants' experience. The data could provide enhanced clarifications of an experience as unanticipated response data can be expected in a phenomenological research approach. This approach may enable me the opportunity to articulate the high school senior's perceived decision-making choice of delaying enrollment (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2010; Shank, 2006).

Stones (1986) explained that up until 1970, phenomenology "had not yet establish[ed] itself as a viable alternative science to the traditional natural scientific approach in psychological

research" (p. 121). Giorgi further explained the wisdom at that time was that an understanding of the organized interpretation of the phenomenological approach had not been developed (Schwandt, 1997). Giorgi articulated the necessary term in phenomenological research is "describe." The goal of the researcher is the propensity to describe the phenomenon precisely by stating the facts and avoiding inferences. Welman and Kruger (1999) explained that phenomenological researchers are concerned with awareness of the psychological and social occurrences from the participant's perspective (p. 189). Multiple studies reveal the application of phenomenology centers on the experiences and level of involvement by the participants (Greene, 1997; Kvale, 1996; Maypole & Davies, 2001; Robinson & Reed, 1998). Janesick (2000) respected the approach of qualitative research through open communication and utilizing the individual participant as the backbone of the study.

Phenomenology establishes an appreciation and understanding of educational issues by exploring the unique experiences and perspectives of participants. Picture two people sitting in a room on opposite sides of a room, both facing the front. In the middle of the front wall is the door. To one individual, the door is to the right, to the other, it is on the left. It is the perspective of the individual that determines the factor of location. Miller and Crabtree (1999) explained that this type of paradigm acknowledges the importance of the subjective definition but does not discard the idea of objectivity. Effective qualitative studies provide researchers the opportunity to describe or explore a contextual phenomenon through multiple sources of data (Yin, 2003).

While designing student engagement survey questions, there is a need to balance closed-ended and open-ended questions (Moustakas, 1994). Closed-ended questions can provide quantitative feedback, while open-ended questions lead to qualitative feedback (Patton, 2002). Though a mixed-method survey would collect statistical data to help identify and measure

student engagement, incorporating data from an initial survey would provide the correlating data as the foundation and could lead to additional and relevant interview questions (Gorad & Taylor, 2004). Receiving personal responses from students about their decision-making processes opens numerous possibilities for the student to discover information about themselves. The designed survey is comprised of components from specific and verified instruments utilizing the Likert scale.

Population and Sample

Qualitative studies commonly have samplings that are purposeful (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009), partially due to the experiences of the participants are at the center of the research (Shank, 2006; Smith et al., 2009). The senior class for 2019-2020 is currently listed at 552 for the designated high school in suburban Maryland. Demographically, the pool of potential participants is illustrated in Table 2. The high school was selected based on the following Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) criteria:

- A decrease in dropout rate (8%),
- An increase in graduation rate (> 95%),
- An increase in attendance rate (91.9%),
- Level 3 or higher on the English/Language Arts Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC; 82.9%).

Table 2

Student Demographics at Maryland Suburban High School

	Projected Seniors	% Gender		% Ethnic Composition			
	n	F	M	AS	BL	HI	WH
High School	552	49.2	50.8	13.6	15.1	26.6	40.1
Targeted Class	28	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Note. Ethnic composition Maryland State Department of Education abbreviations: Asian (AS); Black or African American (BL); Hispanic/Latino (HI); White (WH).

The total number of seniors would be too much for a qualitative approach (n = 552), so it was determined by the school administration to center on a class required by seniors. After obtaining permission from the school's principal, seniors of a single English class were offered the prospect of self-identifying factors of motivation. District high schools require every student to complete four years of English content. Therefore, all seniors are required to take English 12 in their final year. If school administration, the designated teacher, or environmental conditions restrict access, the contingency was to schedule the survey online with the single 12th-grade class (n = 28) and the designated English teacher. Access to the online environment was considered during the contingency planning.

Phase 2 focused on students of single parent households who have indicated they have not completed the college application process as of the January 31st deadline date. Utilizing the binomial probability theorem, the probability that a problem **p** (students that have not applied to a college) will occur **r** times (NCES reports 30%) during a study with **n** participants (28). The estimated sample size for the interview questionnaire of five to nine participants is within the acceptable range for a qualitative range to build a sufficient dataset (Guest et al., 2006; Morse & Niehaus, 2009; Padilla-Díaz, 2015).

Materials/Instruments

The initial design was to provide the capability of responding online to the survey for participants over 18 years of age. Followed by students who identified as living in a single-parent household with a five-question questionnaire. The influence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic created a unique opportunity to perform a phenomenological study where face-to-face interviews were adapted to create a safe, yet meaningful exchange of thoughts. The delivery of the survey began during the national COVID-19 Shelter-in-place. Even though the participants were to confirm they were over 18 years of age, the selected school district would not permit video interviews or recording due to the nature that the student would be hosting their comments from home. Privacy and security were the number one priority for continuance.

Utilizing the expedited process from ACU's IRB, I adjusted the facilitation of the research through synchronous monitoring of participant responses from the online interface directly into a spreadsheet. When a participant responded to each of the questionnaire prompts, a side chat window would be utilized to inquire with any follow-up prompt for an expanded explanation.

I constructed questions to avoid steering the participant toward a projected set of response (Huws & Jones, 2009; Seidman, 2006) as phenomenological studies strive for the participants' distinctive views (Finlay, 2009). Utilizing open-ended questions facilitated greater flexibility by participants to reveal responses that have no preset list of answers, thus removing bias from the interview process. Moustakas (1994) illustrated that phenomenological research systematically integrates open-ended questions to collect data. The participant was encouraged to communicate personal experiences without trepidation of conflicting with the researcher's established knowledgebase (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). A characteristic of the phenomenological

approach is the ability for the use of open-ended questions to follow any new and emerging themes (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2010).

Phase 1

Utilizing multiple instruments, this study attempted to establish a deeper understanding of participants' experiences by establishing a foundation of the extrinsic and intrinsic motivating factors. The survey consisted of 22 prompts, beginning with demographic requests, and transitioning into survey section one with questions from the Academic Motivation Scale-High School Version (AMS-HS 28). The AMS-HS28 addresses the amotivational level of the participant (Vallerand et al., 1993).

The remaining questions were from the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A) for extrinsic and intrinsic factors. As the full SRQ-A consists of 32 questions, shorter versions (n=17) have been used and deemed reliable (McAuley et al., 1989). Specific age and context-relevant questions were incorporated. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was checked using Cronbach's alpha (α), and all resulted in high internal uniformity in measuring the extrinsic and intrinsic values for secondary students. The subscale of external introjection (fear of failure) was .77, for the external regulation (incentives) .81, intrinsic motivation (hope) .95, and identified regulation (desire to succeed) was .77 (Black & Deci, 2000; Williams & Deci, 1996). Calculated scores for the subscales of each area were produced as well as the Relative Autonomy Index (RAI; Williams & Deci, 1996). The RAI can identify the student's perception of autonomy in school, and "it has been used in several other published studies" (p. 461).

Phase 2

Qualitative face-to-face interviews enables an in-depth investigation of the reasons for a participant's level of engagement (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Interviews are used for participants

to express themselves freely and in their own words. In face-to-face interviews, a researcher must respond to requests for clarification at the precise moment a concern is initiated. The researchers must be careful not to misinterpret facial and the tone of voice to questions as follow-up questions can provide revisions of the initial question (Hunt & McHale, 2007; Meho, 2006).

The structure of the interview questions was to assist in obtaining the relevant data from participant responses. These interview protocols helped me to not lose focus on the key points needing to be addressed throughout the interview. As the time required for each interview should be limited in total length, it was not cut short to maintain a given timeframe. The protocol for interaction begins with an introduction and instructions oriented toward an understanding of the participant. At no time during the process did I refer to the participant as the subject. At all times, decorum was maintained by addressing the participant by name.

Introduction. Good morning (afternoon). My name is John Leach. I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. During this phase, you will be asked you about your experiences as a student as well as your perceptions concerning your plans after graduating from high school. I would like you to feel comfortable with saying what you think and how you feel. There are no right or wrong answers. Think of this as more conversational.

Recording the Interview Review. In the participant consent form, you agreed to have this interview taped. Due to the current pandemic situation, your responses will not be recorded. The purpose of this was so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. As you enter your responses, they will be automatically entered into a spreadsheet. During this process, there may need to be for a direct follow-up question. At that point, a side chat window will appear with my name with the additional prompt for further clarification or explanation. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. I want

to confirm at this point if it is still okay with you? I will be compiling a report which will contain all students' comments without any reference to specific individuals.

Interview Process. I will be taking notes throughout this process to provide reference points and highlight possible follow-up questions for clarification. At this point, may we start the interview process?

Q1: What elements of a problem-solving task makes you the happiest?

Q2. What are the factors that help you achieve as a student?

Q3. How has your *parent* been involved in your decision about postsecondary quests?

Q4. What is your definition of the word flourishing?

Q5. The process of applying to college is …

Conclusion. Thank you very much for participating this morning (afternoon). Your time is appreciated, and your comments have been constructive. I will be personally transcribing and analyzing your responses. Your contributions to this study could help establish a new foundation for individualized instruction.

Data Collection and Analysis

I strived for openness by questioning any preconceptions, which could have influenced the analysis of the data. I distinguished any assumptions through personal beliefs and theories that restricted openness. I also questioned any assumptions in the attempt to set aside my experiences to maintain a critical position of the data and the phenomenon. This is analogous to bracketing, a term commonly used but also debated in phenomenology studies (Dowling & Cooney, 2012). One side suggests that bracketing does require that assumptions be put to the side (Dowling & Cooney, 2012). On the other side, assumptions are a part of the understanding of the research direction (Gadamer, 1984). Instead of solely using bracketing, the intention of

this study is to build on questioning as an expressive way to describe what each response means. Otherwise the data could contain some of the researcher’s pre-understanding instead of the participants' experiences (Dahlberg et al., 2008). It can be argued that the substantial use of a priori codes may diminish some of the validity through bracketing and thus not to listen to the students' voices. Priori codes are ciphers developed before the review of the data. The use of inductive coding in this qualitative study was utilized as the process for code development of the reviewed data.

The credibility of research is subject to the researcher's proficiency to reveal the nonbiased nature of the data (Golafshani, 2003). A frequently utilized method is the self-disclosure of influential biases; promoting that anyone who evaluates the report can deduce the validity of the data (DeRosia & Christensen, 2009). In support of the well-being of participants and adherence to Abilene Christian University's (ACU) policies and procedures, I secured permission from ACU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before any research began.

As a starting point, the research was conducted with assurances to participants that they may choose which questions to answer and which questions they elect to skip. Also, it was guaranteed that all data and any personal information be secured and kept confidential. Upon approval of the IRB, the informed consent form was to be sent to potential participants and guardians from the designated target population. The secure online service, DocuSign, was to be used as the signature agent for participants in the online phase of this research. With the alteration of data collection due to the pandemic, the consent form and signature agent were not utilized.

Phase one of the data collection process began with an online capture tool for essential demographic information. The procedural sequence involved in the research is presented with an

understanding that dates are subject to change following ACU procedures and conditions at the Maryland suburban high school (Appendix D). The categorization of questions (Appendix A) is amotivation, extrinsic values, and intrinsic values. The time requirements for this phase was estimated to be 20 minutes. Response were evaluated for motivation causality (Table 3).

Table 3

Engagement Mindset Factors

Motivator	Achievement	Growth	Power	Social	Fear	Incentive
Type	Intrinsic	Intrinsic	Intrinsic	Intrinsic	Extrinsic	Extrinsic
Force	Goal	Learning	Goal	Social	Social	Learning
Area	Desire to Succeed				Fear of Failure	Outside Influence

Note. Adapted from Elliot, A., & Covington, M. (2001). Approach and Avoidance Motivation. *Educational Psychology Review*, *13*(2), 73-92. Copyright 2001 by Elliot and Covington.

With the identification of participants for the qualitative interview questions from the first phase, the second phase was conducted through an online synchronous method with a side chat window for direct interaction with each participant. The estimated time requirement was an additional 20 minutes for the five interview questions. Thus providing both phases to be completed within a standard classroom instructional period. The interview questions deal with extrinsic and intrinsic motivation factors, the level of engagement, and the element of decision-making toward individual goals.

Q1. What elements of a problem-solving task makes you the happiest?

Q2. What are the factors that help you achieve as a student?

Q3. How has your parent been involved in your decision about postsecondary quests?

Q4. How do you definition of the term flourish?

Q5. The process of applying to college is …

Saldaña and Omasta (2018) discussed the use of synchronous interviews to be “any interaction in which a researcher and participant engage in conversation or a dialogic series of questions and answers can be considered an interview, whether the interview takes place in person, over the phone, through an online video chat program such as Zoom, or other means” (p. 89). Millennials, as the target of this research, could be provided with more opportunity to express themselves comprehensively through online questionnaires and surveys (Joinson, 2001; Kivits, 2005; Stewart & Williams, 2005; Wengraf, 2001).

The criteria for this research consisted of obtaining quality data with dialogue validity and the ethical gathering process. The value method of coding is utilized to analyze the interview responses for attitudes, beliefs, feelings, opinions, and values suggested by a participant’s interview transcript, body language, and any visual materials (Table 4). Evaluating attitudes is a method to determine the way an interviewee thinks and feels. Beliefs are the experiences, opinions, or personal knowledge the interviewee reveals in the response. Values are those elements that target a level of importance an interviewee places on the subject of their response.

Table 4

Participant Responses Using the Value Method

Question	Coding Pass
What elements of a problem-solving task makes you the happiest?	
Interviewee # [*Participant's response*]	TBD
What are the factors that help you achieve as a student?	
Interviewee # [*Participant's response*]	TBD
After graduation, what are your plans for next fall?	
Interviewee # [*Participant's response*]	TBD
What are your thoughts on why you have not applied to a college?	
Interviewee # [*Participants response*]	TBD
What is your definition of the word flourish?	
Interviewee # [*Participants response*]	TBD

Trustworthiness/Reliability

Insomuch as this is a qualitative study utilizing validated instruments, there was a need for the data to be confirmable, credible, dependable, and transferable (Guba, 1991). Grouping those four concepts into the realm of trustworthiness is a requirement of this study. I would have personally transcribed the interviews and confirming the expressions, hesitations, and tone from the participants. With the revised online questionnaire process, the expressions, hesitations, and tone were not available for analysis. This would have channeled the researcher's effort through member checking (Terrell, 2016) into accurately reporting the participant's responses for analysis into appropriate themes. In addition, I employed the referential adequacy (Terrell, 2016) approach by waiting to analyze data from the first phase until the analysis from the second phase was completed. I then compared the two data sets.

Confirmability is the degree of neutrality in the research study's findings. This requires that the resulting data are based on participants' responses and not any subject to potential bias or personal motivations of the researcher. The responses must not be misrepresented or adhere to a particular narrative of the researcher. To establish confirmability, I provide sequential analysis to provide a rationale for any assertions made.

Credibility is simply the question of "How do you know that your findings are true and accurate?" I utilized some triangulation of phase 1 responses from the SRQ-A as evidence of validated methods to obtain the research study's findings, to assist in establishing credibility (Terrell, 2016).

Dependability of this study should be able to be replicated by other researchers, and the findings would be consistent between the studies. The instruments to be utilized in this study have been deemed credible and thus dependable across multiple studies.

Transferability of this study's findings should be applied in various contexts. With the established dependability, studies that can utilize the SRQ-A survey can be utilized toward similar phenomena, similar populations, and similar situations.

Each student will be assured that any question can be answered or skipped. To facilitate the confidentiality of a students' information, as they enter their student identification number, it will be converted through the power of 18 algorithms to produce a unique ID. Students that have identified the decision of college or are undecided and have not completed the process as of the date of the survey will be automatically identified as potential participants, as indicated in the status column (Table 5).

Table 5

Example Dataset Organization

							Extrinsic Motivators		Instrinsic Motivators		
							Introject	External Regulation	Instrinsic	Indentified Regulation	
New Name	Post-H.S.	Resource	G.P.A	Converted ID	Status	A M	Fear of Failure	Incentive	Desire to Succeed	Hope	RAI
Adam	College	Applied	2.5 2.9	1330C	Interview N/A	-1	12	7	5	3	-15
Eve	College	Nothing yet	3.0 3.4	234H9	Interview Eve	10	17	9	9	10	-7
David	AmeriCorp/ Military	ASVAB Test	2.5 2.9	243HA	Survey Only	5	4	12	5	3	12
Karly	Undecided	Nothing yet	3.0 3.4	243HE	Interview Karly	9	7	1	3	4	3

Note: AM stands for Amotivation

Removing bias from the interview method can be initiated by using open-ended questions. For instance, the questions wording for an interview could affect the response from the participant. To assist in avoiding some bias elements and to not influence the response, the researcher should avoid leading a participant's responses when conducting the interview questions. I was open to changing my opinion if new information or data are presented, then meeting neutrality requirements (Finlay, 2009; Smith et al., 2009). I made a conscious effort to record personal opinions in the limitations section of this document. Exposing a researcher's biases to the readers will compel the researcher to be vigilant in this effort because a weakness here could damage the trustworthiness of the study (Shank, 2006).

Researcher Role

The primary role of any researcher is to treat all participants and responses with confidentiality, respect, and safety. One role of the researcher is to protect the participant data and ensure their anonymity (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). The participants in this study are likely not to have been former students or personally known of the researcher; no potential conflicts of

interest are known or anticipated. All data collected will be secured and accessible only to me. After the final report has been submitted and approved, all data will be destroyed.

Analysis

Researchers operating phenomenological interviews should be attentive to presumptions toward a topic and be positioned to modify these concepts when new information becomes available (Finlay, 2009; Reid et al., 2005). It is this acceptance of newly revealed responses that classifies phenomenology, but bracketing is a disputed concern (Finlay, 2009). Bracketing is the setting aside of known information in order to be open to new information that may contradict older information (Finlay, 2009; Reid et al., 2005; Smith et al., 2009).

Assumptions

The assumptions for the present inquiry include the following:

The Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A) is a reliable and valid instrument for measuring locus of motivation for students in the secondary setting.

The students that participate through the online survey answer truthfully.

Bracketing

In this qualitative study, bracketing is utilized to reduce the possible effects of preconceptions that may influence the research process. I could understand the motivational factors that could exist within a student's mindset. It is incumbent upon me to set aside the predefined nature of those factors to extract the experiences and definitions of actions and behaviors from the participants. Throughout the development of this study outline, additional insight has been gained by me from previous studies and the literature review. During the interview phase, it is imperative that I set aside as much as possible of the relevant knowledge of motivation within this context.

Step 1 of the bracketing process for this study was to discuss with the dissertation committee the background information about the context, any potential biases, and gained knowledge from this process. Creating a table or log of information established the first bracket for this study.

Step 2 was to record in a study journal information during data collection, analysis, and report writing. During each process step, any bias or preconceived thought was recorded.

Step 3 required that I write any of the biases and preconceived notions in the final report. This will provide the reader with an awareness of any of the written biases of mine when reading the results and conclusions of the interrupted data.

Delimitations

The decision to engage high school seniors of single parent households was designed to increase the prospect of a distinct recollection of the decision-making process. Response choices cannot be bound by predefined choices; however, open-ended questions will provide proper sanctions for evaluation of a participant's experiences. Recruiting participants and conducting the qualitative interviews at the defined high school allowed me to reach students who were college-eligible in a format where they could remain comfortable. All other recruiting delimitations were intended to create a consistent participant pool.

Limitations

Since some people are more likely than others to participate, inherent bias can be present in online data collection (Wright, 2005). Bias could be an issue in a study that requires a representative sampling. Bias is not as apparent in research where similar groups are recruited, and individual perceptions are the goal; qualitative research is built upon consistent samples so the researcher can evaluate the differences and similarities between responses in conscientious

detail (Smith et al., 2009). At this point, I do not consciously know of any biases that would have any influence on questions, analysis, or conclusion formation. In the context of generalizability, research based on large populations in quantitative research may not be as readily applicable in this qualitative study. Due in part to the limited size of the qualitative interviewee's, at one school, and within one more affluent geographic region.

Ethical Assurances

The role of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is to ensure that the research is legal and ethically conducted with the primary goal of assuring the safety and well-being of the research participant (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). It was imperative that the well-being of any potential participant, and accordance with policies and procedures of Abilene Christian University's (ACU), that I secure permission from ACU's Internal Review Board (IRB) before any recruiting and data collection effort. For this study, participants received foundational information relating to the goal of the study, time requirements, the freedom to choose which questions to answer or omit, the intended use of the data, and the commitment to protect participant confidentiality and secure the response data.

The overarching ethical support is directed at any benefit to the participant. The benefit for this study rests with a request by the participant for a copy of their response with analysis, the Relative Autonomy Index (RAI) scores with interpretation**,** and a result from the study. This was not meant to be any form of an incentive/reward as much as it was a benefit to the subject in addition to scholarly knowledge and understanding.

Types of Risk

Potential risks are aligned into several categories. As part of the review process, the IRB evaluated any potential risks of the designed research against the potential benefits. I made every effort to eliminate or reduce potential risks.

Physical risks are usually not evident in qualitative studies as that type of risk could include physical discomfort, diseases, illness, injury, or pain brought about by the methods and procedures of a research study. In contrast, the participants could encounter physical stimuli such as noise or engaging a participant in a social situation that could involve climatic risk. It is not anticipated that any physical risk is present for this study.

Psychological risks could entail the presence of negative impact from areas such as anxiety, deception, depression, guilt, or, loss of self-esteem. To those ends, all attention and effort was present to remove those elements from the study to ensure a peace-of-mind approach.

Social risks were minimized or eliminated that could include any alteration in relationships with administrators, peers, or teachers that involves establishing a harmful element to include embarrassment or labeling of others in a way that will have negative consequences or loss of respect from others.

Loss of confidentiality was addressed, as this study involves human participants. Any information, whether presumed or identified, will be maintained in a secure environment. Participants shall have the right, and guarantee from the researcher, to be protected against the risks identified above and their privacy and personal dignity. Elevated responsibility by the researcher was exercised in obtaining, handling, and storing data. To that end, no personal information was collected. The participant must be a member of the school system login system for access to the online system. Initially, a student identification number would have been

captured. That number would have been converted through an algorithm and maintained in a secure environment. Due to the change in the data capture approach, the identification number was not captured.

Summary

The rationale of this research was to explore the decision-making process of planning of college-eligible high school seniors, and a qualitative, phenomenological approach was employed. The science of qualitative study ushers in the empirical investigation of phenomena that have not been studied in detail and require concept evaluation that cannot be measured mathematically (Shank, 2006). The term qualitative research does not represent a singular agreed-upon approach; more a variety of perspectives.

This phenomenological study integrated several instruments to identify the motivational elements of amotivation, autonomy, extrinsic values, fear of failure (introjected), and incentives (external regulation); and intrinsic values, hope (intrinsic motivation) and a desire to succeed (identified regulation). Utilizing open-ended questions in the interview process collected personal experiences (Smith et al., 2009) and addressed new and emerging themes (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2010) directly from the participants. All of which adhere to the ethical and foundational requirements established by the IRB at Abilene Christian University.

Chapter 4: Results

The participants of this study produced several themes of engagement and motivation. A majority of the participants illustrated low autonomy, which is attributed to fear and frustration of the college application process. A majority of the participants also prefer to start an activity using the end solution first, providing little need for decision-making and planning. Interestingly, a majority of respondents orient their perception of flourishing around a social construct as a benefit for the community. Within a structured school environment, a significant number of participants rely on others for guidance and direct support. Without those safeguards, the participants become intimated to the task through extrinsic stimuli of fear and frustration, or the act of procrastination.

Outlining the process of college choice into three standpoints: economic, psychological, and sociological (Hossler et al., 1989, 1999). The Hossler and Gallagher (1987) three-stage model illustrates the sequential stages of a student's college choice: Students who decide in one stage to delay the decision of postsecondary articulation cannot proceed to the next stage.

A report from the Indiana University Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) highlights that 84% of students can identify their academic direction through their senior year in high school. Of the students surveyed in that study, 41.9% identified their classes as general, 37.5% as advanced placement, and 4.6% as vocational (Yazzie-Mintz, 2009). The George Washington University's Center on Education Policy (CEP [sic]) reported that 87% of high school students want to go to college, 45% feel prepared for college, and 40% are unmotivated (Usher & Kober, 2012).

Research Questions

Q1. How do high school seniors of single parent households describe the college application process?

Q2. How do seniors describe the motivation of the decision to delay applying to college?

Q3. How do seniors who have not applied to a college describe the term flourish?

Participant Selection and Evaluation

The initial design was to provide written responses to the survey for all over 18 years of age. That was to be followed up by students who identified as living in a single-parent household. The influence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic created a unique opportunity to perform a phenomenological study where face-to-face interviews were adapted to create a safe, yet meaningful exchange of thoughts. The delivery of the survey began during the national COVID-19 Shelter-in-place. Even though the participants were to confirm they were over 18 years of age, the selected school district would not permit video interviews or recording due to the nature that the student would be hosting their comments from home. Privacy and security were the number one priority for continuance. The high school was selected based on the following Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) criteria;

- A decrease in dropout rate (8%),
- An increase in graduation rate (> 95%),
- An increase in attendance rate (91.9%),
- Level 3 or higher on the English/Language Arts Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC; 82.9%).

An English teacher agreed with the school administration to permit the use of the designated class. Of the 28 enrolled students, 24 responded to the qualifying survey. The first

question dealt directly with their age. If they acknowledged they were under 18, no additional prompting to answer motivational or decision-making questions were provided; this action was taken to ensure that students under the age of 18 were excluded from the study. However, students who confirmed they were 18 or over were prompted to respond to motivational questions based on the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) as well as from the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A) from the Center for Self-Determination Theory (CSDT). From the 24 respondents, 20 verified they were at least 18 years of age. In total, there were three African-Americans, two Asian-Americans, 12 Caucasians, and three Hispanic-Americans. The respondents consisted of 14 females and six males. Detailed demographic information is provided in Table 6.

Table 6

Participant Demographic Information (n = 20)

			Gender		Parental household	
Demographics	*n*	%	Female (14)	Male (6)	Dual Parents	Single Parent
African-American (BL)	3	12.5 %	33 %	67 %	1 Female 1 Male	0 Female 1 Male
American-Indian (AI)	0	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male
Asian-American (AS)	2	12.5 %	100 %	0 %	1 Female 0 Male	1 Female 0 Male
Caucasian-American (WH)	12	62.5 %	73.3 %	26.7 %	4 Female 2 Male	5 Female 1 Male
Hispanic-American (HI)	3	12.5 %	67 %	33 %	2 Female 0 Male	0 Female 1 Male

Participants that identified as living in a single-parent household were prompted to respond to the second tier of decision-making questions. Also, those prompted for the second tier were provided with an online chat board to ask questions directly to me. The chat board

permitted a safe and anonymous interaction. The chat area also provided a means for me to ask follow-up questions as participants entered responses for specific decision-making questions. Eleven participants comprised the respondents of dual-parent households, and nine participants responded as members of a single-parent household.

Descriptive Analysis

The analysis of raw data, as well as the responses of the participants, was fascinating. When viewed from 30,000 feet, one could interrupt the results and observe students as just being lazy or procrastinating. The process of analysis begins in the scope of separating the various components of the survey questions. Isolating the level of motivation or amotivation, the data revealed students of single-parent households are considered more neutral regarding motivation. Participants of dual-parent households reported being highly motivated.

Understanding the motivational influencers, the data revealed that a majority of the participants place a high requirement for extrinsic motivators, and those who live in a dual-parent household desired the highest extrinsic stimuli. This could be the result of a fear of disappointing family. Four measurable scales were examined: external, introjected, identified, and intrinsic. Each subset was evaluated for the responses from participants of dual-parent versus single-parent households. External motivation (punishments or incentives) has the highest negative weighted measurement because an external force consistently compels the student toward action. Introjected motivation (avoiding guilt or fear of failure) becomes assimilated into the self for a given action. Identified motivation (acting on hope) is internalized into the self. Intrinsic motivation has the highest value because the person enjoys and wants to do the action or task through a value for a desire to succeed.

Engagement Analysis

For high school seniors, engagement in learning deals more with the perceived value of continued learning. The data from this research highlights that respondents view high school and college as valuable. What struck me was that participants of single-parent households inversely viewed their measured engagement at a lower level. Responses from single-parent household participants are revealed as slightly more unmotivated. Signaling they do not place the same importance, or value, on the application process of continuing education. In essence, a student who sees the value of reaching the destination but not the effort required for the journey.

Questions from the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) - High School Version dealt with the perceived worth of high school and college education in terms of the participant's amotivational level (Vallerand et al., 1993). The level of amotivational establishes the value a student places on learning within the two educational settings. Amotivation is apparent if a student has a deficient level of motivation for the given activity and does not exhibit intrinsic or extrinsic behaviors (Vallerand et al., 1993). An amotivated student will not know why they need to be engaged in the activity or task. The outcome is the behavior that relates to a lack of competence and commitment towards engagement (Deci & Ryan. 1985). The lower the amotivation score, the higher level of unmotivation toward the specific educational setting.

Scoring of the four questions from the AMS scale for this research illustrated that respondents of dual-parent households did not see high school or college as a waste of time (Table 7). This is inversely proportional to the responses that high school is beneficial, and college is necessary. Respondents of single-parent households scored higher in agreement with the effort toward high school and college. They also were aligned with the general perception of

the value of high school and college. The two-and-a-third point differential (delta) is substantial in their motivation to apply the effort to apply to college with the value of the college experience.

Table 7

AMS Scale

Question		Delta	Dual-parent	Single-parent
A.	High school is a waste of my time	.74	1.82	2.56
B.	College is necessary	.35	4.09	4.44
C.	High school is beneficial	.15	4.18	4.33
D.	College isn't worth the effort	1.05	1.73	2.78
Average AMS score		2.37	5.82	3.44

Note. Adapted from the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand, R.J., Pelletier, L.G., Blais, M.R, Brière, N.M., Senécal, C., & Vallières, E.F. (1993). Copyright 1993 by Vallerand et al.

Motivational Analysis

Analysis of the data surrounding the motivational factors of this research revealed specific relevance of the contribution of extrinsic and intrinsic factors toward decisions. In brief, motivated learners rely on extrinsic factors when their internal, or intrinsic stature is very high. The four motivational areas, external (need for incentives), extrinsic introjected (fear of failure), identified (hope), and intrinsic (desire to succeed) contribute to the whole person as reported in the Relative Autonomy Index (RAI). Two motivators provide a negative influence, and two provided positives. What surprised me was how much the negative influencers impacted the positive. Students with high intrinsic responses still had overall lower RAI than was expected. The reliance of rewards and a fear of failure, or disappointment by others, played a much more impactful role.

The decision to be engaged in one's education was articulated by Deci and Ryan (2000a) when they proposed the variable of motivation directly affects a change in achievement and can

be more internal than external. Considering high school students are developing a more complex thinking ability and a sense of identity, Miller (1989) concluded that the student would perceive an increase in motivation by completing objectives in which they get a chance to direct a part of the decision-making for success.

This Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A) addresses why the participants are engaged in their education. Results in the external subscale (Table 8) represent external forces that impact the participants. If a student is promised something as a reward for getting a good grade, they only work hard for that one good grade. Therefore the motive is not to obtain knowledge. A prerequisite to learning is studying information. Combining proper studying with an extrinsic incentive has been found to decrease learner motivation (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). This study reveals the importance of extrinsic influencers and the direct impact on decision-making motivation of applying to college.

Table 8

SRQ-A External-Incentives

	Question	Delta	Dual-parent	Single-parent
A.	Because I enjoy doing my homework.	.05	3.27	3.22
B.	Because it's fun.	.16	2.27	2.11
C.	Because I enjoy doing my classwork.	.20	2.91	3.11
D.	Because I enjoy answering hard questions.	.33	3.00	2.67
E.	Because it's fun to answer hard questions.	.42	2.91	2.33
F.	Because I enjoy doing my schoolwork well.	.16	2.73	2.89
G.	Because I will get in trouble if I don't do well.	.22	3.00	2.78
H.	Because I might get a reward if I do well.	.01	2.55	2.56
SRQ-A		.97	22.64	21.67

Note. Adapted from Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A), from the Center for Self-Determination Theory. Copyright 1985 by Ryan and Connell.

The higher scores in this research represent the participant's higher need for incentives to complete an action or activity. Participants of dual-parent households scored higher by a full

point over students of single-parent households. The questions that stand out with the most significant gap between the two households were oriented toward the enjoyment of answering more difficult questions in class.

Data for the second subscale represent the extrinsic factors of introjection (Table 9). Introjection is the influence of attitudes from others on the participant's actions by creating a fear of accomplishment or failure. The higher scores represent the participant's more substantial influence from others that can result in fears of not completing activities competently. Participants of dual-parent households scored higher by about a point over students of single-parent households. The questions with the most significant gap between the two households were oriented toward self-worth.

Table 9

SRQ-A Extrinsic Introjected-Fear of Failure

	Question	Delta	Dual-parent	Single-parent
I.	Because I will feel bad about myself if I don't do it.	.22	2.55	2.33
J.	Because I want the teacher to think I'm a good student.	.16	2.73	2.89
K.	Because I'll be ashamed of myself if it didn't get done.	.15	2.82	2.67
L.	Because I want the other students to think I'm smart.	.44	2.55	2.11
M.	Because I feel ashamed of myself when I don't try.	.40	2.73	2.33
N.	So I want my teachers to think I'm a good student.	.22	3.00	2.78
O.	Because I'll feel really bad about myself if I don't do well.	0	3.00	3.00
P.	Because I will feel really proud of myself if I do well.	.55	3.55	3.00
SRQ-A		1.80	22.91	21.11

Note. Adapted from Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A), from the Center for Self-Determination Theory. Copyright 1985 by Ryan and Connell.

Results in the identified subscale represent the internal forces identified as hope that impact the motivation of the participants (Table 10). The higher scores represent the participant's higher ideal that hope is integral toward a result. Participants of dual-parent households scored

almost three points higher over students of single-parent households. The questions that stand out with the most significant gap between the two households were oriented toward the difficulty of the task at hand.

Table 10

SRQ-A Identified-Hope

	Question	Delta	Dual-parent	Single-parent
Q.	Because it's important to me to do my homework.	.18	3.18	3.00
R.	Because I want to learn new things.	.09	3.09	3.00
S.	Because it's important to me to work on my classwork.	.40	3.18	2.78
T.	I want to find out if I'm right or wrong.	.85	3.18	2.33
U.	Because it's important to me to try to answer hard questions in class.	.65	3.09	2.44
V.	Because it's important to me to try to do well in school.	.55	3.55	3.00
SRQ-A (Higher score, higher aspect of hope)		2.71	19.27	16.56

Note. Adapted from Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A), from the Center for Self-Determination Theory.

Data in the intrinsic subscale represent the factors of the desire to succeed (Table 11). Intrinsic factors begin as goal-oriented and require effort and persistence to be put forth. Intrinsically motivated students will develop the goal to achieve and learn. When the student has a mastery goal united with the desire to understand a topic, the results have been found to align with active learning strategies and positive attitudes toward formal school education (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Table 11

SRQ-A Intrinsic-Desire to Succeed

Question	Delta	Dual-parent	Single-parent
W. Because I enjoy doing my homework.	.29	2.18	1.89
X. Because it's fun.	.34	2.45	2.11
Y. Because I enjoy doing my classwork.	.51	2.73	2.22
Z. Because I enjoy answering hard questions.	.78	3.00	2.22
AA. Because it's fun to answer hard questions.	1.09	3.09	2.00
BB. Because I enjoy doing my schoolwork well.	.45	3.45	3.00
SRQ-A Intrinsic	3.47	16.91	13.44

Note. Adapted from Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A), from the Center for Self-Determination Theory.

The higher scores represent the participant's higher desire to succeed in a given action or activity. Participants of dual-parent households scored about three-and-a-half points higher over students of single-parent households. Each question scored higher and was oriented toward the attitude of enjoyment toward action, activity, or learning.

Autonomy Index (RAI)

The Relative Autonomy Index (RAI; Williams & Deci, 1996) score is established from the four subscales to index the degree to which participants feel self-determined. The RAI is a formula of the four subscales; the external (incentives) subscale is weighted at a minus two; the introjected (fear of failure) subscale is weighted at a minus one; the identified (hope) subscale is weighted at a plus one, and the intrinsic (desire to succeed) subscale is weighted at a plus two. In essence, independent subscales are subjected positively, and the dependent subscales are subjected negatively. The controlled motivations are the external and introjected motivations, and the identified and intrinsic motivations are the autonomous motivations.

Data gathered in this study reveals that students of both dual-parent and single-parent households were in the negative realm (Table 12) of the RAI scale. Students of single-parent

households were lower in the negative range, indicating that those students could require additional ongoing support toward decision-making.

Table 12

Relative Autonomy Index

Decision autonomy	Delta	Dual-parent	Single-parent
2 x Desire to Succeed + Hope – Fear of Failure – Incentives x 2	5.91	-15.09	-21.00

Note. Adapted from Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A), from the Center for Self-Determination Theory. Copyright 1985 by Ryan and Connell.

Hearing the Seniors

By providing students' voices, the underlying motivational factors that influence the student's decision to delay, hesitating, or procrastinating are applied to a college. Schlossberg (1981) suggested that throughout their lifetime, individuals face a succession of transitions. It is an individual's insights into specific transitions that have the most significant influence on her or his capacity to modify (Schlossberg, 1981).

Smith et al. (2009) articulated that the process of analysis should be open and transparent, to engage readers to form a logical progression from the data through to the conclusion. Participants who responded as living within a single-parent household were presented in Table 6. Each participant chooses a pseudonym to be identified for this research. The participants were instructed that they could skip any question and not state the reason. Therefore, the analysis begins as the understanding of motivational factors has been discussed and clarified. Progressing with participants' thoughts on problem-solving elements, factors for their success as students, parental involvement, their definition of flourishing, and finally, the process involved in applying to college (Appendix E). Several times during the online session, with the chat board open to each participant, particular participants were prompted with a follow-up question for a deeper

understanding of their response and to let them embrace the concept of active engagement of the researcher in hearing their voice through the written word.

The results from participants in a single-parent household reveal students with a higher GPA have an associated higher rate of autonomy, indicating those students have been working more on their own to complete tasks. Responses from participants living in a dual-parent household do not uphold the same correlation between GPA and autonomy. The data in Figure 2 illustrates students of dual-parent households have an overall higher aspect of being motivated. The data also shows that, as a group, participants of dual-parent households have higher motivation drive.

Figure 1

Elements of Motivation for Students in Single-Parent Households

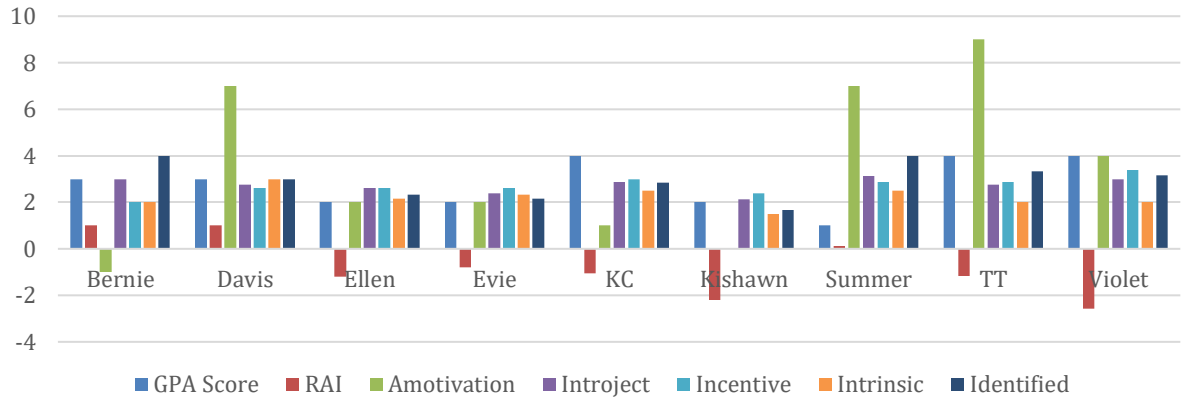
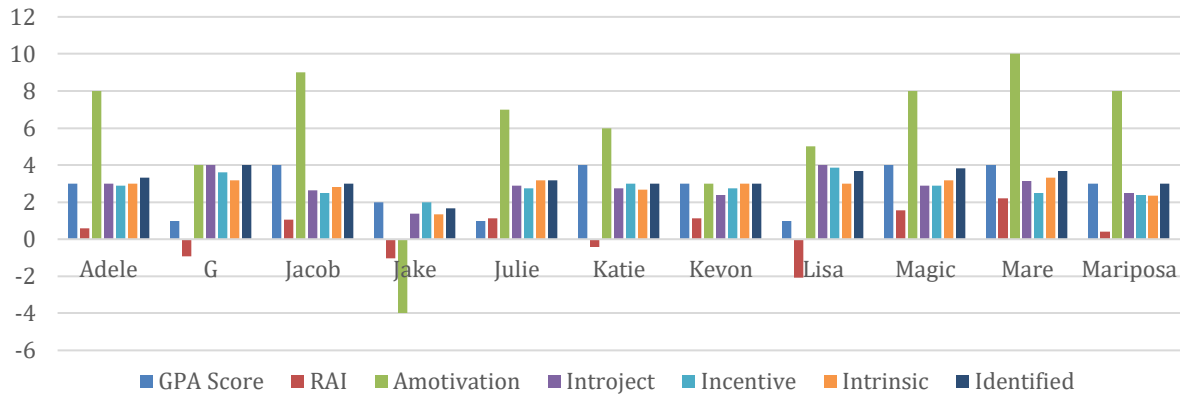


Figure 2

Elements of Motivation for Students in Dual-Parent Households



Response Coding

With phenomenological studies, the coding process (Appendix E) relies on the ability to record the lived experiences. Research shows that 93% of communication is nonverbal and the ability to derive vital data from body language and tone, not just the spoken word (Mehrabian & Ferris, 1967). The importance of research is with a person's eye contact, stance, visual cues, or vocal pitch when listening to the respondent. The challenge facing me is the inability to record the nonverbal cues due to the change in the interview process. The resulting analysis established a general theme for each question with subsequent foci for response placement. Some of the examination from nonverbal interaction was limited following standard coding practices.

The questionnaire was conducted online with an available sidebar chat window. The participants elected when they wished to complete this segment. So watching "remotely" as participants answered the questions was challenging, yet insightful. The data were directly transferred into a capture spreadsheet and then into a text document and arranged by participant name. The results were then analyzed for response themes (Table 13). Participant responses were

read first individually, then as a group, analyzed and coded (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018) for the formulation of themes. It led to the creation of general themes that were expressed by more than one participant (Smith et al., 2009). I was astonished to discover the number of respondents that focused on the community rather than oneself. The data collection mode utilized the online processes and interviews, which allowed the participant the time required to respond. With the synchronous communication, I was also able to evaluate responses and direct follow up questions quickly (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Table 13

Response Coding

Question / Theme	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Problem Solving	Identify Problem (1)	Solution First (6)	No Response (2)		
General Themes	Process Beginning	Process End			
Student Achievement	Directions (3)	Patience (2)	Support (2)	Teamwork (1)	Relatedness (1)
General Themes	Reliance on others				Individual
Parental Involvement	Cooperative (2)	Independent (6)	No Response		
General Themes	Support System		(1)		
Define Flourish	Determined (1)	Financial Security (3)	Social (5)		
General Themes	Goal-Oriented		Community		
Application Process	Fear (3)	Frustration (2)	Time (3)	Inspired (1)	
General Themes	Intimidated			Goal	

The Individual Voice

The following analysis provides a picture of each participant in regard to their responses for the subscales along with their grade point score (GPA, <2 = 1, 2.5-2.9 = 2, 3.0 – 3.4 = 3, and >3.5 = 4). The evaluation of responses concerning the GPA can be presented by creating the

same scale of one to four. Each subscale is represented on the scale with a four equaling "always," three equaling "usually," two equaling "sometimes," and a one for "never." The lower the score illustrates, the lower the need within that category.

Bernie, a Caucasian male, with a grade point score of 3 had an introjected (fear) score of 2.1, an incentive score of 2.0, an intrinsic (desire) score of 2.2, and the identified (hope) score of 2.2. These scores illustrate that Bernie does not require incentives or have a high fear of failure as motivating factors toward achievement. The ratings also indicate that his desire to learn and identified hope toward establishing success is reduced as well.

Bernie responded to the problem-solving question by starting with the end first. His responses illustrate that he prefers guidance and is frustrated with the effort required to enroll in college. While his incentive score represented only a moderate need for rewards, he indicates financial security as the result of his actions. Bernie's score on the amotivation scale does highlight his reluctance toward college as being slightly unmotivated.

Davis, a Hispanic-American male with a grade point score of 3, also had an introjected score of 2.8, an incentive score of 2.6, an intrinsic score of 3.0, and the identified score of 3.0. These scores illustrate that Davis has a moderate need for incentives and fear of failure as motivating factors toward achievement. The scores also indicate that his desire to learn and identified hope toward establishing success is elevated.

Davis responded to the problem-solving question by starting with the end first, too. His responses illustrate that he prefers detailed directions and is hopeful with the effort required to enroll in college. While his incentive score represented only a moderate need for rewards, he indicates financial security as the result of his actions. His response toward applying for college

is aligned with his responses to the identified and intrinsic scores. Davis' score on the amotivation scale does highlight his motivation toward his next chapter.

Ellen, a Caucasian female, with a grade point score of 2 also had an introjected score of 2.6, an incentive score of 2.6, an intrinsic score of 2.2, and the identified score of 2.3. These scores illustrate that Ellen looks toward incentives and has a mid-level fear of failure as motivating factors toward achievement. The scores also indicate that her desire to learn and identified hope toward establishing success is reduced as well.

Ellen responded to the problem-solving question by stating that she does not like to map out the process. She articulated that she does not want to "figure things out on her own," and it seems to fall in line with her parent leaving the college decision to her. Ellen also fears she may not be on the same level as other students. Her amotivation score of 2 indicates that she has some limited confidence.

Evie, a Caucasian female, with a grade point score of 2 also had an introjected score of 2.4, an incentive score of 2.6, an intrinsic score of 2.3, and the identified score of 2.2. These scores illustrate that Evie looks toward incentives and has a mid-level fear of failure as motivating factors toward achievement. The scores also indicate that her desire to learn and identified hope toward establishing success is reduced.

Evie did not respond to the problem-solving question. Her response to the factors that help her toward achievement illustrates that she prefers detailed directions and is hopeful with the effort required to enroll in college. The cooperative home is very involved in helping her reach her decision through a guidance factor, not as an influencer. Evie's score on the amotivation scale does highlight her general hesitation toward applying to college.

KC, a Caucasian female, with one of the highest grade score of 4 had an introjected score of 2.9, an incentive score of 3.0, an intrinsic score of 2.5, and the identified score of 2.8. These scores illustrate that KC looks toward incentives and has a higher level of fear of failure. The ratings also indicate that her desire to learn is moderate, and she identified hope as elevated.

KC responded to the problem-solving question by indicating she does not enjoy beginning the problem-solving process. Looking to take a year to decide what to do in the fall, her responses include receiving patience from teachers. While her incentive score illustrated a higher need for rewards, she indicates her actions lead her toward financial security. KC's score on the amotivation scale highlights neutrality toward college, leaning slightly to unmotivated.

Kishawn, an African-American male, with a grade point score of 2 had an introjected score of 2.1, an incentive score of 2.4, an intrinsic score of 1.5, and the identified score of 1.7. These scores illustrate that Kishawn looks toward incentives and has a moderate level of fear of failure. The ratings also indicate that his desire to learn and identified hope is low. Kishawn scored the lowest of all participants for intrinsic motivation.

Kishawn did not respond to the problem-solving question but was quick to reveal that he wants to see the relevance of learning content. His incentive score illustrated only a moderate need for rewards; he indicates that social construct should be the result of his actions. His response toward applying for college is aligned with his responses with parental involvement. Kishawn's score on the amotivation scale does highlight neutrality toward college and as could be slightly unmotivated.

Summer, a Caucasian female, with a grade point score of 1 had an introjected score of 3.1, an incentive score of 2.9, an intrinsic score of 2.5, and the identified score of 4.0. These

scores illustrate that Summer looks toward incentives and has a higher level of fear of failure. The ratings indicate that her desire to learn is moderate, and her identified hope is the highest.

Summer responded to the problem-solving question by starting with the solution indicating a desire to succeed. Given the proper time and patience from teachers, her responses illustrate that she works harder in subjects that interest her. While her incentive score represented only a higher need for rewards, she indicates that social characteristics are essential for her actions. Her response toward applying for college has led to an increase in frustration and stress in the process. Summer's score on the amotivation scale does highlight her confidence and motivation toward challenges.

TT, an African-American female, with the highest grade point score of 4 had an introjected score of 2.8, an incentive score of 2.9, an intrinsic score of 2.0, and the identified score of 3.3. As one of the two highest GPA's of the group, these scores illustrate that TT looks toward incentives and has a higher level of fear of failure. The ratings also indicate that her desire to learn is on the moderate side, but her identified hope is high.

TT responded to the problem-solving question highlighting she is reactionary and would prefer to improve a finished solution. Given proper time and support from teachers, her responses also highlight her desire to be her own person. While her incentive score illustrated an elevated need for rewards, she indicates her actions should lead toward social construct. Her response toward applying for college is aligned with her responses to the identified and intrinsic scores, but she is moderately frustrated with the application process.

Violet, a Caucasian female, with one of the highest grade score of 4 had an introjected score of 3.0, an incentive score of 3.4, an intrinsic score of 2.0, and the identified score of 3.2.

These scores illustrate that Violet looks toward incentives and has a higher level of fear of failure. The scores also indicate that her desire to learn is low, and her identified hope is low.

Violet responded to the problem-solving question by indicating she enjoys defining the problem presented. Given the step-by-step from understanding teachers, her responses illustrate that she prefers supportive directions and is disappointed in her mother's role and the time required in the enrollment process. Violet's incentive score represented an elevated need for rewards. She indicates her actions should lead toward social construct. Like others, her response toward applying for college corresponds to the time required and the writing process.

Summary

Engel (2015) wrote that as people mature, learning becomes work. As students move from first-grade to high school graduation, high self-esteem goes from 80% to only 5% (Von Stumm et al., 2011). Distinguishing between controlling and supporting motivation through external means would undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci et al., 1981). Providing an autonomy-supportive climate (parents or teachers) would heighten intrinsic motivation. The self-determination factor of autonomy denotes whether the student feels that they possess the freedom to choose how they complete their work (Avolio et al., 2004).

Hossler and Gallagher (1987) developed the three-stage college choice model to illustrate the sequential stages of a student's college choice. Students who decide on one stage to delay postsecondary articulation may not proceed to the next stage—the results of this research highlight that seniors of single-parent households have several general themes toward motivation. Two-thirds of the participants prefer to start with the end first. Within a structured school environment, nearly 90% of the participants rely on others for guidance and direct

support. Without those safeguards, the participants become intimated to the task through fear, frustration, and procrastination.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Robert Frost wrote in the poem, *The Road Not Taken,* an allegory for how decisions can be present each day. A high school student reaches a fork in the road when determining their direction for postsecondary pursuits. Looking at elements of the decision-making process, the course of how to measure those elements is as vital to the equation as the analysis. The nature of human science presumes that the process of human experience is more intricate than a singular narrative of life (van Manen, 1997).

Researchers of psychological phenomena require methods that dive into unique experiences and specific situations instead of testing universal laws (Willis, 2007). As Steve Jobs noted in his 2005 commencement speech to Stanford graduates: "You cannot connect the dots into the future, as those experiences have yet to be written." This means that a person can connect the dots from past discoveries by turning data into knowledge, and through the application of the knowledge, transform knowledge into wisdom.

A synopsis of this research starts with high school educators providing a student *what* is learned through content, providing *how* a person learns best through various inventory assessments, but not the *why*—understanding the *why* is the individual's innate motivational behavior. Usher and Kober (2012) of George Washington University's Center on Education Policy (CEP), reported that 40% of high school students identified themselves as unmotivated (De Castella & Byrne, 2015). The journey of discovery starts with a single step; reflection on the steps for this journey highlights the need to understand the hills and valleys of the student journey of decision-making.

At the secondary educational level, several factors of a student's motivation should be emphasized; belief in their competence, the student-teacher relationship, and the perceived value

of school (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Wigfield et al., 1997). Motivation at the secondary level is a crucial part of enhancing education engagement for postsecondary endeavors (Marrow & Ackermann, 2012). College administrators seek conclusive narratives for *why* students do not persevere (Pan et al., 2008). Vital to understanding the high school senior's engagement and motivation is identifying the factors that center on the noncognitive functions of academic tenacity (Dweck et al., 2014).

It is essential to distribute equally between the level of motivation students have in their engagement with the form at which it is applied (Ryan & Deci, 2000b; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). The differences between the types of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation lead to consequences for altering learning (Deci et al., 1998; Harter, 1978; Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000). When learning serves as a means to an end (extrinsic) then a negative indicator of an achievement outcome is present (Lepper et al., 2005; Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Learning for learning (intrinsic) does predict the engagement of cognitive functions (Walker et al., 2006). Thus, motivation can promote engagement for higher academic achievement. Therefore, engagement can influence the decision-making process as the student would be motivated through either approach or avoidance tendency.

The Research Center of the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC, 2020) reports while overall enrollments are still higher than in years past, the pace of postsecondary admissions decreased a half percent from the spring of 2019. As of 2018, the Research Center receives data from over 3,600 postsecondary institutions, representing 97% of the nation's postsecondary enrollments in degree-granting institutions. The May report established the baseline for registrations before the national shelter-in-place as a result of the COVID-19 situation. The enrollment level represents some sustainability; the actual attendance rate at colleges for the fall

of 2020 has yet to be determined. Some colleges have already indicated they will hold virtual classrooms pending further developments in the COVID-19 condition.

Engagement: Approach, Avoidance, or Procrastination

When a goal is established, and a person moves toward that goal, they have approach tendency; moving away from the target is avoidance. When a goal is fluid, or without set parameters, then a student could demonstrate procrastination. Decision motivation concentrates on how people choose between different actions or different purposes. The work of Atkinson (1966), Heckhausen and Gollwitzer (1987), and Kuhl (1984) maintained that effort requires a decision on the cognitive level where a person envisions the possible action and then considers the consequence of working. Atkinson's theory applies to high school seniors who apply or do not apply for a college by the deadline. Decision-making is the act of evaluating options and selecting the one most in-line to reaching the goal.

The conflict of approach-avoidance is raised when a goal has both negative and positive elements. At that point, approach and avoidance movement interact at the same time. A person may want a positive experience of eating dessert; at the same time, it would have a negative effect on the person attempting to lose weight. Several scenarios can play out when deciding to apply to college. For some, like Bernie, Evie, and Kishawn, the positive experience could be that formal learning is on hold, yet the negative factor of fear is associated with the application process. Attending college could be a positive experience for those with higher intrinsic values, such as Davis, KC, and TT. Still, the negative also plays into the equation from fear of failure.

Approach Tendency

Approach tendency results from the perceived opportunity to achieve success and maximize satisfaction. Data from this research provides insight into how students of single-

parent households utilize autonomy with reasoning strategies that allow them to draw the conclusions they want to produce (Scholer & Higgins, 2008). Both groups in this study scored on the negative side of the autonomy scale, compared to joint decision-making, indicating the concept of a more cooperative approach to decision-making. This cooperative approach highlights the position of others to influence the perceived need for guidance. Responses of participants in this study, Davis, Summer, and TT, have high intrinsic scores and associate flourishing with perseverance and hard work. The resulting data lead to the supposition of a correlation between the desire to succeed and hope. How the two play a crucial role in the development of engagement. The issue for Davis, Summer, and TT of not applying to college is a result of their continued perception of a fear of failure as viewed by others.

Avoidance Tendency

Avoidance tendency develops from perceived adverse outcomes, such as the expectation of failure. A student cannot move toward a goal while moving away from the same goal at the same time. Data from this research indicates that students in a single-parent household perceive that deciding to enroll in a college is not an urgent requirement. The data highlights extrinsic motivational factors have a higher degree of influence over intrinsic factors. Reluctance to apply to college was articulated by several participants with concepts such as; judgment of others about ability and the amount of time required in the application process. Responses of participants in this study, Bernie, Ellen, Evie, Kishawn, and Violet, represented with lower intrinsic scores. While Bernie wants others to see him as successful, Ellen reports flourishing as “not counting on others.” These two positions are not the opposite. They are, in fact, extrinsic and stem from the foundation of a fear of failure. Evie and Kishawn report flourishing as success as seen by family members, also from a fear of failure in the eyes of others. Violet sees the big picture of

flourishing by seeking community recognition. Her response to the application process highlights her perception that it involves a lot more work than she is willing to provide.

Procrastination

Students, like KC, that delay applying for a college could be labeled as procrastinators. Her neutrality scoring and desire to "take a year to decide what to do in the fall," provide evidence for procrastination. This hesitation can be the conscious decision to use the time for other activities before the action deadline. Individuals defined as continual procrastinators fundamentally engage in the behavior when a task was perceived as somehow threatening. The task itself could influence the behavior. More often, the task represents a barrier to a goal and the perceived fear of failure toward the task (Ferrari et al., 1995; Tice & Baumeister, 1997). The consequences of procrastination have been linked to a negative mindset, low self-esteem, self-control, and self-confidence (Lewin, 1935). Evidence for KC, her direct response, "I procrastinate because I am tired of writing" and "not sure if going to college is an ideal way to start making the money," with her higher extrinsic fear of failure score coupled with a lower intrinsic desire to succeed.

Discussion: Data Into Knowledge

The overarching framework of this research is based on the theory of self-determination. Evaluating the influence of avoidance tendency provides additional evidence toward the decision-making factors that highlight the underlying motivational factors that contribute to influencing when a student delays, hesitates, or procrastinates enrolling in a college. A student that delays the enrollment process is 64% less likely to earn a bachelor's degree (Bozick & DeLuca, 2005; Niu & Tienda, 2013). Decisions to not apply for college by the regular decision deadline could set the tone for long-term goals as well as impact collegiate options in the short-

term (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Considering high school students are developing a more complex thinking ability and a sense of identity, it can be concluded that the student would perceive an increase in motivation by completing objectives in which they get a chance to direct part of the decision-making for success (Miller, 1989).

The process by which an individual becomes accustomed to a given situation is called a hedonistic treadmill. With time, negative and positive factors are reduced and thus become commonplace. A natural occurrence of the human brain is the neurochemical process within the limbic system. The limbic system transmits to the body what is bad or good for the individual. When the individual is presented with a good experience, the brain releases four primary chemicals; dopamine, endorphin, oxytocin, and serotonin (Swenson, 2006; Turner, 2018). When choosing to make a decision that would obtain rewards, the chemical Dopamine is released. When confronting fear to continue a task, the right amount of endorphin can be released to complete a sequential step for the task. The focus is on the determination and achievement step to make one feel good about their effort.

Knowledge From Amotivation Data

The data from this research illustrates a small link to procrastination. Data from AMS scale of dual-parent household participants did not see high school or college as a waste of time, and each respondent declared they had applied to a college. Respondents of single-parent households agree with the value associated with high school and college. However, the point differential (delta) is substantial in their motivation to apply the effort as they do not perceive the value in the journey of the college experience. The amotivation score for the participants of single-parent households indicates a hesitation for the process. This score is only one aspect of their hesitation.

Knowledge From Extrinsic Data

In the domain of motivational factors associated with decision-making, the chemical Dopamine is released to facilitate the energy needed to obtain rewards. When confronting fear to continue a task, the right amount of endorphin can be released when completing a sequential step for the task. The focus is on the determination and achievement step to make one feel good about their effort. The data from the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A) of students from the nine single-parent households illustrates an almost two-point lower score within the fear of failure extrinsic factor and one point lower score for incentives. Students of dual-parent households relate the pressure for success and external rewards that contribute to the need to achieve as perceived by others.

Knowledge From Intrinsic Data

One aspect of the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is a sense of belongingness. Oxytocin is released by the brain when a person perceives a high level of trust with others. While trust can take time to establish, the verification of trust will enhance the continuance of building trust with others. The chemical that the brain releases with an increase in the sense of safety when a positive attitude toward decision-making, is serotonin. If the student makes no decision, there will be no release of serotonin, and a reverse effect can occur (Ng, 2018). The data from the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A) reveals students from the nine single-parent households inversely report intrinsic values as three-and-a-half points below those of dual-parent households for the need to succeed and almost three points for identified regulation (hope). The application of this information is the transformation of moving from extrinsic toward the engagement of intrinsic stimuli.

Knowledge From Autonomy Data

The data from the follow-up questions during the online "interview" illustrated that students of single-parent households articulated a sense of autonomy. The participants indicated in their responses that, though some parental involvement was present, most of them scored a lower autonomy rating in their responses on the SRQ-A. The knowledge gained from this data is the research clarifies perceived isolation in decision-making and how they would require guidance. Respondents from single-parent households report a six-point delta on a negative scale, demonstrating a much lower autonomy level.

Academic achievement represented as grade-point average provides insight into the level of confidence or self-efficacy that the student has the knowledge or skills to embark on the college journey. The cognitive category highlights a personal goal and investment in learning. A student with cognitive engagement often views the result as the goal. The factors of behavior, past and present experiences, and the critical relationships all parallel the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) in context to student engagement. The experiences of autonomy and a feeling of belonging within the psychological model provide a clear example of how a student is in control of their life and that a person's behavior is self-directed and guided from a direct interest (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). By providing students' voices, underlying motivational factors that influence the student's decision to delay or procrastinate to apply to a college can be revealed.

Knowledge From the Coding Process

The coding process (Appendix E) in this qualitative study revealed several interesting points of discovery. It is starting with understanding the participant's perception of the term flourishing. Second, the knowledge of decision-making and problem-solving. Third, the process

of applying to college. The three foci provide an interwoven understanding of the decision by students that delay applying for a college.

The first point of reference deals with the term flourish. The term flourish was utilized over the traditional term success. The standard definition of success is the "accomplishment of an aim or purpose." Whereas, flourish is commonly defined as "grow or develop in a healthy or vigorous way." I ascertain that success is the destination and flourish is the journey. Flourish, as defined by the participants were organized along two general themes. Forty-four percent (44%) of the respondents were coded as goal-oriented, with two focused responses of determination and financial security. Goal-oriented designation based on commitment was apparent in Ellen with the response of not relying on others for success. Ellen also scored a positive value for being motivated. Ellen did score a negative value on the Relative Autonomy Scale by having a higher indicator for extrinsic motivators. The combined influencers illustrate Ellen as a student who perceives the need for external forces while attempting to maintain autonomy toward the effort.

The alternate designation of goal-orientation of defining flourish is financial security. Bernie and Davis scored the same level on the autonomy scale, while *KC* scored significantly lower on the same scale. The combined influencers that the three presents also highlight extrinsic motivators as key elements without a favorable autonomous position.

The other half, or 56% of the participants, defined flourish with a socially-oriented coding. The four respondents, Evie, Kishawn, Summer, and Violet, held that each views the value of other perception of themselves. Promoting the ideal forward, Kishawn and Violet indicated the value community service as a factor toward flourishing. Evie and Summer highlight the desire to make their families and others proud of their efforts.

The second point of discovery relates to two questions dealing with decision-making and problem-solving. These two are linked together as they represent the mindset of the student by beginning and resolving a situation. The first general theme centers on the problem-solving aspect. The data reveals two specific foci, Bernie, Davis, Ellen, KC, and TT, and Summer, responded indicating they prefer to start with the solutions, Violet was the sole respondent that would start with identifying the problem. Finally, Evie and Kishawn did not respond. Beginning with the answers, or the end first, illustrates the need of these students for extrinsic stimuli to provide guidance and information. Identifying the problem first exhibits the need for the student to utilize intrinsic factors.

The data reveals a second general theme of the decision-making environment. The general idea consisted of only two specific themes. The first is the cooperative environment, and the second is an independent environment. Evie and Summer revealed parental involvement as cooperative. Both of these participants understood the final decision would be theirs; they articulated that their parental involvement was appreciated and welcomed. Davis, Ellen, KC, Kishawn, TT, and Summer highlight the overwhelming belief that they are on their own when deciding for postsecondary endeavors. Through follow-up questioning, Ellen revealed she was more afraid (fear of failure) of making the wrong choice. TT demonstrated more autonomy by wanting to spread her wings, which counters her score on the autonomy scale. If I were able to have those scores before she answered this question, it would have been prudent to ask an additional question based on a fear of failure.

The third point of discovery deals with the process of applying to college. The data reveals specific foci, Bernie, Ellen, KC, indicating fear as the overarching concern. Kishawn and Summer were frustrated in the whole process. Davis was the sole respondent who reported the

prospect inspired him. Finally, Evie, TT, and Violet were more concerned with the amount of time it would take for the whole process. Combining the fear, frustration, and time leads me to establish avoidance tendency as the underlying route of their situation. Davis is of the approach tendency, and his identified regulatory (hope) score highlights that position.

Conclusion

This phenomenological study integrated several instruments to identify the motivational elements of amotivation, autonomy, fear of failure (introjected), incentives (external regulation), hope (intrinsic motivation), and a desire to succeed (identified regulation). I utilized AMS to determine amotivation, the SRQ-A, for the extrinsic, intrinsic, and calculated RAI to assess the level of autonomy. Open-ended questions in the interview process were utilized to collect personal experiences (Smith et al., 2009) and the possibility to address new and emerging themes (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2010) directly from the participants.

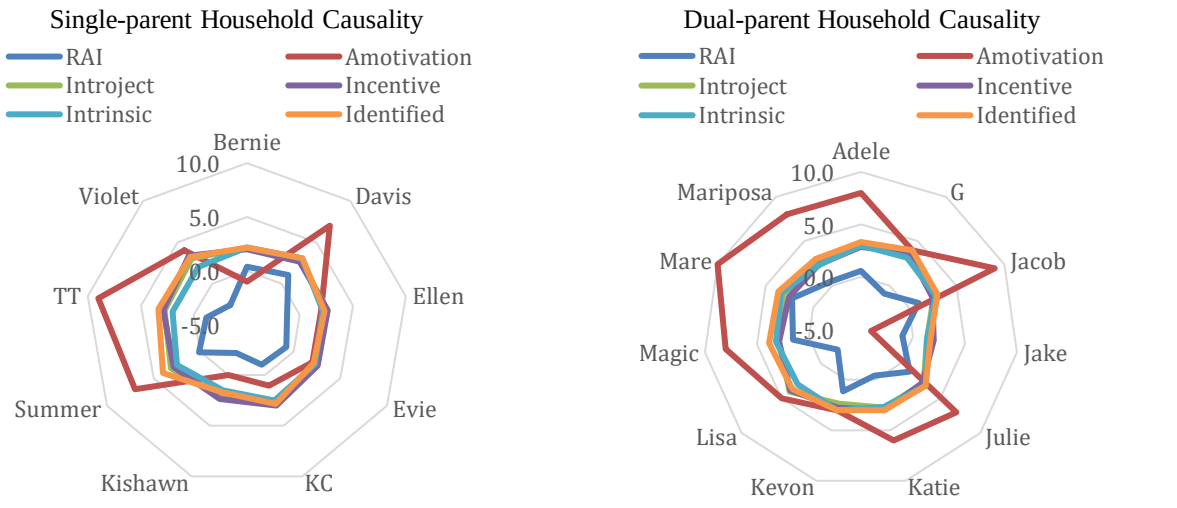
The data from the respondents have been converted into knowledge, and, as represented in Figure 3, the grouping of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators is clearly illustrated. Both single-parent households and dual-parent households show uniform grouping for the motivational factors. However, responses from the dual-parent household participants display higher levels of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The higher responses illustrate to me that the desire to succeed is a little higher than the motivation of fear of failure. The figure also illustrates two outliers; amotivation RAI scores. Interestingly, Jake had the most pronounced variation in scores. His low score on amotivation mirrors that of his autonomous score. A follow-up question for Jake would be the impact his parents played on his decision-making. The dual-parent group was not provided an opportunity for the interviews. The data presented from the group is shown to help determine if the level of motivation stimuli is the same for all seniors. The graphs indicate that

both groups demonstrate associated factors of being motivated. As a group, the participants in the dual-parent household recorded higher levels of motivation than those in single-parent households.

At the beginning of the research phase outlined in this paper, the single-parent household group, as a whole, had not applied to a college as of the deadline of January 31st. With the survey taking place on April 16th, Davis had applied to a college, and thus his score for amotivation could have been skewed due to the variance in the timeline. I believe that Davis responded in accordance with his thought process prior to his application to college. Summer and TT also had amotivation scores that illustrated a high degree of motivation for applying to college. Removing Davis from the equation, the results show 75% of the participants from the single-parent group have low motivation.

Figure 3

Comparison of Causality



The categorization of questions (Appendix A) is amotivation, extrinsic values, and intrinsic values. Results from the survey and questionnaire reveal that intrinsic motivational

factors play a more significant role in the decision-making process. Engagement, and the intrinsic values of desire and hope, lead to the more in-depth application of decision-making. It has been said that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2018) reports that 30% of students who graduated from high school do not enroll in college. Of a class size of 28 students, 32% (9) have not applied as of the deadline. Seven of those nine (78%) were from single-parent households.

The participants in this study revealed their extrinsic and intrinsic motivation for postsecondary endeavors by articulating how they perceive decision-making for their actions. 78% of the participants have not applied to college. All in all, participants of single-parent households scored 69.87% higher for extrinsic versus intrinsic factors. Participants of dual-parent households scored 79.44% higher for extrinsic versus intrinsic factors. Interestingly, the single-parent household student scored 28.52% lower on the autonomy scale. The data leads to the conclusion that students of dual-parent households have a great idea of individualism, but a greater need to prove themselves to others through a fear of failure. It can also be determined that students of single-parent households have an increased fear of failure when positioned to have to make decisions and are reluctant to act on their own. Engagement, and the intrinsic values of desire and hope, lead to the application of intrinsic decision-making.

Evaluation of the responses provided the placement for motivation causality (Table 14). The engagement factors illustrated to provide a guide as to the indicator and force behind the engagement factor. The achievement and power motivators are intrinsic by nature with a goal force of desire to succeed. The growth and social motivators are also intrinsic and deal with hope in making a difference for the community (social) and oneself (growth). Finally, the extrinsic

factors of fear and incentive have a force of learning through social interaction as well. In the case of extrinsic motivators, this is the carrot (incentives) and the stick (fear of failure).

Table 14

Motivation Causality Indicators

Motivator	Achievement	Power	Growth	Social	Fear	Incentive
Type	Intrinsic		Intrinsic		Extrinsic	
Area	Desire to Succeed		Hope		Fear of Failure	Outside Influence
Indicator	A desire to improve skills and prove competency.	A desire for self-rule or control over others.	A desire to increase knowledge of ourselves.	A desire to make a difference.	Driven by rewards for achieving the objective.	Involves consequences.
Force	Learning	Goal	Learning	Social	Social	Learning

Note. Adapted from Elliot, A., & Covington, M. (2001). Approac h and Avoidance Motivation. *Educational Psychology Review*, *13*(2), 73-92. Copyright 2001 by Elliot and Covington.

The current knowledge derived from this research confirms the level of engagement directly corresponds with higher intrinsic motivational stimuli. The presence of extrinsic incentives adds value to the engagement when a person comprehends that the value cannot exceed that of the intrinsic stimuli. A person must define and discover their concept of flourishing for a given activity, goal, or task, first, by setting a goal of achievement. Second, through a desire to succeed by maintaining a positive mindset of power toward self-rule. Third, maintain hope to understand the connectedness of learning and social construct. And forth, not to be afraid of failure, but embrace the opportunity for growth beyond by demonstrating resiliency. The word “fail” simply is an acronym for the first attempt in learning.

Recommendation—Knowledge Into Wisdom

Researchers transform data into knowledge and, ultimately, that knowledge into wisdom through the application of the obtained knowledge. Educational institutions have implemented various plans to incorporate a student’s learning style within the curriculum. Motivation can facilitate student engagement by; guiding behavior toward specific goals, improving energy and

effort, increasing the origination and continuance in activities. Thus affecting the cognitive course of action, determining which consequences are reinforced, and ultimately boosting student achievement.

The ability to move the needle of student engagement toward intrinsic factors of desire and hope requires a long-range vision. However, a vision without a plan is a hallucination. To engage and motivate students, the idea is for students to experience the value and application of learning. Implementing an assessment coupled with their learning style to measure a student's motivation will help engage the students.

Decision motivation is categorized as the classic unmotivated learner. This is where the student knows that work needs to be accomplished but has decided not to do anything about it. Students have reached that decision point. Whether they choose to complete a project or not could highlight several underlying questions. Learners are motivated by several factors: the fear of failure, incentives, the desire to succeed, or hope. As we grow, most of the early curiosity is tested away, and school becomes work. As obstacles increase, desire to learn decreases, and incentives and fear of failure move to the forefront. Erickson (2003) identified the connection (relatedness), contribution (interest), and competence as the "critical ingredients for a healthy child and youth development."

Recommendation One

A resource for school faculty to understand the nuances of each student. Educators have long understood that differentiated instruction will relate to a broader scope of students. To complete the three-dimensional puzzle of student autonomy, engagement, and motivation; school districts should guide students in discovering the personal foundations of learning. Implemented as a school-wide initiative at the beginning of each year, students should be provided a series of

self-assessments (Appendix F) to establish an individualized profile called personal unified profile in learning (PUPiL). The assessments would help students identify their engagement level, their learning style, and their motivational approach to learning. Many students may have faced so much failure that success seems unattainable, so this is as much esteem building as it is one of an engagement philosophy. The Motivational Engagement Matrix (Table 15) shows the breakdown for the motivational thought process that can be attributed to student engagement.

Table 15

Motivational Engagement Matrix (MEM)

			Desire to Succeed							
			Intrinsic					**Extrinsic**		
			Competence	Autonomy	Interest	Relatedness	Relatedness	Interest	Autonomy	Competence
Fear of Failure	Intrinsic	Competence	**I can do this**	I can learn this	I like learning this	I like how this relates	Help me to succeed	Will you help me understand	Will you help me learn this	**I can with your help**
		Autonomy	I can learn this	**I am in control**	I control my interest	I can tie content to other areas	Help me to tie to other areas	I think I will like this	**I have some control**	Will you help me learn this
		Interest	I like learning this	I control my interest	I am interested	I like how it relates to other areas	Help me with interest	**I hear what you say**	I think I will like this	Will you help me understand
		Relatedness	I like how this relates	I can tie content to other areas	I like how it relates	**I see how this relates to me**	**Show me how this relates to me**	Help me with interest	Help me to tie to other areas	Help me to succeed
		Relatedness	Show me how it relates	Show me how to tie to other areas	Show me the possible interest	**I don't see how this relates to me**	**I don't care how this relates to me**	Help me with interest	I don't care how it ties to other areas	I don't see how I can learn this
	Extrinsic	Interest	Show me how to succeed	Help me with interest	I am un-interested	Show me the possible interest	Help me with interest	I am un-interested	I should have interest	I don't think I'll ever be interested
		Autonomy	Help me help myself	Give me step-by-step guidance	Help me with interest	Show me how to tie to other areas	I don't care how it ties to other areas	I should have interest	**I have no control**	I can't do this
		Competence	**I can with your help**	Help me help myself	Show me how to succeed	Show me how it relates	I don't see how I can learn this	I don't think I'll ever be interested	I can't do this myself	**I can't**

Recommendation Two

Once the assessments have been completed, students would be provided a new course called service-oriented unified learning. Core subject areas, English, math, science, and social studies, would be incorporated into the outcomes. The concept of service-oriented unified learning revolves around a learning environment that should be created as a set of independent units of learning, packaged as student-oriented activities, and centered on community-based initiatives. The design, creation, and implementation of this learner-based system will integrate learning styles with motivational stimuli toward student engagement. The school district requires each student to take a half-year health class. As a student enters the ninth grade, they will be enrolled in the half-year health class as well as half-year of an engagement class. For ninth grade, students will be presented with the theory of knowledge. In their 10th grade year, they will be enrolled in a year-long class on the theory of leadership. Subsequent years will focus on school-based and then community-based projects based on a student's area of interest. Possible engagement foci are presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Service-Oriented Learning

9th Grade Knowledge	10th Grade Leadership	11th Grade School-Based Project	12th Grade Community-Based Project
Emotions	Theory of Leadership	Instructional team involvement	Cultural awareness
Language	Principles of Leadership	School climate enhancement	Education mentoring
Reason	Communication	Student Government participation	Environmental endeavors

Extrinsic motivation is categorized as learning-oriented and denotes the motives that are established outside of the behaviors they create. In essence, the causes of the behavior are not essential to the behavior itself (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). If a student is promised something as a reward for getting a good grade on a test, they will only work hard for that one good grade,

and therefore the motive is not to obtain knowledge. Incentives to complete a given task has been found to decrease learner motivation (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1984). In terms of decision-making, an increase in extrinsic factors does not necessarily lead to lower motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is categorized as goal-oriented and requires effort and persistence to be put forth by each student. Intrinsically motivated students will develop the goal to achieve and learn. When the student has a mastery goal united with the desire to obtain an understanding of a topic, the results have been found to align with active learning strategies and positive attitudes toward formal school education. In terms of decision-making, this research verifies Deci and Ryan, the higher the intrinsic motivation, the greater the motivation to flourish.

Human history has been strongly affected by disease throughout the ages. Today's pandemic is just another that impacts the lives of the world. For first-year college-bound students, the impact on the enrollment has not materialized, as actual applications have increased as of May 2020 (National Student Clearinghouse, 2020). Institutions will have to wait to determine the attendance rate for the fall 2020 session. For over 30 years, the attrition rate for first-year college students has averaged 38%. Secondary educators tend to instruct with a broad brush in delivering the content. Educators could learn a lesson from the agriculture community when evaluating the attrition rate coupled with the 40% rate of high school seniors who report they are unmotivated.

The analogy begins with the great Irish potato famine between 1845 and 1850, continuing through the rice blight of Southeast Asia in the 1960s, and the corn shortage of 1970 in the United States (Harveson, 2014). In each circumstance, an individual variety of the crop was instituted. A fast-growing crop that was conducive to the land. The problem was that the one-size-works-for-all concept did not foresee the problem of external influencers. For the crops,

disease decimated each crop. One-third of the human population was lost in Ireland, nearly 30% of the crop was lost in the United States, and 80% of the yield in Southeast Asia.

Compared to the first-year college attrition rate, while diverse instruction is encouraged, the outcomes have remained consistent. If educators choose the single strain of preparing students, they could be following the same recipe. Understanding the needs for each student based on engagement level, learning style, and motivational influencers should direct instruction to the factors outlined by Deci and Ryan; autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Learning cannot survive in a vacuum in formalized educational systems. Students should not be guided to learn only through direct instruction. Under the stewardship of a teacher, competent in instructional content, practices, and able to recognize motivational factors, learners will progress more quickly. If we are unable to improve learner engagement, all else are simply exercises in the effort. When we combine a person's learning style with their motivation style, it tells a much more complete story. The actual value a student receives is how they reach their goals and ultimate potential in a way that they will enjoy the journey.

A students' resiliency is the engagement level they put forth, with little expectations from others. For nearly 12 years, the directional decisions for students have been made by others. Decision-making is the fork in the road. There can be a concern, doubt, or hesitation to reach a decision. In such cases, an individual must be resilient to adjust their journey to focus on the destination. While a students' drive to achieve academically has increased over time, their emotional health has declined (Eagan et al., 2016). This research can assist educators in preparing high school students for the rigors of decision-making in the postsecondary domain. Applying the factors of behavior, past and present experiences, and the motivational factors of

the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) to student engagement, emotional well-being, and perseverance.

The compass for the journey in the presented research pointed toward the question of decision-making for postsecondary endeavors. Self-determination theory claims that individuals have a “wholly” trinity of fundamental psychological requirements; autonomy, competence, and relatedness. It has been ascertained that when these psychological requirements are met in students, their decision-making process and well-being substantially increases (Ryan & Deci, 2009). The data from the presented research indicates the higher the intrinsic factors, the greater the motivation to flourish, and that a higher need for extrinsic factors, do not necessarily lead to lower motivation. Educators and learners have reached a fork in the road. To take the path to encourage autonomy, engagement, and motivation to flourish through informed decisions.

References

Adelman, C. (2006). *The toolbox revisited: Paths to degree completion from high school through college.* US Department of Education.

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). American School Counselor Association.

Appleton, J., Christenson, S., & Furlong, M. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools*, *45*. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20303

Appleton, J., Christenson, S., Kim, D., & Reschly, A. (2006). Measuring cognitive and psychological engagement: Validation of the Student Engagement Instrument. *Journal of School Psychology*, *44*(5), 427–445. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2006.04.002

Archambault, I., Janosz, M., Fallu, J. S., & Pagani, L. S. (2009). Student engagement and its relationship with early high school dropout. *Journal of Adolescence, 32*(3), 651-670. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.06.007

Archer, J. (1994). Achievement goals as a measure of motivation in university students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *19*(4), 430–466. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1994.1031

Astin, A. W. (1999). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, *40*(5), 518–529. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1999-01418-006

Atkinson, J. W. (1966). Motivational Determinants of Risk-Taking Behavior. In J. W. Atkinson, & N. T. Feather (Eds.), *A theory of achievement motivation* (pp. 11–29). John Wiley & Son.

Avery, C., & Hoxby, C. M. (2004). Do and should financial aid packages affect students' college choices? In C. M. Hoxby (Ed.), *College choices: The economics of where to go, when to go, and how to pay for it* (pp. 239–299). University of Chicago Press.

Avolio, B. J., Zhu, W., Koh, W., & Bhatia, P. (2004). Transformational leadership and organizational commitment: Mediating role of psychological empowerment and moderating role of structural distance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *25*(8), 951–968. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.283

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, *84*(2), 191–215. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall.

Barber, B. K., & Olsen, J. A. (2004). Assessing the transition to middle and high school. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *19*, 3–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558403258113

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1997). Writing narrative literature reviews. *Review of General Psychology*, *1*(3), 311-320. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.1.3.311

Bettinger, E., Long, B., Oreopoulos, P., & Sanbonmatsu, L. (2012). The role of application assistance and information in college decisions: Results from the H&R Block FAFSA experiment. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *127*(3), 1205–1242. http://qje.oxfordjournals.org/content/127/3/1205

Bonous-Hammarth, M., & Allen, W. R. (2005). A dream deferred: The critical factor of timing in college preparation and outreach. In W. Tierney, Z. Corwin & J. Colyar (Eds.), *Preparing for college: Nine elements of effective outreach* (pp. 155–172). State University Press.

Bozick, R., & DeLuca, S. (2005). Better late than never? Delayed enrollment in the high school to college transition. *Social Forces, 84*(1), 531–554. https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2005.0089

Brickman, S. J., & Miller, R. B. (2000). The Impact of Sociocultural Context on Future Goals and Self-Regulation. In D. M. McInerney & S. Van Etten (Eds.), *Sociocultural influences on motivation and learning: Volume 1.* Information Age Publishing.

Burks, S. A., & Barrett, T. G. (2009). Student characteristics and activity choices of college freshmen and their intent to persist in religiously affiliated institutions. *Christian Higher Education, 8*(5), 351–392. https://doi.org/10.1080/15363750902917276

Chapman, D. W. (1981). A model of student college choice. *Journal of Higher Education, 52*(5), 490–505. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.1981.11778120

Chapman, R., & Jackson, R. (1987). *College choices of academically able students*. College Entrance Examination Board.

Chen, H. T. (2015). *Practical program evaluation: Theory-driven evaluation and the integrated evaluation perspective.* Sage.

Cohen, L., Mannion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). Routledge.

College Board. (2019). The College Application Process. https://parents.collegeboard.org/planning-for-college/applications-and-admission/college-application-process

Conger, J. A., & Kanungo, R. N. (1988). The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice. *Academy of Management Review, 13*(3), 471-482. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1988.4306983

Connell, J. P., Spencer, M. B., & Aber, J. L. (1994). Educational risk and resilience in African-American youth: Context, self, action, and outcomes in school. *Child Development*, *65*(2), 493–506. https://doi.org/10.2307/1131398

Cook, D., Castillo, R., Gas, B., & Artino, A. (2017). Measuring achievement, goal, motivation, mindsets, and cognitive load: Validation of three instruments' scores. *Medical Education*, *51*(10), 1061–1074. https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.13405

Crabtree, B., & Miller, W. (1999). *Doing qualitative research*. Sage.

Creswell, J. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage.

Dahlberg, K., & Dahlberg, H. (2003). To not make definite what is indefinite. A phenomenological analysis of perception and its epistemological. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, *31*(4), 34–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/08873267.2003.9986933

Dahlberg, K., Dahlberg, H., & Nyström, M. (2008). *Reflective lifeworld research* (2nd ed.). Studentlitteratur.

Darling-Hammond, L., Wilhoit, G., & Pittenger, L. (2014). Accountability for college and career readiness: Developing a new paradigm. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *22*(86), 1–35. https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v22n86.2014

DeBerard, M. S., Spielmans, G., & Julka, D. (2004). Predictors of academic achievement and retention among college freshmen: A longitudinal study. *College Student Journal*, *38*(1), 66–80. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2004-12729-009

De Castella, K., & Byrne, D. (2015). My intelligence may be more malleable than yours: The Revised Implicit Theories of Intelligence (Self-Theory) Scale is a better predictor of achievement, motivation, and student disengagement. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, *30*(3), 245–267. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-015-0244-y

DeCharms, R. (1968). *Personal causation: The internal affective determinants of behavior*. Academic Press.

Deci, E. L. (1975). *Intrinsic motivation.* Plenum.

Deci, E. L., Koestner, R., & Ryan, R. M. (1998). *Extrinsic rewards and intrinsic motivation: Clear and reliable effects*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Rochester.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). The general causality orientations scale: Self-determination in personality. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *19*(2), 109–134. https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566(85)90023-6

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). A motivational approach to self: Integration in personality. In R. A. Dienstbier (Ed.), *Nebraska symposium on motivation*. (Vol. 38, pp. 237–288). University of Nebraska Press.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, *11*(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Deci, E. L., Schwartz, A. J., Sheinman, L., & Ryan, R. M. (1981). An instrument to assess adults' orientations toward control versus autonomy with children: Reflections on intrinsic motivation and perceived competence. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *73*(5), 642–650. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.73.5.642

DeRosia, E. D., & Christensen, G. L. (2009). Blind insights: A new technique for testing a priori hypotheses with qualitative methods. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, *12*(1), 15–35. https://doi.org/10.1108/13522750910927197

Dev, P. C. (1997). Intrinsic motivation and academic achievement. *Remedial and Special Education*, *18*(10), 12–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/074193259701800104

Domene, J. F., Socholotiuk, K. D., & Woitowicz, L. A. (2011). Academic motivation in postsecondary students: Effects of career outcome expectations and type of aspiration. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *34*(1), 99–127. https://www.jstor.org/stable/canajeducrevucan.34.1.99

Dowling, M., & Cooney, A. (2012). Research approaches related to phenomenology: negotiating a complex landscape. *Nurse Researcher*, *20*(2), 21–27. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2012.11.20.2.21.c9440

Drewes, T., & Michael, C. (2006). How do students choose a university? An analysis of applications to universities in Ontario, Canada. *Research in Higher Education*, *47*(7), 781–800. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-006-9015-6

Duckworth, A. (2012). Angela Duckworth on Grit [Video File]. https://www.ted.com/talks/angelaleeduckworthgritthepowerofpassionandperseverance

Duckworth, A., Peterson, C., Matthews, M., & Kelly, D. (2007). Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*(6), 1087–1101. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1087

Dweck, C., Walton, G., & Cohen, G. (2014). *Academic Tenacity: Mindsets and Skills that Promote Life-Long Learning.* Bill and Linda Gates Foundation. https://k12education.gatesfoundation.org/resource/academic-tenacity-mindsets-and-skills-that-promote-long-term-learning/

Eagan, M. K., Stolzenberg, E. B., Ramirez, J. J., Aragon, M. C., Suchard, M. R., & Rios-Aguilar, C. (2016). *The American freshman: Fifty-Year trends, 1966–2015.* Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

Eccles, J. S., Wigfield, A., & Schiefele, U. (1998). Motivation to succeed. In N. Eisenberg (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology, Vol. 3: Social, emotional, and personality development* (5th ed.). Wiley.

Ekstrom, R., Goertz, M., Pollack, J., & Rock, D. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. *Teachers College Record*, *87*(3), 52–69. http://www.ets.org/research/policy_research_reports/publications/chapter/1986/hxzx

Elliot, A. J. (1999). Approach and avoidance motivation and achievement goals. *Educational Psychology*, *34*(3), 169–189. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep3403_3

Elliot, A. J., & Church, M. A. (1997). A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *72*(*2*), 18–32. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.72.1.218

Elliot, A. J., & Covington, M. (2001). Approach and avoidance motivation. *Educational Psychology Review*, *13*(2), 73–92. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1009009018235

Elsworth, D. H. (2009). *Motivation in education*. Nova Science.

Engel, S. (2015). *The hungry mind: The origins of curiosity in childhood*. Harvard University Press.

Erickson, M. (2003). *The Three Cs*. http://ceed.umn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/3csnarrative.pdf

Fay, G. (2000). Uncovering Sociocultural Influences Leads to a Call for Personalized Learning. In D. M. McInerney & S. Van Etten (Eds.), *Sociocultural influences on motivation and learning, 1*. Information Age Publishing.

Ferrari, J. R., Johnson, J. L., & McCown, W. G. (1995). *Procrastination and task avoidance: Theory, research, and treatment.* Plenum.

Ferrer-Caja, E., & Weiss, M. R. (2002). Cross-validation of a model of intrinsic motivation with students enrolled in high school elective courses. *Journal of Experimental Education, 71*, 41–66. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220970209602056

Finlay, L. (2009). Debating phenomenological research methods. *Phenomenology and Practice, 3*(1), 6–25. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6091-834-6_2

Flink, C., Boggiano, A. K., & Barrett, M. (1990). Controlling teaching strategies: Undermining children's self-determination and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*(6), 916–924. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0090387

Fredericks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research, 74*(1). https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543074001059

Furrer, C., & Skinner, E. (2003). Sense of relatedness as a factor in children's academic engagement and performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *95*(1), 148–162. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.95.1.148

Gadamer, H. G. (1984). *The hermeneutics of suspicion. Hermeneutics: Questions and prospects*. University of Massachusetts Press.

Garcia, T., & Pintrich, P. R. (1996a). *Assessing students' motivation and learning strategies in the classroom context: The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire.* In M. Birenbaum & F. J. R. C. Dochy (Eds.), *Evaluation in education and human services. Alternatives in assessment of achievements, learning processes and prior knowledge* (pp. 319–339). Kluwer Academic/Plenum. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-0657-3_12

Garcia, T., & Pintrich, P. R. (1996b). The effects of autonomy on motivation and performance in the college classroom. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *21*(4), 477–486. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1996.0032

Garet, M., Wayne, A., Stancavage, F., Taylor, J., Walters, K., Song, M., & Doolittle, F. (2010). *Middle school mathematics professional development impact study: Findings after the first year of implementation* (NCEE 2010–4010). http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20104009/pdf/20104010.pdf

Garmezy, N. (1991). Resilience in children's adaptation to negative life events and stressed environments. *Pediatric Annals*, *20*(9), 459–460, 463–466. https://doi.org/10.3928/0090-4481-19910901-05

Garmezy, N., Masten, A. S., & Tellegen, A. (1984). The study of stress and competence in children: A building block for developmental psychopathology. *Child Development*, *55*, 97–111. https://doi.org/10.2307/1129837

Giorgi, A. (2010). Phenomenological psychology: A brief history and its challenges. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, *41*(2), 145–179. https://doi.org/10.1163/156916210x532108

Glossary of Education Reform. (2018). Student Engagement. http://edglossary.org/student-engagement/

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *8*(4), 597–607. http://www.nova.edu/ssss/ QR/QR8-4/golafshani.pdf

Goodenow, C. (1993). Classroom belonging among early adolescent students: relationships to motivation and achievement. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, *13*(1), 21–43. https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431693013001002

Gorad, S., & Taylor, C. (2004). *Combining methods in educational and social research.* Open University Press.

Grbich, C. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction*. Sage.

Greene, B. A., Miller, R. B., Crowson, H. M., Duke, B. L., & Akey, K. L. (2004). Predicting high school students' cognitive engagement and achievement: Contributions of classroom perceptions and motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *29*(4), 462–482. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2004.01.006

Greene, M. (1997). The lived world, literature and education. In D. Vandenberg (ed.), *Phenomenology & education discourse* (pp. 169–190). Heinemann.

Guba, E. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology*, *29*, 75–91. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02766777

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough?: An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, *18*(1), 59–82. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903

Gutman, L. M., & Midgley, C. (2000). The role of protective factors in supporting the academic achievement of poor African American students during the middle school transition. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *29*, 223–248. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005108700243

Harter, S. (1978). Effectance motivation reconsidered: Toward a developmental model. *Human Development, 21,* 34–64. https://doi.org/10.1159/000271574

Harveson, R. M. (2014). The southern corn leaf blight epidemic of 1970. *Star Herald*. https://www.starherald.com/farm_ranch/the-southern-corn-leaf-blight-epidemic-of-1970/article_77365f07-bad4-503e-860c-42cb61195eb7.html

Heckhausen, H., & Gollwitzer, P. M. (1987). Thought contents and cognitive functioning in motivational versus volitional states of mind. *Motivation and Emotion, 11*(2), 101–120. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00992338

Hossler, D. (1984). *Enrollment management: An integrated approach*. College Board Publications.

Hossler, D., Braxton, J., & Coopersmith, G. (1989). Understanding student college choice. In J.C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 5). Agathon Press.

Hossler, D., & Gallagher, K. S. (1987). Studying student college choice: A three-phase model and the implications for policymakers. *College and University, 62*(3), 207–221. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234741450_Studying_Student_College_Choice_A_Three-Phase_Model_and_the_Implications_for_Policymakers

Hossler, D., Schmit, J., & Vesper, N. (1999). *Going to college: How social, economic, and educational factors influence the decisions students make.* John Hopkins University Press.

Hossler, D., & Stage, F. K. (1992). Family and high school experience influences on the postsecondary educational plans of ninth-grade students. *American Educational Research Journal, 29*(2), 425–451. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312029002425

Hoxby, C. M., & Avery, C. (2012). *The missing "One-offs": The hidden supply of high-achieving, low income students.* Working Paper 18586. National Bureau of Economic Research. https://doi.org/10.3386/w18586

Hoyenga, K. B., & Hoyenga, K. T. (1984). *Motivational explanations of behavior*. Brookes/Coles.

Hunt, N., & McHale, S. (2007). A practical guide to the e-mail interview. *Qualitative Health Research*, *17*(10), 1415–1421. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732307308761

Huws, J. C., & Jones, R. S. (2009). Diagnosis, disclosure, and having autism: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of the perceptions of young people with autism. *Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability*, *33*(2), 99–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/13668250802010394

IQS Research. (2010). *Community perceptions in higher education in Louisville*. http://www.55000degrees.com/

James-Burdumy, S., Deke, J., Lugo-Gil, J., Carey, N., Hershey, A., Gersten, R., Newman-Gonchor, R., Dimino, J., Haymond, K., & Faddis, B. (2010). *Effectiveness of selected supplemental reading comprehension interventions: Findings From two student cohorts* (NCEE 2010–4016). http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20104015/pdf/20104016.pdf

Janesick, V. (2000). The dance of qualitative research design: Metaphor, methodology, and meaning. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 209–219). Sage.

Joinson, A. N. (2001). Self-disclosure in computer-mediated communication: The role of self-awareness and visual anonymity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *31*(2), 177–192. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.36

Kashdan, T. B. (2012). *Building curiosity* [Video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bv3wQ94G6xE.

Kelly, L. J. (1996). *Implementing Astin's I-E-O Model in the Study of Student Retention: A Multivariate Time Dependent Approach.* Air 1996 Annual Forum Paper.

Kivits, J. (2005). Online interviewing and the research relationship. In C. Hine (Ed.), *Virtual methods: Issues in social research on the Internet* (pp. 35–50). Berg.

Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health*, *74*(7), 262. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2004.tb08283.x

Kuhl, J. (1984). Volitional Aspects of Achievement Motivation and Learned Helplessness: Toward a Comprehensive Theory of Action Control. In B. A. Maher (Ed.), *Progress in experimental personality research* (Vol. 13, pp. 99–171). Academic Press.

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Sage.

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2008). InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing Author: Steinar Kvale. *Sage*.

Langdridge, D. (2007). *Phenomenological psychology: Theory, research and method*. Pearson education.

Larkin, M., Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 102–120. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp062oa

Laskey, M., & Hetzel, C. J. (2011). Investigating factors related to retention of at-risk college students. *Learning Assistance Review*, *16*(1), 31–43. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ919577.pdf

Leclerc, G., Lefrancios, R., Dube, M., Hebert, R., & Gaulin, P. (1998). The self-actualization concept: A content validation. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, *13*(1), 69–84. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1998-04360-005

Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2009). A typology of mixed methods research designs. *Quality & Quantity*, *43*(2), 265–275. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-007-9105-3

Lepper, M. R., Corpus, J. H., & Iyengar. S. S. (2005). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations in the classroom: Age differences and academic correlates. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *97*(2), 184–196. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.97.2.184

Lewin, K. (1935). *A dynamic theory of personality*. McGraw Hill.

Lin, Y., & Liu, V. (2019). *Timing Matters: How Delaying College Enrollment Affects Earnings Trajectories.* CCRC Working Paper No. 105. Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University. https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications /delaying-college-enrollment-earnings-trajectories.html

Long, B. T. (2004). How have college decisions changed over time? An application of the conditional logistic choice model. *Journal of Econometrics*, *121*(1-2), 271–296. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeconom.2003.10.004

Lopez, S. (2013). *Making hope happen: Create the future you want for yourself and others*. Simon and Schuster.

Lovenheim, M. F., & Reynolds, C. L. (2011). Changes in postsecondary choices by ability and income: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth. *Journal of Human Capital*, *5*(1), 70–109. https://doi.org/10.1086/660123

Lucca Irizarry, N., & Berríos Rivera, R. (2013). *Qualitative Research: A Transdisciplinary Perspective.* SM Editions.

Marrow, J., & Ackermann, M. (2012). *Intention to persist and retention of first-year students: The importance of motivation and sense of belonging*. College Student Journal, Mobile, Alabama: Project Innovation, Inc. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EJ996948).

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2010). *Qualitative research design*. Sage.

Mason, M. (2002). *Qualitative researching*. Sage

Maypole, J., & Davies, T. G. (2001). Students' perceptions of constructivist learning in a community college American History 11 Survey Course. *Community College Review*, *29*(2), 54–80. https://doi.org/10.1177/009155210102900205

McAuley, E., Duncan, T., & Tammen, V. V. (1989). Psychometric properties of the intrinsic motivation inventory in a competitive sport setting: A confirmatory factor analysis. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *60*, 48–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.1989.10607413

McClintic-Gilbert, M., Corpus, J. H., Wormington, S. V., & Haimovitz, K. (2013). The relationship among middle school students' motivational orientations, learning strategies, and academic achievement. *Middle Grades Research Journal*, *8*, 1–12. https://go.gale.com/ps/anonymous?id=GALE%7CA369917527&sid=googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=19370814&p=AONE&sw=w

McCracken, J. E. (2015). *College retention connections with multiple influencing factors*. Walden University. https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2384&context=dissertations

McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (1993). *Qualitative data analysis. Research in education: a conceptual introduction* (3rd ed.). Harper Collins.

Meho, L. I. (2006). E-mail interviewing in qualitative research: A methodological discussion. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *57*(10), 1284–1295. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.20416

Mehrabian, A., & Ferris, S. (1967). Inference of attitudes from nonverbal communication in two channels. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, *31*(3), 248–252. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0024648

Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (2019). https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary

Miller, P. M. (1989). Theories of Adolescent Development. In J. Worell & F. Danner (Eds.), *The adolescent as decision-maker*. Academic Press.

Miserandino, M. (1996). Children who do well in school: Individual differences in perceived competence and autonomy in above-average children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *88*(2), 203–214. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.88.2.203

Montgomery, A., Barber, C., & McKee, P. (2002). A phenomenological study of wisdom in later life. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *54*(2), 139–157. https://doi.org/10.2190/28E3-ANPT-UEED-92WF

Mook, D. G. (1996). *Motivation: The organization of action*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Morse, J. M., & Niehaus, L. (2009). *Mixed method design: Principles and procedures*. Left Coast Press.

Mosher, A., Kintz, J., Ninkovic, A., Voobyova, N., Rim, J. R., Sayadi, T., Quan, K., & Woods, C. (2015). *Better to be able to love than to be loveable.* Sage.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *The Condition of Education* (NCES 2018-144), Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicatorctr.asp.

National Research Council. (2004). *Engaging schools: Fostering high school students' motivation to learn*. The National Academies Press.

Ng, B. (2018). The neuroscience of growth mindset and intrinsic motivation. *Brain Sciences*, *8*(2), 20. https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci8020020

Niu, S. X., & Tienda, M. (2008). Choosing colleges: Identifying and modeling choice sets. *Social Science Research*, *37*(2), 416–433. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2007.06.015

Norlyk, A., & Harder, I. (2010). What makes a phenomenological study phenomenological? An analysis of peer-reviewed empirical nursing studies. *Qualitative Health Research*, *20*(3), 420-431. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732309357435

Padilla-Díaz, M. (2015). Phenomenology in educational qualitative research: Philosophy as science or philosophical science. *International Journal of Educational Excellence*, *1*(2), 101–110. https://doi.org/10.18562/IJEE.2015.0009

Pan, W., Guo, S., Alikonis, C., & Bai, H. (2008). Do intervention programs assist students to succeed in college?: A multilevel longitudinal study. *College Student Journal*, *42*(1), 90. https://go.gale.com/ps/anonymous?id=GALE%7CA177412561&sid=googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=01463934&p=AONE&sw=w

Parodi, L. M. (2008). *La filosofía: Fundamentos de la Educación, Visión Histórica, Sistemática y Educativa de la Filosofía Occidental.* Publicaciones Puertorriqueñas.

Paterson, J. (2018, July 9). Addressing the gap between enrollment and graduation. *Education Dive*. https://www.educationdive.com/news/addressing-the-gap-between-enrollment-and-graduation/527199/

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Pelletier, L. G., & Vallerand, R. (1996). Supervisors' beliefs and subordinates' intrinsic motivation: A behavioral confirmation analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *71*(2), 331–340. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.71.2.331

Perry, J. (2010). Critical elements affecting retention of first-time, full-time freshmen at Tennessee State University. https://digitalscholarship.tnstate.edu/dissertations/AAI3433418/

Pintrich, P. (2003). A motivational science perspective on the role of student motivation in learning and teaching contexts. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *95*(4), 667–686. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.95.4.667

Pittman, T. S., Emery, J., & Boggiano, A. K. (1982). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations: Reward-induced changes in preference for complexity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *42*(5), 789–797. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.42.5.789

Ponce, O. (2014). *Investigación Cualitativa en Educación: Teorías, Prácticasy Debates.* Publicaciones Puertorriqueñas.

Pritchard, M. E., & Wilson, G. S. (2007). *Predicting academic success in undergraduates.* Academic Exchange Quarterly.

Reid, K., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2005). Exploring lived experience. *Psychologist*, *18*(1), 20–23. https://www.academia.edu/1302205/Exploring_lived_experience

Reis, S. P., Sheldon, K. M., Gable, S. L., Roscoe, J., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). Daily well-being: The role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *26*(4), 419–435. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167200266002

Robinson, D., & Reed, V. (Eds.). (1998). *The A Z of social research jargon*. Ashgate.

Rodríguez, L. F., & Conchas, G. Q. (2009). Preventing truancy and dropout among urban middle school youth: Understanding community-based action from the student's perspective. *Education and Urban Society*, *41*(2), 216–247. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124508325681

Rodriquez, N., DiSanto, J., Varelas, A., Brennan, S., Wolfe, K., & Ialongo, E. (2017). Building understanding of high school students' transition to college. *International Journal of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education*, *29*(2), 402–411. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1146145.pdf

Royster, P., Gross, J., & Hochbein, C. (2015). Timing is everything: Getting students back on track to college readiness in high school. *The High School Journal*, *98*(3), 208–225. https://doi.org/10.1353/hsj.2015.0005

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). The first phase of analysis: Preparing transcripts and coding data. In *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Rumberger, R. W. (2010). The Economics of High School Dropouts. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGraw (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed.). Elsevier.

Ryan, R. M., & Connell, J. P. (1989). Perceived locus of causality and internalization: Examining reasons for acting in two domains. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*(5), 749–761. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.57.5.749

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000a). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*, 54–67. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000b). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 68-78. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68

Ryan, R. M., & Grolnick, W. S. (1986). Origins and pawns in the classroom: Self report and projective assessments of individual differences in children's perceptions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*(3), 550–558. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.50.3.550

Saldaña, J., & Omasta, M. (2018). *Qualitative research: Analyzing life*. Sage.

Sansone, C., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (Eds.). (2000). *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: The search for optimal motivation and performance*. Academic Press.

Saunders-Scott, D., Braley, M., & Stennes-Spidahl, N. (2018). Traditional and psychological factors associated with academic success: investigating best predictors of college retention. *Motivation & Emotion, 42*(4), 459–465. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-017-9660-4

Savitz-Romer, M., & Bouffard, S. M. (2013). *Ready, willing, and able: A developmental approach to college access and success.* Harvard Education Press.

Schlossberg, N. (1981). A model for analyzing human adaptation to transition. *The Counseling Psychologist, 9*(2), 2–18. https://doi.org/10.1177/001100008100900202

Schlossberg, N. K., Lynch, A. Q., & Chickering, A. W. (1991). *Improving higher education environments for adults.* Jossey-Bass.

Scholer, A. A., & Higgins, E. T. (2008). Distinguishing levels of approach and avoidance: An analysis using regulatory focus theory. In A. J. Elliot (Ed.), *Handbook of approach and avoidance motivation* (pp. 489–503). Psychology Press.

Schraw, G., Horn, C., Thorndike-Christ, T., & Bruning, R. (1995). Academic goal orientations and student classroom achievement. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *20*(3), 359–368. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1995.1023

Schwandt, T. A. (1997). *Qualitative inquiry: A dictionary of terms*. Sage.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences.* Teachers College Press.

Shank, G. D. (2006). *Qualitative research: A personal skills approach.* Pearson.

Skinner, E. A., & Belmont, M. J. (1993). Motivation in the classroom: Reciprocal effects of teacher behavior and student engagement across the school year. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *85*(4), 571–581. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.85.4.571

Skinner, E. A., Kindermann, T. A., & Furrer, C. J. (2009). A motivational perspective on engagement and disaffection: Conceptualization and assessment of children's behavioral and emotional participation in academic activities in the classroom. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *69*(3), 493–525. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164408323233

Smith, A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *6*(4), 346–347.

Snyder, C. R. (2000). *Handbook of hope: Theory, measures, and applications*. Academic Press.

Snyder, C. R., Harris, C., Anderson, J., Holleran, S., Irving, L., & Sigmon, S. (1991). The will and the ways: Development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *60*(4), 570–585. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.60.4.570

Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S., Shorey, H., Rand, K., & Feldman, D. (2003). Hope theory, measurements, and applications to school psychology. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *18*(2), 122–139. https://doi.org/10.1521/scpq.18.2.122.21854

Snyder, C. R., Rand, K., & Sigmon, D. (2002). Hope Theory: A member of the positive psychology family. In Lopez, S., & Snyder, C. (2000), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 257–276). Oxford University Press.

Somers, M. A., Corrin, W., Sepanik, S., Salinger T., Levin, J., & Zmach, C. (2010). *The Enhanced Reading Opportunities Study Final Report: The Impact of Supplemental Literacy Courses for Struggling Ninth-Grade Readers* (NCEE 2010–4022). http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20104021/pdf/20104021.pdf

Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). Psychological empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation. *Academy of Management Journal*, *38*(5), 1442–1465. https://doi.org/10.2307/256865

Stewart, K., & Williams, M. (2005). Researching online populations: The use of online focus groups for social research. *Qualitative Research*, *5*(4), 395–416. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794105056916

Stones, C. R. (1986). Phenomenological praxis: A constructive alternative in research in psychology. *South African Journal of Psychology*, *16*(4), 117-121. https://doi.org/10.1177/008124638601600403

Swenson, R. (2006). *Review of Clinical and Functional Neuroscience*. Dartmouth Medical School. https://www.dartmouth.edu/~rswenson/NeuroSci/chapter9.html.

Takahashi, M., & Overton, W. (2002). Wisdom: A culturally inclusive developmental perspective. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, *26*(3), 269–277. https://doi.org/10.1080/01650250143000139

Terrell, S. R. (2016). *Writing a proposal for your dissertation: Guidelines and examples*. The Guilford Press.

Tice, D. M., & Baumeister, R. F. (1997). Longitudinal study of procrastination, performance, stress, and health: The costs and benefits of dawdling. *Psychological Science*, *8*(6), 454–458. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.1997.tb00460.x

Tichy, M. (2017). Maslow illuminates resilience in students placed at risk. *Journal of Education and Social Justice*, *5*(1), 94–103. https://www.academia.edu /38254349/FinalJournalspring_version11_.pdf

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and the cures of student attrition* (2nd ed.). The University of Chicago.

Turner, C. (2018). Boost your natural 'feelgood' chemicals. *Psychologies*, *4.* https://www.psychologies.co.uk/self/how-to-boost-your-natural-feelgood-chemicals.html.

Usher, A., & Kober, N. (2012). Student Motivation: An Overlooked Piece of School Reform. *Center on Educational Development,* George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development. Washington, D.C.

Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., Blais, M. R., Brière, N. M., Senécal, C., & Vallières, E. F. (1993). On the assessment of intrinsic, extrinsic and amotivation in education: Evidence on the concurrent and construct validity of the academic motivation scale. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 53*, 159–172. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164493053001018

Van der Zanden, P., Denessen, E., Cillessen, A., & Meijer, P. (2018). Domains and predictors of first-year student success: A systematic review. *Educational Research Review*, *23*, 57–77. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2018.01.001

van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching lived experience: human science for an action sensitive pedagogy* (2nd ed.). The Althouse Press.

Vansteenkiste, M., Lens, W., & Deci, E. L. (2006). Intrinsic vs. extrinsic goal contexts in self-determination theory: Another look at the quality of academic motivation. *Educational Psychologist, 41*, 19–31. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep4101_4

Von Stumm, S., Hell, B., & Chamorro-Premuszic, T. (2011). The Hungry Mind: Intellectual Curiosity is the Third Pillar of Academic Performance. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 6*, 574–588. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691611421204

Walker, C. O., Greene, B. A., & Mansell, R. A. (2006). Identification with academics, intrinsic/extrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy as predictors of cognitive engagement. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *16*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2005.06.004

Weiss, C. (1995). Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families. In '*New approaches to evaluating community initiatives*.' Aspen Institute.

Welman, J. C., & Kruger, S. J. (1999). *Research methodology for the business and administrative sciences*. International Thompson.

Wengraf, T. (2001). *Qualitative research interviewing*. Sage.

White, R. W. (1963). *Ego and reality in psychoanalytic theory*. International Universities Press.

Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., Yoon, K. S., Harold, R. D., Arbreton, A. J. A., Freedman-Doan, C., & Blumenfeld, P. C. (1997). Change in children's competence beliefs and subjective task values across the elementary school years: A 3-year study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *89*(3), 451–469. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.89.3.451

Willis, J. W. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: interpretive and critical approaches*. Sage.

Wright, K. B. (2005). Researching internet-based populations: Advantages and disadvantages of online survey research, online questionnaire authoring software packages, and web survey services. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication, 10*(3), Article 11. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2005.tb00259.x

Yazzie-Mintz, E. (2007). Voices of students on engagement: A report on the 2006 High School Survey of Student Engagement. *Center for Evaluation & Education Policy.* https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED495758

Yazzie-Mintz, E. (2009). Engaging the Voices of Students: A Report on the 2007 and 2008 High School Survey of Student Engagement. *Center for Evaluation & Education Policy.* https://cufa.socialstudies.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=dc2d2a22-d5b2-453c-a37c-bb5a94ae7e66

Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, *47*(4), 302–314. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2012.722805

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Sage.

Zhang, X., & Bartol, K. M. (2010). Linking empowering leadership and employee creativity: The influence of psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation, and creative process engagement. *Academy of Management Journal*, *53*, 107–128. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.48037118

Appendix A: Motivation Scale

Student survey to determine motivational factors toward postsecondary endeavors.

Please create a pseudonym FIRST name _____						
Gender	Female [ ]	Male [ ]	No Response [ ]	**I confirm I was born before May 1, 2002. [_____]**	Parental Household: Dual [ ]	Parental Household: Single [ ]
Ethnicity	African- American [ ]	American Indian [ ]	Asian-American [ ]	Hispanic-American [ ]	Caucasian-American [ ]	No response [ ]
After high school, my plan is	AmeriCorp/Military [ ]	Start working [ ]	College [ ]	Undecided [ ]	other_____ [ ]	
I have started the process by completing	ASVAB test [ ]	Resume [ ]	Application [ ]	Nothing yet [ ]		
My GPA is	Below 2.0 [ ]	2.0 – 2.4 [ ]	2.5 – 2.9 [ ]	3.0 – 3.4 [ ]	3.5 or higher [ ]	

Please respond to each question You may skip any question	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
A. High school is a waste of my time						
B. College is necessary						
C. High school is beneficial						
D. College isn't worth the effort						

Why do I do my homework, because	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
E. I will feel bad about myself if I don't do it.				
F. that's what I'm supposed to do.				
G. I enjoy doing my homework.				
H. it's important to me to do my homework.				

Why do I work on my classwork, because	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
I. I don't want the teacher to yell at me.				
J. I want the teacher to think I'm a good student.				
K. I want to learn new things.				
L. I'll be ashamed of myself if it didn't get done.				
M. it's fun.				
N. that's the rule.				
O. I enjoy doing my classwork.				
P. it's important to me to work on my classwork.				

Why do I try to answer hard questions in class, because	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Q. Because I want the other students to think I'm smart.				
R. Because I feel ashamed of myself when I don't try.				
S. Because I enjoy answering hard questions.				
T. Because that's what I'm supposed to do.				
U. I want to find out if I'm right or wrong.				
V. it's fun to answer hard questions.				
W. it's important to me to try to answer hard questions.				
X. I want the teacher to say nice things about me				

Why do I try to do well in school, because	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always

Y. that's what I'm supposed to do.				
Z. So I want my teachers to think I'm a good student				
AA. I enjoy doing my school work well.				
BB. I will get in trouble if I don't do well.				
CC. I'll feel really bad about myself if I don't do well.				
DD. it's important to me to try to do well in school.				
EE. I will feel really proud of myself if I do well.				
FF. I might get a reward if I do well.				

Note. Adapted from the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand, R.J., Pelletier, L.G., Blais, M.R, Brière, N.M., Senécal, C., & Vallières, E.F. (1993). Copyright 1993 by Vallerand et al.

Note. Adapted from Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A), from the Center for Self-Determination Theory. Copyright 1985 by Ryan and Connell.

Appendix B: Intrinsic Motivation Scale Responses

Appendix B Mean scores of the student survey, by question with focus measurement.

Thank you for your time and willingness to share your experiences in your personal and academic growth.
Each question will help you and the school make improvements and tailor programs to better meet your needs.

Participants over 18	20		Gender		Parental household	
Demographics		Identified as	Female (14)	Male (6)	Dual Parents	Single Parent
African-American (BL)	3	**12.5 %**	33 %	67 %	**1 Female 1 Male**	**0 Female 1 Male**
American-Indian (AI)	0	**0 %**	0 %	0 %	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male
Asian-American (AS)	2	**12.5 %**	100 %	0 %	1 Female 0 Male	1 Female 0 Male
Caucasian-American (WH)	12	**62.5 %**	73.3 %	26.7 %	**4 Female 2 Male**	**5 Female 1 Male**
Hispanic-American (HI)	3	**12.5 %**	67 %	33 %	**2 Female 0 Male**	**0 Female 1 Male**
Respondents with a plan		0 % Military (0)	0 % Start working (0)	**95.8 % College (19)**	**4.2 % Undecided (1)**	0 % No response (0)
African-American (BL)	3	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	**1 Female 2 Male**	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male
American-Indian (AI)	0	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male
Asian-American (AS)	2	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	**2 Female 0 Male**	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male
Caucasian-American (WH)	12	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	**9 Female 2 Male**	**0 Female 1 Male**	0 % Female 0 % Male
Hispanic-American (HI)	3	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	**2 Female 1 Male**	0 % Female 0 % Male	0 % Female 0 % Male
Respondents completing		ASVAB test (0)	**20 % Resume (4)**	**35 % Application (7)**	**45 % Nothing yet (9)**	% No response
African-American (BL)	3	0 Female 0 Male	**0 Female 1 Male**	0 Female 0 Male	**1 Female 1 Male**	0 Female 0 Male
American-Indian (AI)	0	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male
Asian-American (AS)	2	0 Female 0 Male	0 % Female 0 % Male	**1 Female 0 Male**	**1 Female 0 Male**	0 Female 0 Male
Caucasian-American (WH)	12	0 Female 0 Male	**2 Female 1 Male**	**4 Female Male**	**3 Female 2 Male**	0 Female 0 Male
Hispanic-American (HI)	3	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	**2 Female 0 Male**	**1 Female 0 Male**	0 Female 0 Male
Respondents GPA		0 % Below 2.0	0% 2.0 – 2.4	20 % 2.5 – 2.9 (4)	25 % 3.0 – 3.4 (5)	55 % 3.5 or higher (11)
African-American (B.L.)	3	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	**0 Female 1 Male**	0 Female 0 Male	**1 Female 1 Male**
American-Indian (A.I.)	0	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male
Asian-American (AS)	2	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	**1 Female 0 Male**	0 Female 0 Male	**1 Female 0 Male**
Caucasian-American (W.H.)	12	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	**1 Female 1 Male**	**1 Female 2 Male**	**7 Female 0 Male**
Hispanic-American (HI)	3	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	0 Female 0 Male	**1 Female 1 Male**	**1 Female 0 Male**

	Survey Questions	Avg.	Focus	
AMS Scale Low (1) to High (6)		score		Focus Measurement
A.	High school is a waste of my time	2.25	amotivation	Amotivation
B.	College is necessary	4.60	motivation	Amotivation
C.	High school is beneficial	4.80	motivation	Amotivation
D.	College isn't worth the effort	2.40	amotivation	Amotivation
SRQ-A	Always = 1, Usually = 2, Sometimes = 3, Never = 4			
E.	Because I will feel bad about myself if I don't do it.	2.45	Homework	Extrinsic – Fear
F.	Because I want the teacher to think I'm a good student.	2.80	Classwork	Extrinsic - Fear
G.	Because I'll be ashamed of myself if it didn't get done.	2.75	Classwork	Extrinsic – Fear
H.	Because I want the other students to think I'm smart.	2.35	Questions	Extrinsic – Fear
I.	Because I feel ashamed of myself when I don't try.	2.55	Questions	Extrinsic – Fear
J.	So I want my teachers to think I'm a good student.	2.90	School	Extrinsic – Fear
K.	Because I'll feel really bad about myself if I don't do well.	3.00	School	Extrinsic – Fear
L.	Because I will feel really proud of myself if I do well.	3.30	School	Extrinsic – Fear
M.	Because that's what I'm supposed to do (homework).	3.25	Homework	Extrinsic – Incentives
N.	I don't want the teacher to yell at me.	2.20	Classwork	Extrinsic – Incentives
O.	Because that's the rule.	3.00	Classwork	Extrinsic – Incentives
P.	Because that's what I'm supposed to do (hard questions).	2.85	Questions	Extrinsic – Incentives
Q.	Because I want the teacher to say nice things about me.	2.65	Questions	Extrinsic – Incentives
R.	Because that's what I'm supposed to do (school).	2.80	School	Extrinsic – Incentives
S.	Because I will get in trouble if I don't do well.	2.90	School	Extrinsic – Incentives
T.	Because I might get a reward if I do well.	2.55	School	Extrinsic – Incentives
U.	Because I enjoy doing my homework.	2.05	Homework	Intrinsic – Desire
V.	Because it's fun.	2.30	Classwork	Intrinsic – Desire
W.	Because I enjoy doing my classwork.	2.50	Classwork	Intrinsic – Desire
X.	Because I enjoy answering hard questions.	2.65	Questions	Intrinsic – Desire
Y.	Because it's fun to answer hard questions.	2.60	Questions	Intrinsic – Desire
Z.	Because I enjoy doing my school work well.	3.25	School	Intrinsic – Desire
AA.	Because it's important to me to do my homework.	3.10	Homework	Intrinsic – Hope
BB.	Because I want to learn new things.	3.00	Classwork	Intrinsic – Hope
CC.	Because it's important to me to work on my classwork.	3.00	Classwork	Intrinsic – Hope
DD.	I want to find out if I'm right or wrong.	2.80	Question	Intrinsic – Hope
EE.	Because it's important to me to try to answer hard questions in class.	2.80	Question	Intrinsic – Hope
FF.	Because it's important to me to try to do well in school.	3.30	School	Intrinsic – Hope
	Total Questions		**32**	

Note. Adapted from the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand, R.J., Pelletier, L.G., Blais, M.R, Brière, N.M., Senécal, C., & Vallières, E.F. (1993). Copyright 1993 by Vallerand et al.

Note. Adapted from Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A), from the Center for Self-Determination Theory. Copyright 1985 by Ryan and Connell.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol Invitation

Dear [*participant's pseudonym Name*],

I would like to thank you for the commitment in sharing your experiences and knowledge for this study. Your responses could help you discover what motivators guide you in the decision-making processes. It could also aid your teachers in improving the educational experience of students that follow you on the journey after high school. The school district is continually evaluating best practices to guide decisions about the instruction and curriculum.

During this phase, I will be asking you about your experiences as a student as well as your perceptions concerning your plans after graduating from high school. I would like you to feel comfortable with saying what you think and how you feel. There are no right or wrong answers. Think of this as more conversational, using your own language and terminology. As the nation grips with the national emergency, an electronic interview will be conducted utilizing the Zoom™ platform. You will be provided a specific URL, and agreeable date and time, through correspondence within Google Classroom.

At any time, and for any reason, you may withdraw from this study. If you are not comfortable with a question, you may choose to skip that question. The entire interview process should take an average of 20 minutes. The responses you provide can be as detailed as you wish and could inspire a few additional questions from the researcher. Here are the primary questions:

- What elements of a problem-solving task makes you the happiest?
- What are the factors that help you achieve as a student?
- How has your *parent* been involved in your decision about postsecondary quests?
- How do you interpret the meaning of flourishing?
- How do you describe the process of applying to college?

The school district, university, and the I thank you for your time and attention and look forward to learning and working with you so we can present the analysis of the information to the educational community.

Respectfully,

John R. Leach

Primary Researcher

Appendix D: Research Timeline

1. Formal approval from the IRB received on: April 10, 2020.
2. Start date: April 14, 2020.
3. Day 1; correspond with teachers to obtain consent – Granted, approved to recruit.
4. Day 2; begin round 1 of the recruitment efforts through the online portal.
   Students will attest to being over 18 years of age and create a pseudo name for identification. Data are automatically captured in an Excel™ spreadsheet. The cell will display the interview [*participant's pseudo name*] for continuance.
   Update, due to the COVID-19 restrictions for face-to-face and online interaction, the interview process took place online through synchronous communication for data entry with one-on-one messaging capability.
5. Identify qualifying students for interview process based on responses of dual or single parent households. Goal for this phase is 5, based on NCES (2018) reports of 30% of students who graduated from high school do not enroll in college.
6. Day 11, confirm, in writing, conference room in counseling department for availability to conduct one-on-one interviews. CANCELED.
7. Day 13, through the English teacher, notify each potential participant in sealed envelopes. The invitation will offer the participants their choice to schedule a time during school hours, through an online scheduler using [*participant's pseudo name*]. CANCELED
8. Day 20 – 22, phase 2: conduct the prescribed in-person interviews of the identified individuals. As the consent form provides for video tapping, confirm with each participant, they understand that the video will be transcribed by the researcher and then stored in a secure location with access only by the researcher. CANCELED
9. Day 24, begin transcribing all responses.
10. Day 28, begin analyzing data and bracket common themes and responses.
11. Day 40, finalize data analysis and prepare a report.
12. Day 55, present to ACU.

Appendix E: Coding

Coding	*Participant responses to questionnaire.*	
What elements of a problem-solving task makes you the happiest?		Coding Pass
Bernie	*The reversing process, which means I start with the end and back-track how it may be adjusted to meet the requirement.*	Solution first
Davis	*I would enjoy implementing the solution chosen by others. Team work makes me nervous, I'd prefer to take directions from the others.*	Solution first
Ellen	*I honestly don't like to problem solve, in the relation to schoolwork. Seems the teachers show one way to solve a problem, when in fact, there could be thousands. The element that frustrates me the most is trying to map it all out first. During this medical crisis, I understand we can't just try every possible solution, but we have to start somewhere with something.*	Solution first
Researcher (chat board)	Ellen? If I may, you responded that with thousands of possible solutions, teachers seem to show or present one way. How would you present the possible solutions to your class?	
Ellen	Response. *Teachers have said there may be a variety of solutions, but they seem to only have one in mind as correct. If I could present veins of thought to promote different solutions. I would suggest a solution could be down this thought line, or that thought line. I use the medical crisis as an example because how a solution might be directed to specific demographics or medical commonalities.*	
Evie	no response	n/a
K.C.	*I like the ending, reviewing the solution. Least of all I don't like brainstorming, as I feel I will be way off.*	Solution first
Researcher (chat board)	K.C.? If I may, what factors of brainstorming were you concerned with?	
K.C.	Response. *I feel like I don't have the creative elements to come up with several possible solutions.*	
Kishawn	no response	n/a
Summer	*I like to star with the solution I think would be the best fit for the identified problem.*	Solution first
T.T.	*I don't like the problem-solving concept. Teachers tended to have one answer. Of them all though would be a re-design process if something doesn't work.*	Solution first
Violet	*I like defining the problem. Then choosing a possible solution*	Identify problem
Describe the factors that help you achieve as a student?		
Bernie	*People are not equal. Some people are more likely to succeed than others. For me, have someone help guide me through processes.*	Direction
Davis	*clearly stated directions and objectives*	Direction
Ellen	*teamwork. I do not like to try and work things out on my own*	Teamwork
Evie	*a supportive mother and teachers*	Support
K.C.	*time. Patience on my part and the teachers part*	Patience
Kishawn	*seeing the relevance in my life*	Relatedness

Summer	*When a teacher is understanding, available, approachable, and can explain things in simple terms. When I am interested in the subject.*	Patience
T.T.	*Support group, time management*	Support
Violet	*Understanding teachers. Step-by-step instructions*	Direction
How has your parent been involved in your decision about postsecondary quests?		
Bernie	no response	n/a
Davis	*My mother had me make a list of the factors that I believe would enhance the college experience. As the question related to my efforts to apply before February 1, I have, as of March 10, applied to two schools*	Independent
Ellen	*left me to make the decision, but did give me some options on location to think about.*	Independent
Researcher (chat board)	Ellen, what was your reaction to that position?	
Ellen	Response. *I am nervous that I would make the wrong choice to either attend or not attend college in the fall. Having my mom spend money for a failed attempt makes me nervous, but I also know that the responsibility to proceed is mine and my choice has to be the strongest factor.*	
Evie	*Very involved in helping me narrow what I'd like to do that will make money.*	Cooperative
Researcher (chat board)	Evie, what was your reaction to that position?	
Evie	Response. *I hope to make the right decision, and that delaying that decision can put me behind others. My mother is very good at listening and really helping me map things out. I realize this is my decision.*	
K.C.	*my decision on the next phase and how'd she be proud of me of my choice.*	Independent
Kishawn	*Not too involved, says I have to make this decision for myself*	Independent
Researcher	Kishawn, what was your reaction to that position?	
Kishawn	Response. *My mother is good at avoiding decisions she thinks I should be making*	
Summer	*They have set me on the path to go to college since my childhood. They weigh in on the finances.*	Cooperative
T.T.	*to figure it out for myself but did offer to go on some visits to see what it would be like.*	Independent
Researcher	T.T., what was your reaction to that position?	
T.T.	Response. *I think my father would be better suited to help in guiding me along, but he is in another state. My mother doesn't want me to move out of the area, but I need to spread my wings.*	
Violet	*left me to make the decision, but did give me went over options.*	Independent
Researcher	Violet, what was your reaction to that position?	
Violet	Response. *I was a little disappointed that she didn't want to help me more. I understand she thinks its my choice, but her input makes me wonder if she thinks it is worth all of the expense and trouble.*	
What is your definition of the word flourish?		
Bernie	*Making the money and keeping good friends*	Financial Security

Davis	*My English teacher says there can be multiple meanings for a concept or word. In this case, flourish for me could be to show others my abilities. Or it could mean to make money. Combining the two, show others how smart I am by making good money.*	Financial Security
Ellen	*I could say to develop my potential. To be truthful, to flourish means I don't need to count on others for success. Success to me is reaching my goals and desires before I get to retire.*	Determined
Evie	*Making my family proud*	Social character
K.C.	*To make money first. Not sure if going to college is an ideal way to start making the money, only owe more.*	Financial Security
Kishawn	*to be like my grandparents and give back to others*	Social character
Summer	*to thrive*	Social
Researcher (chat board)	Summer? Would you please expand on defining one word with another word?	
Summer	Response. *To thrive is to be recognized for hard work and the ability to handle most situations.*	
T.T.	*Doing exceedingly well*	Social
Violet	*Flourishing to me means the ability to adjust in conditions that surround your life. The current pandemic clearly illustrates that we each need to pursue what makes us happy and where we can be essential to the continued support of community.*	Social character
The process of applying to college is ...		
Bernie	*Stupid. Not sure it is worth the effort and aggravation. If I want to be an artist, why continue to go to school to enhance what my teacher says is my "natural" talent.*	Fear
Davis	*I know my grades weren't perfect, I applied to a Community College in hopes of seeing what the experience is like before deciding on a major. Working with the C.C. was fantastic. The college rep was really helpful.*	Inspired
Ellen	*I think about applying and then think why? I will be judged against so many other that I may not be able to keep up with others who might be smarter*	Fear
Evie	*To time consuming. I really don't know where to start if I can't decide what I want to do. I am thinking of taking a year to work and make that choice then.*	Time
K.C.	*I thought about why I delayed applying. First, I didn't want to have to leave my mother. Second, some the application processes required writing a rather lengthy application letter. I know I did well in high school, so I think I procrastinated because I was tired of always writing.*	Fear
Kishawn	*Ridicules. We keep hearing that we need high school information to prepare for college. I don't ever see me needing advanced algebra. Not enough preparing for life to think about applying for college.*	Frustrated
Summer	*stressful, confusing, and unrewarding. Everyone tells you something different on how to go about the process. There is so much unknown and lots of misinformation. They wait too long to tell you all the things you need to know. No matter how hard I worked in high school, I will never have enough money to go to the colleges that I was accepted into and want to attend.*	Frustrated
T.T.	*Tedious*	Time
Researcher (chat board)	T.T.? Would you please expand on defining one word with another word?	

T.T.	Response. *Colleges want us to write about ourselves in an attempt to see who we think we are. I am tired of telling people who I am, as that is evolving. I'd prefer to be admitted based on my academic performance. I don't even know what I want to study.*	
Violet	*so time consuming and I am just tired of having to write so much. Our grades and recommendations for our high school teachers should be enough.*	Time

Note: With the revised online questionnaire process; the expressions, hesitations, and tone were not available for analysis.

Appendix F: Personal Unified Profile in Learning (PUPiL)

The following set of inventories that can assist in defining your; engagement level, learning style, and motivation toward achievement. When you are learning something new and you feel like you just can't figure it out, even after you use a process that someone has suggested, you could have a different learning style than the others and their method might not be the best approach for you. You process and learn information in your unique way, but could share some common learning preferences.

Identity	**Gender**			**Ethnicity**					
	Female [ ]	Male [ ]	No Response [ ]	African-American [ ]	American-Indian [ ]	Asian-American [ ]	Hispanic-American [ ]	Caucasian-American [ ]	No response [ ]

1. **Engagement** is the influence that drives you to complete a task or goal. It comes from a curiosity, desire or from an external force driving you on. In either instance, you need to make the decision to grasp or to skip the opportunity to learn. Different situations and topics can draw on various levels of engagement when you try to learn something challenging.

SENTENCE	COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C
1. I am happy when I	Solve problems by thinking things through.	Get things done.	Help other people.
2. To relax, I want to	Discover something new.	Rely on a quiet activity.	Talk with friends.
3. I often think about	Different ideas.	The next topic.	My friends
4. Assignments should be	Meaningful to my life.	Finished on time.	Done in groups.
5. I like to do things	When it feels right to me.	As soon as I can or put it on a schedule.	When others can do it beside me.
6. When online, I like to	Follow links in many directions.	Search for specific required information.	Communicate with others by emails or texting.
7. When in school, I like to	Explore many topics.	Ask questions.	Make friends.
8. I believe detailed schedules	Are useful tools to keep me on course.	Keeps me organized.	Helps me organize plans with other people.
9. I like to be recognized for being	Curious and a good problem solver.	Organized and on time.	Kind and considerate to others.
10. Completing things shows I	Want to stay focused.	Finish what I am given.	Can work with others to complete work.
Totals	**Learning**: _____	**Goal**: _____	**Social**: _____

Add the number of responses for each column.

Note. If you are **learning-oriented**, you are driven by the practice and achievement of learning. Your quest is for knowledge because you enjoy learning. You become frustrated by tasks that require following procedures than on obtaining knowledge.

If you are **goal-oriented**, you reach for your goals through direct action. You look toward a reference source or the teacher.

If you are **social-oriented**, you take part in learning mainly for social interaction. When you meet and talk with people, you tend to learn things through sharing. You do not like working by yourself, that won't provide you with the interaction you desire.

2. Learning style. Read the starting sentence in the left-hand column. Look at the three options to the right and circle the one that best summarizes your reaction. Answer as honestly as possible with the description that applies to you at this moment.

	Circle the best response for you.		
	COLUMN A	**COLUMN B**	**COLUMN C**
1. When I try to focus	Movement confuses me and I notice things around me.	Sounds distract me and I try to minimize the noise.	I get distracted by movement or sound so I want to be myself.
2. When I discuss topics with others I	Find it difficult to listen for long periods of time.	Enjoy listening, sometimes I want to talk myself.	Communicate and move my hands a lot.
3. I see concepts and	Detailed pictures in my mind.	Think about the concept by listening to my inner voice.	Images in my mind that involve movement.
4. When I see someone I know	I may forget their name but remember their face.	I remember their names.	I remember the work we did together.
5. When I read I	Like descriptive examples and I may imagine the scene.	Can almost "hear" each word.	Often don't like to read for pleasure, I prefer action stories.
6. When I am working on something new I	Seek out demonstrations, pictures, or diagrams.	Want written directions, and then talk it over with others.	Dive right in to try it and try different approaches.
7. When I build an object I	First look at the illustration and then read the directions.	Read the directions or talk aloud as I work.	Usually ignore the written directions and just figure it out
Totals	**Visual**: _____	**Auditory**: _____	**Hands-On**: _____

Add the number of responses for each column

Note: If your primary learning style is **visual**, first look at the graphics and then read the text that explains those graphics.

If your primary learning style is **auditory**, first listen to the words as you read then try to create an internal conversation between you and the text. You could even read quietly aloud.

If your primary learning style is **hands-on or kinesthetic**, you might use a highlighter or pencil to mark sections that are significant to you. Kinesthetic implies movement is important so you should keep busy physically and mentally.

MOTIVATION SCALE – General Instructions: Place an "x" to indicates whether you disagree/agree with each of the comments about your educational experience in general. There is **neither a right nor wrong answer** to any question. Please do your best to respond to all questions. However, if you do not want to respond to an item, feel free to leave the response blank.	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
1. High school is a waste of my time						
2. College is necessary						
3. High school is beneficial						
4. College isn't worth the effort						
5. Finishing an exam first, I am afraid I did something wrong						
6. When faced with a difficult test, I expect to fail						
7. Class work is the last thing I talk about with my friends						
8. If I get a low grade on an assignment, I try to hide it						
9. If I receive a low grade on a test, I hide it from others						
10. To get better grades – I'd rather take an easier class						
11. After receiving bad grades – I feel helpless about school						
12. Completing assignments – I wait until the last minute						
13. When I receive a low grade – I feel ashamed						
14. I feel that my ability is sufficient in the classroom						
15. Taking test, I get frustrated I will not remember anything						
16. When my teacher hands back tests, I get nervous						
Section I – Count the number for each column above						
17. Even if I like or dislike a class, I still try to learn from it						
18. My performance is dependent on my grade in the class						
19. I am satisfied with my grade, if there are others lower						
20. I work best in a group environment						
21. If I finishing an exam quickly – It makes me feel good						
22. Receiving a good grade on a project, I feel more accepted						
23. Receiving a good grade on a test, I feel more accepted						
24. I study better in a group						
25. I study better by myself						
26. I get frustrated when I have to study a lot for a test						
Section II – Count the number for each column above						
27. I work hard to learn, even if I don't get a higher grade						
28. When I do well on a test – It's because I am prepared						

MOTIVATION SCALE – General Instructions: Place an "x" to indicates whether you disagree/agree with each of the comments about your educational experience in general. There is **neither a right nor wrong answer** to any question. Please do your best to respond to all questions. However, if you do not want to respond to an item, feel free to leave the response blank.	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
29. I read more in class than required, because it interests me						
30. I set high goals for myself						
31. Getting the best grades I can is very important to me						
32. Challenging assignments is a great learning experience						
33. On every assignment, I try to do my best						
34. I like to be one of the most known students in the class						
35. I want to learn and understand everything presented						
36. I feel good about myself when the material is clear to me						
37. I like to learn for the sake of understanding						
38. I prefer difficult tasks as opposed to moderate tasks						
39. I do everything to make my assignments turn out perfectly						
40. I enjoy learning various subjects						
41. When I finish a difficult project I feel good about myself						
Section III – Count the number for each column above						
Your teacher will process the information below						
Section I – Count the number for each Column						
Section II – Count the number for each Column						
Section III – Count the number for each Column						
Total						