PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS IT RELATES TO

STUDENT SATISFACTION FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

AT A 4-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the topic of parental involvement as it relates to students at a 4-year public university. Previous studies have researched parent involvement by surveying parents on how involved they are in the higher education process of their students. Without providing student input on this issue, most previous data does not present a complete picture of the effects of parent involvement and how satisfied undergraduate students are with that involvement. Universities and administrators alike should value this information to help them better understand the student-parent relationship in college. It is important to comprehend this so that when colleges and universities seek to include parents in their students' college experience, they can use past and present research to develop plausible solutions.

The bodies of literature and the results of this study help create a link between the research questions and conceptual framework. The literature focuses on several main topic areas, including student satisfaction measures, Generation Y, parental involvement, perceptions of parental involvement, college transition, and the first-year experience. The examination of the literature allows for the development of four main research questions and subquestions addressing parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction.

Data for this study included a sample of 4,340 undergraduate-level students at a southeastern university. T tests, regression, and Chi-square were used to analyze the data and provide results for the four main research questions. The researcher found through analysis of the data that a relationship existed between parental involvement and student satisfaction. The

results of the *t* tests also showed that significance existed between certain demographic groups

for items under college choice, social experience, and academic experience.

DEDICATION

To God, Granddaddy Sol, Granddaddy Rex, Mimi, Paw Paw, and Granddaddy Rivers

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the arrival of a fresh generation of college students, new issues have emerged that

have caused colleges and universities to reevaluate programs and policies involving parents.

Today's group of college students is sometimes referred to as Generation Y (Wellner, 2002).

These students have a unique set of characteristics that is explored in the literature and that

influences their preferences and decisions as they go through college. A better understanding of

their requirements may help administrators tailor the college experience to better suit the needs

of both students and parents. Little research has been conducted in the area of student

satisfaction with parental involvement, so it is important to discuss the characteristics and

uniqueness of this student population further in the literature review.

Parents are no longer taking a backseat in their children's higher education experience.

Instead, they involve themselves with everything from admissions to financial aid to academics

to social life (Lange & Stone, 2001). Advances in technology and communication have allowed

parents to be in constant contact with their children. These advances are partly responsible for

the phrase "helicopter parents." For every student at a campus visit day or summer orientation

session, there are parents who are experiencing their child's first college encounter. The unique

issue of parent involvement has the capability of impacting student transition, institutional

policy, and many other areas of higher education. Increased contact and communication have

even caused concern for some student affairs professionals in higher education (Taub, 2008).

Other issues that have arisen from parental involvement are the adverse impact it can have on a

student's development and finding ways for student affairs professionals to educate parents about not oversupporting their student (Taub, 2008). Gaining student input on the issue of parent involvement will enable student affairs professionals to plan strategically for parental involvement to be a permanent part of higher education.

Consumerism is another big issue that has emerged in relation to parent involvement. Parents of today's student view higher education as a product and themselves as the consumer (Omelia, 1998). In years past, students might have worked two or three jobs to put themselves through school because their parents did not have the means to do so. That is not the case today. Parents are putting up more money than ever for their student's education (Stringer, Cunningham, O'Brien, & Merisotis, 1998). For example, The University of Alabama increased in-state tuition by 12% and out-of-state by 9% for the 2008-2009 academic year (www.ua.edu). The very theory of consumerism leads to a sense of entitlement from parents that in turn helps give a negative perception to parental involvement.

Statement of the Problem

Parental involvement in the college experience is a current area of interest for colleges and universities who are enrolling Generation Y students. The body of literature from the student point of view on parental involvement is not very large. Furthermore, the research that does exist in this area is incomplete because it does not address the student point of view nor does it look at how student satisfaction relates to parental involvement.

For example, studies that were conducted by Rouse (2009), Wartman (2009), and Cullaty (2009) all address parental involvement, but data was collected from different populations than those in this study. Rouse (2009) collected data from student affairs professionals, whereas Cullaty's (2009) research was qualitative in nature and focused on parental involvement in the

autonomy development of traditional-age college students. Wartman (2009) used a sample from the Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center (MET), which comprises only six small public high schools. Furthermore, her study concentrates on low-income and working class families. All of these add to the body of literature, but they are limited by either research method or sample. Considering that these are all recent studies, it shows that parental involvement is a relevant topic, and that this study is different from the ones that precede it. Parental involvement ranges from the application process to financial aid to orientation. It was the goal of this study to compile data collected from students and to use the findings to add to the growing body of literature on this subject.

The focus of this study is to explore parental involvement from the student perspective and provide insight into areas of parental involvement, satisfaction with that involvement, and areas that are impacted by that satisfaction. Specifically, the survey for this study examined the effects of the student demographics of age, race, gender, and residency and whether or not the student was first generation on the student-parent relationship. Because no survey existed to explore parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction, one was developed and administered. Generation Y, or the Millennials, is a complex and interesting group that is worth researching in several different ways (Paul, 2001a). In the area of student affairs, we must understand and adapt our practices to the changing population of students. At universities and colleges in the Southeast, parent involvement has become a hot topic. Although, all of these issues are important, understanding parental involvement with today's students is one of the most crucial. Parents today tend to hover over their students, making all the decisions. In higher education there is a negative connotation that surrounds this involvement.

Importance of the Study

This research examines parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction. Opinions in higher education show how parent involvement has been viewed as a hindrance and not a helper. Parents can assist with their student's transition and their academic and social development through supporting but not oversupporting their student development on campus. The largely negative perception of parental involvement creates challenges in higher education that need to be addressed. It is essential for higher education administrators to understand how students feel about their parent's involvement and how satisfied they are.

Carney (2004) researched parent expectations and involvement with their college student. She stated, "However, we know very little about college parent expectations of involvement in the college experience" (p. 5). This present study will research the opposite. Instead of exploring what parents' expectations are, the student's opinion should be explored on the same topic. The long-term effects of doing this type of study in relation to the college decision process could impact retention as well as other issues that students may face in their first year in college.

Carney also researched parental involvement at a liberal arts college. In Carney's study, she suggested that administrators need to clarify parents' role and what their expectations of the student should be. The best way to do that is by answering certain questions from the student perspective. Stringer et al. (1998) stated that 72% of parents helped students complete college applications, 65% gave advice about school, 57% spoke with admissions personnel, and 50% helped select the college or university.

These types of statistics show how involved parents are even before their students reach college. Colleges and universities should not condone parental involvement at its extreme, but they do need to learn how to foster more positive behavior. These statistics are major indicators

that require administrators' close attention. By connecting with undergraduate students and taking a proactive approach to dealing with parents, colleges and universities can not only prevent potential problems but develop beneficial programs as well. According to Jacobson (2003), parent involvement has gotten to the point that parents threaten lawsuits, claiming discrimination on "the basis of something." This type of parental involvement is what is causing higher education to form negative perceptions of parents.

The literature suggests that parent involvement on a K-12 level has positive effects, whereas that same involvement in higher education is detrimental to the student (Gettinger & Guetschow, 1998). It is apparent that each institution has its own goals and values. It is probably also safe to assume that each institution wants to instill some sort of value set in each student. Universities and colleges want our students to learn how to problem solve and make decisions on their own, but it does not have to be done completely independent of the parent.

Several articles that already exist on this topic portray parental involvement in higher education as negative. It is the goal of this study to show what these perceptions are, and that ultimately students may be satisfied with this involvement. If certain areas of parental involvement can be identified, colleges and universities can facilitate a healthy relationship between parent and student and parent and institution. This will provide an opportunity to do unique research in the field and hopefully provide some suggestions for administrators to consider in the future.

Research shows that parents are not-so-affectionately being called "helicopter parents." A helicopter parent is one that makes crucial decisions for the student rather than with the student. A parent is not considered to be a helicopter parent simply because he or she makes decisions with their student. Parents are more likely to be referred to as helicopter if they are

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making all the decisions with no student input. This ultimately takes away from the first-year student development process. Administrators need to turn this involvement into a positive experience, allowing parents to get involved in specific areas that might better retain a student in their first year. Increased parent involvement is a major change that has taken place on college campuses over the last decade (Wills, 2005). Parents call administrators to complain about room assignments, roommates, and even grades. Recently, at Colgate, one parent wanted to know what the administration planned to do about a plumbing problem her daughter had experienced during a study abroad trip to China. The problem is getting worse mainly due to the tight bond between baby boomer parents and their children (Wills, 2005).

The biggest concern for students is that they will never be able to learn any life lessons if every time a difficult situation arises they call mom and dad. Some colleges are taking active steps to alleviate the problem. Colgate has made it clear to parents that their priority is to educate students not customer service (Wills, 2005). Also, at Vermont, they are hiring students as "parent bouncers" to keep parents from interfering in certain situations such as meetings with academic advisers (Wills, 2005). The students are going to be the ones that facilitate what is good and bad about parent involvement. If student viewpoints can be obtained then administrators will gain a more accurate perspective of parental involvement and what is positive or negative about it.

This problem will continue to grow on college campuses around the nation unless universities start taking proactive approaches to include the students' needs. With rampant cell phone use, parents can keep in constant contact with their son or daughter. This is a far cry from the 10-minute-weekly check-in from a pay phone that occurred decades ago (Wills, 2005). Some parents are adapting to this change in mentality and understand the importance of the college

experience. However, time after time parents quote how much they are spending for their

student to attend college (Wills, 2005). It will continue to be the administration's job to make

parents appreciate the things their students can learn on their own, and the necessity of that

process in gaining independence throughout the college years. Furthermore, it will be important

for colleges and universities to decide where to be supportive and where to be absent when

parental involvement is present. Being supportive would mean presenting students and parents

with the necessary resources to make educated decisions together. Encouraging parents to let

students learn from their mistakes and to guide them with past experiences of their own will also

be important to the process. Some instances will call for an absence of involvement from

administrators. This will allow students and parents to come to a common understanding of what

the student wants while helping them grow as well. These anecdotes show the negative

perception that faculty, staff, and administrators have toward parental involvement. Wills (2005)

ended his article by saying that Clemson invites parents back after their student's first year to

share their experiences. This is the type of positive strategy that needs to be brought about by

colleges and universities.

It is not only important to understand perception, but also how breakdowns in

communication, characteristics of the generation, and other factors can cause issues for higher

education in regard to parental involvement. Daniel, Evans, and Scott (2001) explained:

> Murky guidelines for family involvement lead to inconsistent interactions from campus
> to campus and, more alarmingly, from office to office on the same campus. Parents learn
> quickly to capitalize on institutional chaos and contact a different administrator when
> they do not achieve their desired outcome at the first point of contact. (p. 3)

This is the exact type of institutional behavior that leads to problems with parental involvement.

It is imperative that in this generation colleges create relationships between parents and the

school that foster development and educational growth (Daniel et al., 2001).

The characteristics of college students such as socioeconomic background, ethnicity, and family dynamics can also drive parental involvement and student development. It is vital to recognize the need for and level of both parental involvement and student socialization. Parents are much more likely to be involved if they view their college-aged student as a child (Daniel et al., 2001). This kind of behavior could eventually lead to other problems as well. Daniel et al. wrote, "Their parents scheduled campus visits, dominated the interactions while there, outlined or even wrote major parts of their college application, and decided whether the students would attend prematriculation orientations" (p. 4). Keeping control of the student in such a way causes the students to lose out on the learning experience. It also prevents them from being able to adapt to change, which could have a major impact on their after-college lives.

For institutions to encourage and maintain a level of healthy parent involvement, they must develop a strategy or philosophy. Many parents feel that they have the right to know everything about their student because they pay tuition (Daniel et al., 2001). However, they are prevented from obtaining certain statistics because of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). A parental involvement strategy should be spearheaded by areas of enrollment management. The message that they present should be consistent with those of residential life, academic affairs, and judicial affairs (Daniel et al., 2001): concern for student success first and concern for what the parent wants second. After all, colleges and universities must retain their students to be effective.

The face of higher education is changing constantly. In a highly competitive higher education environment, colleges and universities must structure programs to meet the needs of the student (Daniel et al., 2001). Establishing a consistent message is critical. According to

Daniel et al., "Orientation leaders should not prioritize involvement with especially enjoyable or prestigious families while ignoring the presence of others" (p. 8).

The Daniel et al. (2001) study has the potential to be extremely beneficial to administrators. Colleges all too often take the role of not involving the parent or involving the parent too much. By learning more about parent involvement in the first year of college, universities will be able to make educated decisions about what level of involvement is healthy and in what areas it will be most useful. It is important that colleges become conscious of how parents are involved in order to persuade them to let their children make their own decisions. This ability to make independent decisions may have the potential to play a major role in student success and education.

Each generation has its own unique characteristics, as does Generation Y. It is important to find new and creative ways to relate to students. Researching parental involvement in the college process can provide insight into how to identify with this generation of students. The goal of this dissertation is to further understand student expectations of parental involvement. If trends can be recognized, then measures can be taken to deal with this growing concern on college campuses. In addition, a plan of action can be developed and integrated to benefit both students and parents while still supporting the institution's mission and goals. Gathering student perceptions and opinions of parent involvement will assure that administrators know what affect parent involvement has. We may find that negative opinions on this subject are a result of jaded administrators.

There has not been a great deal of research done on this particular subject, and the research that has been conducted tends to only scratch the surface of parental involvement and portray it as an extremely negative issue. By conducting student-based research on parent

involvement, we may find that parents have a large, positive influence on a student's first year. Students can provide information that we cannot receive from parents. Until students have input into this topic, it will be difficult for colleges and universities to determine appropriate strategies for accommodating both student and parent needs as they relate to a child's college experience. This research may show that parental involvement is not negative, and that students are actually satisfied with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Still, the issue remains that colleges and universities will perceive parental involvement as negative on varying levels until the research proves otherwise.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on several different areas of literature that will support the significance of this topic as well as provide a conceptual framework for the study. The literature shows that parent involvement is a complex and intricate part of higher education. Chapter 2 examines seven main bodies of literature. The first is the conceptual framework for the study. The literature will then turn to student satisfaction measures, Generation Y, parental involvement, perceptions of parental involvement, college transition, and the first-year experience. Research shows parental involvement in a number of areas including college choice, financial aid, admissions, and other areas of higher education. The section on perceptions of parental involvement helps to identify how higher education views parental involvement and the biases and barriers that it creates, instead of what areas parents are involved in. Finally, this chapter researches different areas of the first-year experience. This is done to draw comparisons to parent involvement and other features of student engagement and success. By studying these bodies of literature, gaps in research can be found which will help develop the survey instrument and research questions.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework developed for this study is based on exploring the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) identified three constructs that influence parents' involvement decisions. These were used to ground the study and provide the layering for the research questions. Hoover-Dempsey and

Sandler were supplemented by Walker-Marshall and Hudson (1999), along with the NSSE conceptual framework, which helped explain the student satisfaction component of this study and develop the survey.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) conducted a review that examined three constructs that influence parent involvement decisions. The constructs include (1) parents' role construction, or beliefs about what they are supposed to do; (2) parents' sense of efficacy, or beliefs that they can benefit children; and (3) parents' perceptions of opportunities and barriers to involvement. These constructs were developed on the K-12 level, although this model's primary focus is on what parents think and do and the roles that they have constructed for themselves. This model of the parent-involvement process can be directly related to this study (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995).

The first construct is role construction. Role construction establishes the range of activities and forms of involvement that parents and schools consider important and possible (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). For this study, role construction can affect all three of the areas of involvement including college choice, academic, and social as it relates to student satisfaction. According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995), when schools communicate frequently with their group members (parents), there is more success in maintaining parental involvement and greater satisfaction as well.

The second construct is parents' sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school. Parents who hold positive efficacy beliefs assume that their involvement will be beneficial. The survey seeks to collect data on this from the student point of view to analyze whether students believe this involvement is positive. This is supported by Johnson (2004), Wills (2005), Jacobson (2003), and Toor (2000) in their research concerning perceptions and

other factors that can affect parental involvement. For example, for this study socioeconomic (McDonough, 1997; Perna & Titus, 2005; Stringer 1998), generational (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Paul, 2001a), and even social characteristics (Cohen, 2009; Wells, 2008) could have some bearing on how involved a parent might become, and how satisfied a student is with that involvement. Parents could possibly have certain beliefs about higher education or their students that would cause them to become more or less involved. For example, if the parents of a student did not attend college they may not see the value and therefore might not be as involved, which could affect student satisfaction with their college experience.

The third major construct that influences parents' involvement decisions is the extent to which they perceive the school wants them to be involved. This construct of the model also takes into account any barriers and obstacles (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). One barrier could be the mostly negative perception of parental involvement in higher education that is further discussed in the literature review. If colleges and universities present an attitude toward parents that is negative then it might provide a barrier for parental involvement. A negative perception of parental involvement could be further exacerbated if the study finds that students are largely satisfied with the level of parental involvement.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) also served as a component of this framework in a supplementary role to what Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) developed. NSSE contributed to the framework of this study in regard to satisfaction. NSSE evaluates satisfaction through the College Student Report (http://nsse.iub.edu). This instrument asks students to answer a series of questions on multiple aspects of their college experience. The survey ends by asking students to evaluate their educational experience and whether or not they would attend the same institution if they were to start over (http://nsse.iub.edu). NSSE also

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focuses on how certain institutional practices can lead to high levels of student engagement. Although this study will look at involvement as it relates to satisfaction, the conceptual framework from NSSE is very closely related (http://nsse.iub.edu).

Walker-Marshall and Hudson (1999) conducted a study of student satisfaction and student success at the University System of Georgia. In this particular study, the ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS) was used to assess student satisfaction with college services and environment. The most important question asked students how satisfied they were with *this college in general*. In addition, demographics were taken into account as well as variables such as whether the college they were attending was their first choice.

The SOS was designed to measure satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 5 (*very satisfied*) (Walker-Marshall & Hudson, 1999). The SOS assisted in developing the satisfaction section of the survey in conjunction with NSSE. The College Student Report that was developed by NSSE focused on the frequency with which students are involved in college activities, if they took advantage of learning opportunities, and even student perceptions of satisfaction (http://nsse.iub.edu). NSSE also includes a good deal of demographic questions such as race, gender, and age, which were taken into consideration when developing the survey instrument for this study. Another interesting result of the SOS study is that "maturation or length of time in college may also play a role in satisfaction. Juniors and seniors were slightly less satisfied than freshmen and sophomores" (p. 12). Length of time in college is important to note because it could affect student satisfaction with parental involvement. Over time, students may want less involvement from parents, and both this study and the one conducted by Walker-Marshall and Hudson surveyed all undergraduate students. This study assisted in developing the demographic questions as well.

In Table 1 Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995) constructs are laid against the backdrop of parental involvement as it relates to college choice, academic involvement, and social involvement. Student satisfaction can be seen as either positive or negative. A similar table could be drawn for the other variables of college choice, academic involvement, and student satisfaction. However, the variable of parental involvement is foundational for this study because college choice, academic involvement, and social involvement are measured by it. They are used this way so that the level of parental involvement can be studied from the student prospective.

Table 1

Visual Representation of Conceptual Framework

	Student Satisfaction	
Parent involvement process	Role Construction	Sense of efficacy
	Perceptions from school	Barriers and obstacles

According to Calabrese (2006), the conceptual framework is in essence providing the ideas, constructs, experiences, and facts surrounding the study. For this study, the model for the parent-involvement process developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) helped provide an explanation of the relationship among factors, constructs, or key variables in the inquiry. Once data was collected from students, it was not analyzed for the purpose of placing them in one of three constructs from Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995). Instead, the constructs of this framework functioned as the backdrop for the study rather than the forefront.

Another component of Calabrese's (2006) explanation of a conceptual framework is how the theory used allows the researcher to identify a model for what is happening. For this particular study, the research focused on parental involvement in college choice, academic involvement, and social involvement. The students surveyed provided insight into their perceptions, expectations, level of satisfaction, and level of parental involvement in these three areas. All of this is explained in depth in chapter 3.

Whereas Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995) model assisted with the development of the involvement piece of this study, NSSE and Walker-Marshall and Hudson (1999) facilitated the satisfaction constructs of the survey. In particular, Items 13 and 14 of the College Student Report helped keep the survey for this study on target because they provided ideas on how to measure satisfaction related to involvement. Furthermore, all three of these studies provided layering for the research that is being conducted and helped ground the study. Calabrese (2006) simply provided the reasoning for using a conceptual framework, whereas Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995), NSSE, and Walker-Marshall and Hudson (1999) supplied the framework itself.

College Transition

College transition is another important component of this study. Transition needs to be discussed to better understand the conceptual framework of the study, as well as how parents and demographics can and do affect transition to college. Cohen (2009) explained, "The college transition is a transformation from dependence to independence, from being a mere product of one's upbringing to being a responsible individual who makes real choices, practical and philosophical, about one's path in life" (p. 9). If one's upbringing can affect the transition to college, then it is safe to assume that parents or guardians will have an impact in this topic area. Cohen (2009) mentioned that his transition to college was at the least eye-opening, especially in

terms of the diversity of the world. This is important to this study because the selected survey

population needs to contain the diversity of public institutions to provide rich data.

The issue of diversity in college transition is further discussed in studies conducted by

Terenzini et al. (1993) and Locks, Hurtado, Bowman, and Oseguera (2008). Locks et al.

mentioned that race can play a major role in one's transition to college. Factors of successful

transition include family support and relationships. Linking this information to the present study

would show that race is an important factor to include and that parent involvement could

influence if a student experiences successful college transition.

To further back this, Locks et al. (2008) stated, "Early social experiences in college are

influenced by the students' experiences prior to college as well as by their experiences with

different racial/ethnic groups in college" (p. 261). It is clear that parents influence prior

experiences that will be carried over when students transition into college. The findings in the

study conducted by Terenzini et al. (1993) continue to support the point that many factors affect

transition. For example, the students' social, family, and educational backgrounds persist as

themes that affect college transition. This supports the use of the demographic questions chosen

for this study in addition to parents having an impact on their students' transition to college.

In the Terenzini et al. (2008) study, one of the participants mentioned that attending

college was never in question because both parents attended. Once again the theme of parents is

brought forth in regard to college choice. It is also cited that first generation college students'

adaptation to college was much more difficult (Terenzini et al., 2008). This is almost certainly

due to the fact that their parents have never attended college and could not be used as a reliable

resource for transition purposes.

Locks et al. (2008) studied this trend, using the phrase *precollege environment* when referring to how this can impact the nature of a student's interactions with diverse peers in college. Precollege environment includes parents, and successful interaction in college is another crucial variable in regard to transition. The Terenzini et al. (1993) and Locks et al. (2008) studies broaden the scope of this study in regard to parental involvement and transition, providing insight into external factors that affect transition. They help to reaffirm the survey that is being used and the impact that parents may potentially have in several areas of their students' college experience**.**

<div align="center">Student Satisfaction Measures</div>

To fully understand the components of this study, it is helpful to examine measures of student satisfaction. Not only does this aid in tying the conceptual framework to the study, but it assists in analyzing the data produced from the survey. Two different measures of student satisfaction that closely relate to this body of research were used in a study conducted by Franklin (1994).

Franklin (1994) used a student satisfaction survey in a study at East Tennessee State University (ETSU) called the Enrolled Student Survey (ESS). The ESS was designed by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission to measure six dimensions of student education experience: overall satisfaction, involvement, personal development, learning, major instruction and advising, and major curriculum (Franklin, 1994).

The ESS contained a 77-question measurement of which 69 of the questions were on a 3- to 5-point Likert scale. Of those 69 questions, each one measured student attitude specific to one of the aforementioned six dimensions. The other eight questions pertained to demographics.

Demographic variables included gender, age, and ethnic group (Franklin, 1994). These were very similar to ones used for this study.

Both the Student Opinion Survey and the Enrolled Student Survey are useful measures of student satisfaction. Many similarities can be drawn between the surveys used by Walker-Marshall and Hudson (1999) and Franklin (1994). The SOS and ESS provide helpful measures of student satisfaction, which will correlate with this study on parental involvement.

<div align="center">Generation Y</div>

According to Neuborne and Kerwin (1999), the generation of Americans that currently inhabits college campuses, as well as those to come for the next 10 years, is known as Generation Y. In addition, this generation is referred to by an array of other nicknames: Echo Boomers, Nexters, and Millennials. Depending on the source quoted, this generation was born between 1976-1979 and 1995-1998. Neuborne and Kerwin (1999) described Generation Y as being born between 1979 and 1994. Others, such as Paul (2001b), stated that this generation was born between 1977 and 1994. With these varying definitions, this means that persons of this generation could currently be as young as 12 years old, and as old as 32 years old.

The Generation Y population totals over 71 million (Paul, 2001a), which is three times the size of Generation X (Neuborne & Kerwin, 1999). This generation's sheer girth means there are more students going off to college. The study, *Crossing the Great Divide: Can We Achieve Equity When Generation Y Goes to College?,* suggests that the combined undergraduate populations at the nation's private, public, and community colleges will grow from 13.4 million students in 1995 to about 16 million in 2015 (Humphreys, 2000).

Further research in 2008 by the legislative analyst's Office of Higher Education (LAO) shows that the college population has average about 2% growth per year. However, this is a

trend that will seemingly slow and even begin to shrink after 2009. According to the LAO, a decade from now the college population will be roughly the same as it is now (www.lao.ca.gov).

Although Generation Y resembles the Baby Boomer generation in size, it is very different in other ways. Generation Y is very racially diverse; one in three is not White (Neuborne & Kerwin, 1999). Howe and Strauss (2000) explained that according to new census data, 35% of the Millennial Generation, age 19 and under, is either Latino or non-White. Omelia (1998) stated that Generation Y is the most culturally diverse generation yet. She further stated that 9 out of 10 children under the age of 12 have friends of different ethnicity than their own.

Generation Y is not only diverse in race and ethnicity, it is also rather diverse in living arrangements. According to Wellner (2002), more and more Generation Y youth live with both parents. Further, 68% of Generation Y youth live with both of their parents, 22% live with their mother only, and 4% live with their father only (Wellner, 2002). Likewise, according to Neuborne and Kerwin (1999), one in four persons of Generation Y lives in a single-parent household. According to Howe and Strauss (2000), every generation comes with its new attitudes and characteristics. Howe and Strauss maintained that Generation Y reveals several primary traits that differentiate it from earlier generations, such as the Baby Boomers and Generation X.

According to Tulgan and Martin (2001), Generation Y is extremely techno savvy. Seventy-five percent of Generation Y has a computer at home, and 50% have access to the internet from home (Omelia, 1998). This generation is an extremely digital population, and most have been using computers from a very young age (Tulgan & Martin, 2001).

Howe and Strauss (2000) explained that *The New York Times* refers to this generation as "neo-traditional" in terms on the new emphasis on values and character. Howe and Strauss

further stated that approximately 94% of Generation Y students trust their parents, and 80% have really important talks with them. Tulgan and Martin (2001) claimed that Generation Y might be the most socially conscience generation since the 1960s. Responding to messages from schools, homes, and churches that they can make a difference, Generation Y students are exhibiting behaviors that embrace the environment, poverty, and community problems. These students contribute much to their society (Tulgan & Martin, 2001). Paul (2001b) explained that 73% of Generation Y says they have volunteered in the past year, and 9 out of 10 expect to do so in the future.

Howe and Strauss (2000) declared that Generation Y is more culturally cynical, more economically independent, more risk prone with sex and drugs and crime, and that that they are more pessimistic when it comes to the economy and their future. However, Howe and Strauss maintained that these were misleading characteristics. They said that the behavioral data contradicts these previous assumptions. Within Generation Y, crime is down, abortion rates are down, and even cigarette and tobacco use is down (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Further, O'Reilly (2000) stated that the Millennials or Generation Y teenagers appear to be warm, confident, and upbeat, with little of the moral antiestablishment types of the 1960s.

As well as possessing the characteristics that O'Reilly explains, Generation Y is very team-oriented according to Howe and Strauss (2000). These students even seek out different work skills than in the past. Some of those include wanting to get along well with others they work with, being part of a team, using technology, and relating well to other races. Cooperation and collaboration are a much greater part of this generation than that of their parents (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

Martlett (1999) stated that Generation Y is very heavily influenced by peers and brand names. Further, Generation Y is particularly susceptible to what brand peers like or do not like. For example, the highly caffeinated soda Mountain Dew has become one of the biggest hits with Generation Y, but the drink's success has little to do with advertising. Instead, Generation Y found out about Mountain Dew from their most trusted endorsers—each other (Neuborne & Kerwin, 1999). According to O'Reilly (2000), individuals who are part of Generation Y have an extraordinarily close bond to their friends. Friends seem to be a part of every generation, but this group is more emotionally attached than ever.

Generation Y is the most education-minded generation in history (Tulgan & Martin, 2001). Generation Y students recognize that the key to their success lies in advanced learning. Approximately, 90% of high school seniors expect to attend college, 70% of them expect to work in professional jobs, 70% believe college is necessary to meet their career goals, and 40% of college freshmen expect to get their master's degree. It is in these areas that parents have great influence and involvement in their student's life. Therefore, more high school students than ever are taking harder college prep courses (Tulgan & Martin, 2001). Howe and Strauss (2000) stated that SAT scores are up and that our society needs to realize that this is the smartest generation ever.

The preceding characteristics paint a vivid picture of why students of Generation Y are the way they are. This information is also very pivotal to this study because it helps to further understand the data collected by the survey instrument. Literature on Generation Y reveals that parents have been heavily involved with their students and that further research must be done to discover what type of effect this involvement has on students.

Generation Y is of particular interest in this study because it presents a whole different

set of challenges than previous generations. Generation Xers, for example, were mostly

"latchkey kids" (Brown, 1997). A lot of this generation saw both parents work, may have been

raised in single-parent homes, and their parents may have been divorced. Millennials are much

more team oriented (Howe & Strauss, 2000), whereas Generation Xers are used to getting things

done on their own and are independent problem solvers and self-starters (Brown, 1997). The

goal of education is to assist students with the skills to live, learn, and work successfully within

society (Black, 2010). That means adapting to the way they learn, which includes Generation

Y's expectation of technology.

Howe and Strauss (2000) also mentioned that Millennials have been programmed by their

parents to have ambitious academic schedules and extracurricular activities. As explained by

Black (2010), this type of parental involvement can be problematic because the Millennials are

seen as the "everyone gets an A generation." This can cause problems in a competitive college

environment where there is not a spot for everyone. These differences in generations illustrate

how parental involvement is much more prevalent with Generation Yers. It also confirms the

need to study Generation Y and parental involvement rather than another generation.

<center>Parent Involvement</center>

Parent relations or involvement has not always been such a big issue. Decades ago it was

almost nonexistent on college campuses (Johnson, 2004). This issue has gotten to the point

where it is almost out of hand. Helen Johnson, who was appointed to direct Cornell University's

first parents' program, said she dealt with a parent who actually demanded her daughter have 24-

hour computer assistance because she lost a term paper at 3 a.m. (Johnson, 2004). Wills (2005)

referred to today's generation of parents as *helicopter parents* (p. A4): they hover over their

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students and make every decision for them. It is only natural that administrators have a poor

view of parental involvement when you hear stories such as these. This type of negative

involvement can hamper the educational process as well as prevent students from being able to

transition properly (Wills, 2005).

Higher education does not typically want as much interaction with parents in the

educational process. Administrators want college and university students to make their own

decisions, which will help them grow and learn. It is important to understand why higher

education has not yet taken advantage of this type of positive involvement the way K-12 schools

have. Rather, higher education in a lot of areas has a negative attitude toward parental

involvement.

One of the main findings of the study conducted by Gettinger and Guetschow (1998) is

that it appears that teachers and parents alike are consistent in their role expectations for parents.

However, generally both groups prefer greater parent participation, which suggests that both

groups present a willingness to participate in programs designed to maximize parental

involvement in their student's education. Another interesting result of the study was that "both

teachers and parents rated parents as being more effective in helping children through

participation in direct-involvement than indirect-involvement roles" (p. 48). Direct involvement

would include something such as reading to or with their student, whereas indirect would be

something such as attending a school board meeting. It is easy to see how the lines of parental

involvement have been blurred over the years. K-12 schools say involvement is beneficial,

whereas higher education says that it could potentially hinder the educational process.

How K-12 schools have dealt with parent involvement could potentially help

administrators in higher education better understand the situations they are facing. However, it is

also crucial to understand how and in what areas parents are involving themselves in higher education. Observations of today's parents characterize them as very involved, overprotective, and child focused. This is consistent with anecdotal campus situations (Carney, 2004). However, there are factors in higher education that cause administrators to indirectly encourage parental involvement. For example, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows for university officials to notify parents of alcohol violations (Carney, 2004). Most colleges and universities hold parent orientations during the summer as well. These types of activities force a certain level of parent involvement on higher education.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act was introduced in 1974 and is also commonly referred to as the Buckley Amendment (Weeks, 2001). The establishment of FERPA is one of the first instances of involving parents in the higher education process. Weeks (2001) stated, "The shift in public policy is clear: Congress has opened Buckley for better interactive communication and fewer barriers to effective family-friendly policies" (p. 41). There are some areas in which FERPA prevents parents from being involved, such as student records. However, it guarantees five basic rights that: parent financial information, dependent students, health and safety issues, student behavior, and access to information of violations of drug and alcohol policies (Weeks, 2001). In all instances, FERPA has guaranteed these rights to foster a better student-parent relationship in higher education. Equally as important is the fact that FERPA can often cause tension between parents and institutions. A sense of entitlement often occurs due to parents' investment in a particular college or university. FERPA takes parent involvement to a new level, and policies must be developed accordingly, especially in the areas of admissions and financial aid.

Parents are definitely getting involved in areas such as admissions and financial aid. (Carney, 2004; Lange & Stone, 2001). Issues such as financial aid formalize parental involvement. Many institutional policies focus on the individual student, but financial aid involves the entire family (Lange & Stone, 2001) because financial aid awards are based on family income and other factors that compel parents to become involved. Furthermore, especially in the area of financial aid, parents of first-generation students are likely to be more involved due to their lack of knowledge on the subject (Lange & Stone, 2001). The suggestion that parents are involved in the financial aid process is also backed up by some compelling statistics. According to a study by Stringer, Cunningham, O'Brien, and Merisotis (1998), 83% of parents helped complete financial aid forms, 80% obtained aid for their children, and 52% spoke with a financial aid counselor.

Equally as intriguing is the admissions and college choice process. Stringer et al. (1998) reported that parents get highly involved with several different areas of the admissions process. For example, 72% of parents helped students complete applications, 65% gave advice about schools, 57% spoke with an admissions counselor, and 50% helped select the college or university (Stringer et al., 1998). Technology is one of the main factors for increased parental involvement. Unlike prior decades, technology has provided access to information that parents have never had before (Lange & Stone, 2001). Parents are becoming better equipped to get involved in their student's higher education lives. Overly involved parents raise concerns for administrators. Parents expect to be involved in higher education for a number of reasons, including the high cost of attendance, their own regard for their students, and the changing role of colleges in society (Scott & Daniel, 2001). Students are essentially removed from the process and therefore are not prepared to make decisions on their own. Parental involvement of this

magnitude also gives ample reason for higher education administrators to have a negative view on the matter.

In terms of involvement, parents of today have definitely taken on the consumer mentality. Conneely, Good, and Perryman (2001) explained, "Privilege and honor have been succeeded by value and entitlement (p. 52). This mentality causes increased accountability for college and university staffs. Parent involvement does not limit itself to college choice but even branches out to residential living as well (Conneely et al., 2001). Residential life staff are expected today more than ever to respond to the needs of students and parents. This includes but is not limited to issues of harassment, hate crimes, and diversity (Conneely et al., 2001).

Different families have varying degrees of parental involvement when it comes to the issue of college. Part of a study conducted by McDonough (1997) focused on the level of involvement from parents in the college-choice process. In this particular study, students were taken from four California high schools. The level of socioeconomic status and guidance counselor interaction varied from high to low. Students were asked to write personal accounts of their college selection process, and several mentioned the level of involvement of their parents. This is further supported by Smith and Bers (1989), who looked at parental involvement at the community college level. They found that nearly 50% of the parents who they surveyed made a joint decision with their student to attend community college. This reemphasizes that parental involvement is a factor in both 2- and 4-year institutions.

In the case of the Taylor family, the parents did not get involved in their daughter's college selection process at all. This actually turned out to have a negative effect on her college selection experience (McDonough, 1997). Another example was the Scott family, in which the mother got involved in the process only with the consent of her daughter. The father and two

older siblings were less involved (McDonough, 1997). A final instance concerned the Whitcomb family. In this particular circumstance, the daughter actually referred to the college process with the term "we" due to the high level of involvement of her family (McDonough, 1997). Parent or family involvement oftentimes differs based on personal experience. If the parents did not go to college or have never sent another child to school, then they may not know how to get involved. David, Ball, Davies, and Reay (2003) determined in studying gender issues in parental involvement that parents of children in private high schools took a more hands-off approach to college choice. In addition, parents of students who attended state schools exhibited more anxiety and fear that their children would fail or make poor choices. Males tended to not want parents to intrude in their studies due to a desire for independence and autonomy from parents, whereas females were far more willing to engage their parents, especially their mothers (David et al., 2003). Furthermore, a hands-off approach could potentially cause a negative experience as easily as an overly involved parent. There must be a happy medium, and this study seeks to facilitate that by using the students to identify satisfactory and unsatisfactory levels of involvement.

One of the main concerns about parental involvement in higher education is that colleges and universities have not taken a proactive approach to the issue. This is due in part to the changing role of higher education along with inconsistent interactions between the college and the parents and students. Daniel et al. (2001) explained, "Murky guidelines for family involvement lead to inconsistent interactions from campus to campus and, more alarmingly, from office to office on the same campus" (p. 3). This type of institutional chaos quickly leads to parents taking advantage of certain situations. If they do not get the answer they like the first time, parents will continue searching until they do.

In residential communities, open paths of communication such as email listservs, distribution lists, and parent-friendly links on web pages allow colleges to respond quickly to concerns that may arise (Conneely et al., 2001). This type of interaction with parents allows residential-life staff to encourage more positive parental involvement. Institutions play a key role in reassessing their historical approach to parental involvement, and universities must also define appropriate roles for parents (Daniel et al., 2001). Forbes (2001) reaffirmed that as colleges begin this new millennium, administrators must redefine their beliefs about how they should interact with parents. This kind of hands-off approach has the potential to cause problems between parents and the institution. Institutions are being looked at more and more to take the place of parents and take on responsibility for students' actions (Forbes, 2001). In addition, when parents do not have any clearly defined roles, then administrators can start to view parents as overbearing and too involved.

Certain characteristics of families and students can further contribute to how involved a parent may become. Students today have a less rigid definition of family than did their parents, and parents have a greater level of educational attainment ,which make them more knowledgeable on the subject (Daniel et al., 2001). Things can also become more complicated by socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicity, and family dynamics. Parents who still believe that their college-aged students are children will become more involved as well. Continuing with this same trend, once the parent reaches a certain level of involvement, they cause the student to never have any interaction with university personnel before they come to campus (Daniel et al., 2001). This, combined with hardly any direction from colleges and universities, can cause parental involvement to be negatively perceived.

Daniel et al. (2001) reiterated that in the coming years colleges and universities will experience even more parental involvement. It is only natural to expect that the more parents become involved at the K-12 level, the more carryover effect there will be on higher education. Parents today perceive that paying tuition bills guarantees their right to know everything the student does (Daniel et al., 2001). It is imperative for universities to start developing strategies and policies that foster positive parental involvement. Administrators have a duty to provide resources that will allow the parent and the college to both act in the student's best interest. Challenges also exist for administrators to create an environment that fosters communication between students and parents (Conneely et al., 2001). Taking a proactive approach can potentially stop any problems before they start and allow the college to better serve the needs of the student population. In certain institutions it may even be necessary to create a freestanding family office (Scott & Daniel, 2001). This may depend on the size of the institution and the diversity of the student population. Whatever the reason may be, both student affairs and institutional advancement have to collaborate to be successful (Scott & Daniel, 2001).

As administrators, it is vital to examine not only the level of parental involvement that occurs, but also the perceptions that are attached to it. It is time for colleges and universities to start scrutinizing why this negative perception exists and find more ways to create positive involvement. If this can be done, it may reveal that parental involvement can make the college experience more efficient and give institutions the ability to retain more students.

Perceptions of Parent Involvement

The perceptions that colleges and universities have of parental involvement can play a major role in how proactive an institution is. Negative perceptions can give way to a laissez-faire attitude, which means institutions simply hope that the problem will disappear. The

research suggests that in several cases the perception of parental involvement seems to be negative (Jacobson, 2003; Johnson, 2004; Toor, 2000; Wills, 2005). Unless administrators find ways to change these perceptions, parental involvement may always have a negative connotation.

So, what has caused the change in the level of parental involvement over the years? It is due in part to baby boomers sending their children to college (Johnson, 2004). These parents expect a level of service equal to that of rising tuition costs. Baby boomers were so involved themselves that they see nothing wrong with being involved with every aspect of their students' life. Johnson followed this up by stating, "It is the rare administrator or faculty member who does not have a troubling story to share about inappropriate parent involvement" (p. B11). Too much involvement and unclear parent roles leads to problems unless colleges and universities take steps to make the relationship positive.

These instances of negative involvement lead to extreme measures by some schools. At The University of Vermont, they actually decided to hire "parent bouncers" to keep parents at bay while students schedule their classes. At The University of California at Santa Barbara, a similar strategy is in place (Wills, 2005). A student coordinator at UC-Santa Barbara stated that parents had gotten worse during her tenure, but that students kind of wanted them around as well (Wills, 2005). Parental involvement is being facilitated by both parent and student, and colleges and universities seem to want no part in it.

Parents are continuing to be involved at higher levels each year. Jacobson (2003) stated, "and not for the better. More parents now heavily edit applications or fill them out themselves, make repeated calls to admissions offices, or threaten lawsuits if a college rejects their child" (p. A27). This problem is only intensifying because the number of students applying to college has risen, and the number of colleges and universities has stayed the same (Jacobson, 2003). This

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means that competition has increased, and therefore more parents are doing whatever they can to get their student admitted to their college of choice or the parents' college of choice.

It is also amazing the amount of information that parents know about their students. Parents call admissions offices and recite things such as SAT scores and leadership activities that their child has taken part in (Toor, 2000). These are the same parents who have ferried their students back and forth from ballet lessons, soccer practices, and other activities. Parents cannot seem to flip a switch that lets their student make grown-up decisions (Jacobsen, 2003). Parental involvement has even gotten to the point that parents refer to their relationship with their student as "we are choosing a college" (Toor, 2000). The actual relationships are something that colleges and universities have no control over. However, policies and strategies that affect the nature of these relationships are under the control of the institution and must be adapted to meet the needs of today's parent and student.

Three main articles that were used in conjunction with this section are titled as follows: *Parent Trap, Help Not Wanted,* and *Pushy Parents and Other Tales of the Admissions Game*. The titles show how negative the perception of parental involvement has become. No research to date has been found that suggests that parental involvement has a positive effect on the student and his or her college experience. This negative perception automatically hinders administrators' ability to be effective when dealing with parent and student relationships. It is important to explore indicators of first-year success to see if certain areas of parental involvement can be used in a positive way. This type of analysis could potentially provide solutions for a growing and complex problem.

First-Year Experience

Hopefully by furthering the research within the area of parental involvement student success can be impacted in some manner. Even if it is on a small scale, at least colleges and universities will be able to take measures to influence positive parental involvement. Strage et al. (2002) stated, "The broader university community has come to expect offices of student affairs to continue taking the lead in identifying critical needs of a changing student body, and in providing the appropriate support services to students as well as faculty" (p. 247). With this said, part of identifying the needs of the changing student body of future generations will be to find out how to best use parental involvement for the good of the student.

Strage et al. (2002) conducted a study on academic success. It included students of which approximately one third were underclassmen and two thirds were upperclassmen. The authors acknowledged some broad categories within which to measure success. They were age, ethnicity, English language fluency, employment, and college experience. This is further supported by Upcraft, Gardner, and Associates (1989) in their book *The Freshman Year Experience*. The authors stated that in order to enhance freshman success, "Institutions must (1) develop a clear and broader definition of it, (2) commit to a set of beliefs that create maximum opportunities, and (3) know and understand the variables that affect it" (p. 1). With regard to freshman success, it will be important for this study to examine whether parental involvement is one of these variables.

In the study conducted by Strage et al. (2002), it was found that older students, age 23 and above, typically outperformed the younger students. Also, in terms of ethnicity, White students earned higher GPAs than students with African American, Chinese, Japanese, Hispanic, or Korean ethnic backgrounds (Strage et al., 2002). In the category of college experience, it was

reported that students who were the first to attend college in their family were not faring as well as those who indicated they were not the first. This could be extremely significant in relation to the level of involvement that parents have. Colleges and universities may find it valuable for retention if there is more parental involvement for first-generation college students. Parents might feel more connected to the college while also facilitating student success.

In a similar study, Edwards and McKelfresh (2002) examined academic success in correlation with Living Learning Centers (LLCs). In their study, academic success was measured by GPA. It was discovered that LLCs had a positive impact on the academic success of men, the rate of persistence of non-White students to the University, and the rate of persistence of male students to the residence halls. This could also be another set of essential data for university administrators to consider. It may be worth it to have parents involved in encouraging their students to live in this type of community. It could be especially beneficial to non-White and male students.

Partnerships across university and college campuses are equally as important to student success. It takes a collaborative effort on the part of administrators, faculty, and staff to ensure that students have a good college experience (Hyman, 1995). This is extremely hard to accomplish considering that historically faculty members have had little or no interest in what administrators do. In addition, student affairs staff have acknowledged that there tends to be a lack of institutional concern for the nonacademic experience of students (Hyman, 1995). This could be a reason for previous literature implying that there has been a hands-off approach to parental involvement. If there seems to be a lack of institutional interest in the nonacademic experience, then parental involvement might be included. However, one could argue that involvement is a key component of the academic experience.

These same types of partnerships within colleges and universities should be encouraged outside an institution's academic walls as well. Hyman (1995) has explained, "True collaboration and partnerships can only flourish when there is a commitment to a common goal" (p. 3). This includes parents, students, administrators, and faculty. The common goal should partly involve the student or nonacademic experience. Unfortunately, this does not always tend to be a college- or university-wide objective.

Another factor of academic or student success can be attributed to student involvement on campus. Astin (1977) supported this by explaining that there are several factors that contribute to academic success. Some of these factors include students being involved on campus, live in residence halls, participate in Greek Life, or work part time. Giving parents the resources to encourage their students to have a well-rounded college experience is vital to positive parental involvement.

Ball State is one university that has taken some specific measures to ensure academic success with its students. The university established a Freshman Year Experience to examine experiences of their student during their first year (Hyman, 1995). Ball State administrators concentrated on the areas of quality of general education, quality of student life, general climate for first-year students, and policy issues that affect freshman (Hyman, 1995). All of these particular areas could be related to parental involvement in some way. Policy issues for freshman definitely need to be addressed in the area of parental involvement, and parents have the potential to have a profound effect on the climate of their student's first year.

Partnering with all areas of campus life is an essential factor for student academic success. Parental involvement and its impact on first-year college success has been researched very little. By looking at the issue of parental involvement, perceptions of that involvement, and

factors for academic success, administrators can gain beneficial insight and knowledge. Further developing the body of literature in this area could provide evidence that parental involvement can affect many different areas of the first-year experience and allow administrators to develop advantageous policy.

Conclusion

Parental involvement is a topic that deserves more attention than it receives. It is an issue that is becoming problematic for those colleges and universities who are ignoring it. The view in higher education tends to be negative, and evidence needs to be provided for action to be taken. If it can be shown that students are satisfied with parental involvement, then maybe perceptions can be changed. In order to do this all levels of the college and university must be on board. This information will be most useful if it is gathered from students rather than parents. Students will be able to tell the true side of parental involvement and if it relates to their satisfaction in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Although parents are crucial to the higher education process, students are our business, and administrators must continue to find ways to make them successful in the future.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter reviews the methodological considerations for this study, as well as the limitations involved. This chapter discusses the research questions, hypotheses, survey design, sampling, and data collection. From the three areas of literature outlined in chapter 2, four main research questions have been developed that will in turn be answered by the results of a survey. Findings and results from the described analyses are presented in chapter 4. The research questions provide the groundwork for the rest of the study as well as the framework for the survey that was conducted.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to measure student satisfaction in college choice, social experience, and academic experience as it relates to parental involvement. There is a general lack of knowledge on the topic of parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction, therefore, it was important to develop research questions that would give administrators better insight into this growing issue. It was important to examine whether the perceived notion that parental involvement is negative held true from the student point of view. By examining the students' perspective, colleges and universities can obtain more accurate information in regard to parental involvement throughout the college experience. Thus, this study focused on the following overlapping questions:

1. How does student satisfaction relate to parental involvement with students' college choice, social experience, and academic experience in college?

This question will be answered by all the rest of the research questions. It aims to answer whether or not parental involvement has any effect during a students' college experience. This will provide good information on whether initiatives that have been established at different colleges and universities are even worth the effort. The remaining questions follow:

2. To what extent do the demographics of year in school, gender, being a first-generation college student, race, and residency, affect satisfaction with parental involvement?

3. To what extent does satisfaction with institution attended relate to satisfaction with parental involvement?; and

4. To what degree are students satisfied with the level of parental involvement:

5. A. in college choice,

6. B. in social experience, and

7. C. in academic experience?

These questions will attempt to provide a perspective on parental involvement in college choice, academics, and social experience as it relates to student satisfaction. The survey that has been developed clusters similar questions together to ultimately answer each of these research questions. Also, included in the survey was a demographic analysis of gender, race, whether or not the student was first generation, and residency. The goal was to see if any of these demographic measures affect the amount of parental involvement as it relates to satisfaction.

<div align="center">Survey Design</div>

This survey was designed with a 5-point Likert scale answering system (see Appendix A). Answer choices included *not at all satisfied, slightly satisfied, satisfied, very satisfied,* and *not applicable.* All survey items were answered using the Likert scale with the exception of the demographic questions and the last six items. A 5-point Likert scale was chosen to force

participants to choose one of the options rather than defaulting to neutral. Not applicable will hopefully only be marked in certain situations.

A demographics section was included at the beginning of the survey. This section included demographic questions on year in school, race, gender, residency, and whether or not the student was first generation. These are all factors that could play into responses concerning parental involvement. Specifically, race and gender could affect both the cultural and social aspects of parent involvement (Wells, 2008). Furthermore, Perna and Titus (2005) researched college preparation programs and discovered that parental involvement can promote the college enrollment of underrepresented groups of students. In addition, parental involvement increases the likelihood of aspiring to attend college and actually enrolling (Perna & Titus, 2005).

With regard to the research questions discussed for this study, each one had certain items that helped answer that particular question. Research Question 1 asked, "How does student satisfaction relate to parental involvement with students' college choice, academic, and social experience in college?" All survey items in section 2 labeled College Choice/Social Involvement/Academic Involvement were used to answer this question. The dependent variables for Research Question 1 included survey Item 6 under the college choice section, Item 8 under the social experience section, and Item 8 under the academic experience section. The independent variables included all the items under the college choice, social experience, and the academic experience sections of the survey. This is the broadest of the research questions and was answered using almost all items on the survey.

Research Question 2 evaluated how demographics affect student satisfaction with parental involvement. The demographic items on the survey help provide insight into several categories of students and how satisfaction of parental involvement may differ between

individuals. For this research question, multiple regression was used to measure the relationship between multiple variables. Survey Items 2 and 4 under the Satisfaction Questions section served as the dependent variable, whereas Items 1 to 6 under the demographic section were independent variables.

Research Question 3 attempted to answer how satisfaction with institution attended relates to satisfaction with parental involvement The third question used t tests as the statistical method to determine if the means for two groups were statistically different. The dependent variables were survey Items 3 and 5 under the satisfaction questions section, and all responses under Item 1 of the same section will be used as the independent variables. To combine these items a summation was used. This showed more significant differences in the responses. On a 1-4 scale, 12 would be the highest sum, or most positive, and 3 would be the lowest sum, or least positive. If averages were used it would be difficult to determine how more positive a 3.5 average would be from a 3.35. The two "groups" were satisfaction with institution attended and satisfaction with parental involvement. The alpha level (level of significance) was adjusted to account for multiple t tests. This is called a Bonferroni adjustment (Olejnik, Li, Supattathum, & Huberty, 1997).

Research Question 4 determined the level of satisfaction that students had with parental involvement. This question used multiple regression as the statistical method. Item 2 under the satisfaction questions section served as the dependent variable, and the independent variables included all items under the college choice, social experience, and academic experience sections. Sub items A, B, and C under Research Question 4 gauged satisfaction of involvement within college choice, academic experience, and social experience. Regression compared the items in

the Satisfaction and General Response Questions to those items under college choice and academic and social experience.

The research questions were designed in conjunction with the survey instrument to provide insight into the student perspective on parent involvement as it relates to satisfaction. It is the objective of this survey to provide useful information to college administrators, staff, faculty, and parents to identify students' true feelings in regard to parent involvement and not a university's perception of it.

Population

The population for this study was all undergraduate students at a southeastern university. The student body of this institution has over 20,000 undergraduates and has a 70% or higher in-state enrollment. According to the 2009-2010 student demographics, 47.6% of students are male, 52.4% female, 15.6% are minority, 1.4% are international, and 70.4% are residents (www.ua.edu). Furthermore, it is a regional institution that pulls its students from different parts of the country, enabling this study to encompass differences in ethnic, economic, and cultural backgrounds. The university is diverse racially, economically, and geographically. The students at this university will inevitably have different perceptions of parental involvement.

Accessibility to this population is one of the reasons that students at this southeastern university were chosen. Furthermore, surveying students allowed for some conclusions to be drawn due to the size and diversity of the institution being studied. Conducting the survey at the university allowed data to be collected from a larger number of students more efficiently. Contact with the university ensured that access for this study would be granted. In addition, choosing a public flagship university generated the population diversity needed to obtain new and useful statistics.

Knowing the demographic make-up of the university was also a determining factor for choosing it for this study. Because this university is a large, 4-year flagship institution, the composition of the student body helped to obtain a more representative view of parental involvement. One of the main reasons for this is the differences in socioeconomic groups, culture, ethnicity, race, and gender provided unique data for this study. Other institutions such as private universities, ivy leagues, and even small liberal arts universities would not provide the rich data that a public flagship would. For instance, these other colleges might account for cultural differences, but not socioeconomic as much. With a 4-year public flagship, the data collected was from a much broader population.

The participants of this study consisted of all undergraduate students from the university. Approximately 25,000 surveys were distributed to undergraduate students. In addition, demographic questions such as year in school, race, gender, residency, and whether or not the student was first generation were taken into account to ensure that a representative sample was obtained. These questions along with the other survey questions were compared to see if demographic differences affected student satisfaction as it related to parental involvement.

Lastly, surveying students at a public flagship institution provided a rare opportunity to collect rich data. Carney (2004) stated, "Because, small private schools pride themselves on parent interaction, understanding how parents experience a small private school's environment is important" (p. 33). On the other hand, public universities are not always as receptive to parent involvement and there is a need to collect more data in this area. This university also tends to be larger, therefore causing students to possibly feel more overwhelmed and want parental involvement. As in several studies, Carney's in 2004 also collected data from parents rather than

students. It is equally as important to examine student opinion of parental involvement as it relates to satisfaction.

Sample

The sample for this study was collected from a survey given to 23,947 undergraduate students at the university. The sample created from the online survey was 4,340. The sample consisted of students ranging from 17 to 61 years of age as well as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Data Collection

For this study, data were collected through the use of an electronic survey. Survey Monkey was used to create the survey and distribute it through email to the target population. Students at the university received the survey through their campus email accounts. The university allowed for distribution of the survey to undergraduate students through the Registrar's office providing student email addresses to the researcher.

The survey was intended to reach about 25,000 undergraduate students with a predicted response rate of 10-20%. Considering the large volume of participants at the university, an electronic survey was more timely, efficient, and cost effective. A reminder email was sent at 2 weeks, 3 weeks, and one final email at 4 weeks. The survey produced an n of 4,340, which yielded an 18.12% return. Due diligence was completed for the survey based on the original survey being sent out along with the follow up emails. The data for the study was analyzed using Survey Monkey and compiled using Excel, SPSS, and text files.

Data Analysis

For this study three main statistical methods were used to analyze the data. These methods include Chi-square analysis, t tests, and multiple regression. Analysis of the survey

items through these methods helped to relate data back to the research questions in order to answer them. Also, graphs were used to help drive the analysis.

Chi-square analysis will be used to test the significance of certain dependent and independent variables. Chi-square can assess whether paired observations on two variables are independent of each other. For this study, Chi-square will be used to test the significance level between satisfaction with institution attended and satisfaction with parental involvement. The results of the Chi-square analysis will be used to answer research question 3.

A test of means was conducted to compare the means between different survey items. For the test of means to be more conservative, we assumed unequal variances. The test of means also allowed the researcher to adjust for differences in response numbers such as the sample size. Furthermore, a test of proportions was used to see if there was a representative sample for the study. Demographics were tested for statistically significant differences. For example, did more African American students receive help with their college essays than Hispanic students did?

T tests evaluated survey information that was collected by permitting a comparison between the different demographic groups for the study. This test was also used to assess the level of significance between demographic groups for items under college choice, social experience, and academic experience. *T* tests were used to measure variance between items such as average satisfaction of students with low parental involvement and those who had high parental involvement.

The final statistical method that was used for this study was multiple regression. Multiple regression used predictors such as satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice, college social experience, and academics to determine a response like am I satisfied with the overall level of my parent's involvement. Similarly, the *t* tests that will help answer research

question 2 will also be supported by a regression analysis of satisfaction with parental involvement and the demographic variables. Table 2 illustrates the data analysis for this study and includes the research question, variable, independent and dependent variables, survey items that pertain to each question, and the method used for each question.

Limitations

Several limitations were associated with this study. Some were identified prior to the study, while others emerged after the study. The following section explains the limitations of the study. The sample for the study was a limitation. Because only one 4-year public university was used for this study, it did not allow for broader analysis of undergraduate students or more all inclusive recommendations.

The response rate for an email survey is typically lower than that of a mail survey or a paper and pencil survey administered in person. For this particular survey there was a response rate of 18.12%. Due diligence was done with trying to increase response rate, however it was still low in comparison to the other two survey methods. An online survey allowed the researcher to reach many more students, but it did not permit broader generalizations. By using only one institution the sample was not as diversified as it could have been if the researcher had survey students at multiple universities.

Table 2

Data Analysis

Research Question	Variables	Dependent Variable(s)	Independent Variable(s)	Survey Item	Statistical Method
RQ1: How does student satisfaction relate to parental involvement with students' college choice and social and academic experience in college?	College choice, academic involvement, social involvement, parental involvement, satisfaction	survey Item 8 under college choice, Item 6 under social experience, and Item 8 under academic experience	All survey items in college choice, social and academic experience sections	All survey items	This research question will be answered by all the other research questions
RQ2: To what extent do the demographics of age, year in school, gender, race, residency, and being a first-generation college student affect satisfaction with parental involvement?	Demographics, satisfaction, parental involvement	Survey Items 2 and 4 under the Satisfaction Questions section	Survey Items 1-6 under the demographics section	Items 2 and 4 under Satisfaction Questions and 1-6 under demographics	Multiple Regression: used when measuring the relationships between multiple variables
RQ3: To what extent does satisfaction with institution attended relate to parental involvement?	Parental involvement, satisfaction, institution	Survey Items 3 and 5 under Satisfaction Questions	All questions under Item 1 in the Satisfaction Questions	Items 1, 3, and 5 under Satisfaction Questions	*Chi-square*: used to determine if two variables are independent of each other
RQ4: To what degree are students satisfied with the level of parental involvement: A: in college choice B: in social experience C: in academic experience	Student satisfaction, parental involvement, college choice, social experience, academic experience	Survey Item 2 under the Satisfaction Questions	All survey items under college choice, social experience, and academic experience	Item 2 under Satisfaction Questions, and all items under college choice, social experience and academic experience	Multiple Regression

The sample contained some external degree candidates that were unable to be detected based off the list of emails the researcher received from the Registrar's office. Also, loss of information about the college choice process and parental involvement could have potentially occurred for upperclassmen and older students. Lastly, the more time a student has been in college could affect their view of parental involvement.

Response rate to the email survey could have hindered the study as well. Traditionally, email has a lower response rate than standard mail. Students may have viewed the survey as junk mail and deleted it. It was the researcher's hope that by doing an anonymous survey students would be more likely to respond. It is also fair to mention that although response rate is lower with email surveys, it is a more feasible and economical method. It should result in a larger sample size because more surveys can be distributed.

Because freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors were used in this research, there was a chance that parent involvement might not affect the upperclassmen as much as the underclassmen. This could limit the results of the survey in regard to parent involvement. Although a much broader perspective was given on the issue of parent involvement, there was bound to be some loss of pre- and early enrollment information for upperclassmen, due to the time the student has been in college. Chapter 4 will report the findings and analysis for this study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction. The idea of parental involvement in higher education has often held a negative connotation with administration (Jacobson, 2003; Johnson, 2004; Toor, 2000; Wills, 2005). Little effort has been made to study student perspectives on parental involvement in areas such as college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Studies such as Rouse (2009), Wartman (2009), and Carney (2004) focused on parental involvement, but did not consider student satisfaction. As a result, the perception of parents being involved in certain aspects of higher education has remained negative, and this involvement continues to raise concern with administrators (Bermudez & Marquez, 1996).

Several of the studies that have been conducted on parental involvement have focused on information from the parents as the primary source. This has led to incomplete data because student information was not being collected. This study investigated the student perspective to gain insight on how satisfaction related to parental involvement. Very few, if any, researchers have taken this angle, which creates rich data to fill a gap in parental involvement research. *T* tests were conducted for the purposes of answering four research questions, and the results of all analyses are presented in this chapter.

Descriptive Data

The population for this study was all undergraduate students at a university in the southeast. The students ranged from freshman to seniors in college. The population consisted of

23,947 students who were administered an electronic survey through their campus email account. No incentive was given to the students to complete the survey. The Parental Involvement Survey yielded an 18.12% return and produced an *n* of 4,340.

The sampling frame represented undergraduate students from all majors and age ranges from 17-61. The mean age was 21.14, and the median age was 20. The following table summarizes the demographic characteristics of the sampling pool.

Table 3

Demographic Summary

Demographic	#	%
Year in School		
Freshmen	1,172	27.0%
Sophomores	926	21.3%
Juniors	1,060	24.4%
Seniors	1,182	27.2%
Gender		
Male	1,442	33.2%
Female	2,898	66.8%
Ethnicity		
White	3,686	84.9%
African American	370	8.5%
Asian Pacific	81	1.9%
Hispanic	79	1.8%
Native American	23	0.5%
Native Hawaiian	4	0.1%
Native Alaskan	2	0.0%
Other	95	2.2%
Origin		
In-state	3007	69.3%
Out-of-state	1333	30.7%
Generation		
First Generation	927	21.4%
Non-First Generation	3413	78.6 %

Note. N = 4,340

The demographic information for the southeastern university was similar in nature to the demographics for this survey.

In addition to the demographic questions that were part of this study, a 5- point Likert scale was used to rate the satisfaction level of undergraduate students as it related to parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7 illustrate the Likert scale, as well as the rating system used to evaluate survey answers. The Likert scale options for respondents were *Not at all Satisfied, Slightly Satisfied, Satisfied, Very satisfied, and N/A*. *Not at all Satisfied* was a value of 1, *Slightly Satisfied* was a 2, *Satisfied* was a 3, and *Very Satisfied* was a 4. Rating averages are also shown in the Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7. An average close to 1 meant that the student was not at all satisfied with parental involvement in that respective area, whereas an average close to 4 meant they were very satisfied with parental involvement.

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics for college choice for all students who participated in the online Parental Involvement Survey. For each item under college choice, respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with parental involvement. Table 4 shows, first the percentage of the sample who chose each satisfaction level, followed by the actual number of respondents, and last the rating average for that particular item. The closer the rating average is to 4.0 the more satisfaction with parental involvement a student had for that item. It is important to note that all ratings are above a 3.0 except for college essays, indicating that students were not quite as satisfied with parental involvement with college essays as they were for the other items.

Table 4

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to College Choice

College Choice Question	Not at all Satisfied % (#)	Slightly Satisfied % (#)	Satisfied % (#)	Very Satisfied % (#)	N/A % (#)	Rating Average
Parental involvement with college applications	5.4% (162)	7.9% (237)	36.2% (1,089)	40.8% (1,227)	9.7% (921)	3.25
Parental involvement with college essays	9.7% (291)	9.7% (290)	33.8% (1,014)	23.9% (717)	22.9% (686)	2.93
Parental involvement in college decision process	5.3% (159)	8.8% (264)	35.1% (1,050)	43.3% (1,296)	7.5% (224)	3.26
Parental involvement with regard to reminding you of application deadlines	10% (298)	10% (300)	29.9% (894)	36.7% (1,098)	13.3% (399)	3.08
Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend	6.3% (188)	9.6% (279)	34.8% (1,042)	40.2% (1,203)	9.1% (273)	3.20
Parental involvement in the college choice process	6.1% (183)	9.4% (279)	34.4% (1,025)	42.2% (1,258)	8% (238)	3.22

Table 5 shows satisfaction with parental involvement as it relates to social experience. Again, for this table the percentage who chose each satisfaction rating, followed by the number of respondents, and the rating average are all included.

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Table 5

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Social Experience

Social Experience	Not at all Satisfied % (#)	Slightly Satisfied % (#)	Satisfied % (#)	Very Satisfied % (#)	N/A % (#)	Rating Average
Parental involvement with you being involved on campus	8.6% (255)	13.2% (393)	37.9% (1,129)	25.5% (760)	14.7% (438)	2.94
Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority	9.0% (269)	6.6% (196)	22.6% (671)	26.4% (786)	35.4% (1,053)	3.03
Parental involvement with issues about drinking	5.7% (168)	9.2% (272)	37.3% (1,108)	34.2% (1,016)	13.6% (404)	3.16
Parental involvement with issues about drugs	5.4% (162)	6.6% (197)	33.5% (996)	36.9% (1,097)	17.6% (522)	3.23
Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure	5.6% (167)	9.5% (283)	37.4% (1,109)	33.6% (997)	13.8% (410)	3.15
Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus	4.9% (147)	6.9% (205)	33.8% (1,005)	36.1% (1,073)	18.2% (541)	3.24
Parental involvement with transition to social life in college	7.2% (215)	10.4% (308)	36.4% (1,081)	34.2% (1,017)	11.8% (349)	3.11
Parental involvement in college social experience	6.9% (205)	10.4% (307)	37.1% (1,096)	32.4% (957)	13.2% (389)	3.09

Table 5 shows satisfaction with parental involvement as it relates to social experience for all survey respondents. Under social experience, students did not seem to be as satisfied with parental involvement with getting them involved on campus. However, this contradicts satisfaction with parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority because that is part of becoming involved on campus.

Table 6 is similar in nature to Tables 4 and 5. This table shows the results of satisfaction with parental involvement as it relates to academic experience. The percent that chose each satisfaction rating, the actual number of respondents, and the rating average are given. It is important to note that several of the rating averages were below 3.0 in Table 6. For items such as scheduling classes, waking up for class, class assignments, and tests students seemed less satisfied with parental involvement. This shows that students had less satisfaction with parental involvement for day-to-day type activities.

Table 6

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Academic Experience

Academic Experience	Not at all Satisfied % (#)	Slightly Satisfied % (#)	Satisfied % (#)	Very Satisfied % (#)	N/A % (#)	Rating Average
Parental involvement in scheduling your classes	10.3% (307)	9% (267)	29.5% (878)	21.2% (631)	30% (893)	2.88
Parental involvement with waking you up for class	12.4% (368)	4.9% (147)	18.4% (546)	15.8% (470)	48.5% (1,443)	2.73
Parental involvement with class assignments	11.5% (342)	6.8% (202)	24.1% (715)	16.1% (477)	41.6% (1,234)	2.77
Parental involvement with tests in college	11.5% (342)	6.8% (203)	23.8% (707)	17.7% (525)	40.1% (1,188)	2.80
Parental involvement with your freshman orientation	6.6% (195)	7.4% (219)	30.8% (913)	39.4% (1,169)	15.9% (472)	3.22
Parental involvement with your grades	6.5% (193)	7.9% (2350	34.5% (1,023)	34.3% (1,017)	16.8% (499)	3.16
Parental involvement with your transition to college course load	9.2% (272)	8.3% (245)	32.2% (956)	28.3% (841)	22% (653)	3.02
Parental involvement in academics	7.3% (215)	7.6% (226)	34% (1,008)	33.9% (1,003)	17.2% (511)	3.14

Table 7 shows the results for general satisfaction questions for all students that participated in the online survey. Once again, it shows the percentage who chose each satisfaction rating, the actual number of respondents for each item, and the rating average.

Table 7

Satisfaction Questions

Satisfaction Questions	Not at all Satisfied % (#)	Slightly Satisfied % (#)	Satisfied % (#)	Very Satisfied % (#)	N/A % (#)	Rating Average
I am satisfied with the institution I attend	1.3% (37)	7.6% (221)	31.1% (901)	59.7% (1,728)	0.2% (6)	3.5
I am satisfied with the overall quality of academic advising at my institution	6.8% (196)	19.6% (568)	33.8% (978)	39.4% (1,139)	0.4% (11)	3.06
I am satisfied with the knowledge, skills, and personal development I have gained at my institution	1.3% (37)	8.4% (242)	38.5% (1,109)	51.5% (1,485)	0.4% (11)	3.41
I am satisfied with the relationships I have with faculty members at my institution	4.7% (137)	20.3% (586)	36.7% (1,060)	37.1% (1,073)	1.2% (34)	3.07
I am satisfied with the relationships I have with administrators and staff members at my institution	7.4% (212)	23.0% (664)	34.6% (997)	32.8% (946)	2.2% (63)	2.95

The lowest rating average that Table 7 produced was satisfaction with the relationships students had with administrators and staff members. This could be due to some of the disconnect between administrators, parents, and students that is mentioned in the literature. Tables 4, 5, and 6 are used later in this chapter for analysis of the research questions.

The final descriptive questions for this study were asked with only *yes* or *no* being offered as an answer selection. When asked whether students were satisfied with the level of parental involvement in their overall college experience, 90% said yes, whereas 10% said no. Of the students surveyed, 62.3% said *yes* when asked whether the level of parental involvement impacted satisfaction with their experience at this southeastern university; 19.8% said they would like more parental involvement, and 80.2% said they did not want more involvement. Lastly, 85.1% would attend the same institution again, whereas 14.9% said they would choose a different college. This descriptive data helps better understand the sample that was collected, which will in turn set the stage for further analysis of Research Questions 1-4.

Research Questions

The overarching research question for this study sought to determine how student satisfaction relates to parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Research question 1 is the broadest and is explained at the end of this section by the analysis of the all the other research questions in this section. All of the other research questions were answered by the impact of the independent variables, college choice, social experience, academic experience, and demographics, on the dependent variables of satisfaction and parental involvement. *T* tests were used to analyze the data for Research Questions 2, 3, and 4.

Demographics required groups to be formed for proper analysis. Underclassmen were compared to upperclassmen, males to females, White students were compared against non-White students, first generation to non-first generation students, and out-of-state to in-state students. Groups were combined due to smaller sample sizes in the minority, which would have made it difficult to compare each individual group. For all *t* tests in the following tables a confidence

interval of 95% was used. Although not all survey items yielded a statistical significance, interesting data emerged from the *t* tests.

Research Question 2: To what extent do the demographics of year in school, gender, being a first generation college student, race, and residency affect satisfaction with parental involvement?

For this study, *t* tests were used to compare the demographics of year in school, gender, race, residency, and being a first generation college student in regard to satisfaction with parental involvement. Differences in means and *t* scores were used to conclude whether or not a statistical significance existed. Also, a regression model was developed to test the dependent variable against the independent variables. For this regression model overall satisfaction with parental involvement served as the dependent variable, whereas the independent variables included year in school, gender, being a first generation college student, race, and residency.

Based on the *t* scores in Table 8, no statistical significance was found between underclassmen (freshmen and sophomores) and upperclassmen (juniors and seniors). For each item under college choice, the difference in means was not large enough to create a statistically significant difference.

As in the case of Table 8, Table 9 shows that no statistical significance existed between underclassmen and upperclassmen. All items under social experience were compared using *t* tests.

Table 8

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to College Choice for Underclassmen and Upperclassmen

College Choice	*M* Under	*SD* Under	*M* Upper	*SD* Upper	*T* score Under vs. Upper	*DF*
Parental involvement with college applications	3.27	1.45	3.22	1.33	.98	3006
Parental involvement with college essays	2.94	1.42	2.93	1.55	.18	3006
Parental involvement in college decision process	3.26	1.09	3.25	1.26	.23	3006
Parental involvement with regard to reminding you of application deadlines	3.12	1.31	3.04	1.45	1.57	3006
Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend	3.21	1.16	3.19	1.32	.44	3006
Parental involvement in the college choice process	3.25	1.09	3.20	1.30	1.13	3006

* *p* < .05.

Table 9

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement As It Relates to Social Experience for Underclassmen and Upperclassmen

Social Experience	*M* Under	*SD* Under	*M* Upper	*SD* Upper	*T* score Under vs. Upper	*DF*
Parental involvement with you being involved on campus	2.97	1.29	2.92	1.39	.89	2979
Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority	3.01	1.64	3.04	1.69	.49	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drinking	3.18	1.29	3.14	1.38	.81	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drugs	3.24	1.40	3.23	1.50	.75	2979
Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure	3.18	1.29	3.12	1.39	1.21	2979
Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus	3.26	1.33	3.21	1.55	.95	2979
Parental involvement with transition to social life in college	3.14	1.25	3.08	1.36	1.25	2979
Parental involvement in college social experience	3.14	1.28	3.06	1.38	1.63	2979

* $p < .05$.

Table 10 compares underclassmen to upperclassmen for items under academic experience. As was the case in Tables 8 and 9, no statistical significance exists between these two demographics for academic experience.

In Table 11, only two items showed statistical significance between males and females. The first item was satisfaction with parental involvement in choosing a college to attend. For this item the mean for males was 3.11 and the mean for females was 3.24. When tested, a t score of 2.67 resulted, and a statistically significance difference emerged between males and females. It can also be concluded that the female group had a higher mean than did the male group, indicating that females seemed to have more satisfaction with parental involvement when it came to choosing a college to attend.

The second item that showed statistical significance between males and females under college choice was satisfaction with parental involvement in the college choice process. Means of 3.13 and 3.26 were recorded for males and females, respectively. For this item, a t score of 2.50 meant that a statistical significance was present. Again, females had the higher mean when tested, which shows that they were more satisfied with parental involvement in the college choice process than their male counterparts. All other items under college choice did not produce a large enough difference in means to be considered statistically significant.

Table 10

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Academic Experience for Underclassmen and Upperclassmen

Academic Experience	Mean Under	*SD* Under	Mean Upper	*SD* Upper	*T* score Under vs. Upper	*DF*
Parental involvement in scheduling your classes	2.90	1.58	2.86	1.59	.69	2974
Parental involvement with waking you up for class	2.69	1.57	2.77	1.60	1.37	2974
Parental involvement with class assignments	2.74	1.59	2.79	1.60	.85	2974
Parental involvement with tests in college	2.78	1.33	2.81	1.61	.55	2974
Parental involvement with your freshman orientation	3.23	1.39	3.21	1.52	.37	2974
Parental involvement with your grades	3.16	1.47	3.16	1.47	0.00	2974
Parental involvement with your transition to college course load	3.03	1.40	3.02	1.55	.18	2974
Parental involvement in academics	3.13	.71	3.15	1.49	.45	2974

* $p < .05$.

Table 11

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to College Choice for Males and Females

College Choice	Mean Males	SD Male	Mean Females	SD Females	T score M vs. F	DF
Parental involvement with college applications	3.20	1.29	3.27	1.50	1.23	3006
Parental involvement with college essays	2.88	1.49	2.96	1.14	1.61	3006
Parental involvement in college decision process	3.20	1.27	3.28	1.39	1.49	3006
Parental involvement with regard to reminding you of application deadlines	3.06	1.41	3.09	1.21	.59	3006
Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend	3.11	1.32	3.24	1.19	2.67*	3006
Parental involvement in the college choice process	3.13	1.27	3.26	1.33	2.50*	3006

*$p < .05$.

Unlike in Table 11, several areas under social experience produced differences in means that were statistically significant. Significance was shown between males and females in regard

to satisfaction with parental involvement in he/she being involved on campus, joining a fraternity/sorority, transition to social life in college, and in college social experience.

Females had a mean of 2.99, whereas males had a mean of 2.84 when testing the two groups for satisfaction with parental involvement in being involved on campus. A *t* score of 2.36 confirms a statistical significance for this item. Again, females showed higher satisfaction with parental involvement in this area than males. Furthermore, when compared in regard to satisfaction with parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority, there was a mean of 3.08 for females and 2.90 for males. The *t* score was 3.17. In Table 12, the *t* test shows statistical significance for this item as well. Again, females were more satisfied with parental involvement based on the means.

Table 12

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Social Experience for Males and Females

Social Experience	*M* Males	*SD* Male	*M* Females	*SD* Females	*T* score M vs. F	*DF*
Parental involvement with you being involved on campus	2.84	1.37	2.99	1.68	2.36*	2979
Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority	2.90	1.64	3.08	1.32	3.17*	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drinking	3.13	1.38	3.17	1.45	.70	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drugs	3.22	1.45	3.24	1.32	.37	2979
Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure	3.09	1.40	3.17	1.42	1.42	2979
Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus	3.16	1.53	3.27	1.29	2.02	2979
Parental involvement with transition to social life in college	3.01	1.36	3.14	1.31	2.46*	2979
Parental involvement in college social experience	3.00	1.36	3.13	1.56	2.17*	2979

* *p* < .05.

Satisfaction with parental involvement with transition to social life in college and in

college social experience showed statistical significance between males and females, yielding

t scores of 2.46 and 2.17, respectively. Females had higher levels of satisfaction with parental involvement in both of these areas, which can be seen by looking at the means for both groups in Table 12.

Within academic experience, Table 13 shows three items that are statistically significant between males and females when compared using a *t* test. Satisfaction with parental involvement with your freshman orientation is the first item that shows significance. Keeping with the trends set under college choice and social experience, females seemed to have more satisfaction than males with parental involvement in this area. Females had a mean of 3.27 and males had a mean of 3.12. A *t* score of 2.61 validates that a statistical significance exists.

The second item that produced a statistical significance was satisfaction with parental involvement in academics. Looking at Table 13, the means demonstrate a higher level of satisfaction with parental involvement in this area for females than males. Females had a mean of 3.27 compared to a 3.12 for males. In addition, a *t* score of 2.28 is evidence for statistical significance when the means were tested.

Table 13 also shows that there was statistical significance for parental involvement with academics between males and females. Females had a mean of 3.17, whereas males had a mean of 3.08. The *t* score for this item was 2.28, which showed statistical significance for parental involvement in academics.

Gender did not show statistical significance for all items. The interesting data point that came from the *t* tests was that females seemed to have a higher level of satisfaction for all items that were statistically significant. This was the case under college choice, social experience, and academic experience.

Table 13

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Academic Experience for Males and Females

Academic Experience	*M* Males	*SD* Male	*M* Females	*SD* Females	*T* score M vs. F	*DF*
Parental involvement in scheduling your classes	2.83	1.56	2.90	1.60	1.10	2974
Parental involvement with waking you up for class	2.71	1.57	2.74	1.59	0.00	2974
Parental involvement with class assignments	2.76	1.58	2.77	1.61	.156	2974
Parental involvement with tests in college	2.77	1.58	2.81	1.41	0.00	2974
Parental involvement with your freshman orientation	3.12	1.49	3.27	1.44	2.61*	2974
Parental involvement with your grades	3.06	1.43	3.20	1.51	2.36*	2974
Parental involvement with your transition to college course load	2.96	1.52	3.05	1.44	1.54	2974
Parental involvement in academics	3.08	1.47	3.17	.68	2.28*	2974

* *p* < .05.

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Tables 14-16 used *t* tests to compare first generation students to non-first generation. The

tables listed will be referred to in the order they appear for purposes of analysis.

In Table 14, a statistical significance was shown for every item under college choice

when first generation students were compared to non-first generation students. For college

applications the mean for non-first generation was 3.31, and for first generation the mean was

2.96. A *t* score of 6.37 revealed statistical significance between the two groups for this item.

The mean was higher for non-first generation students, which meant they had a higher level of

satisfaction with parental involvement.

For satisfaction with parental involvement with college essays, the means were 3.03 and

2.53 for non-first generation and first generation students, respectively. A *t* score of 7.60 was

given, meaning there was significance for this item. Non-first generation students had the higher

mean, which equates to higher satisfaction for this item.

Satisfaction with parental involvement in the college decision process produced similar

results. Non-first generation students had a mean of 3.31, and first generation students had a

mean of 3.04. The *t* score for this item was 5.18, again showing a statistically significant

difference between the two groups. Non-first generation students produced the higher mean,

indicating a higher level of satisfaction for this item.

Table 14

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to College Choice for First Generation and Non-First Generation Students.

College Choice	*M* First Gen	*SD* First Gen	*M* Non-first	*SD* Non-first	*T* score FG vs. NFG	*DF*
Parental involvement with college applications	2.96	1.43	3.31	1.17	6.37*	3006
Parental involvement with college essays	2.53	1.47	3.03	1.47	7.60*	3006
Parental involvement in college decision process	3.04	1.39	3.31	1.10	5.18*	3006
Parental involvement with regard to reminding you of application deadlines	2.80	1.51	3.14	1.34	5.52*	3006
Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend	3.00	1.43	3.25	1.17	4.55*	3006
Parental involvement in the college choice process	2.99	1.41	3.28	1.13	5.43*	3006

* *p* < .05.

Parental involvement with reminding students of application deadlines also showed a statistically significant difference between non-first generation and first generation students. A *t* score of 5.52 proves that a statistical significance exists. Non-first generation students had a

higher mean again at 3.14 as compared to 2.8 for first generation students. The higher mean for

non-first generation students once again shows higher satisfaction for this item.

Satisfaction with parental involvement in choosing a college to attend produced a *t* score

of 4.55, which means significance exists. The means were 3.25 for non-first generation and 3.0

for first generation students. Non-first generation students showed a higher level of satisfaction

for this item as well.

The last item was satisfaction with parental involvement in the college choice process.

Again a statistical significance exists between the two groups for this item. A *t* score of 5.43 was

given, along with a mean of 3.28 for non-first generation and 2.99 for first generation students.

As with all the other items, non-first generation students had the higher level of satisfaction.

As was the case for Table 14, Table 15 also shows a statistical significance for all items

when non-first generation and first generation students were compared. The first item was being

involved on campus. For this item a *t* score of 5.0 was given. Non-first generation students had

a mean of 3.0, and first generation students had a mean of 2.7. The higher mean for non-first

generation students shows more satisfaction for those students. A *t* score of 7.44 showed a

statistical significance for satisfaction with parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority.

The mean for non-first generation students was 3.12, and for first generation it was 2.57. Again,

non-first generation students showed a higher level of satisfaction with parental involvement in

joining a fraternity/sorority.

Table 15

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Social Experience for First Generation and Non-First Generation Students

Social Experience	*M* First Gen	*SD* First Gen	*M* Non-first	*SD* Non-first	*T* score FG vs. NFG	*DF*
Parental involvement with you being involved on campus	2.70	1.43	3.00	1.31	5.00*	2979
Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority	2.57	1.54	3.12	1.67	7.44*	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drinking	3.04	1.47	3.19	1.30	2.50*	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drugs	3.12	1.57	3.26	1.42	2.14*	2979
Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure	2.98	1.47	3.19	1.30	3.50*	2979
Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus	3.01	1.56	3.29	1.42	4.30*	2979
Parental involvement with transition to social life in college	2.91	1.43	3.15	1.27	4.09*	2979
Parental involvement in college social experience	2.89	1.43	3.14	1.30	4.19*	2979

* $p < .05$.

The third item in Table 15 is parental involvement with drinking issues. Non-first generation students had a higher level of satisfaction with a mean of 3.19 as compared to a mean of 3.04 for first generation students. Once more, a *t* score of 2.5 showed that a statistical significance existed for this item. Involvement with issues about drugs produced similar results, with means of 3.26 for non-first generation students and 3.12 for first generation students. Satisfaction was higher for non-first generation students, and a *t* score of 2.14 revealed a statistical significance.

Satisfaction levels were higher for non-first generation students with regard to parental involvement with social pressure. Non-first generation students had a mean of 3.19 compared to 2.98 for first generation students. A *t* score of 3.5 confirms that there is a significant difference between the groups. Continuing with the same trend, non-first generation students had a higher level of satisfaction with parental involvement in their choice to live on campus: 3.29 and 3.01 were the means for non-first generation and first generation students, respectively. Significance was shown by a *t* score of 4.3.

The last two items in Table 15 are parental involvement in transition to social life in college and parental involvement in college social experience. For transition to social life, non-first generation students had higher levels of satisfaction, with a mean of 3.15. First generation students had a mean of 2.91. A *t* score of 4.09 indicates statistically significant difference between the two groups. For involvement in college social experience, non-first generation students again had a higher mean at 3.14 compared to 2.89 for first generation students. Not only did a *t* score of 4.19 show significance, but the means revealed higher satisfaction for non-first generation students for this item.

Table 16 illustrates satisfaction with parental involvement as it relates to academic experience. The only item that did not show statistical significance was involvement in waking up for class. For involvement in scheduling classes, a *t* score of 5.55 reveals a statistical significance between non-first generation students and first generation students. The mean for non-first generation students was 2.95, and the mean was 2.56 for first generation students. This signifies non-first generation students had higher levels of satisfaction with involvement in scheduling classes.

Parental involvement with class assignments disclosed means of 2.82 and 2.56 for non-first generation and first generation students, respectively. A *t* score of 3.63 reveals significance. Tests in college showed higher levels of satisfaction for non-first generation students, with a mean of 2.86, judged against a mean of 2.55 for first generation students. A statistical significance between the groups exists with a *t* score of 4.3.

Satisfaction with parental involvement in freshman orientation was higher for non-first generation students, who had a mean of 3.26. First generation students had a mean of 3.08, and the *t* score for the item was 2.8, which are deemed significant. The *t* score for involvement with grades is 2.79. The mean for non-first generation students was 3.2, and for first generation students it was 3.02. The *t* score and means for involvement with grades show significance and a higher level of satisfaction for non-first generation students.

The last two items under academic experience are parental involvement with transition to college course load and involvement in academics. For transition to college course load, significance exists with a *t* score of 4.12. Once again, non-first generation students had a higher level of satisfaction, with a mean of 3.08, compared to 2.8 for first generation students.

Table 16

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Academic Experience for First Generation and Non-First Generation Students

Academic Experience	*M* First Gen	*SD* First Gen	*M* Non-first	*SD* Non-first	*T* score FG vs. NFG	*DF*
Parental involvement in scheduling your classes	2.56	1.51	2.95	1.57	5.55*	2974
Parental involvement with waking you up for class	2.63	1.56	2.76	1.60	1.81	2974
Parental involvement with class assignments	2.56	1.50	2.82	1.61	3.63*	2974
Parental involvement with tests in college	2.55	1.52	2.86	1.62	4.30*	2974
Parental involvement with your freshman orientation	3.08	1.59	3.26	1.38	2.80*	2974
Parental involvement with your grades	3.02	1.51	3.20	1.41	2.79*	2974
Parental involvement with your transition to college course load	2.80	1.53	3.08	1.50	4.12*	2974
Parental involvement in academics	2.92	1.52	3.19	1.42	4.15*	2974

*$p < .05$.

Parental involvement in academics produced a mean of 3.19 for non-first generation students and 2.92 for first generation students. The *t* score was 4.15, which showed statistical significance, whereas the means revealed higher satisfaction for non-first generation students.

The *t* tests used to compare first generation and non-first generation students produced very interesting results. Tables 14-16 show that there was statistical significance between first generation and non-first generation students for every item under college choice, social experience, and academic experience except for one. Satisfaction with parental involvement with waking you up for class was the only item that was not significant between these two groups.

Additionally, the means for non-first generation students in Tables 13-15 were higher for all items than the means for first generation students. This shows that for all items under college choice, social experience, and academic experience, non-first generation students were more satisfied with parental involvement. Higher satisfaction with parental involvement for non-first generation was shown for areas such as the college decision process, issues about drinking and drugs, grades, and tests. This seems to be a logical conclusion because a first generation college student's parents have no experience with higher education, which could equate to less parental involvement.

Tables 17-18 show *t*-test data for comparison between White and non-White students. As a whole, races other than White had too small of a sample size to stand alone. Therefore, for the purposes of the *t* test, students were grouped as either White or non-White. The results in Tables 17-18 yielded interesting data that was different from the previous two groups tested.

Table 17, shows statistical significance for four items under college choice. Parental involvement with college applications had a *t* score of 3.03, which shows significance between

White and non-White students. The mean for White was 3.27 versus 3.08 for non-White students. White students had a higher level of satisfaction with parental involvement for this item. For college essays the mean for White students was 2.97 and 2.72 for non-White students. Satisfaction was higher for White students, and a *t* score of 3.25 was significant.

There was statistical significance in the college decision process, with a *t* score of 2.88. White students had the higher level of satisfaction for this item with a mean of 3.28 as compared to 3.11 for non-White students. Parental involvement with the college choice is the last item under college choice for which a statistical significance existed. A *t* score of 2.64 supports this finding. White students had a mean of 3.25, whereas non-White students had a mean of 3.09. This shows a higher satisfaction level for White students, as was the case in all the previous items that showed significance.

In Table 18, *t* tests revealed two areas of statistical significance. The mean for White students for satisfaction with parental involvement in being involved on campus was 2.97, whereas non-White students had a mean on 2.81. The *t* score for this item was 2.32. The means and *t* score again confirm significance between the two groups, with White students having the higher level of satisfaction. The other area that showed statistical significance was satisfaction with parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority. Table 18 shows a higher mean for White students, at 3.07, compared to 2.76 for non-White students. Again significance is indicated by a *t* score of 3.56. For both of these items under social experience it is revealed that the White students had more satisfaction with parental involvement. Unlike the previous two groups who were compared by gender and first generation and non-first generation students, Table 18 shows completely different results.

Table 17

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to College Choice for White and Non-White Students

College Choice	*M* White	*SD* White	*M* Non-White	*SD* Non-White	*T* score White vs. Non-White	*DF*
Parental involvement with college applications	3.27	1.23	3.08	1.17	3.03*	3006
Parental involvement with college essays	2.97	1.50	2.72	1.48	3.25*	3006
Parental involvement in college decision process	3.28	1.16	3.11	1.10	2.88*	3006
Parental involvement with regard to reminding you of application deadlines	3.10	1.38	2.97	1.34	1.84	3006
Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend	3.21	1.22	3.10	1.17	1.77	3006
Parental involvement in the college choice process	3.25	1.19	3.09	1.13	2.64*	3006

*$p < .05$.

Table 18

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Social Experience for White and Non-White Students

Social Experience	*M* White	*SD* White	*M* Non-White	*SD* Non-White	*T* score White vs. Non-White	*DF*
Parental involvement with you being involved on campus	2.97	1.34	2.81	1.30	2.32*	2979
Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority	3.07	1.69	2.76	1.67	3.56*	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drinking	3.16	1.32	3.12	1.30	.59	2979
Parental involvement with issues about drugs	3.25	1.45	3.17	1.42	1.07	2979
Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure	3.15	1.34	3.12	1.30	.44	2979
Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus	3.25	1.46	3.17	1.42	1.06	2979
Parental involvement with transition to social life in college	3.12	1.30	3.01	1.27	1.64	2979
Parental involvement in college social experience	3.11	1.46	3.02	1.30	1.21	2979

*p < .05.

Although no statistical significance was shown for any item under academic experience,

Table 19 explains the means and *t* scores for all items.

Table 19

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Academic Experience for White and Non-White Students

Academic Experience	*M* White	*SD* White	*M* Non-White	*SD* Non-White	*T* score White vs. Non-White	*DF*	Sig
Parental involvement in scheduling your classes	2.88	1.56	2.86	1.56	.24	2974	No
Parental involvement with waking you up for class	2.73	1.59	2.73	1.60	0.00	2974	No
Parental involvement with class assignments	2.78	1.59	2.70	1.61	.97	2974	No
Parental involvement with tests in college	2.80	1.60	2.79	1.62	.12	2974	No
Parental involvement with your freshman orientation	3.22	1.44	3.26	1.38	.54	2974	No
Parental involvement with your grades	3.16	1.43	3.19	1.41	.41	2974	No
Parental involvement with your transition to college course load	3.02	1.51	3.02	1.50	0.00	2974	No
Parental involvement in academics	3.14	1.44	3.13	1.42	.13	2974	No

*$p < .05$.

The last two groups that were compared using *t* tests were in-state students and out-of-state students. Tables 20-22 show the results of those *t* tests for college choice, social experience, and academic experience.

Table 20 shows that there were only two items under college choice that showed statistical significance between in-state and out-of-state students. The first item was satisfaction with parental involvement with college essays. The mean for out-of-state students was 3.07, and for in-state students it was 2.93. The *t* score for this item was 2.49, which supports that statistical significance exists. The second item that showed significance was satisfaction with parental involvement in the college choice process. The means for this item were 3.33 for out-of-state students and 3.22 for in-state students. The *t* score was 2.4, again showing statistical significance. It is interesting to note that for college choice out-of-state students reported being more satisfied with parental involvement for these two items. Overall, residency did not show as much significance as some of the other demographics.

Table 20

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to College Choice for In-State and Out-of State Students

College Choice	*M* In State	*SD* In State	*M* Out of State	*SD* Out of State	*T* score In vs. Out of State	*DF*
Parental involvement with college applications	3.25	1.26	3.32	1.23	1.49	3935
Parental involvement with college essays	2.93	1.51	3.07	1.45	2.49*	3935
Parental involvement in college decision process	3.26	1.21	3.34	1.13	1.79	3935
Parental involvement with regard to reminding you of application deadlines	3.08	1.40	3.18	1.40	1.90	3935
Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend	3.20	1.26	3.27	1.22	1.49	3935
Parental involvement in the college choice process	3.22	1.24	3.33	1.15	2.40*	3935

*p < .05.

For Table 21, three items under social experience showed statistical significance when in-state and out-of-state students were compared. The first item was satisfaction with parental involvement in joining a fraternity or sorority. The mean for out-of-state students was 3.16 for

this item, whereas in-state students had a mean of 3.03. A t score of 2.07 indicates statistical

significance exists. For parental involvement with transition to social life in college, a t score of

2.17 supports statistical significance here as well. The means were 3.23 and 3.11 for out-of-state

and in-state students, respectively. The third and final item that showed statistical significance

under social experience is parental involvement in college social experience. Out-of state

students had a mean of 3.21 for this item, and in-state students had a mean of 3.11. The t score

for this item was 2.37. All of these items showed significance, and for each one the mean was

higher for out-of-state students. This means that out-state students had a higher level of

satisfaction than in-state students.

Table 21

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement As It Relates To Social Experience For In-State And Out-of-State Students

Social Experience	*M* In State	*SD* In State	*M* Out of State	*SD* Out of State	T score In vs. Out of State	*DF*
Parental involvement with you being involved on campus	2.94	1.36	3.02	1.32	1.57	3898
Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority	3.03	1.66	3.16	1.66	2.07*	3898
Parental involvement with issues about drinking	3.16	1.33	3.20	1.37	.79	3898
Parental involvement with issues about drugs	3.23	1.43	3.27	1.52	.73	3898
Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure	.315	1.34	3.21	1.37	1.18	3898
Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus	3.24	1.50	3.30	1.36	1.08	3898
Parental involvement with transition to social life in college	3.11	1.31	3.23	1.31	2.17*	3898
Parental involvement in college social experience	3.09	1.34	3.21	1.34	2.37*	3898

*$p < .05$.

For the last table, only one item under academic experience showed statistical significance. In Table 22, parental involvement with freshman orientation showed significance between in-state and out-of state students. Out-of-state students once again had the higher mean, which shows they have a higher level of satisfaction in this area. The mean for out-of-state students was 3.33, whereas in-state students had a mean of 3.22. The *t* score was 2.01 for this item showing that statistical significance exists.

It is interesting to note that out-of-state students showed higher levels of satisfaction for each item that was statistically significant under college choice, social experience, and academic experience. For an item such as freshman orientation, a higher level of satisfaction could have been the result of more parents traveling with their students from out-of-state to attend orientation than from in-state.

To further support the *t* tests that were used to analyze the data for Research Question 2, a regression model was also created. The regression model in Table 23 was used to determine which independent variable had the highest impact on the dependent variable of overall satisfaction with parental involvement (SatParIn; see Appendix B for the list of codes). The independent variables for this model were year in school, gender, first generation or non-first generation, race, and residency.

Table 22

Satisfaction with Parental Involvement as it Relates to Academic Experience for In-State and Out-of-State Students

Academic Experience	*M* In State	*SD* In State	*M* Out of State	*SD* Out of State	T score In vs. Out of State	*DF*
Parental involvement in scheduling your classes	2.88	1.55	2.95	1.60	1.19	3893
Parental involvement with waking you up for class	2.73	1.58	2.76	1.60	.50	3893
Parental involvement with class assignments	2.77	1.57	2.83	1.62	1.00	3893
Parental involvement with tests in college	2.80	1.58	2.87	1.65	1.16	3893
Parental involvement with your freshman orientation	3.22	1.47	3.33	1.38	2.01*	3893
Parental involvement with your grades	3.16	1.42	3.21	1.48	.92	3893
Parental involvement with your transition to college course load	30.2	1.49	3.09	1.58	1.23	3893
Parental involvement in academics	3.14	1.44	3.19	1.47	.92	3893

*p < .05.

Table 23 shows several interesting results based on the regression model that was developed. In many ways, the regression reinforces what was previously stated when analyzing the results of the *t* tests. In all but one case, the coefficients for the independent variables were negative. Year in school was the only demographic that had a positive coefficient. Not all of the independent variables showed significance to the dependent variable of satisfaction with parental involvement (SatParIn). Both race and in- and out-of-state residency were not significant predictors for the dependent variable at the alpha = .05 level.

Table 23

Regression Model for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement Compared to Year in School, First Generation and Non-First Generation, Race, and Residency

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
	Model 1 *B*	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	Sig.
Constant	1.308	.041		31.736	.000*
YIS	.015	.005	.056	2.986	.003*
Gen	-.026	.012	-.040	-2.186	.029
Race	-.006	.006	-.020	-1.066	.287
InOutRes	-.008	.012	-.013	-.689	.491
FirGen	-.096	.014	-.129	-6.962	.000*

Dependent Variable: SatParIn.
$R^2 = .023$; Adj. $R^2 = .021$; Std. Error = .041.
*$p < .05$.

Three of the independent variables were significant predictors of SatParIn. Year in school, gender, and first generation and non-first generation had significance at the level of .003, .029, and .001, respectively. When analyzing the regression model, first generation or non-first

generation (FirGen) showed the highest level of significance for any of the independent variables. In addition, the coefficient for FirGen was -.096. This coefficient had the highest absolute value for any of the independent variables. What this means is that being a first generation or non-first generation student had the most affect or impact on satisfaction with parental involvement. The fact that FirGen had the highest impact on satisfaction with parental involvement firmly supports the results of the *t* tests. When compared to each other in Tables 14-16, first generation and non-first generation students showed more significance than any of the other demographics that were tested.

The *t* tests and regression model firmly support that certain demographics do affect satisfaction with parental involvement. The *t* tests showed that females, White students, non-first generation students, and out-of-state students all had more satisfaction with parental involvement for the items that showed significance. Year in school did not show any significance but for the most part the means for underclassmen were higher indicating more satisfaction. Being a first generation or non-first generation student proved to be the demographic that affected satisfaction with parental involvement more than any other. The demographics for this study are discussed further in chapter 5.

Research Question 3: To what extent does satisfaction with institution attended relate to satisfaction with parental involvement?

For Research Question 3, a combination of descriptive statistics based off of crosstabulation and Chi-square tests were used for the analysis. These methods were chosen after both regression and correlation analysis were examined. Regression and correlation both

showed an *r* coefficient that was not high enough to be used as a predictor. Therefore, crosstabulation and Chi-square were used to better analyze the data.

Table 24 shows the crosstabulation results between the items "I am satisfied with the institution I attend" and the question "I am satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement in my college experience."

There are two items to note within Table 24 pertaining to the satisfaction with institution attended and satisfaction with parental involvement. First, there is a significance developing between satisfaction with institution (SatInst) and satisfaction with parental involvement (SatParIn). This is further supported by the Chi-square analysis in the next table. Table 24 shows that the percentage of *yes* answers within satisfaction with institution increases as the satisfaction rating increases from *Not at All Satisfied* to *Very Satisfied.* The percentage of *yes* answers with SatInst goes from 64.9% at the *Not at All Satisfied* rating to 92.1% at the *Very Satisfied* rating. Also, the percent of *no* within SatInst decreases as the satisfaction rating increases. The percentage of *no* within SatInst goes from 35.1% to 7.9% as the rating goes from *Not at All Satisfied* to *Very Satisfied*.

This descriptive data shows that as students were more satisfied with the institution they attended, they were also more satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement in their college experience. The crosstabulation simply introduces the relationship that exists between SatInst and SatParIn. However, because this study has a large number of participants, the percentages in Table 24 provide a greater understanding of the pattern of results. Table 25 shows the Chi-square test results that confirm what has already been shown.

Table 24

Crosstabulation for Satisfaction with Institution Attended and Satisfaction with Parental Involvement

			SatParIn		
			Yes	No	Total
SatInst	Not at All Satisfied	Count	24	13	37
		Expected Count	33.3	3.7	37.0
		% within SatInst	64.9%	35.1%	100.0%
		% within SatParIn	.9%	4.5%	1.3%
		% of Total	.8%	.5%	1.3%
	Slightly Satisfied	Count	173	48	221
		Expected Count	198.9	22.1	221.0
		% within SatInst	78.3%	21.7%	100.0%
		% within SatParIn	6.7%	16.7%	7.7%
		% of Total	6.0%	1.7%	7.7%
	Satisfied	Count	804	90	894
		Expected Count	804.4	89.6	894.0
		% within SatInst	89.9%	10.1%	100.0%
		% within SatParIn	31.1%	31.3%	31.1%
		% of Total	28.0%	3.1%	31.1%
	Very Satisfied	Count	1581	135	1716
		Expected Count	1544.0	172.0	1716.0
		% within SatInst	92.1%	7.9%	100.0%
		% within SatParIn	61.1%	46.9%	59.7%
		% of Total	55.0%	4.7%	59.7%
Total		Count	2586	288	2874
		Expected Count	2586.0	288.0	2874.0
		% within SatInst	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within SatParIn	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%

Table 25

Chi-Square Tests for Satisfaction with Institution Attended and Satisfaction with Parental Involvement

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	71.872[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	54.849	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	55.858	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	2,874		

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .60.

The Chi-square tests for independence for SatInst and SatParIn were used to determine if these variables were related or associated with each other. For the Chi-square analysis the significance between SatInst and SatParIn is shown in the third column of Table 25. In all cases shown in Table 25, significance is listed at the .001 level. A probability of less than .05 in Chi-square shows that there is a statistical significance. In the analysis between these two variables, the Chi-square test shows that they are highly significant. The probability shows that that satisfaction with the institution and satisfaction with the overall level of parental involvement are most definitely related.

The Chi-square analysis supports the patterns that are displayed in Table 24 with the descriptive crosstabulation statistics. Chi-square analysis and crosstabulation allow the researcher to show that a high level of significance exists between the two variables. Furthermore, based on the Chi-square results students who are very satisfied with the institution they attend are also satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement in their college experience.

Research Question 4: To what degree are students satisfied with the level of parental

involvement in:

    A. college choice

    B. social experience

    C. academic experience

For Research Question 4, regression was used to predict satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. The dependent variable was the same for all three areas. Overall satisfaction with parental involvement (SatParIn) was the constant dependent variable, whereas the independent variables were different for college choice, social experience, and academic experience.

College Choice

Table 26 provides the model summary for the regression analysis for parental involvement in college choice (ParInChoice) and the dependent variable SatParIn. This model summary is important because of the R^2 value that is given. The R^2 for this model is .111. This means that there was an approximate variation of 11% in SatParIn. It also corresponds to the variation in ParInChoice. This is significant to note going forward with the analysis.

Table 26

Regression Model Summary for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with College Choice

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.333	.111	.110	.284

a. Predictors: (Constant), ParInChoice.

In Table 27, it is important to note both the *F* distribution and the significance. The first is that the *F* distribution for the entire model is given as 355.439. at the significance in Table 26 is listed in the last column of the regression model. For this model, significance is listed at the .001 level. This shows that the overall regression model is highly significant based on alpha < .05. Knowing that the overall model is significant allows the researcher to use the independent variable as a predictor.

Table 27

ANOVA for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with College Choice

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	28.648	1	28.648	355.439	.000[a]
1	Residual	230.351	2858	.081		
	Total	258.999	2859			

a. Predictors: (Constant), ParInChoice.
b. Dependent Variable: SatParIn.

In Table 28, the first column shows the coefficients for both the constant and the independent variable of ParInChoice. The coefficient for the constant is listed as 1.350. This means that estimated coefficient is significantly different than zero. Below the constant, the coefficient for ParInChoice is -.084. This coefficient is also significantly different than zero. In the last column in Table 28 the significance is given for both the constant and ParInChoice. In each case the significance is shown at the .001 level. Again, this supports that there is a high level of significance for the two variables in this model.

Table 28

Coefficients for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with College Choice

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
	Model 1 *B*	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	Sig.
Constant	1.350	.014		94.724	.000
ParInChoice	-.084	.004	-.333	-18.853	.000

a. Dependent Variable: SatParIn.
*$p < .05$.

To summarize, Tables 26-28 help the researcher explain that parental involvement in college choice (ParInChoice) is a significant predictor of satisfaction with overall parental involvement (SatParIn). The coefficient for ParInChoice of -.084 shows that an inverse relationship exists between ParInChoice and SatParIn. As satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice increases, this regression model would predict that there would be lower satisfaction in overall parental involvement.

Social Experience

A similar regression model was produced for social experience. Tables 29-31 show the regression analysis for parental involvement in social experience (ParInSE) and overall satisfaction with parental involvement (SatParIn).

Table 29 provides the model summary for the regression analysis for parental involvement in social experience (ParInSE) and the dependent variable SatParIn. This model summary is important because of the R^2 that is given. The R^2 for this model is .081. This means that there was an approximate variation of 8% in SatParIn. The R^2 also corresponds to the variation in ParInSE. This is significant to note going forward with the analysis.

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Table 29

Model Summary for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with College Social Experience

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.284	.081	.080	.288

a. Predictors: (Constant), ParInChoice.

Table 30 provides the *F* distribution and the significance of the overall model. The first item to look at is the *F* distribution for the entire model. This value is given as 249.755. The second item of importance in Table 30 is the last column where the significance for the regression model can be found. For this model significance is listed at the .001 level. This shows that the overall regression model is highly significant based on an alpha < .05. Knowing that the overall model is significant allows the researcher to use the independent variable as a predictor.

Table 30

ANOVA for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with College Social Experience

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.745	1	20.745	249.755	.000[a]
	Residual	236.555	2848	.083		
	Total	257.300	2849			

a. Predictors: (Constant), ParInSE.
b. Dependent Variable: SatParIn.

The first column of Table 31 shows the coefficients for both the constant and the independent variable of ParInSE. The coefficient for the constant is listed as 1.274. This means that the estimated coefficient is significantly different than zero. Below the constant, the coefficient for ParInSE is -.064. This coefficient is also significantly different than zero. In the last column in Table 30 the significance is given for both the constant and ParInSE. In each case the significance is shown at the .001 level. Again, this supports that there is a high level of significance for the two variables in this model.

Table 31

Coefficients for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with College Social Experience

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	Model 1 *B*	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	Sig.
Constant	1.274	.012		104.089	.000
ParInSE	-.064	.004	-.284	-15.804	.000

a. Dependent Variable: SatParIn.
*$p < .05$.

To summarize, Tables 29-31 help the researcher explain that parental involvement in social experience (ParInSE) is a significant predictor of satisfaction with overall parental involvement (SatParIn). The coefficient for ParInSE of -.064 shows that an inverse relationship exists between ParInSE and SatParIn. This regression model predicts that as satisfaction with parental involvement in social experience increases, satisfaction in overall parental involvement. decreases.

Academic Experience

The final regression model was run for satisfaction with parental involvement in academics (ParInAca) and overall satisfaction with parental involvement (SatParIn). Tables 32-34 help provide the summary and explanation for this regression model.

Table 32 provides the model summary for the regression analysis for parental involvement in academics (ParInAca) and the dependent variable SatParIn. This model summary is important because of the R^2 value that is given. The R^2 for this model is .073. This indicates that there was an approximate variation of 7% in SatParIn. The R^2 also corresponds to the variation in ParInAca. This is significant to note going forward with the analysis.

Table 32

Model Summary for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with Academics

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.271[a]	.073	.073	.289

a. Predictors: (Constant), ParInACA.

Table 33 shows the F distribution and the significance of the overall model. The F distribution for the entire model is given as 226.910. The second item to look at in Table 33 is the last column where the significance for the regression model can be found. Again, as in the previous two regression models, significance is listed at the .001 level. This shows that the overall regression model is highly significant based on an alpha < .05. Knowing that the overall model is significant allows the researcher to use the independent variable as a predictor.

Table 33

ANOVA for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with Academics

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.970	1	18.970	226.910	.000[a]
	Residual	239.270	2862	.084		
	Total	258.240	2863			

a. Predictors: (Constant), ParInAca.
b. Dependent Variable: SatParIn.

The first column in Table 34 shows the coefficients for both the constant and the independent variable of ParInAca. The coefficient for the constant is listed as 1.248. This means that the estimated coefficient is significantly different than zero. Below the constant, the coefficient for ParInAca is -.057. This coefficient is also significantly different than zero. In the last column in Table 34 the significance is given for both the constant and ParInAca. In each case the significance is shown at the .001 level. Again, this supports that there is a high level of significance for the two variables in this model.

Table 34

Coefficients for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Parental Involvement with Academics

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Variable	Model 1 *B*	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	Sig.
Constant	1.248	.011		111.399	.000
ParInAca	-.057	.004	-.271	-15.064	.000

 a. Dependent Variable: SatParIn.

To summarize, Tables 32-34, help the researcher explain that parental involvement in academics (ParInAca) is a significant predictor of satisfaction with overall parental involvement (SatParIn). The coefficient for ParInAca of -.057 shows that an inverse relationship exists between ParInAca and SatParIn. This regression model predicts that as satisfaction with parental involvement in social experience increases, satisfaction in overall parental involvement decreases.

In all three regression models, similar results were produced for satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academics. Based on the regression analysis, the researcher can conclude that the independent variables in each model are significant predictors of the dependent variable of overall satisfaction with parental involvement. It is interesting to note that all three regression models did show an inverse relationship between the independent and dependent variable.

Research Question 1: How does student satisfaction relate to parental involvement with students' college choice, social experience, and academic experience in college?

Research Question 1 was the overarching question for this study and was answered by the other three research questions. After conducting the analysis of the other three research questions, a more thorough understanding of parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction exists. Based on the results, there is now evidence to support that students at this southeastern university are satisfied with parental involvement in certain areas of college choice, social experience, and academic experience. There is also evidence that supports differences in satisfaction levels between certain demographic groups. When referring back to Tables 8-22, statistical significance can be seen between these different groups of students, and satisfaction levels differ as well. The most significance was shown when comparing first generation to non-first generation students. By looking at the means in the tables, it is apparent that certain groups have higher levels of satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. In addition, when students were asked to respond to the statement, "I am satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement in my college experience," 90% said *yes,* whereas only 10% said *no.* Students also do not seem to want more parental involvement in their college experience: 80.2% of students noted that they did not want more parental involvement, whereas 19.8% said they did.

Given the way in which student satisfaction was measured, *t* tests provided the most compelling evidence of how parental involvement related to that satisfaction because so many demographic groups were able to be compared. The results of the *t* tests and analysis of the other research questions indicate that a relationship does exist between parental involvement and student satisfaction. For certain students, levels of satisfaction were higher, which could imply that the negative perception that higher education has of parental involvement does not exist with

students. Students seem to be satisfied with the level of involvement their parents have in their college experience.

The *t* tests were supported by the development of a regression model to test the dependent variable of satisfaction with parental involvement against the demographics for the study, which were the independent variables. Similar to the results in the *t* tests, the regression analysis showed that the variable first generation or non-first generation had the largest effect or impact on satisfaction with parental involvement. This demographic group showed far more significance than any other group tested.

Chi-square was used to test whether satisfaction with institution attended was related to satisfaction with parental involvement. This analysis produced significance between these two items, which is shown in Tables 24 and 25. Patterns were recognized in the crosstabulation for these two items, which further supports the fact that satisfaction with parental involvement can be influenced by multiple variables.

The final test that was run to help answer Research Question 1 was regression analysis. The independent variables of satisfaction with college choice, social experience, and academics were run against overall satisfaction with parental involvement. In each case, statistical significance was shown between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Furthermore, regression analysis revealed negative coefficients for all the independent variables. This shows that an inverse relationship existed in all three models. Lastly, all three regression models proved that the independent variable was a significant predictor for satisfaction with overall parental involvement.

Analysis of Research Questions 2, 3, and 4 supports that student satisfaction does relate to parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Further discussion of this topic will be included in the following chapter.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to analyze the data for this study and produce findings by way of *t* tests, Chi-square, and regression. The findings show that student satisfaction and parental involvement do relate. Student satisfaction with parental involvement can not only impact things like satisfaction with institution attended, but it can also be impacted by student demographics. The usefulness of these findings are discussed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the data collected were analyzed and discussed. Chapter 5 presents the summary of the study, the conceptual framework, and a review of the findings. The limitations of the study are also discussed. The chapter closes with an explanation of the recommendations for policy, practice, and future research.

Summary Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction. There were three main areas that were researched in regard to parental involvement in higher education. Those areas included college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Secondary to the broader question, the research also sought to find the effect of demographics on student satisfaction with parental involvement. In addition, this study looked at student satisfaction with institution and the degree of satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. A review of the literature revealed that not much research existed on this topic, especially in the area of student satisfaction. The literature reviewed also showed even less research conducted on parental involvement from the student standpoint. This study sought to add to both of these areas of limited research.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) three constructs guided this study and provided the conceptual framework. Although these constructs were developed based on parents in K-12, they served as a basis for researching parental involvement. The three constructs of parent's role

construction, sense of efficacy, and perceptions of opportunities and barriers to involvement that were developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) helped define parental involvement for this study. They were used to gain a better understanding of parental involvement at the K-12 level so that a similar perspective could be gained in higher education.

As noted in previous chapters, a survey instrument was created to measure student satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Although no framework previously existed for parental involvement and student satisfaction, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) constructs grounded the study. However, the NSSE conceptual framework and Walker-Marshall and Hudson's (1999) study guided the development of the survey items. Items from the survey were grouped within college choice, social experience, academic experience, and general satisfaction questions.

In order to answer the first research question, it was necessary to determine the results of the other three questions that assessed student satisfaction with parental involvement in different areas. The results of Research Question 2 analyzed the statistical significance between dissimilar demographic groups. Analysis of Research Question 2 indicated that a statistical significance did exist between different groups within college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Analysis also revealed that there were higher levels of satisfaction with parental involvement for some groups than others. There was no statistical significance for any item under college choice, social experience, or academic experience when comparing year in school. For males and females parental involvement in choosing a college to attend and involvement in the college choice process showed significance. Other areas that showed statistical significance for males and females included satisfaction with parental involvement in transition to social life, college social experience, grades, and academics.

When comparing White students to non-White students, items under college choice showed the most statistical significance. White students were more satisfied with parental involvement with applications, essays, the decision process, and the college choice process than were non-White students. For social experience race only showed two areas of statistical significance, and no areas of significance were shown under academic experience. The demographic of residency produced similar results to race. Items under college choice, social experience, and academic experience that revealed statistical significance were satisfaction with parental involvement in college essays, the college choice process, joining a fraternity/sorority, the college social experience, and freshman orientation.

The most compelling result came in the comparison between first generation students and non-first generation. There was statistical significance for every item but one under college choice, social experience, and academic experience. In each case of statistical significance, non-first generation students had a higher level of satisfaction with parental involvement. This leads to the possibility that because first generation students' parents have no prior experience with higher education there might not be as much parental involvement.

Research Question 3 was analyzed by using Chi-square. A Chi-square test of independence was done for overall satisfaction with parental involvement and satisfaction with institution. The crosstabulation results from the Chi-square analysis allowed the researcher to see any patterns that developed between the two items. The crosstabulation helped to show significance developing between satisfaction with parental involvement and satisfaction with institution attended. The Chi-square analysis for the two variables produced significance at the .001 level. The level of significance showed that these two variables were highly significant. Furthermore, the results for Research Question 3 showed that students who were satisfied with

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institution attended were also satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement with their college experience.

Research Question 4 used regression to help analyze the data. Research Question 4 is, To what degree are students satisfied with the level of parental involvement in: A) college choice, B) social experience, and C) academic experience? Regression analysis was used to compare the dependent variable of satisfaction with overall parental involvement with the independent variables of satisfaction with parental involvement in college choice, social experience and academics. The three regression models produced similar results. In each model, regression showed significance at the .001 level. The results showed that based on this level of significance the independent variables were a significant predictor of the dependent variable. The regression analysis also produced a negative coefficient for all three independent variables. This meant that an inverse relationship exists between the independent and dependent variables. The inverse relationship is interesting because as the level of satisfaction with parental involvement for each independent variable increases, the model predicts lower satisfaction with overall parental involvement.

The analysis of the first research question pulled from the results Research Questions 2, 3, and 4. By looking at the results of the other three research questions the researcher was able to see how student satisfaction relates to parental involvement with students' college choice, social experience, and academic experience in college. Research showed that satisfaction did relate to parental involvement not only with different demographic groups, but with certain areas of college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Given the evidence provided by the other three research questions there is a relationship between student satisfaction and parental involvement.

This study assessed parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction at a 4-year university. The results show that differences in demographics can produce higher or lower levels of student satisfaction within college choice, social experience, and academic experience. Results suggest that the general negative perception of parental involvement in higher education discussed in the literature may not be shared by students.

The Conceptual Framework

As noted in chapter 2, the conceptual framework that was the foundation for this study was Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) three constructs that influence parents' involvement decisions. This framework was also supplemented by Walker-Marshall and Hudson (1999) and the NSSE conceptual framework (http://nsse.iub.edu). However, for the purposes of this study Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) were the primary focus. The three constructs were developed on the K-12 level, but proved to be a good fit for this study. This model's primary focus is on what parents think and do, and the roles they construct for themselves. To reiterate what was stated in chapter 2, the three constructs include role construction, parents' sense of efficacy, and the extent to which parents perceive the school wants them to be involved. Also, part of the last construct listed includes any barriers or obstacles that may occur. There were two main areas of concern when selecting this framework for this study: the constructs were developed on the K-12 level, and they were developed for the parents' point of view.

The first reason for concern for Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model is that it was developed on the K-12 level. The constructs themselves are translatable to higher education, but they were not developed with colleges and universities in mind. For higher education this model would need to take into account factors such as demographics. Parental involvement has been known to assist in the enrollment of underrepresented groups (Perna & Titus, 2005).

Therefore, factors such as race and gender, which were included in this study, would need to be re-examined with Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) constructs to make it a viable model for administrators in higher education to employ.

A second area of concern for this model is for whom it was developed. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) developed these three constructs for parents. Due to the fact that this model's primary target audience was K-12 parents, it would have been difficult for the authors to utilize students to help build on the three constructs. Students are an important part of the parental involvement process that seems to have been overlooked in previous studies (Carney, 2004; Cullaty 2009; Rouse, 2009; Wartman, 2009). Combined with the student component of this study, it is apparent that Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's constructs could be expanded to include a higher education approach. Parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction could potentially work in conjunction with this model to facilitate the same type of meaning it has at the K-12 level. What was learned from the grounding concepts will be explained further in the discussion section.

As a conceptual framework the three constructs, along with the barriers and obstacles component, provided an adequate lens to examine parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction. Parents' role construction, sense of efficacy, and perception of how involved the school wants them to be provided a clear description of what has helped K-12 level administrators develop positive attitudes and relationships with their parents. This model allowed the researcher to gain insight into the disconnect with parental involvement that is occurring somewhere between K-12 and higher education. The researcher has also been able to better understand that student satisfaction with parental involvement can play a part with role

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construction and the way in which parents feel a university may perceive them. Furthermore by investigating this framework, a more complete view of parental involvement has revealed itself.

Although these constructs provided a suitable framework for this study, the framework could be strengthened and further developed for use in higher education, if it were to reflect certain aspects of this study. To learn from this study that student satisfaction with parental involvement can be different depending on certain demographics or that it can impact satisfaction with college experience is powerful. Student-centered research relating to parental involvement could really strengthen the constructs of this framework and aid in developing a similar model that would be applicable to higher education administrators. As different generations of students enter college, higher education is going to have to continue to evolve its approach to parental involvement. Revisiting this framework from the standpoint of the student may in turn bring forth new constructs for higher education or at the very least provide a needed student perspective on parental involvement. Last of all, this model should be broadened so that higher education administrators may use it to develop a more comprehensive view of parental involvement.

The analysis for this study did add to the framework that was employed for the research. The first area was in the areas of role construction for parents. Role construction for this framework meant that parents had a sense of belief about what they were supposed to do. The analysis for the study showed that a relationship existed between student satisfaction and parental involvement. In this case, if parents feel like their students want them to be involved, then the role they construct for themselves will be one of high parental involvement. The same can be said for the second construct, which is sense of efficacy, or a belief that parents can benefit their children. The survey showed that 90% of students were satisfied with the overall

parental involvement with their college experience. Further results showed that 62.3% of students said that parental involvement impacted their experience at their university. The message from this study was unmistakable. Students were satisfied with the level of parental involvement, which shows that perhaps parents can benefit their students in K-12 as well as higher education.

The last construct of the framework for this study was parents' perception of barriers and obstacles to involvement. This researcher believes that the research added to the framework here by showing the statistical significance that did or did not exist between different demographic groups. The most statistically significant group turned out to be first generation and non-first generation students. The level of satisfaction with parental involvement was lower for first generation students. That being true, parents of first generation students may have barriers and obstacles that parents of White or in-state students don't perceive. The framework discussed grounded this study, but the analysis of the results helped add to the foundation of the framework and make it applicable to higher education.

Discussion

Based on the literature reviewed in chapter 2, several areas are examined in the discussion section in relation to the results of this study. Although a number of areas of literature were reviewed, three specific topics are discussed in conjunction with the results and analysis of this study. The main purpose of this study was to conduct research from the student point of view regarding parental involvement. More specifically, parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction was the main area of focus for the researcher. In this section, literature including student satisfaction measures, perceptions of parental involvement, and parent

involvement are examined along with data from the study to better understand how this study was useful to the broader topic of parental involvement in higher education.

One area of literature that was reviewed to help grasp the student satisfaction component of this study was student satisfaction measures. When initially reviewing the literature for this study, the researcher was able to find a number of studies related to parental involvement. However, these studies were conducted from a number of different viewpoints, including parents' and administrators', but none directly surveyed students. To add to the problem, there was no student satisfaction measure linked directly to parental involvement. Therefore this study attempted to solve both of these issues.

Two satisfaction measures were researched to try and help develop this study. The first was Franklin's (1994) Enrolled Student Survey. Although this survey included a student satisfaction piece, it was related to student education experience. This survey helped the researcher better understand the direction for this study, but it did not provide a student satisfaction measure that was useful.

The second student satisfaction measure was used as a supplement to the conceptual framework for this study. Walker-Marshall and Hudson (1999) used the ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS) to research student satisfaction with college services and environment. Although this study did look more closely at student perceptions, it (along with Franklin, 1999) does not address the issue of parental involvement.

Both of these studies were useful to this research, but what they helped develop is very important to the body of literature. The survey that was created for this study not only adds an additional student satisfaction measure to the body of literature, but it also furthers the literature in the area of parental involvement. The Parental Involvement Survey (PIS) is now a foundation

for researching student perceptions of parental involvement in a number of areas. The PIS can be adapted for other studies on parental involvement. It was the goal of the researcher to not only explore parental involvement as it relates to student satisfaction, but to produce a survey instrument that could be used for future research to help close any gaps that exist in the literature.

The perception of parental involvement in higher education is another area of literature that this study could potentially affect. Jacobson (2003), Wills (2005), Toor (2000), and Johnson (2004) have all researched and written articles on the attitude toward parental involvement in higher education. In all cases the same negative perception has come to light. This study shows that the negative perception that is generally held in higher education may not be completely accurate.

Higher education no longer has the luxury of keeping parents at arm's length. They must find ways to interact on a positive level and to involve them rather than push them away. This study shows that students at a southeastern university were more satisfied than not with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. In particular, 90% of students said they were satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement with their college experience. It is unrealistic for administrators at this university to continue to have a negative perception of parental involvement when students are satisfied in a number of areas relating to their experiences in college.

Furthering supporting this fact are the results of the Chi-square analysis for Research Question 3. Research Question 3 is, To what extent does satisfaction with institution attended relate to satisfaction with parental involvement? When analyzing the data for this research question, a high level of significance was found between satisfaction with institution attended and satisfaction with parental involvement. Because a statistically significant relationship exists

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between these two variables, it is safe to assume that satisfaction with parental involvement is going to relate to a student's satisfaction with their institution. In short, administrators need to be aware of the relationship that already exists between students and parents and find ways to foster it.

Both Toor (2000) and Jacobson (2003) made interesting points in their articles concerning parental involvement. According to Jacobson, parental involvement is intensifying due to the number of students applying to college. This trend is one that seemingly will continue in the near future. Enrollment is at record levels at the southeastern university in this study, with a growing number of students attending from out-of-state. Toor (2000) explained parent-student relationships by using the term *we*. Decisions involving higher education are no longer singular ones. Decisions involve the student and one if not both parents. This study shows that a university cannot push parents away when the overall mood of the students is one of satisfaction with their parents' involvement.

The last main area of literature discussed in connection with the results of this study is the broader topic of parental involvement. Although there was not an endless supply of literature on parental involvement, the authors who have contributed paint a broad picture of this topic. Johnson (2004) wrote an article in which he referred to parents as "helicopter parents." This was by no means a compliment for parents in regard to their involvement in higher education. What Johnson meant was that parents tend to hover in many situations regarding their student or students. Lange and Stone (2001) pointed out one of these areas as financial aid. The authors mentioned that financial aid involves the entire family, which promotes parental involvement.

In an instance that McDonough (1997) described, the Taylor family said they had no involvement in their college choice process, and that it actually turned out to be a negative thing.

The results of this study show that students at the university are not the ones saying "parents, stay away," and the literature suggests that colleges and universities are making that decision on behalf of the students. If certain areas of higher education promote involvement and others do not, there is a mixed message being sent to parents and students. The conceptual framework supports that parents construct their own roles with respect to parental involvement. Administrators at the southeastern university cannot say that students don't want parents to be involved, when 69.5% of students reported being satisfied with the level of parental involvement in the college social experience, and 67.9% are satisfied with parental involvement in academics.

Stringer et al.(1998) demonstrated in their study that parents are involved with college applications, and over 50% of parents said they helped select the college that their student attended. The present study shows that 77% of students surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with parental involvement with college applications and that 78.4% were satisfied with parental involvement with the college decision process. Students with high levels of satisfaction with parental involvement want their parents to be involved. It is a different generation of students, and universities are going to have to adapt.

The final component that impacts the broader issue of parental involvement is demographics. Daniel et al. (2001) mentioned that socioeconomic background, ethnicity, and family dynamics may all play a role in how involved a parent becomes. Daniel et al. further explained this in his study by stating that males were not as willing to engage their parents as were females. Lange and Stone (2001) supported that demographics can impact parental involvement by expressing that first generation parents are likely to be more involved because of their lack of knowledge about higher education.

The researcher believes that some of the most compelling results of this study came from the *t* tests for Research Question 2. *T* tests showed that demographics could impact the level of satisfaction a group had with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. This study supports the statement made by Daniel et al. (2001) by showing that the means for females were high for all items that were statistically significant. This means that females had higher levels of satisfaction with parental involvement for those items than did males.

Another compelling comparison was between first generation and non-first generation students. Every item tested under college choice, social experience, and academic experience showed statistically significant differences between these two groups. All the means were higher for non-first generation students, which shows higher levels of satisfaction with parental involvement. In addition, a regression model was developed to test satisfaction with parental involvement against the demographics of year in school, gender, first generation and non-first generation students, race, and residency. The regression model showed that year in school, gender, and whether the student was first generation or not were all significant. Similar to the *t* tests, the first generation (FirGen) variable had the most effect or impact on satisfaction with parental involvement. These findings discount what Lange and Stone (2001) found. The main point this study makes based on the results of the *t* tests is that at the southeastern university in this study, certain demographics did impact the level of satisfaction with parental involvement. This helps add to the literature on how demographics can impact parental involvement.

This discussion section sought to look deeper at how this study added to the literature in the fields of student satisfaction measures, perceptions of parental involvement, and the broad topic of parental involvement. In all three cases, the researcher feels that this study did provide

results that help close a gap in literature that previously existed. Although this study is only connected to one school, a foundation has been laid to broaden and expand the literature on parental involvement.

Recommendations

As a result of the findings of this study, several recommendations for enhancing the depth and scope of the body of literature have emerged. Furthermore, recommendations for policy and practice in regard to parental involvement will be made as well. Finally, due to the narrow span of this study, recommendations have been made to expand the research.

Recommendations for Policy

Recommendation 1: Upper level administrators at the southeastern university should fully commit to creating a culture of cooperation between parents, students, and the university where parental involvement is welcome.

Without the support and guidance of upper level administrators, academic units across the board will not be able to see the value of parental involvement. Administrators and staff alike should assist each other to use parental involvement to improve the perception of the role of parents in higher education. The idea of "helicopter parents" (Wills, 2005) has prevented administrators from creating a culture that nurtures the support of its parents and, in turn, student satisfaction.

In this case, the author is not advocating for parents to be involved in every aspect of higher education. However, assumptions about the positive or negative effects of parental involvement are sometimes made at the upper level without always considering the source. The source in this instance is the students and their opinion of the parental involvement they experience. A consistent effort should be made by administrators to collaborate with parents and

students and bring into play parental involvement to create a more welcoming environment.

Collaboration on the part of administrators at the university is shown to be important by the fact that satisfaction with institution attended showed significance to overall satisfaction with parental involvement in the Chi-square analysis. It was found that significance was at the .001 level, which is highly significant for these two variables. This shows that creating a welcoming environment for parents at the university level could impact a student's satisfaction with his or her institution.

Administrators must map out and consider a strategic plan for using parental involvement in certain situations, realizing how that could possibly impact their student population to create a culture of better cooperation and communication between the university and its stakeholders. To do this, students must be an integral part of the development and implementation of a plan that takes into account parental involvement. The regression model in Table 23 was used to compare the demographics for this study to overall satisfaction with parental involvement. This model showed that year in school, gender, and first generation and non-first generation all were significant predictors of overall satisfaction. These results show how input from different groups of students can be used to enhance the overall environment of the university. Research is needed from parents on specific needs and areas of disconnect that may be occurring within the college experience. This research along with findings from this study can be drawn on to cultivate parental involvement.

In addition, many other resources can support a strategic plan for parental involvement. Looking at other universities and considering what types of issues or concerns they have about parental involvement will also contribute to developing a successful plan. Other things need to be taken into account as well. Who should lead the effort to create a more welcoming culture for

parental involvement? What other stakeholder, if any, should be included in discussions when developing a strategic plan. Furthermore, would involving parents more or differently in higher education have any lasting positive or negative effects for the university?

Recommendation 2: Parental involvement should be used in a variety of areas such as admissions, orientation, academic colleges, and campus programs to improve the quality of the college experience for students and parents in higher education. Colleges can no longer take a sink-or-swim approach when it comes to their students' social and academic experiences at their institutions. Table 7 shows that students were less satisfied with their relationships with faculty members, staff, and administrators more than any other items on the Parental Involvement Survey. The ratings on these two items show that a hands-off approach could potentially be affecting the way students view the relationships they form with faculty, staff, and administrators. K-12 schools have been contradicting the hands-off approach for years, which makes it increasingly hard for colleges and universities to ignore parental involvement.

Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) mentioned that (K-12) schools foster greater communication, encourage parents to assist the child at home with schoolwork, and even recruit parents to participate as volunteers. Having this type of attitude on the K-12 level can potentially create a considerable disconnect between parents and universities when the student transitions to higher education. The Parental Involvement Survey shows that 62.3% of students at the southeastern university in this study agreed that parental involvement did impact their satisfaction with the experience they had in college. This reaffirms that parental involvement cannot simply be dismissed as parents trying to micromanage their student.

In areas such as admissions, orientation, and other campus entities, policy must be put in place to better involve the parent. The Parental Involvement Survey also showed that 90% of

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students were satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement with their college experience. Fostering communication and involvement from parents within higher education can potentially impact student satisfaction, which benefits the university as a whole. Different offices on campus are going to have to find ways to use parents as a resource to help better the social and academic experiences of their students. It will be especially important to identify certain groups of students in which parental involvement needs to be fostered the most. The t tests for this study revealed that males, non-White students, and first-generation students had less satisfaction with parental involvement based on their means than did their counterparts. With this said, finding ways to involve parents on various levels across campus can make individual units more effective and efficient with certain groups of students. Parental involvement is a free resource that when directed properly can become an asset in higher education.

Further information needs to be gathered from parents to assist in making parental involvement a useful tool. Administrators and staff from areas such as campus programs and orientation need to talk to parents about things that can be improved from year to year. Admission offices can use parents to recruit, and orientation offices might use them to develop better academic advising sessions. Instead of expending energy trying to find ways for parents to become less involved, campus entities should utilize parents to help them better serve students. Parental involvement does not have to be seen as a negative aspect of higher education. Colleges and universities should continue the trend of positive parental involvement from the K-12 level and truly explore ways that parental involvement can grow and expand in higher education.

Recommendations for Practice

Recommendation 3: Higher education administrators and management should develop

programs and parent education opportunities to improve parental involvement and identify areas

in which parents may be able to affect student satisfaction. In Tables 28, 31, and 34, regression

analysis shows that parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academics are

all significant predictors of overall satisfaction with parental involvement. The significance

between these variables shows how program development and parent education could influence

the satisfaction of students in these three areas at the university. The author knows from firsthand

work experience that some programs do exist, such as a parent orientation program. However,

the design of this particular program limits parents' access to their students during the summer

orientation process. The thought process for years has been to try and distance parents and keep

them from controlling what happens with their students during a given orientation session.

Challenges continue to exist for administrators to create an environment that fosters

communication with parents (Conneely et al., 2001).

Additionally, the admissions office has used parents in certain recruiting situations to

speak to other parents and students about their experiences at this southeastern university. These

are both valid ways to welcome parental involvement at the university level. However, normally

the parental involvement in admissions and orientation tends to be superficial and only occurs at

the initial phase of a student's 4-year college experience. There still seems to be a disconnect in

subsequent years that could be addressed by developing programs and even training for parents

that would not exclude them from the college process.

The Parental Involvement Survey produced three points of interest in relation to this

recommendation. When students were asked to rate their relationships with faculty, as well as

relationships with administrators and staff, satisfaction levels fell. Some 25% of respondents were not at all satisfied or slightly satisfied with their relationships with faculty members. In addition, 30.4% of students surveyed were not at all satisfied or slightly satisfied with their relationships with administrators and staff. These were the lowest two areas of satisfaction, and they provide a clear opportunity for more parental involvement.

Also, when running the *t* tests and regression model for the demographics of this study, first generation and non-first generation students showed the most significance of any group. Non-first generation students were more satisfied with parental involvement in college choice, social experience, and academic experience. In addition, the absolute value of the coefficient for this demographic in the regression model was the highest of the independent variables tested. These results show that special attention needs to be paid to first generation students with regard to programming and parental involvement strategies.

Many times the only interaction a parent may have with a faculty member or administrator is an email or phone call once a year. Students on the other hand, may never form good relationships with either group due to lack of involvement on campus or the short time frame in which they may be exposed to a particular faculty member. Perhaps universities can initiate more opportunities for parents and students to interact with administrators and faculty members together. Scott and Daniel (2001) mentioned that at certain institutions it may even be necessary to create a free-standing family office. Creating this type of resource can depend on the size and diversity of the institution (Scott & Daniel, 2001). This type of parental involvement could possibly lead to better student satisfaction, which could have a trickledown effect with other campus units. There is also the possibility that if parents better comprehend

some of the inner workings of the university, they could pass on a more complete understanding to their students.

Programs and/or training for parents should be held at a variety of times during a student's college career. Involving parents only during processes like orientation and admissions does not create an environment of cooperation and collaboration. Orientation and admissions can definitely serve as a catalyst for parental involvement, but they do not need to be the only outlet for this type of involvement. These programs should be modeled after other successful parent programs. North Carolina State University has developed a checklist for "Best Practices in Programming for Parents of College Students" (www.ncsu.edu/for_parents). Parent programs and education opportunities should be strategically held over the course of 4 or 5 years to truly have an impact on parental involvement.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendation 4: There should be further research conducted at 4-year public and private institutions using the Parental Involvement Survey or a variation of it. In order to broaden the literature base on parental involvement, multiple student populations need to be surveyed. Certain characteristics of families and students can contribute to how involved a parent may become (Daniel et al., 2001). By conducting research at additional institutions, the diversity of the sample can be increased, providing a better understanding of how different races, genders, and grade classifications view parental involvement. Daniel et al. (2001) supported this by explaining that socioeconomic background, ethnicity, and family dynamics can all play a role in parental involvement. The scope of this study was limited, so although the variables of year in school, gender, and first generation or non-first generation showed significance to overall satisfaction that does not provide enough evidence to make broad generalizations.

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With the growing level of parental involvement in this generation of students, it is imperative that the knowledge base continue to grow on this topic. Universities across the board are going to continue to deal with parental involvement in a variety of situations, and without more complete understanding, problems could occur between colleges and their stakeholders. Several of the studies cited in the literature provide beneficial data in the area of parental involvement. Each of these studies along with this current study have bridged gaps in the literature concerning parental involvement, but more research needs to be done.

By branching out to both public and private institutions, data can be collected from a larger population and compared on a much larger scale. With this type of research, more conclusions can be drawn about parental involvement. Parents today are characterized as very involved, overprotective, and child focused (Carney, 2004). Research at a more diverse set of universities would allow researchers to compare private and public universities and even further break down differences that may exist with students and parents concerning parental involvement. Further expansion of the Parental Involvement Survey would lead to a broader base of research and a more useful set of data for university administrators to use.

Recommendation 5: There should be further research conducted on parental involvement using qualitative methods. Students have a lot to say on an array of topics regarding their experiences in higher education. Unfortunately, university administrators do not always take into account student opinion when putting strategic plans in place. There is an opportunity here to use students to provide information on parental involvement that would complement what has been collected by means of survey. Qualitative research would have the ability to dig into the how and why of parental involvement.

Focus groups could be used to collect data from students that would provide administrators the opportunity to learn what type of involvement they like from their parents and on what level. Furthermore, questions could be developed to ask how their parents have been involved with their college experience. Questions could be developed in similar areas to the Parental Involvement Survey. Addressing parental involvement with college choice, social involvement, and academic experience would supply the data necessary to help university administrators create a more parent-friendly environment. Qualitative data in these three areas could affect decisions made regarding admissions, campus programming, and individual academic units.

Focus groups would also enable the researcher to narrow down specific groups of students and collect data within those groups. For instance, a researcher could have a sample of just female freshman or of senior males. In this particular study, 66.8% of the sample was female and 84.9% were White. This does not mean that the survey did not provide good data, however qualitative data could be used to gain an even better understanding of parental involvement from a more diversified point of view. According to census data, 35% of the Millennial Generation, age 19 and under, is either Latino or non-White (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Based on this information, focus groups could be developed to target Hispanic students who are first generation college students.

There are any number of targeted samples that could be interviewed by using qualitative research. The results for this study show that first generation students have the potential to be a very important target sample based on the fact that this group showed significance for every item in the *t* tests for college choice, social experience, and academic experience, and had the most significance in Table 23 as well. In addition, data could be collected and compared between peer

institutions to investigate any similarities or differences in parental involvement. These are all topics in which qualitative research needs to be employed.

Recommendation 6: There should be further research conducted on higher education administration's perception of parental involvement. Administrators could be interviewed and/or surveyed to gain their perception of parental involvement in higher education. It is difficult to welcome parental involvement in higher education if administrators truly have a negative view of that involvement. Administrators have a difficult time defining boundaries and creating programs that speak to the growing needs of parents (Watson, 2007). Interviewing administrators would help to understand the theory of keeping parents at arm's length when their student enters college. What is the administrator's view of the role parents play, and how do they think parental involvement could be used to the advantage of higher education?

University administrators could provide a better appreciation of the disconnect that occurs between colleges and parents. Parental involvement should be seen as parental investment (Palkovitz, 1996). It is this investment by parents that universities have a difficult time comprehending. Collecting data from higher education administrators could help shed light on why some universities do not encourage more parental involvement in certain areas. If parents are already going to involve themselves with their students, then it makes sense to redirect the time and energy they spend in a positive manner.

Collecting information from administrators would also provide insight into how they communicate with parents and what the purpose of that communication is. Although parent programs and family weekends occur at colleges across the board, this type of involvement does not always satisfy parents. Too many times these programs are superficial in nature. Parents are asking if not demanding more involvement, and it is the responsibility of administrators to find

ways to accomplish the task they have been presented. Research needs to be expanded

concerning parental involvement and university administration. There are a lot of unknowns that

could be answered with this type of data, which would contribute significantly to the body of

literature surrounding parental involvement.

<center>Conclusion</center>

Parental involvement is becoming a more prominent concern in higher education. In the

past, studies, articles, and other research have shown that parents can become overly involved to

the point where colleges and universities do what they can to keep them out of the higher

education process. The goal of this study was to examine parental involvement from the student

point of view, more specifically in the area of satisfaction with parental involvement in college

choice, social experience, and academic experience. Although this study focused on just one

southeastern university, useful data was collected and added to the literature base.

Despite the research that had previously been done on the topic of parental involvement,

not much if any existed on student opinion or student satisfaction. This study not only

contributes to the literature on parental involvement, but it also helped develop a student

satisfaction measure and added to the conceptual framework of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler

(1997). This study produced data that showed that parental involvement does relate to student

satisfaction, and that factors such as demographics can have an effect on that satisfaction. This

research offers opportunities to continue exploring student satisfaction and parental involvement

at other colleges and universities.

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APPENDIX A

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT SURVEY

<u>Demographics</u>

Age: _____

Year in School:　　Freshman　　Sophomore　　Junior　Senior

Gender:　Male　　Female

Race: African American　　Asian/Pacific Islander
　　　Alaskan Native　　　Native American
　　　Caucasian　　　　　Hispanic
　　　Native Hawaiian　　Other_____

Residency:

In-state_____　Out-of-state_____

First Generation Student (Meaning: Are you the first one in your family to attend college?):

Yes　　　　　No

College Choice Questions					
	Not At All Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A
Parental involvement with college applications					
Parental involvement with college essays					
Parental involvement in college decision process					
Parental involvement with regards to reminding you of application					

deadlines					
Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend					
Parental involvement in the college choice process					

Social Experience Questions

	Not At All Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A
Parental involvement with you being involved on campus					
Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority					
Parental involvement with issues about drinking					
Parental involvement with issues about drugs					
Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure					
Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus					
Parental involvement with transition to social life in college					
Parental involvement in college social experience					

Academic Experience Questions

	Not At All Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A
Parental involvement in scheduling your classes					
Parental involvement with waking you up for class					

Parental involvement with class assignments					
Parental involvement with tests in college					
Parental involvement with your freshman orientation					
Parental involvement with your grades					
Parental involvement with your transition to college course load					
Parental involvement in academics					

Satisfaction Questions

	Not At All Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A
I am satisfied with the institution I attend					
I am satisfied with the overall quality of academic advising at my institution					
I am satisfied with the knowledge, skills, and personal development I have gained at my institution					
I am satisfied with the relationships I have with faculty members at my institution					
I am satisfied with the relationships I have with administrators and staff members at my institution					

I am satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement in my college experience.

Yes
No

The level of parental involvement impacted my satisfaction with the experience at my university.

Yes
No

I would like more parental involvement with my college experience

Yes
No

If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

Yes
No

CODEBOOK

Age- What is your age?

YIS- What is your current year in school?

Gen- What is your gender?

Race- What is your race?

Other- Other

InOutRes- Are you and in-state or out-of-state resident?

FirGen- Are you a first generation college student?

ParInApp- Parental involvement with college applications

ParInEss- Parental involvement with college essays

ParInCDP- Parental involvement in college decision process

ParInDead- Parental involvement with regards to reminding you of application deadlines

ParInAtt- Parental involvement in choosing a college to attend

ParInChoice- Parental involvement in the college choice process

ParInCamp- Parental involvement with you being involved on campus

ParInFrat- Parental involvement in joining a fraternity/sorority

ParInDrk- Parental involvement with issues about drinking

ParInDrg- Parental involvement with issues about drugs

ParInPress- Parental involvement in dealing with social pressure

ParInLive- Parental involvement in your choice to live on campus

ParInTrans- Parental involvement with transition to social life in college

ParInSE- Parental involvement in college social experience

ParInClass- Parental involvement in scheduling your classes

ParInWake- Parental involvement with waking you up for class

ParInAsgn- Parental involvement with class assignments

ParInTest- Parental involvement with tests in college

ParInOrient- Parental involvement with your freshman orientation

ParInGrade- Parental involvement with your grades

ParInLoad- Parental involvement with your transition to college course load

ParInAca- Parental involvement in academics

SatInst- I am satisfied with the institution I attend

SatAcaAdv- I am satisfied with the overall quality of academic advising at my institution

SatKSP- I am satisfied with the knowledge, skills, and personal development I have gained at my institution

SatRelFac- I am satisfied with the relationships I have with faculty members at my institution

SatRelAdm- I am satisfied with the relationships I have with administrators and staff members at my institution

SatParIn- I am satisfied with the overall level of parental involvement in my college experience.

ParInImp- The level of parental involvement impacted my satisfaction with the experience at my university.

MoreParIn- I would like more parental involvement in my college experience.

SameInstAtt- If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?