Old Dominion University

ODU Digital Commons

Spring 2013

Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The Attitudes of Three Generations Toward Their Higher Education Objectives in Georgia Community Colleges

Jodi Fissel
Old Dominion University

BABY BOOMERS, GENERATION X, AND MILLENNIALS: THE ATTITUDES

OF THREE GENERATIONS TOWARD THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION

OBJECTIVES IN GEORGIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

by

Jodi Fissel
B.S. December 1994, Ball State University
M.A. December 2001, The University of South Carolina

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
May 2013

Approved by:

_____

Dennis Gregory (Director)

_____

Mitchell Williams (Member)

_____

G. Lea Lee (Member)

ABSTRACT

BABY BOOMERS, GENERATION X, AND MILLENNIALS: THE ATTITUDES OF
THREE GENERATIONS TOWARD THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION OBJECTIVES IN
GEORGIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Jodi Noles Fissel
Old Dominion University, 2013
Director: Dr. Dennis Gregory

In today's economy, students and professionals must acquire skills and continue

to hone them throughout their lifetimes (Boothe, 1998). In particular, students must

sharpen communication, information technology, and human relations skills and expect

to have more than one career in their lifetimes. Because higher education is the key to

those skills, community colleges are increasingly multi-generational learning institutions

complete with students comprising three or more generations simultaneously. As such, it

may be beneficial to recognize and examine the traits of Baby Boomers, Generation X-

ers, and Millennials so educators may adapt to varying learning styles and value systems

(Robey-Graham, 2008).

For this quantitative study, a review of the professional literature and a

documents analysis from each institution was performed, followed by interviews with

two administrators at each of the three institutions to determine what these administrators

believe are the learning objectives of each of the generational groups, and to seek

information regarding the methods provided at each institution to enhance the learning

environment for each of the generational groups. The above information was used to

develop a survey instrument that was administered to students enrolled within classes at a

large, medium, and small community college that was selected to ensure that the

participants in the study represent the larger population of community college students in

Georgia. Finally, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine the degree of differences and what changes students from each of the three generations would like to see in the learning environment at community colleges in Georgia.

Student survey responses reinforced assumption gleaned from the literature. Millennials are often extrinsically motivated, meaning they value the goals that education may afford, including a job, career, financial opportunities, or societal expectations, but not necessarily for the sake of learning (Bye, Pushkar, and Conway's, 2007). Millennials are drawn to higher education because of the promise of a more satisfying career, secure financial future, and are more invested in the end result, financial reward, than acquiring knowledge (Shaul, 2007). Conversely, non-traditional learners are intrinsically motivated, desiring self-improvement, while considering personal growth to promote psychological well-being, and not requiring an immediate return, wanting to attend college for the sake of learning, seeking knowledge to satisfy an inquiring mind (Wolfgang & Dowling, 1981).

This dissertation is dedicated to my loving husband, Mark.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have made this accomplishment possible. I am especially grateful to Dr. Dennis Gregory, dissertation chair, for his boundless patience, guidance, and support. Dr. Mitch Williams was no less patient, supportive, and kind, while simultaneously serving as my academic advisor. Thank you to Dr. Lea Lee who saved my committee by agreeing to read this dissertation and provide her expertise in the field of Teaching and Learning. Special thanks go to Mr. Bruce Wright for my internship opportunity. Thank you to Dr. Lara Carver, Dr. Hara Charlier, Dr. Cheryl Curry, and Dr. Kellie Sorey for providing their expertise in validating my survey instrument. I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the administration, faculty, staff, and students of the three sample colleges who shared their time to make my goal a reality.

I want to acknowledge my husband's parents, Charles and Vecenta Fissel, who provided me with more support and encouragement than any in-laws should have to. With great love and appreciation, I want to recognize Christina, Scott, and Tristan Bullock for continued support. To my beloved grandparents: thank you for your unconditional love and most exemplary paradigm of gratitude and strong work ethic. Finally, my greatest appreciation, love, and affection, go to my husband, Mark. You promised to make all my dreams come true and did.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Today, community colleges are multi-generational learning institutions with students comprising three or more generations simultaneously (Robey-Graham, 2008). For this reason, administrators and faculty must identify and recognize generational distinctions to promote persistence and decrease attrition. As never before, institutions of higher education in general and community colleges in particular must accommodate multiple generations exiting high school or a career to transition to a new or different career (Booth, 1998).

In an ever-changing and modernizing economy, the American manufacturing sector is being supplanted by a service one. For this reason, students must sharpen communication, information technology, and human relations skills. Additionally, those cohorts currently employed are expected to have more than one career. In fact, more than 50 percent of the next decade's jobs have not yet been invented. Regardless, each generation after World War II has enjoyed a higher standard of living than those previous. The common denominator is that professionals must acquire skills and continue to hone them throughout their lifetimes (Booth, 1998).

Higher education facilitates the development and honing of those skills. Through remediation, community colleges will continue to play an important role in transitioning students from high school or the workforce to a university or a new or different career. An important component to this country's future workforce and a student's career success is retention (Almeida, 1991). Recognition of generational learning styles, likely distinct, will undoubtedly be a factor in student retention and a viable solution to attrition. In turn, a foundation in generational theory, the understanding that four generational types exist,

each with a distinct collective persona, is appropriate to understanding those learning styles (Howe & Strauss, 1991; Robey-Graham, 2008).

The following study examined the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia Community Colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the learning objectives of each group. The researcher used a sample of students from Georgia Community Colleges to compare the following:

1. What are the learning objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

3. What are the differences between the learning objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

Background

Most community colleges are serving students of three or more generations simultaneously (Robey-Graham, 2008). Robey-Graham suggested it may be beneficial to recognize and examine the traits of each group, so educators may adapt to varying learning styles and value systems. A college's student body is a composite of a host of characters from differing backgrounds, experiences, races, and cultures (Light, 2001). Now more than ever, multiculturalism has come to include "multi-generationalism". Multiculturalism and multi-generationalism can provide an exciting mix, making a richer classroom experience (Robey-Graham).

Not only is the transition from high school to college a monumental one for the individual, it is a daunting challenge for the institutions that they attend. Previous retention studies focused overwhelmingly on four-year, residential colleges. As a result, those studies emphasized the need for a student's social inclusion within the university. Since community colleges are generally not residential institutions of higher education, this type of institution was omitted from most previous studies (Astin, 1975; 1984; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980; 1991; Tinto, 1975; 1993).

Educators must be receptive and diligent when accepting students as holistic beings, not simply academic ones. As such, emotional, intellectual, and extra-curricular needs, for example, differ generationally (Strauss & Howe, 1997). Like advertising and media, higher education must keep pace with ever-changing trends and values to attract customers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia Community Colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the learning objectives of each group. To do this, the researcher identified demographic information about these students. Demographic data collected included a variety of data such as age (in order to determine generational classification), gender, whether the student is degree-seeking, and full- or part-time enrollment status. The study examined students at three Georgia Community Colleges (one large, one medium, and one small). The institutions from which the samples were drawn were selected in a manner that allowed them to be representative of the population of students at all Georgia Community Colleges. This selection will enhance generalizability across the population of community college students in Georgia. Further, the study compared the learning objectives of each of the generational groups identified by the literature which make up the primary student populations of community colleges. This study then sought to determine if there are differences in the learning objectives among students between each generation. Finally, this study seeks to identify what changes students from each generation believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment and meet their learning needs.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the learning objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

3. What are the differences between the learning objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

Significance

Institutions of higher education may be serving three or more generations simultaneously. Ensuring persistence and limiting attrition among all of these generational groups are continual problems for educators. As a result, Robey-Graham (2008) wrote about the benefits of intergenerational learning environments which also allow focus on specific learning objectives of each generation, but also suggested further studies should be undertaken for application to learning styles, the use of technology, and academic and organizational approaches to students from different generations.

Unfortunately, persistence studies on community college students were late coming; early studies focused on students at four-year institutions and the theory of resident-inclusion (Bean, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1990; Tinto, 1975, 1982, 1988). For all of the above reasons, this study explored the higher education learning objectives of each of the three generations of students currently studying at Georgia Community Colleges, identify and examine whether there are differences in the learning objectives of students in each generation, and identify what changes students from each generation believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment.

Methodology

As noted above, this study compared the learning objectives of three generations of community college students in Georgia. The researcher utilized stratified sampling procedures at each institution because the student population was drawn from three community colleges (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996) with distinct rurality index codes— one large, one medium, and one small (Carnegie, 2006). Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh explained:

> An advantage of stratified sampling is that it enables the researcher to study the
> differences that might exist between various subgroups of a population, In this
> kind of sampling one may either take equal numbers from each stratum or select
> in proportion to the size of the stratum in the population. The latter procedure is
> known as *proportional stratified sampling*, which is applied when the
> characteristic of the entire population are the main concern in the study. The
> stratum is represented in the sample in exact proportion to its frequency in the
> total population (p. 178).

Thus, while not an identified research question for the study, the researcher also examined whether any of the responses to the research questions from samples at each college differ according to rurality. The researcher randomly selected classes within which she administered a survey instrument. Ten classes of at least twenty students each were selected to create a population of approximately 200 students at each type of community college (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996).

For this study, the researcher employed a quantitative research design. First of all, the researcher conducted interviews with two administrators at each of the three institutions. The purpose of these interviews is to determine what these administrators believe are the learning objectives of each of the generational groups and to seek information regarding the methods provided at each institution to enhance the learning environment for each of the generational groups.

Separate interviews were conducted with the chief academic officer (CAO) and the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) at each of the three community colleges in the sample. The purpose for selecting samples from one institution in each rurality group is intended to assure that the participants in the study represent the larger population of community college students in Georgia (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996).

The information gathered at these interviews, as well as a review of the professional literature and a documents analysis from each institution, was used to develop a quantitative survey instrument that was administered to students enrolled within classes selected to be surveyed at each institution. Specifically, the information gathered contributed to research question five: What are the changes students from each

generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

Prior to surveying students, demographic data regarding their student population were obtained from each institution to gain an understanding of the demographics breakdown at each institution. The survey itself also sought demographic data from the students including age (to determine generational classification), gender, whether the student was degree-seeking, and full- or part-time enrollment status.

The student survey instrument used Likert-type items that explored 1) the learning objectives of each generational group, 2) whether there are differences in the learning objectives of students in each generation, and 3) what changes students from each generation believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment.

Following the interviews and the development of a draft survey instrument, the validity of the instrument was established through a review process by a panel of experts including university professors, community college leaders, and other professionals who have experience with or expertise in community college teaching or generational theory. Members of the panel of experts reviewed the draft survey instrument to establish its content validity. Next, the instrument tested for reliability through a test-retest pilot study. After the validity and reliability of the instrument have been established, students within the ten classes selected from each community college were asked to complete the survey instrument. As noted above, a student sample from a large, medium, and small community college was selected to ensure that the participants in the study represent the larger population of community college students in Georgia (Carnegie, 2006). Data from the survey instrument was processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

(SPSS) to answer the research questions described above. Specifically, the researcher performed an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine the degree of differences. Additionally, data from the survey was analyzed to determine if there are significant differences in what changes students from each of the three generations would like to see in the learning environment at community colleges in Georgia.

Delimitations of the Study

The following delimitations apply to this study:

1. Surveyed institutions are limited to SACS-accredited, non-technical community colleges in Georgia.

2. The survey instrument was edited and revised by experts within and on community college issues or generational theory. However, panel members may not have possessed expertise in both of these topics, may not necessarily have been specialists in retention, or work within Georgia or at one of the participating institutions.

3. The researcher only interviewed Chief Academic Officers (CAO) and Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) from SACS-accredited, non-technical community colleges, in Georgia.

Definition of Terms

Terms referred to throughout this study are defined as follows:

Baby boomers are students who were born immediately following World War II. Specifically, "Boomers" were born between 1945 and 1963 (Cohen & Brower, 2008).

Community College refers to public two-year, liberal-arts based institutions. These colleges serve a junior-college purpose in that they: 1) prepare underprepared

students for transition to four-year institutions through remediation, 2) offer an affordable option for students to complete the first two years of a four-year degree (Cohen & Brower, 2008).

A *Generation* is a group of people who share a common period in history (Strauss & Howe, 1997).

Generation X describes those students born between 1964 and 1981 (Cohen & Brower, 2008).

G. I. Generation refers to the generation made up of young adults during, and who fought in, World War II (Strauss & Howe, 1997).

Large refers to associate's degree granting institutions whose full-time equivalent enrollment is 5,000-9,999 students.

Learning Environment refers to the social, physical, psychological, and pedagogical contexts in which learning occurs and which affect student achievement and attitudes (Learning Environments Research, n.d.).

Learning Objectives refer to the reasons and motivations of each generation attending college.

Medium refers to associate's degree granting institutions whose full-time equivalent enrollment is 2,000–4,999 students

Millennials are students born between 1982 and 2000 (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

Multicultural refers to a population consisting of two or more cultures (Locke, 1998).

Multigenerational refers to a population consisting of two or more generations (Strauss & Howe, 1997).

Non-traditional students are those students aged 25 or older (Cohen & Brower, 2008). While students under the age of 18 may also be considered as non-traditional, no such students were included in this study.

Rural refers to institutions serving Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs) or Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) with a total population lower than 500,000, or not in a PMSA or MSA.

SACS, or Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is an accrediting body that assesses colleges and schools for: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia (SACS, 2010).

Small refers to associate's degree granting institutions whose full-time equivalent enrollment is 500–1,999 students

SPSS, or Statistical Package for the Social Sciences is a predictive, analytical software program for social science research (SPSS, 2010).

A *Traditional Student* in this study is one who is between the ages of 18 and 25 (Cohen & Brawer 2008).

CHAPTER II - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

When considering America's economic future, "The most significant shift will be the substitution of 'mindcraft' for 'handicraft' work (Langhorst, p. 57, 1997)." Indeed, Perelman (1992) suggested that "jobs that involve growing things and making things are fast disappearing (as cited in Langhorst, p. 57, 1997)." Add to the equation that each generation after World War II has enjoyed a higher standard of living than those previous.

The common denominator is that professionals must acquire skills and continue to hone them throughout their lifetimes in order to achieve or maintain that higher standard of living. Higher education is the key to those skills. Whatever existential knowledge a student may hope to glean from higher education, college is still the way to obtain marketable skills and to limit or avoid periods of unemployment (Reitzle, 2006). Reitzle suggests that instead of one career, today people are preparing occupational portfolios and stresses work is the cardinal role individuals in Western society play.

Still, each generation's motivations for attending college prove more unique than standard of living alone. Baby Boomers, for example, may have differing reasons for attending college as traditional students immediately following high school versus later in life. Today, Baby Boomers may attend college for economic reasons. People are living longer, older unemployed adults take longer to find work than their younger counterparts, and they may not be able to cash in on retirement portfolios as a result of the recent economic downturn (Moltz, 2011). Immediately following high school, however, Susan El-Shamy (2004) explained:

many of us were in college in the sixties, and while some may have been

marching and protesting outside of class, in class we all listened up and took good

notes. In the seventies, concerned with inner peace, human growth, and reaching

our full potential, we sat in circles on beanbags sharing our feelings and letting it

all hang out. We looked to gurus and subject-matter experts to tell us the

answers—or at least provide insights. (p. 12)

Previous generations appeared to attend college, at least in part, to grow and find

themselves as much as to establish the foundations of a future career. According to Kroth

and Boverie (2000), "from the beginnings of adult education, philosophers have

recognized that learning is at the core of humanity" (p. 137). When adult education was

still in its infancy, Eduard Lindeman (1926) suggested adult education "put meaning into

the whole of life" (p.7) and that "meaning must reside in the things for which people

strive, the goals which they set for themselves, their wants, needs, desires and wishes" (p.

13).

Generation X students were and are a product of Baby Boomers' social

accomplishments. Generation X attended college after the civil rights and women's

movements, and as a result, this generation is a diverse one with more women earning

degrees than men (NAS, 2006). Women recognize their potential earning power and the

need to support themselves, and some members of Generation X are tasked with caring

for two larger generations: their parents and their own children (NAS). Finally, due to

this generation's lack of faith in the employer/employee commitment, Gen X-ers is

convinced real job security lies in their ability to develop the knowledge and skills to

advance to their next job. Gen X-ers is more inclined to stay with a company that helps

them expand their knowledge and skills; therefore, continued learning and development is significant to recruiting and retaining Gen X-ers (NAS, 2008).

The Millennial generation is characterized as optimistic, team-oriented, high-achieving rule-followers (Howe & Strauss, 2003). Teen suicide, pregnancy and abortion, violent crime, and drug use rates have all decreased, while aptitude test-scores and expectations to succeed have risen as this generation has come of age (Howe & Strauss). As a result, it is generally accepted that Millennials will simply do what is expected of them: attend college. Howe and Strauss and Eubanks (2006) explained:

> The expected teen rebellion among Millenials has manifested itself as a break with the Boomer and Gen X-ers cultures that preceded them. Expect teamwork instead of free agents, political action instead of apathy, T-shirts with school colors instead of corporate swooshes, on-your-side teamwork instead of in-your-face sass. The Millenials are correcting for what teens see as the excesses of today's middle aged Boomers: narcissism, impatience, iconoclasm, and a constant focus on talk (usually argument) over action. (para 3)

Furthermore,

> Paid employment is falling among Millennials as compared to Gen Xers. This trend appears to be driven by parents' and kids' concerns about time spent working instead of studying. Any work that Millennial teens do now should be a planned and preparatory investment for the permanent kind of life they wish to lead tomorrow. (para 8)

So that subsequent generations may continue to enjoy higher standards of living and contribute to an evolving economy, communication, learning, information

technology, and human relations skills are proficiencies that make a student trainable and in turn, employable. Langhorst (1997) explained these attributes are what create lifelong learners. Students must accept education to be a lifelong investment and not a one-time venture toward employability.

As such, the mission of college is no longer viewed as a place and time to simply experience life and expand the mind. The role of higher education has become increasingly utilitarian and its purpose economic (Langhorst, 1997). As such, today's colleges and universities are filled with professionals seeking to hone skills for an existing career, individuals hoping to change careers entirely, and recent high-school graduates seeking to develop their professional futures.

If the economy dictates acquiring, mastering, and improving communication and technology skills, for example, and students hope to move into or remain within a comfortable standard of living, colleges and universities are the impetus to bring these interests together. As a result, educators must recognize the diverse student bodies they serve. If the ultimate goal for student and institution is graduation, and therefore persistence, educators must recognize differences and solutions to attrition across generational lines. Although multiculturalism has been the subject of significant and worthy research, too little has been made of the contribution that multi-generationalism can make (Astin, 1975; 1984; Palazesi, 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980; 1991; Tinto, 1975; 1993).

Although research in student persistence has existed in the U.S. throughout the twentieth century, early studies examined academic performance (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980; 1991; Tinto, 1975; 1982; 1988; 1993). Beginning in the 1970s, Pascarella,

Terenzini, and Tinto were pioneers in persistence studies based on inclusion theory. In other words, a shift was made from believing student attrition was a strictly academic phenomenon to recognizing it may have broader, social implications such as feelings of alienation (Ellison, 2009). As such, until the 1980s, this research focused exclusively on four-year colleges and universities and their attempts to lessen student alienation (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980; 1991; Tinto, 1975; 1982; 1988; 1993). Still, persistence studies overwhelmingly illuminated upon the problem of attrition regarding traditionally-aged (under the age of 25) students.

To close the persistence-studies gap between community college and university students the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) studies how and to what degree students are engaged in the community college. Still, CCSSE does not highlight generational differences. 2010 survey respondents, for example, are divided according to characteristics such as gender, enrollment status, and race/ethnicity. Generation is only recognized as a characteristic in that 67% of respondents are traditionally-aged (18-24), however (CCSSE, 2010). So, while great strides were made to understand multiculturalism, diversity, and socioeconomic imbalances in community colleges in particular, inclusion theory and multiculturalism did little to recognize a growing phenomenon: multi-generationalism (CCSSE) . Although the topics of academics, inclusion, theory and multiculturalism, made significant contributions to persistence studies, multigenerational theory may help colleges and universities understand how each generation approaches higher education and learning differently.

Finally, an unexpected contribution to generational studies has sparked interest in understanding groups of students categorized by birth year and a host of characteristics

unique to them. While meant for entertainment purposes, every year since 1997 Beloit

College has produced its Mindset List (McBride & Nief, 2009) for college faculty and

administrators to remind them just how young this year's freshmen really are. The

compilation of generational markers is designed to bridge the ever-increasing gap

between the aging educator and his or her new freshmen class. However, the Mindset

List, too, has ignored the fact that Generation-X (and soon, Millennial) faculty may be

teaching Boomer *and* Millennial students, for example, ignoring the concept of multi-

generationalism.

Colleges and Universities

Universal education represents the cornerstone of the American identity:

Individualism. As a country, the United States began with the understanding that citizens

were more than cogs in the governmental machine. Rather, citizens retained

constitutionally guaranteed individual rights and liberties, as well. Norton (1959)

asserted:

> A basic principle which underlies the fundamental concepts of a democracy is the
>
> recognition of the worth of each individual. In harmony with this principle is the
>
> provision for equal educational opportunity regardless of the individual's social,
>
> economic, or personal status. Leaders of our nation throughout history have stated
>
> that there is nothing more democratic than a good program of education for all
>
> children everywhere. (p. 2)

Although written in 1959, at a time when federal aid for higher education was at its

inception, the core values that universal education represents continue. Today, federal

financial aid affords 47 % of students the ability to attend college (Joyner, 2008). The

values that guaranteed each American child access to free and universal elementary and secondary level education may now be expanded to include all post-secondary students interested in attending college, at least for the first two years.

The American system is a synthesis of Jeffersonian and Jacksonian governmental theories that have resulted in the popularizing of higher education (Cardasco & Romano, 1967). However, this has promoted formerly non-college track students to the ranks of college freshmen. If a college degree is no longer a privilege but an expectation, student motivations have changed (Bye, Pushkar & Conway, 2007). Because America "democratized" education to ensure it served the whole (Cardasco & Romano), the demographic has shifted toward increased adult education. Additional research is needed so that instructors may more adequately prepare their students over the age of 25 (Robey-Graham, 2008). Arguably, student persistence and success is the perennial problem of higher education institutions. Despite the strides made in educational theory and practice, the problem persists (Astin, 1975; 1984; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980; 1991; Tinto, 1975; 1993).

Community College

The unique history of the community college is a paradigm of democracy (Young, 1997). Unlike four-year colleges and universities, community colleges sought to democratize education, eliminate the elitism education represented in centuries past, and improve access to vertical mobility. Community colleges represent the noblest mission of higher education: Accessibility, affordability, and accountability. Unfortunately, today community colleges are charged with educating 40 % of America's students with less

funding than their four-year counterparts (Barton, 2005). The following paragraphs explore the evolution of the community college, its mission, and its present state.

Deegan and Tillery (1985) suggest the community college has transcended five incarnations throughout the twentieth century. These are: (1) extension of high school, 1900-1930; (2) junior college, 1930-1950; (3) community college, 1950-1970; (4) comprehensive community college, 1970-1985; and (5) new college, 1985-present. According to Young (1997), the community college has evolved because of its connection to the community and its needs. Indeed, Young stresses that community colleges are such unique and independent entities because they tailored their needs to the communities in which they reside. Because of their close ties to the communities they serve, the community college mission and experience is based upon its grassroots, bottom-up philosophy.

At inception, community colleges were designed to bridge the gap between high school and four-year colleges and universities. The first community college, Joliet Junior College, was an experiment in the democratization of higher education. Joliet Township High School Superintendent J. Stanley Brown and University of Chicago President William Rainey Harper recognized the need promote smoother transition between their institutions (Joliet Junior College, 2009). The Illinois educators elected to join forces to serve students otherwise incapable of entering university directly from high school. Researchers assert that such a market existed for a myriad of reasons that included, but was not limited to, academic unpreparedness.

In its infancy, the community college, then known as a junior college, was just that: A stepping stone to a comprehensive, four year institution. After decades of

demonstrated success, Joliet Junior College and its successors expanded their purpose to include vocational training. At this point, the junior college truly evolved into a community college, resembling its modern, comprehensive mission. While the former was expressly created for preparing students for transfer to four year institutions, the latter represents the college's inclusive function.

Pedersen (2001) suggested that the early community college mission was merely a myth of the democratization of education, however. A historical analysis of early community college catalogs

> reveals that the great majority of pre-1960 community colleges were small, self-consciously elite institutions. Catalogues reveal a curriculum modeled on the liberal arts colleges, dominated by Latin, the humanities and mathematics.

> Further, institutional policies reflect a conscious effort to restrict access. (p. 4)

Pedersen shared that 1930s admission standards for Taft Junior College in California were less attainable than Yale University. Finally, throughout the following decade the University of Texas proved more affordable than the state's two-year counterparts, further disproving the democratizing myth (Pedersen). According to Pedersen, the early, elitist model was the antithesis of the cornerstones of the community college: open access and affordability.

Norton (1959) reported that prior to their 1960s restructuring community colleges were financed by states and local agencies. These circumstances contradicted the community college's democratic principles. Lack of federal funding and, therefore, limited revenues could have indeed contributed to what Pedersen (2001) called the myth of community college democracy. High tuition that early community colleges charged

may have been a result of the lack of governmental funding. Stringent admissions standards may have been appropriate for a college supported by tuition dollars. In other words, students who could afford the high cost of community college tuition in those days had probably attended private and possibly higher quality secondary schools. For these reasons, tuition and admissions standards were not problematic for those who attended community colleges. Finally, even today some community colleges are independently financed. Bruce Wright, Director of Georgia Military College-Augusta explained that tuition still contributes to approximately 98% of the college's revenue lines (Personal Communication, February 26, 2009).

Still, Young (1997) explains that historically, education has been socially and culturally grounded within the community. When examining the economic development purpose that community colleges serve, no other institution is so thoroughly grounded within the community. Young suggests that four-year colleges and universities have treated economic development internally and externally. For example, individuals seeking access to higher education would apply for admission as an attempt to improve their own financial futures. External interaction resulted from fundraising. The author stresses that these institutions of higher learning have not yet reconciled their internal and external foci, resulting in a disconnect.

Almeida (1991) argues that if the institution is sufficiently rigorous and delivers upon its promises, it is fulfilling its mission, however. The author urges the public to recognize the differences between the perceptions of community colleges, their students, and the reality. For example, a primary function of community colleges is transferability. The community college is a vehicle for students to begin their higher education career

with the option to transfer to a four-year college or university. Those who choose to study at community colleges may do so for a variety of reasons. The community college may offer a more affordable and convenient alternative to complete the general studies curriculum than its four-year counterpart. Alternatively, students who find themselves underprepared following high school or have been removed from the classroom for a period of time may find the community college to be a more supportive option in which to begin their studies.

For this reason, community colleges are experts at transferability. Prior to transitioning students to four year colleges and universities, community colleges prepare students for college level work. This often involves remediation. Community colleges are also attuned to workforce development, serving returning adults interested in pursuing new career training and job skills (Almeida, 1991). Adult learners are entering or returning to college in record numbers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). In today's economic climate, many adult learners attend classes to receive training or additional credentials to accommodate an evolving market (Almeida). Additionally, restarters, or students who had attempted college previously but with unsuccessful results, find the community college an appropriate match. According to Almeida, community colleges offer the remediation, course variety, cost-effectiveness, and flexible hours that meet the unique needs of these non-traditional students.

As a pioneer in community college education, Raymond Young (1997) witnessed a discrepancy in human rights and prosperity following World War II and prior to the Civil Rights and Women's Rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s (Katsinas, 2008). After the civil rights movements, community college campuses grew at unprecedented

rates throughout the country. In conjunction with this phenomenon, the Higher Education Act of 1965 (P.L. 110-315) provided federal financial aid in the form of grants and loans to students unable to otherwise afford college (Somers, Hollis, & Stokes, 2000). At last, the community college mission of affordability, accessibility, and accountability was realized (Almeida, 1991).

Prior to the community college revolution of the 1960s, however, local and state officials treated these institutions with reservation. Katsinas (2008) wrote that politicians feared the financial obligations new community colleges would require. At the same time, local leaders hoped to actually attract larger universities instead. By the 1970s, community colleges were severed from local primary and secondary school districts, distinguishing these institutes of higher learning from their previous junior college incarnation. Young (1997) already recognized that a local college did not equate to a college of the community.

> For example, Mahoning and Columbiana counties both established branch
> campuses after university officials made the false but alluring case that they
> would not 'cost' local taxpayers anything. The 'cost' of the establishment of
> branch campuses in these counties and across the state (rather than community
> colleges) was instead borne by students and their families through higher
> university-level tuition. (Katsinas, p. 253)

Instead, satellite campuses of larger, state universities require nearly three times that of community colleges without true community investment.

Norton (1959) explains that leaving the cost and responsibility of education to state and local entities hurts the nation. The author delineates numerous reasons for the

importance of federal aid. For example, the country's poorest states are unable to

properly fund education for their constituents. Further,

> A Federal government is responsible for its own proportional share in the support
>
> of education of the citizenry because: (1) the preservation of the democracy
>
> depends upon it; (2) it has become increasingly important to the national welfare;
>
> (3) the mobility of our population makes education a national concern; (4) the
>
> Federal government is the only agency able to bring about equitable distribution
>
> of educational opportunities. (p. 79)

People are mobile, meaning that those educated within poorer states may not remain

there. If residents from lesser quality educational systems relocate to states with higher

ranked systems, those people may not be competitive. Finally, the national economy is a

product built upon the strength of each state.

Nespoli and Martorana (1984) stress that the community college serves specific

purposes for different populations. Locally, community colleges serve individualized

populations and needs, while at the state and national levels they are vehicles for

economic development. Still, the community college's primary function remains

transferability. Ultimately, the authors suggest that constituencies must reconcile their

differences of opinion concerning the community college's purpose. Only then, as Norton

(1959) suggested, may the question of who finances community colleges be determined.

If transferability is a primary purpose of community colleges, then remediation

may be an underlying cause. Because non-traditional students may not have been

students for some time, they may "have lost the intellectual edge that accompanies

educational continuum, an edge that might be held by some of their younger classmates.

These students have forgotten much of the knowledge they acquired in high school and may also have skills that could be seen as substandard" (Almeida, 1991, p. 29). Ideally, then, the community college may be a starting point from which to transfer to a four-year college or university. While many traditionally-aged entering freshmen prove academically prepared for college level coursework, some may be described as *underprepared*. The latter suggests these students could be made prepared for college-level coursework after remediation.

Perhaps more than their four-year counterparts, community colleges must accommodate a variety of customers. Online learners may participate in a single course or earn an entire degree through a virtual campus without traveling to campus. Today, community colleges have incorporated multiculturalism, accommodating those learning and mastering English as a second language and hosting and educating international students (Joyner, 2008). Some learners attend community colleges in hopes of enriching their own lives through academic and cultural experiences and exposure, rather than to accrue credit toward a degree (Joyner). Finally, students who attend community colleges may do so for economic reasons (Fain, Blumenstyk, & Sander, 2009). Community college students juggle multiple life roles including family, workplace, community, and higher education (Oplatka & Tevel, 2006). By nature, these students are limited by geography, time, finances, and possibly preparedness, presenting students with a multi-faceted set of challenges.

Ultimately, today's economic climate presents new challenges for community colleges. At a time when enrollments are stretching college personnel and resources to their limits, state and federal sources have introduced budget cuts (The Daily Press,

2009). This recent phenomenon only exacerbates what community college administrators

have known for years: Community colleges receive far less funding than do baccalaureate

awarding institutions. Blumenstyk (2009) offered "The fastest enrollment growth took

place at community colleges, yet those are the institutions that spend the least per student

(p. 1)." Many of these institutions are charged with introducing new revenue lines

through privatization (Blumenstyk).

Generational Theory

To better understand each generation and its needs, it is necessary to study the

components of the whole. In other words, multigenerationalism is a holistic concept

whose elements must be examined individually for a clearer picture (Strauss & Howe,

1997). As such, study of generations may contribute to retention within higher education

in particular, and the current sociological understanding of this country as a whole. Such

a study may make sense of the past, allow for examination of the present, and even

suggest predictions about future trends and problems.

Strauss and Howe (1997; 2000) are pioneers in generational theory. Together they

introduced older cohorts to the Millennials and their generational characteristics. An early

study, *The Fourth Turning* (1997) named, introduced, and explained each generation and

its corresponding "turning." According to Strauss and Howe, "A generation is composed

of people whose common location in history lends them a collective persona. The span of

one generation is roughly the length of a phase of life. Generations come in four

archetypes, always in the same order, whose phase-of-life positions comprise a

constellation (Strauss & Howe, 1997, p. 125). Further, Strauss and Howe (1997)

explained "A turning is a social mood that changes each time the generational archetypes

enter a new constellation. Each turning is roughly the length of a phase of life (p. 124)."

Generations correspond and navigate society through each respective turning. As such,

four turnings and moods exist, including: 1)The First Turning – a High, 2) the Second

Turning – an Awakening, 3) the Third Turning – an Unraveling, and 4) the Fourth

Turning – a Crisis (Strauss & Howe).

Presently, the United States finds itself in the midst of the Fourth Turning, and

thus, a crisis. A crisis is described as "a decisive era of secular upheaval, when the values

regime propels the replacement of the old civic order with a new one (Strauss & Howe,

1997, p. 124)". A study of younger generations, particularly Millennials, may provide an

understanding of how these future leaders will cope with today's problems. This is

possible as cohort characteristics will reveal themselves again. In many ways, Millennials

mirror traits of the G.I. Generation (Howe & Strauss). Greater investment was made in

children of each cohort than ever before. So that they may further mirror their protégé's

generation, Millennials have yet to prove themselves as heroes, however.

Generational theory may be most appropriate to those evolving and adapting to

meet the needs of younger generations coming of age (Robey-Graham, 2008). The

advertising and media industries are attuned to younger consumers, recognizing their

collective cultural and economic influence (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Likewise, industry is

exploring how to overcome the challenges associated with multi-generational

workplaces. Forman and Carlin (2005) suggest that today's workforce is more diverse

than ever, and multigenerationalism is one contribution to that diversity. Experts assert

that a multigenerational workforce may create such innocuous results as a more

competitive work environment, different definitions of ambition, including "meaningful

work" and "lateral" moves, differences in loyalty, and varying levels of comfort with technology (Forman & Carlin). More potentially detrimental results may occur with upside-down management, or when younger workers manage older ones (Forman and Carlin). For example, younger generations may reject traditional organizational hierarchies, challenge authority, and expect greater democracy in the workplace (Forman and Carlin). A delineation of generational markers and values could ease worker distrust and alleviate apprehension.

Baby Boomers

Products of the middle class lifestyle their parents afforded them, Boomers were a restless youth that rejected many of their parents' traditional values. They were proactive individuals who worked collectively to end the Vietnam War and promote civil and women's rights. They tuned in, turned on, dropped out (Leary, 1965), and experienced the sexual revolution first-hand. Today Boomer-students fit the non-traditional mold, however. That is, a student over the age of 25 with children, possibly married, and perhaps also employed.

Forman and Carlin (2005) wrote:

The Boomer generation was the first to be raised with television. The oldest among them grew up during a period of peace and prosperity in the United States and then a period of civil unrest and change, followed by inflation and corporate downsizing. They remember Ozzie & Harriet, Viet Nam [sic], Watergate, Woodstock, hippies, free sex, drugs, flower power, hot pants, antiestablishment politics, environmental protest groups, the Civil Rights movement, and music that spans rock and roll, folk, hard rock, and disco (p.1).

Additionally, Baby Boomers are recognized by their idealism, individualism, self-improvement, and high expectations (Forman & Carlin, 2005).

As students, Baby-Boomers are considered self-reliant, motivated, and self-starters (Palazesi, 2004). As products of the counter-culture, they value learning, health, and expect longevity but continue to perceive themselves as youthful (Palazesi). For some, earning a degree can contribute to one's career through a promotion or salary increase, but overwhelmingly adult-learners attend college to learn and for personal development (Oplatka & Tevel, 2007). Oplatka's and Tevel's study found some non-traditional students believed they could achieve more in life and that "Higher Education was perceived as an instrument to get out of the dead end of the working-class, married life (p. 65)." The authors explained that the empty-nest syndrome experienced by these non-traditional students actually leaves them with more available time and fewer family commitments. So, some in midlife consider higher education a way to express their renewed autonomy or personal emancipation, signaling a transition from a family role to a personal one (p. 70). In short, they are hoping to experience an increase in self-confidence, self-fulfillment, and perhaps even change an existing career path (Oplatka & Tevel, 2007).

Fortunately, whatever obstacles these non-traditionals face, they more than make up for their shortcomings through motivation and desire to learn. Naturally, backgrounds and degrees of academic preparation differ between generations (Tinto, 1993). This group wants to attend college for the sake of learning, and seeks knowledge to satisfy an inquiring mind (Wolfgang & Dowling, 1981). Furthermore, Bye, Pushkar, and Conway (2007) described non-traditional learning styles as intrinsically motivated. That is, the

desire for self-improvement and personal growth is considered to promote psychological well-being, and does not require an immediate return.

Still, scholars warn enrolling or re-entering higher education may not prove an easy task. Mature students typically manage concurrent roles in the family, workplace, community, and higher education (Hornfleck, 2001). Also, although participation of non-traditional students is rising, their representation is still limited. Laing, Chao and Robinson (2005) have also found that despite their intrinsic motivation, some non-traditional students may not be academically prepared. Voigt (2007) explained that unequal background conditions affect whether a student goes to college at all. If students are the first members of their family to attend college, they are less likely to enter a prestigious university, attending a second or third tier institution instead.

Generation X

Generation X was first coined to describe those coming of age as World War II ended because it was still an unknown entity. According to Ulrich (2011), "Since then, "Generation X" has always signified a group of young people, seemingly without identity, who face an uncertain, ill-defined (and perhaps hostile) future (p.33)." As such, members of Generation X are the recipients of particularly negative assumptions.

Beginning with the Greatest Generation, those who fought in World War II, each generation thereafter experienced greater prosperity and opportunity (Rickles, 2009). As a result, previous generations observe the lifestyles afforded each subsequent cohort, creating a generational disconnect and misunderstanding. As such, Generation X is often characterized as a cohort of spoiled, lazy, and un-ambitious slackers. Indeed, Boomers regard X-ers as "reactive" rather than proactive, as the former sees itself (Levine, 1980).

Although X-ers were the most prosperous cohort of the twentieth century until the Millennials, the Generation X childhood was one marked by national and international economic uncertainty (Levine,1980). Additionally, children of this generation are the product of parents who believed in pursuing their own happiness as much as securing that of their children (Levine). Parents sought to widen the gap between their child-rearing styles and those of their World War II-generation parents, for example. Parents spared the rod at risk of spoiling the child intending to parent in a more relaxed, creative, and hands-off fashion (Levine). As a result, teachers in particular noticed students were products of divorced parents, single-parent households, and two-income families leading to latch-key lifestyles (Levine). Unlike Boomers before them and the Millennials who follow, members of Generation X are seen as individual learners lacking a collective commitment (Levine).

Ultimately, this cohort is the product of a transforming family unit almost unrecognizable from that of the 1950s. Events such as the assassination of President Kennedy, the Vietnam War, and Watergate created a youth distrustful of authority (Levine, 1980). Divorce and working mothers left children with less structured supervision and more idle, but with more possessions than their predecessors (Levine). On a positive note, Generation X had become the most educated cohort to date. However, this phenomenon has come at a time when more education is necessary to achieve or maintain middle class lifestyles (Levine).

Forman and Carlin (2005) described Generation X as:

often said to be the Me generation, the generation of status-seekers. They were

exposed to fast food, designer clothes for children, the war on drugs, the fight

against AIDS, the Space Shuttles, human genome research, the falling of the

Berlin Wall, the first woman Supreme Court Justice, and the first female and first

black presidential candidates. Their music ranges from pop, rock, country, punk,

and rap. They saw their parents divorce in ever-greater numbers, became the first

generation of latch-key kids, and watched their parents reinvent themselves

because of jobs lost in hostile takeovers and corporate downsizing. This is the first

generation to have been shaped by the mass media. It is also the first generation

that may fail to match or surpass the economic status of their parents. (p. 1)

Adjectives that describe Generation-X-ers include pragmatism, conservativeness,

diversity, entrepreneurial spirit, and appreciation for the quality of life and work/life

balance (Forman & Carlin, 2005).

Millennials

The Millennial generation is often defined by their preoccupation with

instantaneous information transfer (Howe & Strauss, 2000). This generation is recognized

for their sheltered rearing, parental (over-) involvement, and greater racial and cultural

tolerance. Previous generations often misinterpret the Millennial delay into adulthood as

a sign of immaturity (Howe & Straus).

The close of the Millennial generation makes up today's students under the age of

25. They face unique problems associated with the "de-traditionalization" of their

generation (Hake, 1999). Arguably, this is an extension of Chickering's (1969) Theory of

Identity Development. Chickering argued that traditionally-aged college students traverse

various stages of identity development. The result is a possible delay into adulthood and

an extension of youth (Reitzle, 2007). According to Howe and Srauss (2000) millennials

are a product of "'yuppie' parents who invested in this generation as never before (p.

74)." Confident of their abilities and their role in the future, their motivations are not

based on simply surviving (Howe & Strauss, 2003).

Forman and Carlin (2010) described Millennials as having:

been influenced by the electronic age more than any of the other generations.

They are the first generation of children to do their homework on desktop

computers, to carry their own cell phones, download music to iPods, and do their

shopping online. They are influenced by wars in the Middle East, the destruction

of the World Trade Center, a booming economy, a more diversified society,

casual dress codes in business settings, Ritalin, the debate about gun control,

NAFTA, reality TV, and distance education. Hip-hop music remains popular for

this generation, along with R&B, country, and movie soundtracks. (p. 1)

Millennials identify with neo-traditionalism, ritual, optimism, technological adeptness,

and compartmentalized work and life roles (Forman & Carlin, 2010).

As traditional students, Millennials are often extrinsically motivated, meaning

they value the goals that education may afford, including a job, career, financial

opportunities, or societal expectations, but not necessarily for the sake of learning (Bye,

Pushkar, & Conway, 2007). The authors emphasized that this group seeks approval and

external signs of worth, meaning they are motivated by rewards outside the task, and are

less interested in the well-being of the classroom (Bye, Pushkar, & Conway). Ultimately,

motivations for enrolling in and succeeding at college differ between adult and

traditionally aged students. The existing literature (Bye, Pushkin, & Conway) has shown

that often, degree of motivation is the result a student's life experiences upon entering college. In turn, student persistence and success is the result of that motivation.

Evolving Attitudes toward Higher Education

Increasingly, today's college students view themselves as customers of the university. Armed with the entitlement customers possess, students demand a level of service and services not formerly associated with institutes of higher education (Prensky, 2001). Authors Finney and Finney (2010) applied the Student-as-Customer (SAC) and Exchange-Theory models to their study of evolving student attitudes. The SAC model was based on a corporate approach to understanding consumers' attitudes. Likewise, Exchange Theory (Bagozzi, 1974), suggests social exchanges are means to end goals such as the exchange of goods or services. In combination, these models suggest that student attitudes toward higher education have changed as a result of the customer label (Finney & Finney). Proponents of this label suggest that in order to attract and retain quality students, institutions of higher education must satisfy students as customers. Critics urge the customer label has created grade inflation and less qualified graduates (Lederman, 2005). Indeed, Johnson (2010) suggested higher education institutes have become accountable for productivity and profitability, forcing them to abandon earlier principles of the academy.

An example of student dissatisfaction and the institutional response is found in the general education curriculum. Johnson (2010) suggested that student interest and investment in general education has waned due to the move toward consumerism. General education requirements are at the core of the American higher education system and were designed to expose students to many disciplines, provide a solid academic

foundation, and introduce and instill values such as civic responsibility and community contribution (Johnson). Presently, higher education is moving toward a more utilitarian approach, such as the experimental three-year bachelor's degree, greatly reducing or eliminating the general studies curriculum (Aronauer, 2005). Roberts' study (2009) augmented this claim, finding international students recognized greater value in the general education curriculum and their educational experience than their American counterparts. Ultimately, international students explain their hopes to *attain* greater standards of living while American students seek to *keep* theirs (Roberts).

Palazesi (2004) suggested that consumerism is an unintended consequence of college marketing efforts designed to attract new students. Marketing and advertising schemes that promise students smaller class size, more parking, and convenient course offerings, for example, have encouraged the student as customer trend. Perhaps nothing illustrates this trend more than the move away from dormitories and residence halls toward residential suites. While Boomers and X-ers used bathrooms shared between entire floors of students, Millennials enjoy en suite accommodations shared by clusters of four students. When the former generations took meals at dormitory-housed cafeterias, Millennials use meal cards designed for use at school-sponsored eating facilities as well as off-campus establishments.

Ultimately, most students are drawn to higher education because of the promise of a more satisfying career and secure financial future. Unfortunately, the result is a student body more invested in the end result, financial reward, than acquiring knowledge. Shaul's (2007) findings reinforced this assumption. When studying Baby Boomers', Generation-X-ers', and Millennials' attitudes toward money, he found that the latter two generations

more greatly valued money as a sign of status and prestige than the former, while Boomers retained more money than X-ers or Millennials.

Regardless, Finney and Finney (2010) argued that student engagement, requiring greater investment in his or her education, is the most significant indicator of student success. Conversely, Perricone (2005) suggested, from his experience of being in the education field for over 21 years, that giving external rewards for performance, reading, and behavior is counterproductive to students. He explained that giving rewards for a desired action automatically devalues the action. He suggested that the accomplishment of the action and its side effects (i.e., knowledge) should be the ample reward. He concluded that individuals live in a capitalistic world, though money is not the end-all.

Unfortunately, critics of the student-as-customer scenario believe student attitudes toward higher education have negatively affected student performance. Allitt (2005) is discouraged by perpetual student lack of preparedness and inadequate reading and writing skills. Productivity, profitability, and accountability have resulted in a substitution of quantity of students served and degrees conferred for quality of academic skills (Johnson, 2010). Educators lament less qualified students graduating as a result of grade inflation (Lederman, 2005). Indeed, regardless of unlimited access to technology providing students a greater breadth of knowledge, educators are disappointed in the depth of learning sacrificed (Allitt, 2005).

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

This chapter will identify the research design, population, instrument development, data collection, and data analysis for this study. The purpose of this quantitative study was to compare the learning objectives of students at public, community colleges in Georgia who fall within the generational groups identified by the literature as Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials. This study then identified and examined the learning objectives between each generation. Finally, this study sought to identify what changes Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment.

During the Summer 2012 semester, the researcher interviewed each of the Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) and Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAOs) at the sample institutions. These interviews informed the development of the survey instrument which was used for data collection in this study. Following these interviews, a survey instrument was distributed to students in randomly selected classes at three community colleges in Georgia.

Research Design

This quantitative study identified variations in Baby Boomers', Generation X-ers', and Millennials' learning objectives. This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design. The survey instrument is a widely used source of data. Survey researchers often want to investigate associations between respondents' characteristics such as age (Baby Boomer, Generation X, or Millennial) and their learning objectives (higher education). A cross-sectional survey studies a cross section of a population at a single point in time (Kumar, 2005). Survey research typically does not draw causal inferences but rather

describes the distribution of characteristics within a large group. Interviews with the CAOs and the SSAOs of one large, one medium, and one small community college in Georgia, as well as a review of the professional literature and a documents analysis from each institution, informed the development of the survey instrument. Each institution was a community college. Thus, this excluded technical colleges and institutions which are not SACS-accredited, since these institutions are not part of the community college population in Georgia. Prior to surveying students, demographic data from each institution was examined to determine the number of students in each generational group by gender and full- time or part-time status.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the learning objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

3. What are the differences between the learning objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment.

For Research Questions One and Two, concerning the learning objectives and higher education objectives of students from the three generations, the researcher reported descriptive statistics which described the main features of a collection of data quantitatively. Descriptive statistics aim to summarize a data set. Based on student responses to the survey instrument (items on age and learning objectives), univariate statistics were reported. Univariate statistics include the percentage from each generation that selected each of the learning objectives and higher education objectives on the survey instrument.

For Research Questions Three and Four, concerning differences in the learning objectives and higher education objectives among students from the three generations, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. ANOVA is a statistical test used to analyze the data from a study with more than two groups. ANOVA is an inferential statistical test used for quantitative designs with more than one independent variable or more than two levels of an independent variable. ANOVA revealed if statistically significant differences exist between students from each of the three generations concerning their learning objectives and higher education objectives.

Additionally, data from the survey were analyzed to examine research question five: the changes students from each of the three generations would like to see in the learning environment at community colleges in Georgia. Once again, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the responses received from the survey instrument as well as

report the changes students from each generation believe are necessary to enhance their

learning objectives.

Participants

This study utilized two different populations. First, interviews were conducted

with the CAO and SSAO at three SACS-accredited, non-technical, community colleges

in Georgia. Using the Carnegie Classification System (2006) the colleges participating in

the study were selected through a random stratified sampling procedure. This ensured the

participation of one large, one medium, and one small community college (Carnegie,

2006). A total of six interviews were conducted to inform the creation of the survey

instrument to be used in this study.

After the interviews were conducted, the researcher randomly selected classes to

which she administered the survey instrument. Random sampling was appropriate here

because twelve classes of at least twenty students each were selected *at random* to create

a population of approximately 200 students at each type (large, medium, and small) of

community college (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996).

Instrument Development

The data from the above described interviews were combined with information

from a review of the professional literature and a documents review from each institution

to inform the creation of a quantitative survey instrument. A major task in survey

research is constructing the instrument that is used to gather the data from the sample in

order to answer the research questions. In this study the primary data-gathering

instrument was a survey instrument with Likert-type items. The scale instrument assessed

respondents' perceptions toward a topic by presenting a set of statements about the topic

and asking respondents to indicate for each item whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. A Likert-type scale is constructed by assembling a large number of statements about a topic. The cumulative data from the Likert-type instrument represents the attitude toward the topic, in this case, attitudes regarding higher education objectives (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996). These items explored the perceptions of students from each of the three generations regarding their objectives of higher education and changes students would suggest in the learning environment at community colleges in Georgia.

Instrument Validity

Following the interviews and the development of a draft survey instrument, the validity of the instrument was established. According to Kumar (2005), content validity addresses whether "...the items and questions cover the full range of the issue or attitude being measured" (p. 154). In the current study, content validity was established by developing the instrument in conjunction with a panel of subject-matter experts, including both practitioners and scholars who have extensive experience in generational theory at the community college level. The members of the Panel of Experts reviewed the draft survey instrument to establish the content validity of the instrument. The instrument was then tested for reliability through a test-retest pilot study.

Panel members were sent an email message thanking them for participation, explaining the nature of their role in the study, and defining the study purpose. This correspondence included an attachment containing the study purpose statement, research questions, and a link to an evaluation instrument. The evaluation instrument consisted of the proposed survey with embedded questions addressing the content validity of the

items. For each item, panel members were asked to rate the item with respect to the importance, degree of representation of the study content, and clarity. This review by the Panel of Experts used a 3-point scale where 1 = this item should be included in the survey instrument, 2 = this item should perhaps be included in the instrument, and 3 = this item should be removed from the survey instrument.

At the conclusion of the instrument, panelists were asked whether the instrument excluded any important topics related to the study, and the panel members were given an opportunity to provide general comments. The collective input of the expert panel was considered when revising the instrument, with the minimum criterion for revising the instrument being a response of 2 or 3 from at least two of five members of the panel of experts regarding a particular item.

Content validity of the revised instrument was further established through a pilot study designed to ensure items were clearly related to the research goals, identify areas of confusion, and to estimate the amount of time necessary to complete the survey. For the pilot study, the survey was administered to ten community college students from Georgia Military College-Augusta. Initial correspondence with the pilot group occurred approximately one week prior to the pilot study with an introductory email inviting members to participate in the study, describing the study's purpose, the role of the pilot group, and estimated time commitment for participation.

Instrument Reliability

Reliability is the consistency of the instrument in measuring, whatever it is intended to measure (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). A test-retest procedure is a common method for establishing the reliability of a newly formed instrument and was followed to

establish the reliability of this instrument. The reliability of any measuring instrument is the degree of consistency with which it measures, whatever it is measuring. One way of estimating the reliability of an instrument is to administer it to the same group of individuals on two occasions and correlate the two sets of scores. Correlation coefficients were computed between responses on the first administration of the instrument and second administration of the instrument. The correlation coefficient obtained by this procedure is called a test-retest reliability coefficient. The test-retest reliability coefficient, because it indicates consistency of subjects' scores over time, is sometimes referred to as a coefficient of stability. A high coefficient of at least .70 indicates the ability to generalize from the score a person receives on one occasion to a score that a person read would receive if the test had been given at a different time (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996).

To conduct the pilot study, and in an effort to emulate the conditions to be used when administering the survey to the entire population, the researcher hosted the pilot group. The group received instructions for survey completion identical to those to be used during administration of the final survey. Subsequently, respondents were asked to complete an evaluation of the survey instrument to ensure content validity and identify areas needing improvement. Pilot study participants were asked to insert for questions about the draft survey instrument:

1. Are the instructions clear?

2. Are all items on the instrument clear and unambiguous?

3. Do any of the items contain language that could be offensive to anyone?

4. How long did it take you to complete the instrument?

Data Collection

After the validity and reliability of the instrument had been established, the survey instrument was administered to students enrolled in a random sample of classes at three community colleges. The survey instrument was mailed to each college for a representative to administer to students. Surveys at institutions of higher education are often administered in the classroom. The primary advantage of direct administration of the survey instrument is the high response rate. Other advantages are low cost and a representative being present to provide assistance. Permission to administer the survey instrument was secured from the CAO and VPSS of each sample institution at the time of the interviews. Again, one large, medium, and small community college was used to ensure that the participants in the study represent the larger population of community college students in Georgia.

Students were surveyed in paper format at each college. At the time of the CAO and SSAO interviews, the researcher secured permission to mail the surveys to a college representative who administered them to approximately twelve randomly selected classes from each time frame and multiple disciplines from each college selected. Morning (8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.), afternoon (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.), and evening classes (5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) were selected to ensure representation of multiple segments of the community college population. Additionally, each college's representative took time from the beginning of each class to explain the study and process and distribute paper surveys to each student in the classroom. Once all surveys were completed they were collected and kept in a locked drawer and office to be coded and analyzed at a later date. Oishi (2003) wrote:

Surveyors elect to use in-person interviews in their survey studies because, under

the right circumstances, such interviews offer many advantages for valid (that is

accurate and precise) data collection. In addition, in self-administered surveys,

persons other than the intended respondents can fill out questionnaires without the

surveyor's knowledge. (p. 8)

Although this method required a greater time commitment during each day of

surveying, it eliminated delays in electronic responses. Further, this method ensured that

approximately 200 participants were surveyed at each college. Twelve classes were

surveyed at each campus to accumulate 200 participant responses from each institution.

Courses for which the survey was administered were randomly selected prior to the

survey administration and at the time of the interviews and included morning, afternoon,

and evening classes, as well as multiple disciplines, to ensure that the greatest number of

participants were represented from each generational cohort.

Data Analysis

The final step in the methodology includes statistical data analysis and preparing

to interpret and report the findings. Survey research generally does not require complex

statistical analyses. Data from the survey instrument were analyzed using SPSS 20

software. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is a statistical test used to analyze the data from

a study with more than two groups. ANOVA is an inferential statistical test used for

quantitative designs with more than one independent variable or more than two levels of

an independent variable. Analysis of variance is more versatile than the t-test because

ANOVA can test the difference between two or more groups. An ANOVA revealed

degrees of difference between students from each of the three generations concerning

their learning objectives. Additionally, data from the survey was analyzed to determine if there are significant differences in what changes students from each of the three generations would like to see in the learning environment at public, community colleges in Georgia (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2009).

An ANOVA is an appropriate data analysis measurement for this study for a number of reasons. Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (2009) explained that, like a *t-test*, an ANOVA measures the differences in means between groups. Whereas a *t-test* can only measure the difference between *two* groups, the ANOVA can measure the difference in means between *two or more* groups. Because the researcher is interested in the degrees of difference between students from each of the three generations concerning their perceptions of the objectives of higher education, the ANOVA, is the most appropriate statistical application.

Conclusion

In the U.S., each generation after World War II has enjoyed a higher standard of living than those previous. So that future generations may continue this trend, professionals must acquire skills and continue to hone them throughout their lifetimes (Booth, 1998). Higher education facilitates the development and honing of those skills. As such, community colleges will continue to play an important role in transitioning students from high school or the workforce to a university or a new or different career.

A perennial concern for community colleges is retention (Almeida, 1991). Because most community colleges are serving students of three or more generations simultaneously, recognition of generational learning styles, likely distinct, will undoubtedly be a factor in student retention and a viable solution to attrition. Recognition

and examination of group traits will allow educators to adapt to varying learning styles and value systems.

In recent decades administrators and faculty have recognized that a college's student body is a composite of a host of characters from differing backgrounds, experiences, races, and cultures (Light, 2001). Now more than ever, multiculturalism has come to include "multi-generationalism". Therefore, a foundation in generational theory is appropriate to understanding those learning styles (Robey-Graham, 2008).

Informed by the literature, this quantitative study examined the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia Community Colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials). Additionally, the study compared the learning objectives of each of the generational groups identified by the literature which make up the primary student populations of community colleges. This study then sought to determine if there are differences in the learning objectives among students between each generation. Finally, this study seeks to identify what changes students from each generation believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment and meet their learning needs.

CHAPTER IV - FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. The purpose of this study was to examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia community colleges (these groups include Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe community colleges might change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the learning objectives of each group. A sample of students from three community colleges in Georgia was used to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the learning objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

3. What are the differences between the learning objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

Response Rate

This study was conducted with Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial

students enrolled at one large enrollment (College A), one medium enrollment (College

B), and one small enrollment (College C) community college in Georgia during the

summer 2012 session. As indicated in Table 1, the student population of each college was

5,219, 2,754, and 1,077, respectively, for a total population of 9,050. Two hundred

surveys were mailed to each community college for a total of 600 surveys mailed. A total

of 371 surveys were returned for a total response rate of 61.83%. One hundred forty

surveys were returned from College A for a response rate of 70%, 120 from College B

for a response rate 60%, and 107 from College C for a response rate of 53.5%. Six

students were excluded from the study. Four students were excluded for answering the

demographic item "What year were you born" with a city not a year, therefore, making it

impossible to determine the generation in which the respondent belonged. Two

respondents were found to be too old to be included in the study because they indicated

they were born before 1945, which disqualified them from participation. The response

rate for students from College A, College B, and College C is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Item 1: Summary of Response Rates

College	Total population	Institutional type	Surveys mailed	Surveys utilized	Percentage completed
College A	5,219	Large	200	140	70.0
College B	2,754	Medium	200	120	60.0
College C	1,077	Small	200	105	52.5
Total	9,050		600	365	61.5

Responses to Demographic Items

Survey items 1-6 describe respondents' demographic data. As indicated in Table

2, a large majority of respondents from all three community colleges were born in the

United States. One hundred thirty seven students from College A, 118 from College B,

and 103 from College C reported being born within the U.S. Conversely, three students

from College A, two from College B, and two from College C reported being born

outside of the U.S.

Table 2

Item 2: Respondents Born Within and Outside of the United States

College	Institutional type	Born in U.S.	Not Born in U.S.
College A	Large	137	3
College B	Medium	118	2
College C	Small	102	3
Total		357	8

Item 3, "What year were you born?" determined the generational data found in

Table 3. For example, seven students from College A reported they belong in the Baby

Boomer generation, 44 from Generation X, and 89 from the Millennial generation. Three

respondents from College B reported birth years belonging to the Baby Boomer

generation, while 19 were from Generation X, and 98 were Millennials. College C

reported three, 30, and 72, as belonging to the Baby Boomer, Generation X, and

Millennial generations, respectively. Table 3 presents the breakdown of respondents by

generation per college. In total, all three colleges reported 13 Baby Boomers, 93

Generation X-ers, and 259 Millennials.

Table 3

Item 3: Breakdown of Respondents by Generation

College	Institutional type	Baby Boomers	Gen X-ers	Millennials
College A	Large	7	44	89
College B	Medium	3	19	98
College C	Small	3	30	72
Total		13	93	259

Gender data for the respondents are reported in Table 4. College A respondents reported 47 males and 93 females, College B reported 48 males and 72 females, while College C reported 43 males and 62 females. Table 4 represents the breakdown of respondents by gender at each college.

Table 4

Item 4: Respondents' Gender

College	Institutional type	Male	Female
College A	Large	47	93
College B	Medium	48	72
College C	Small	43	62
Total		138	227
% of total		.39	.62

The results from item 5, "Do you plan on earning a degree at this college?" are as follows. College A respondents reported 99 as degree seeking and 41 as non-degree seeking, while College B reported 93 as degree seeking and 27 non-degree seeking. Finally, College C reported 78 degree seeking and 27 non-degree seeking respondents. Table 5 represents the breakdown of respondents by whether they are degree seeking.

Table 5

Item 5: Respondents' Degree-Seeking Status

College	Institutional type	Degree seeking	Non-degree seeking
College A	Large	99	41
College B	Medium	93	27
College C	Small	78	27

Item 6, "Are you a full-time (12+ hours) or part-time student?" resulted in the following responses. College A reported 75 full-time and 65 part-time students, College B reported 94 full-time and 26 part-time students, and College C reported 49 full-time and 56 part-time students. Table 6 represents the breakdown of respondents by full or part-time status.

Table 6

Item 6: Full- or Part-Time Enrollment Status

College	Institutional type	Full-time	Part-time
College A	Large	75	65
College B	Medium	94	26
College C	Small	49	56

Significant Findings

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia community colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe

community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the learning objectives of each group. Demographic data were collected, and they included a variety of data such as age (in order to determine generational classification), gender, whether the student is degree-seeking, and full- or part-time enrollment status.

The students were enrolled at three Georgia community colleges which represent colleges with a variety of enrollments: large enrollment, mid-enrollment, and small enrollment. The institutions from which the samples were drawn were selected in a manner that allowed them to be representative of the population of students at all Georgia community colleges. This selection was intended to enhance generalizability across the population of community college students in Georgia. Further, the study compared the learning objectives of each of the generational groups identified by the literature which make up the primary student populations of community colleges. This study then sought to determine if there are differences in the learning objectives among students between each generation. Finally, this study sought to identify what changes students from each generation believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment and meet their learning needs.

ANOVA was utilized to test for significant differences between the mean scores from the three groups of respondents (the three generations) on each survey instrument item. A one-way analysis of variance is a procedure that determines the proportion of variability attributed to the components represented in the survey instrument items (Cronk, 2008). In this study, the one way ANOVA compares the means of two or more groups of participants that vary on a single independent variable; ANOVA reduces the

possibility of a type I error which would result from conducting multiple t-tests (Cronk, 2008). ANOVA compensates for these multiple comparisons and provides a single answer indicating if any of the responses from any of the groups are significantly different from the other groups.

Since the ANOVA indicates only whether a group is different from another group, post hoc tests are necessary in the event of a significant ANOVA finding. Post hoc tests help to determine which groups are different from other groups (Cronk, 2008). In the current study, SPSS was used to administer the Scheffe post hoc test.

The following paragraphs show results to questions 10-13 and correspond to Research Question 1,"What are the learning objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia community colleges?" Survey item 10 "I am attending college to earn a quality education" indicated differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials, $(F, (2, 364) = 2.62, p < .05$. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers ($m = 3.83$, $sd = 1.19$), Generation X ($m = 4.43$, $sd = .87$) responses differed more significantly from those of Millennials ($m = 4.50$, $sd = .98$). In this item, Millennials' responses differ most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 10.

Table 7

Item 10: Earn a Quality Education

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.83	1.19	2.62	.07
Gen X-ers	93	4.43	.87	2.62	.07
Millennials	259	4.50	.98	2.62	.07

Survey item 11 "I am attending college to become a better person" indicated

slight differences between all generations (F, (2, 364) = 1.41, p < .05. Again, post-hoc

tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomer (m = 3.58, sd = 1.16), Generation X (m

= 3.79, sd = 1.20) responses differed significantly from those of Millennials (m = 3.98, sd

= 1.14). In this item, Millennials' responses differ more significantly from Generation X

rather than Baby Boomers. Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers

and Millennials' responses to survey item 11.

Table 8

Item 11: Become a Better Person

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.58	1.16	1.41	.25
Gen X-ers	93	3.79	1.20	1.20	1.41
Millennials	259	3.98	1.14	1.41	.25

Survey item 12 "I am attending college to become a well-rounded person" did not

indicate significant statistical differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, but did

indicate greater differences between those generations and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = .24,

p < .05. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers (m = 3.83, sd

= 1.19), Generation X (*m* = 4.00, *sd* = 1.09) responses differed significantly from those of

Millennials (*m* = 4.04, *sd* = 1.08). In this item, Millennials' responses differ more

significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 9 presents the

descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 12.

Table 9

Item 12: Become a Well-Rounded Person

Generation	*N*	Mean	Std. deviation	*F*	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.83	1.19	.24	.79
Gen X-ers	93	4.00	1.09	.24	.79
Millennials	259	4.04	1.08	.24	.79

Survey item 13 "I am attending college to have greater job satisfaction", indicated

slight differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X and, Millennials (*F*, (2, 364) =

3.05, *p* < .05. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers (*m* =

3.75, *sd* = 1.36) and Generation X (*m* = 4.39, *sd* = .96) responses differed more from

those of Millennials (*m* = 4.46, *sd* = .98). In this item, Millennials' responses differ more

significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 10 presents the

descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 13.

Table 10

Item 13: Greater Job Satisfaction

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.75	1.36	3.05	.05
Gen X-ers	93	4.39	.96	3.05	.05
Millennials	259	4.46	.98	3.05	.05

The following paragraphs show results to questions 7-9 and correspond to

Research Question 2, "What are the higher education objectives of those students from

the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are

currently attending Georgia community colleges?" Survey item 7 "I am attending college

to earn a degree to make more money" indicated significant differences between Baby

Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = 3.54, $p < .05$. Again, post-hoc

tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers ($m = 3.67$, $sd = 1.30$) and Generation X

($m = 4.31$, $sd = 1.01$) responses differed significantly from those of Millennials ($m =$

4.44, $sd = 1.01$). Specifically, Millennials' responses differ most significantly from

Generation X, rather than Baby Boomers. Table 11 presents the descriptive statistics of

Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 7.

Table 11

Item 7: Earn a degree to make more money

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.67	1.30	3.54	.03
Gen X-ers	93	4.31	1.01	3.54	.03
Millennials	259	4.43	1.01	3.54	.03

Survey item 8 "I am attending college to gain self-confidence" indicated some differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = .17, $p <$ .05. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers (m = 3.66, sd = 1.22) and Generation X (m = 3.75, sd = 1.26) responses differed from Millennials (m = 3.86, sd = 3.34), with Millennial responses differing most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 12 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 8.

Table 12

Item 8: Gain Self Confidence

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.66	1.22	.17	.84
Gen X-ers	93	3.75	1.26	.17	.17
Millennials	259	3.86	3.34	.17	.84

Survey item 9, "I am attending college to make more money to be financially independent" indicated significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = 5.13, $p <$ .05. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers (m = 3.83, sd = 1.27), Generation X (m = 4.27, sd = 1.11) responses differed from Millennials (m = 4.54, sd = .90), while Millennial responses differ most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 13 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 9.

Table 13

Item 9: To Be Financially Independent

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.83	1.27	5.13	.01
Gen X-ers	93	4.27	1.11	5.13	.01
Millennials	259	4.54	.90	5.13	.01

The following paragraphs show results to questions 17, 18, 21, 22, 23 and correspond to Research Question 3, "What are the differences between the learning objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia community colleges?"

Survey item 17 "I am attending college to contribute to making a better world" did not indicate significant differences between Generation X and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = 2.04, $p <$ 05. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomer ($m =$ 4.08, $sd =$ 1.48) and Generation X ($m =$ 4.52, $sd =$ .92) responses differed significantly from those of Millennials ($m =$ 4.57, $sd =$ 1.10). In this item, Millennials' responses differed more significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 14 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 17.

Table 14

Item 17: Make a Better World

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	4.08	1.48	2.04	.13
Gen X-ers	93	4.52	.92	2.04	.13
Millennials	259	4.57	1.10	2.04	.13

Survey item 18 "I am attending college to understand the liberal arts" indicated

significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials $(F, (2,$

$364) = 3.91, p < 05$. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed similarities

between Generation X $(m = 2.60, sd = 1.16)$ and Baby Boomer $(m = 3.33, sd = 1.07)$

responses. In this item, Millennials' $(m = 2.90, sd = 1.05)$ responses differed most

significantly from Generation X-ers rather than Baby Boomers. Table 15 presents the

descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 18.

Table 15

Item 18: Understand the Liberal Arts

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.33	1.07	3.91	.02
Gen X-ers	93	2.60	1.16	3.91	.02
Millennials	259	2.90	1.05	3.91	.02

Item 21, "I am attending college to have a professional or white collar job"

indicated soight differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers, and Millennials $(F, (2,$

$364) = 2.80, p < .05$. Scheffe tests indicated that Millennial $(m = 3.97, sd = 1.12)$

responses differed more greatly from Generation X-ers $(m = 3.64, sd = 1.10)$ than Baby

Boomers $(m = 3.91, sd = 1.38)$, however. Table 16 presents the descriptive statistics both

generations' responses to survey item 21.

Table 16

Item 21: Get a Professional or White Collar Job

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.91	1.38	2.80	.06
Gen X-ers	93	3.64	1.10	2.80	.06
Millennials	259	3.97	.1.12	2.80	.06

Item 22, "I am attending college to be competitive in this job market" did not

indicate significant differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers, and Millennials (F,

(2, 364) = .17, $p < .05$. Again, Scheffe tests indicated that Millennial ($m = 3.98$, $sd =$

1.03) responses differed more greatly than Generation X-ers ($m = 3.97$, $sd = 1.15$), or

Baby Boomers ($m = 4.17$, $sd = 1.03$). Table 17 presents the descriptive statistics both

generations' responses to survey item 22.

Table 17

Item 22: Be competitive in this job market

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	4.17	1.03	.17	.84
Gen X-ers	93	3.97	1.15	.17	.84
Millennials	259	3.98	1.03	.17	.84

Item 23, "I am attending college because I value learning" did not indicate

significant differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers and Millennials (F, (2, 364) =

.51, $p < .05$. Scheffe tests indicated that Baby Boomers ($m = 4.00$, $sd = 1.13$), Generation

X-ers ($m = 4.22$, $sd = .87$), and Millennials ($m = 4.13$, $sd = .99$) answered similarly. Table

18 presents the descriptive statistics both generations' responses to survey item 23.

Table 18

Item 23: I Value Learning

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	4.00	1.13	.511	.60
Gen X-ers	93	4.22	.87	.511	.60
Millennials	259	4.13	.99	.511	.60

The following paragraphs show results to questions 14, 15, 16, 19, and 20 and correspond to question 4, "What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia community colleges?"

Survey item 14 "I am attending college to meet people and build friendships" indicated significant statistical differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = 8.22, $p < 05$. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers ($m = 3.00$, $sd = 1.13$) and Generation X ($m = 2.99$, $sd = 1.02$) responses differed significantly from those of Millennials ($m = 3.50$, $sd = 1.10$) with Millennial responses differing most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 19 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 14.

Table 19

Item 14: Meet People and Build Friendships

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.00	1.13	8.22	.00
Gen X-ers	93	2.99	1.02	8.22	.00
Millennials	259	3.50	1.10	8.22	.00

Survey item 15, "I am attending college to get involved in the educational community" revealed significant statistical differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials $(F, (2, 364) = 5.27, p < .05$. Scheffe post-hoc tests revealed the significance of those differences between Baby Boomers $(m = 3.58, sd = 1.38)$, Generation X $(m = 3.05, sd = 1.13)$ and Millennials $(m = 3.48, sd = 1.10)$. The most significant differences were found between Generation X-ers' and Millennials' responses. Table 20 indicates the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers' and Millennials' responses to survey item 15.

Table 20

Item 15: To Get Involved in the Educational Community

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.58	1.39	5.27	.01
Gen X-ers	93	3.05	1.13	5.27	.01
Millennials	259	3.48	1.10	5.27	.01

Survey item 16 "I am attending college to have greater, long-term job security" did not indicate significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials $(F, (2, 364) = 1.43, p < 05$. Again, post-hoc tests were performed and revealed Baby Boomers $(m = 4.08, sd = 1.44)$ and Generation X $(m = 4.52, sd = .84)$ responses differed significantly from Millennials $(m = 4.57, sd = .95)$ with Millennial responses differing most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers. Table 21 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X-ers and Millennials' responses to survey item 16.

Table 21

Item 16: Greater, Long-Term Job Security

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	4.08	1.33	1.43	.24
Gen X-ers	93	4.56	.84	1.43	.24
Millennials	259	4.51	.95	1.40	.24

Item 19, "I am attending college to meet a future life partner" indicated significant

statistical differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) =

7.88, $p < .05$. Scheffe tests indicated that Millennials ($m = 2.98$, $sd = 1.11$) responses

differed most from Generation X-ers ($m = 2.60$, $sd = 1.04$), or Baby Boomers ($m = 3.33$,

$sd = .98$). Table 22 presents the descriptive statistics both generations' responses to

survey item 19.

Table 22

Item 19: To Meet a Future Life Partner

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.33	.98	7.88	.00
Gen X-ers	93	2.60	1.04	7.88	.00
Millennials	259	2.98	1.11	7.88	.00

Item 20, "I am attending college to make my parents happy" indicates significant

statistical differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers and Millennials (F, (2, 364) =

14.15, $p < .05$. Scheffe tests indicated that Millennials ($m = 2.98$, $sd = 1.35$) expressed a

greater desire to make their parents happy than Baby Boomers ($m = 2.67$, $sd = 1.30$) or

Generation X-ers ($m = 2.14$, $sd = 1.22$). Table 23 presents the descriptive statistics both

generations' responses to survey item 20.

Table 23

Item 20: Make My Parents Happy

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	2.67	1.30	14.15	.00
Gen X-ers	93	2.14	1.22	14.15	.00
Millennials	259	2.98	1.35	14.15	.00

The following paragraphs show answer to survey questions 24-34, and correspond

to Research Question 5, "What are the changes students from each generational group

who are currently attending Georgia community colleges believe are necessary to

enhance their learning environment?"

Item 24, "I consider myself a customer of the college" did not indicate significant

differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = 1.06, $p <$

.05. Scheffe tests indicated that Baby Boomers ($m = 4.00$, $sd = 1.08$), Generation X-ers

($m = 4.23$, $sd = .99$), and Millennials ($m = 4.13$, $sd = 1.06$), responded similarly. Table 24

presents the descriptive statistics both generations' responses to survey item 24.

Table 24

Item 24: A Customer of the College

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	4.00	1.08	1.06	.35
Gen X-ers	93	4.23	.99	1.06	.35
Millennials	259	4.13	1.06	1.06	.35

Survey item 25 "I resent having to pay tuition and college expenses", revealed significant statistical differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials $(F, (2, 364) = 8.97, p < .05$. The Scheffe post-hoc test indicated significant differences in the means and standard deviations of responses of Baby Boomers ($m = 2.42, sd = 1.08$) and Generation X-ers ($m = 2.62, sd = 1.22$), versus Millennials ($m = 3.14, sd = 1.08$. Table 25 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X and Millennial responses to survey item 25.

Table 25

Item 25: Resent Having to Pay Tuition

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	2.41	1.08	8.97	.00
Gen X-ers	93	2.62	1.22	8.97	.00
Millennials	259	3.14	1.08	8.97	.00

Item 26, "I am entitled to a free college education" indicated significant differences in responses between Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial students $(F, (2, 364) = 3.73, p < .05$. Again, post-hoc tests revealed significant differences in the means and standard deviations of responses from Generation X-ers ($m = 2.85, sd = 1.29$) when compared to Millennials ($m = 3.26, sd = 1.25$) and Baby Boomers ($m = 3.33, sd = 1.07$) Table 26 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X and Millennial responses to survey item 26.

Table 26

Item 26: Entitled to a Free Education

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.33	1.07	3.73	.03
Gen X-ers	93	2.85	1.29	3.73	.03
Millennials	259	3.26	1.25	3.73	.03

Item 27, "I believe the college staff is responsible for my satisfaction at college" indicated significant statistical differences in responses between Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial students (F, (2, 364) = 3.15, $p < .05$. This time, post-hoc tests revealed differences in the means and standard deviations of responses of Millennials ($m = 3.27$, $sd = 1.13$), when compared to Baby Boomers ($m = 2.83$, $sd = 1.11$) and Generation X-ers ($m = 2.96$, $sd = 1.19$). Table 27 presents the descriptive statistics of responses to survey item 27.

Table 27

Item 27: College Staff Is Responsible

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	2.83	1.11	3.10	.04
Gen X-ers	93	2.96	1.19	3.15	.04
Millennials	259	3.27	1.13	3.15	.04

In item 28, "I believe the college faculty is responsible for my satisfaction at college", Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = 2.42, $p < .05$ did not indicate significant differences in responses. Scheffe tests indicated that Baby Boomers ($m = 3.00$, $sd = 1.35$), Generations X-ers ($m = 3.24$, $sd = 1.21$) and Millennials

($m = 3.49$, $sd = 1.12$) answered similarly. Table 28 presents the descriptive statistics of

Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial responses to survey item 28.

Table 28

Item 28: College faculty is responsible

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.00	1.35	2.42	.09
Gen X-ers	93	3.24	1.21	2.42	.09
Millennials	259	3.49	1.12	2.42	.09

Survey item 29, "If I pay tuition, I believe I should have a say in college matters",

indicated significant statistical differences in responses, between Baby Boomers,

Generation X-ers, and Millennials (F, (2, 364) = 5.26, $p < .05$. Here, Baby Boomers ($m =$

3.33, $sd = 1.15$) and Generation X students ($m = 3.79$, $sd = .87$) showed similar

responses, while Millennial students ($m = 4.04$, $sd = .94$) showed significant differences

in means and standard deviations. Table 29 indicates the descriptive statistics of

responses to survey item 29.

Table 29

Item 29: I Should Have a Say

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	3.33	1.15	5.26	.01
Gen X-ers	93	3.79	.87	5.26	.01
Millennials	259	4.04	.94	5.26	.01

Survey item 30, "I resent having to take classes outside of my major", also indicated significant differences in responses, between Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials (F, $(2, 364) = 3.98$, $p < .05$. Here, Baby Boomers ($m = 2.75$, $sd = 1.21$) and Generation X students ($m = 2.94$, $sd = 1.14$) showed similar responses, while Millennial students ($m = 3.29$, $sd = 1.19$) showed significant differences in means and standard deviations. Table 30 indicates the descriptive statistics of responses to survey item 30.

Table 30

Item 30: Classes outside of major

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	2.75	1.22	3.98	.02
Gen X-ers	93	2.94	1.14	3.98	.02
Millennials	259	3.29	1.19	3.98	.02

Survey item 31, "I do not see value in taking classes outside of my major", indicated significant statistical differences in responses between Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials (F, $(2, 364) = 5.37$, $p < .05$. Here, Baby Boomers ($m = 2.08$, $sd = 1.08$) responded most differently from Generation X-ers ($m = 2.82$, $sd = 1.23$), and Millennial students ($m = 3.13$, $sd = 1.29$). Table 31 indicates the descriptive statistics of responses to survey item 31.

Table 31

Item 31: Do Not See Value in Classes Outside of Major

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	2.08	1.08	5.37	.01
Gen X-ers	93	2.82	1.23	5.37	.01
Millennials	259	3.13	1.29	5.37	.01

Survey item 32, "Because I pay tuition I believe I should not receive a failing grade", revealed slight differences in responses between Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials $(F, (2, 364) = 3.02, p < .05$. Generation X $(m = 1.75, sd = .96)$ and Millennial $(m = 2.06, sd = 1.09)$ students differed in their responses as revealed by Scheffe post-hoc tests. Millennials responded differently from Generation X-ers, but more answered more similarly to Baby Boomers $(m = 2.00, sd = .74)$. Table 32 presents the descriptive statistics of Generation X and Millennial responses to survey item 32.

Table 32

Item 32: Should Not Receive a Failing Grade

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	2.00	.74	3.02	.05
Gen X-ers	93	1.75	.96	3.02	.05
Millennials	259	2.06	1.09	3.02	.05

Survey item 33, "I believe I am given grades as opposed to earning them", did not reveal significant differences in responses between Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers and Millennials $(F, (2, 364) = 2.79, p < .05$. Baby Boomer $(m = 2.00, sd = 1.28)$, Generation X $(m = 1.69, sd = .97)$, and Millennial $(m = 2.01, sd = 1.13)$ students differed slightly in

their responses as revealed by Scheffe post-hoc tests. Table 33 presents the descriptive

statistics of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennial responses to survey item 33.

Table 33

Item 33: I Am Given Grades

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	2.00	1.28	2.79	.06
Gen X-ers	93	1.69	.97	2.70	.05
Millennials	259	2.01	1.13	2.79	.06

Survey item 34, "If I have a job I should not have to work as hard in college",

again did not reveal significant differences in responses between Baby Boomers,

Generation X-ers, and Millennials $(F, (2, 364) = 1.32, p < .05$. Baby Boomer $(m = 1.92,$

$sd = 1.24)$, Generation X $(m = 1.72, sd = .96)$, and Millennial $(m = 1.90, sd = .94)$

students answered similarly in their responses as revealed by Scheffe post-hoc tests.

Table 34 presents the descriptive statistics of responses to survey item 34.

Table 34

Item 34: If I Have a Job

Generation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	F	Sig.
Baby Boomers	19	1.91	1.24	1.32	.27
Gen X-ers	93	1.72	.96	1.32	.27
Millennials	259	1.90	.94	1.32	.27

Chapter Summary

Findings indicate significant differences in fourteen survey instrument items. Possibly due to minimal Baby Boomer participation, most differences occurred within eight survey instrument items between Generation X and Millennial students. For example, survey items 14, "I am attending college to meet people and build friendships", and 15, "I am attending college to get involved in the educational community", revealed the most significant differences in responses between Generation X-ers and Millennials. Similarly, items 19, "I am attending college to meet a future life partner", 25 "I resent having to pay tuition and college expenses", and 26, "I am entitled to a free college education", all revealed significant differences between Gen X-ers and Millennials.

Alternately, item 29, "If I pay tuition, I believe I should have a say in college matters", indicated significant differences in responses between Baby Boomers and Millennials. Survey item 31, "I resent having to take classes outside of my major", also indicated significant differences in responses, but again between Generation X-ers and Millennials. Finally, survey item 33, "Because I pay tuition I believe I should not receive a failing grade", again indicates significant differences in responses from Generation X-ers and Millennials.

Chapter Five will present a discussion of the findings of the study. There will also be recommendations for practitioners and community college leaders concerning how community colleges might change to enhance the learning environment for people from each of the three generations, and there will be recommendations for further research on this topic.

CHAPTER V - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most community colleges are serving students from three or more generations simultaneously (Robey-Graham, 2008). Robey- Graham suggested it would be beneficial to recognize and examine the traits of each group, so educators may adapt to varying learning styles and value systems. A community college's enrollment includes differing ages, backgrounds, experiences, races, and cultures (Cohen & Brawer, 2006; Light, 2001). Now more than ever, multiculturalism has come to include "multi-generationalism", and these two trends can provide an exciting mix, making a richer classroom experience for all students (Robey-Graham).

Educators must be receptive and diligent when accepting students as holistic beings, not simply academic ones. Students' emotional, intellectual, and extra-curricular needs, for example, differ generationally (Strauss & Howe, 1997). As such, educators must recognize and adapt to students' needs beyond those academic and according to generational idiosyncrasies. For example, today's students are not only transitioning from high school to college, but may be returning to college from the workforce or as homemakers in preparation for second careers or delayed first careers. Like advertising and media, higher education must keep pace with ever-changing trends and values to attract customers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia Community Colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to

gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe

community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of

meeting the learning objectives of each group. To do this, the researcher identified

demographic information about these students. Demographic data collected included a

variety of data such as age (in order to determine generational classification), gender,

whether the student is degree-seeking, and full- or part-time enrollment status. The study

examined students at three Georgia Community Colleges (one large, one medium, and

one small). The institutions from which the samples were drawn were selected in a

manner that allowed them to be representative of the population of students at all Georgia

Community Colleges. This selection will enhance generalizability across the population

of community college students in Georgia. Further, the study compared the learning

objectives of each of the generational groups identified by the literature which make up

the primary student populations of community colleges. This study then sought to

determine if there are differences in the learning objectives among students between each

generation. Finally, this study seeks to identify what changes students from each

generation believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment and meet their

learning needs.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following:

1. What are the learning objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer

   generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently

   attending Georgia Community Colleges?

2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

3. What are the differences between the learning objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?

5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

Review of the Methodology

For this study, a quantitative research design was utilized. Initially, interviews were conducted with two administrators at three different community colleges. The purpose of these interviews was to gather information about the administrators' perspectives on the learning objectives of students from each of the generational groups. This information was used to develop a survey instrument. Additionally, the interviews sought information regarding the methods utilized at each institution to enhance the learning environment for students from the generational groups. Separate interviews were conducted with the chief academic officer (CAO) and the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) at each of the three community colleges in the sample. The purpose of selecting officials from institutions in each geographic group was intended to assure that the participants in the study represented the larger population of community college students in Georgia (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996).

The information gathered at these interviews, as well as a review of the professional literature and a document analysis from each institution, was used to develop a quantitative survey instrument that was administered to students enrolled within classes selected to be surveyed at each institution. Specifically, the information gathered contributed to examining research question five: What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

Demographic data regarding their student population were obtained from each institution to gain a better understanding of the demographic breakdown at each college. The survey instrument also gathered demographic data from the students including age, gender, whether the student is degree-seeking, and full- or part-time enrollment status. The student survey instrument used Likert-type items that explored 1) What are the learning objectives of each generational group?, 2) What are the higher education objectives of each generational group?, 3) What are the differences in the learning objectives of students in each generation?, 4) What are the differences in the higher education objectives, and 5) What changes do students from each generation believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

Following the interviews and the development of a draft survey instrument, the content validity of the instrument was established through a review process by a panel of experts including university professors, community college leaders, and other professionals who have experience with or expertise in community college teaching or generational theory. Members of the panel of experts reviewed the draft survey instrument to establish its content validity. Next, the instrument was tested for reliability

through a test-retest pilot study. After the validity and reliability of the instrument were established, students within the twelve classes selected from each community college were asked to complete the survey instrument. As noted above, student samples from a large, medium, and small community college were selected to ensure the participants in the study represented a large population of community college students in Georgia (Carnegie, 2006). Data from the survey instrument were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to answer the research questions described above. Specifically, the researcher performed an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine the degree of differences. Additionally, data from the survey analyzed to determine if there are significant differences in what changes students from each of the three generations would like to see in the learning environment at community colleges in Georgia.

Summary of the Findings

Enrollment at the three colleges in the study was 5,219, 2,754, and 1,077, respectively, for a total population of 9,050. Two hundred surveys were mailed to each community college for a total of 600 surveys mailed. A total of 371 surveys were returned, a total response rate of 61.83%. One hundred forty surveys were returned from College A for a response rate of 70%, 120 from College B for a response rate 60%, and 107 from College C for a response rate of 53.5%. Six students were excluded from the study. Four students were excluded for answering the demographic item "What year were you born" with a city not a year, therefore, making it impossible to determine the generation in which the respondent belonged. Two respondents were found to be too old

to be included in the study because they indicated they were born before 1945, which disqualified them from participation.

Eight survey instrument items indicated the most significant differences between the responses of students from different generations. For example, questions 10-13 showed significant inter-generational responses and correspond to Research Question 1,"What are the learning objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia community colleges?" Specifically, survey item 10 "I am attending college to earn a quality education" indicated differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials, with Millennials' responses differing most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers.

Survey questions 7-9 correspond to Research Question 2, "What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia community colleges?" Survey item 7 "I am attending college to earn a degree to make more money" indicated significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials, and revealed Baby Boomer and Generation X responses differed most significantly from those of Millennials. Specifically, Millennials' responses differ most significantly from Generation X, rather than Baby Boomers.

Likewise, survey item 9, "I am attending college to make more money to be financially independent" indicated significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials, while Millennial responses differ most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers.

Survey questions 17, 18, 21, 22, 23 correspond to Research Question 3, "What are the differences between the learning objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia community colleges?" Survey item 18 "I am attending college to understand the liberal arts" indicated differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials, and again revealed similarities between Generation X and Baby Boomer responses, while Millennials' responses differed most significantly from Generation X-ers rather than Baby Boomers.

Survey questions 14, 15, 16, 19, and 20 correspond to question 4, "What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia community colleges?" Survey item 14 "I am attending college to meet people and build friendships" indicated significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials, and revealed Baby Boomers and Generation X responses differed significantly from those of Millennials, with Millennial responses differing most significantly from Generation X rather than Baby Boomers.

Survey item 15, "I am attending college to get involved in the educational community" again revealed significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials, while the most significant differences were found between Generation X-ers' and Millennials' responses. Item 19, "I am attending college to meet a future life partner" indicated significant differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers, and Millennials, again revealing that Millennials responses differed most from Generation X-ers. Finally, Item 20, "I am attending college to make my parents happy" indicated significant differences between Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers and Millennials.

Here, Millennials expressed a greater desire to make their parents happy than Baby Boomers or Generation X-ers.

Survey questions 24-34 correspond to Research Question 5, "What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia community colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?" Specifically, survey item 25 "I resent having to pay tuition and college expenses", revealed significant differences between Generation X-ers and Millennials Here, Millennials express greater resentment at having to pay tuition and college expenses than Generation X-ers. As in item 25, item 26, "I am entitled to a free college education" indicated differences in responses between Generation X-ers and Millennial students. Similar to the previous example, Millennials express a greater sense of entitlement to a free education than do Generation X-ers.

Alternately, in item 29, "If I pay tuition, I believe I should have a say in college matters", Baby Boomers and Millennials indicated the most significant differences in responses. In this case, Millennials believe they should have greater say in college matters, than do Baby Boomers. Survey item 31, "I resent having to take classes outside of my major", also indicated significant differences in responses, but this time between Generation X-ers and Millennials. Here the latter showed greater resentment at having to take classes outside of their majors than did their Generation X-er counterparts.

Finally, survey item 33, "Because I pay tuition I believe I should not receive a failing grade", again revealed significant differences in responses between Generation X-ers and Millennials. As in item 29, Millennials more strongly agreed that because they pay tuition they should not receive a failing grade than Generation X-ers.

Discussion

Findings Related to the Literature

The results of this study indicate that Millennial students' attitudes toward higher education differed significantly from Baby Boomers and even more so from Generation X-ers. Millennials, for example, value a more active role in their physical presence at college, including meeting people and building friendships, an interest in the educational community, and a desire to meet a future life partner. Additionally, Millennials, more than any other group, indicated that as tuition-paying students they should have a say in college matters.

In contrast to Baby Boomer or Generation X students, Millennials expressed resentment at having to pay tuition and college related expenses, and feel more greatly entitled to a free education. Furthermore, Millennials actually indicated that because they pay tuition, students should not receive a failing grade. Finally, Millennials expressed greater resentment at having to take classes outside of their majors.

The results of this study reaffirm the assertions of the professional literature, specifically in responses to questions 25, 26, 31, and 33, with these survey items showing the most significant differences between Generation X and Millennial students. For example, in survey item 25, "I resent having to pay tuition and college expenses", Millennials expressed resentment at having to pay tuition and college expenses at all, leading to item 26, "I am entitled to a free college education", where Millennials expressed a sense of entitlement to an entirely free education. Those responses reinforce Bye, Pushkar, and Conway's (2007) assertions that Millennials are often extrinsically motivated, meaning they value the goals that education may afford, including a job,

career, financial opportunities, or societal expectations, but not necessarily for the sake of learning. Moreover, Shaul (2007) concurred that Millennials are drawn to higher education because of the promise of a more satisfying career, secure financial future, and are more invested in the end result, financial reward, than acquiring knowledge. Alternately, while item 29, "If I pay tuition, I believe I should have a say in college matters", indicated significant differences in responses between Baby Boomers and Millennials. The latter believed paying any amount of tuition afforded them the privilege of having a say in college matters. Indeed, Wolfgang & Dowling (1981) suggested this generation wants to attend college for the sake of learning, seeking knowledge to satisfy an inquiring mind. Further, Bye, Pushkar, and Conway (2007) described non-traditional learners as intrinsically motivated, desiring self-improvement, while considering personal growth to promote psychological well-being, and not requiring an immediate return. For these reasons, Baby Boomers report not needing a say in college matters, rather recognizing the role of personal responsibility in their education.

Moreover, survey item 31, "I resent having to take classes outside of my major", indicated that Millennials do not value learning in classes required outside of their majors. This confirmed what Johnson (2010) suggested, that student interest and investment in general education has waned due to the move toward consumerism, and that higher education is moving toward a more utilitarian approach, such as the experimental three-year bachelor's degree, greatly reducing or eliminating the general studies curriculum (Aronauer, 2005).

Finally, survey in item 33, "Because I pay tuition I believe I should not receive a failing grade", Millennials' revealed that because they pay tuition they should not receive

a failing grade. This confirmed Palazesi's (2004) suggestion that consumerism is an unintended consequence of college marketing efforts designed to attract new students, resulting in diluting the purpose of higher education for learning sake and reinforcing extrinsic motivations, consumerism, and waning student interest and investment in general education toward a more utilitarian approach.

College marketing efforts designed to attract new students have encouraged the student as customer trend, unintentionally, but negatively, affecting student performance (Palazesi, 2004). As a result, today's college students view themselves as customers of the university, demanding a level of service and services not formerly associated with institutes of higher education (Prensky, 2001). Most students, regardless of generational cohort, are drawn to higher education because of the promise of a more satisfying career and secure financial future. Increasingly, the result has become a student body more invested in the end result, financial reward, than acquiring knowledge.

As students, Gen X-ers were labeled individual learners lacking a collective commitment, but as they completed college they had become the most educated cohort to date (Levine, 1980). However, this phenomenon came at a time when more education is necessary to achieve or maintain middle class lifestyles (Levine). Generation X is also the first generation that may fail to match or surpass the economic status of their parents (Forman & Carlin, 2005). Finally, generations subsequent to those who lived through the Great Depression express an appreciation for the quality of life and work/life balance, expecting and experiencing a more elevated standard of living than their grandparents (Forman & Carlin, 2005).

As children, Generation-X-ers were described as pragmatic, conservative, diverse, and possessing an entrepreneurial spirit (Forman & Carlin, 2005). At the time of this study, Gen X-ers participants were at or nearing middle age. Therefore, this cohort's attitudes about, and purposes for, attending college are as non-traditional students and not recent high school graduates. For example, Generation X students may not have the time to devote to their education, nor be in the market for a life partner. Similarly, Generation X students seem to recognize college tuition as a part of the greater educational investment, resenting the cost less, and therefore feeling less entitled. Perhaps because of a more mature understanding of the role of higher education, and their place within it, they do not require a say in college matters. Finally, this generation recognizes a greater value in taking classes outside of one's major, as well as the possibility of failing classes. Levine (1980) recognized that Generation X had become the most educated cohort to date, but at a time when more education is necessary to achieve or maintain middle class lifestyles. Perhaps for this reason, this generation accepted the role and importance of the general education curriculum.

Specifically, this study reaffirms the literature in survey items 14, "I am attending college to meet people and build friendships", and 15, "I am attending college to get involved in the educational community". Responses to both questions revealed that Millennials value meeting people and building friendships, while indicating a greater interest in the educational community than do their Generation X counterparts, confirming that Millennials are team players who simultaneously value social relationships over learning. Finally, although in item 19, "I am attending college to meet a future life partner", Millennials expressed a greater desire to meet a future life partner

than Generation X-ers, this could be a result of the latter's more advanced station in life. In other words, Gen X-ers may already have a life partner or have differing aspirations at this life stage.

Unanticipated Outcomes

This study produced a number of unanticipated outcomes. Most of these can be attributed to the fact that Baby Boomers and Generation X-ers were answering survey questions as middle-aged adults and non-traditional students. As a result, most students within these generations were not attending college to meet a future life partner or to please their parents, which may motivate traditionally-aged students. Moreover, as a generation, Millennials responded that they were more interested in meeting a future life partner than their Boomer and X-er counterparts.

Additionally, while it is not surprising that most students surveyed were Millennials, the limited number of Boomers sampled was unanticipated. It was anticipated that a greater number of Baby Boomers were community college students who would participate in this study. Finally, the most unexpected results were that Gen-X-ers' and Millennials' responses indicated the most significant differences. Considering that Baby Boomers and Millennials are two generations removed from each other, the fact that these two generations' responses were not the most significantly different, made this part of the most unanticipated findings.

Recommendations for Community College Leaders

Based upon the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for community college leaders and practitioners.

1. Community colleges must acknowledge the special role of their institutions in the consumer trend within higher education, and they should work with faculty and administration to address issues related to grade inflation and student performance. Consumerism is the result of attracting and retaining quality students by satisfying students as customers, in turn creating grade inflation and less qualified graduates (Lederman, 2005). Instructors must curtail such problems by enlightening students of their role as invested learner over customer, impressing upon them the value of education over the comfort of services.

As higher education institutes have become increasingly accountable for productivity and profitability, some have abandoned earlier principles of the academy (Johnson, 2010). This domino effect has resulted in waning student interest from general education toward a more utilitarian approach, such as the experimental three-year bachelor's degree, greatly reducing or eliminating the general studies curriculum (Aronauer, 2005).

As a result, community college leaders must be proactive in educating students about the greater mission of higher education: to make students educated persons rather than provide job training. Further, educators must enlighten students of the need to master skills learned within general studies and the liberal arts and the role those skills play within the workforce.

In other words, communication and critical thinking skills will translate to income. If American higher education continues to adhere to the principle of a well-rounded education, the purpose and benefit of general studies must be clarified. Additionally, administrators and faculty must work together to raise performance and

ability rather than grade point averages. Finally, administrators and faculty must bridge the gap between college classroom and career by working with human resources representatives so that colleges may better train and prepare students for today's workforce.

2. College leaders must understand the differences in students' reasons for pursuing his or her education, particularly students from different generations. Regardless, the role of college and students' attitudes toward college are increasingly utilitarian. For example, Millennials are often extrinsically motivated, meaning they value the goals that education may afford, including a job, career, financial opportunities, or societal expectations, but not necessarily for the sake of learning (Bye, Pushkar, & Conway, 2007).

Alternately, Gen X-ers and Baby Boomers may be more intrinsically motivated, understanding the value in general education and the liberal arts (such as communication and critical thinking skills). Ultimately, Baby Boomers and Generation X-ers, however, report attending college for greater job security and to be competitive in the job market. As such, educators must work with industry to prepare state of the art curricula to satisfy accrediting bodies, students, and human resources simultaneously. For example, by consulting with those respective fields, community colleges could craft modern curricula and career advising in growing professions such as information technology or healthcare. Moreover, community colleges could pursue technical education trends by preparing students for the workforce through certificate programs rather than working under the assumption that all students will graduate or transfer to pursue a four-year degree.

Whatever their reasons for attending, different life stages dictate different priorities for students. Regardless of Boomers' and Gen X-ers' maturity and intrinsic motivation, their desire to learn may be curtailed by time constraints of work and children. However devoted to learning they may be, non-traditional students' commitment to study may be lacking as much as Millennials'. Educators must recognize and accommodate atypical schedules.

3. Terry Doyle (2011) insisted that Millennials need the purpose of a task clear; the end presented so the means may be completed. Doyle's assumption is also a principle of Andragogy, or the theory helping adults learn (Knowles, 1984). Although Doyle's work concerned Millennials, all generations of college students, as adult learners, could benefit from this and all principles of Andragogy.

In short, Andragogy is the science of teaching and learning that is based on understanding through self-directed and autonomous learning that is supported by teachers as facilitators of that learning (Knowles, 1984). Educators in particular should make themselves familiar with this theory of *facilitating* adult learning, as opposed to pedagogy, or *teaching* children. Regardless of generation, community college students are adult learners. Knowles emphasized that adults need the purpose and worth of a task stated before learning, need to be responsible for their decisions on education, and involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction. As such, many instructors of Millennial students have recognized the benefit of this approach and adopted it in class. Administrators could also use this approach to clarify the purpose of higher education in general, to promote learning and raise performance levels.

4. Community colleges offer students an affordable option that could reverse a national trend of skyrocketing college costs. With student loan debt nearing $1 trillion, community colleges are a prudent alternative (Hechinger & Lorin, 2012). Community colleges afford students the opportunity to obtain an education at a lower cost, resulting in a significantly lower student debt rate. Because colleges perpetuate the consumer trend to recruit and enroll students, institutions must deliver services promised or explain why they are not offered. Community colleges should aggressively market themselves as the affordable alternative.

For example, a public university within the University System of Georgia charges state residents $888.70 for one three-hour course, inclusive of all fees (GRU, 2012). Alternatively, tuition and fees for one three-hour course at Georgia's largest public community college is $548.20 (GPC, 2012). If a student were enrolled at the university full-time for an average of five classes, or 15 hours, she could expect to pay $32, 832 for the first two years of a four year degree (GRU). If that student enrolled at the community college, she would pay $7,004 for the same four semesters, or two years (GPC). Already an affordable alternative to a four-year, residential campus, students at the community college can further save money by living at home.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers should consider the following recommendations. To begin, because even the youngest Baby Boomers are inching closer to retirement, and considering their small representation within this study's population sample, that generation should be eliminated from future studies. Rather, researchers should consider studying the generation following the Millennials, which is not yet named. Next, research

questions should recognize that students of older generations will be answering survey questions as middle-aged adults, not recent high school graduates. As a result, questions should be tailored to consider the social and economic implications for attending college as an adult learner, with greater consideration for students' stations in life.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the educational objectives of, attitudes, and gain input from, three generational groups in Georgia Community Colleges: Baby Boomers, Generation X-ers, and Millennials. The professional literature suggested that non-traditional students, in this case Baby Boomers and Gen-X-ers, were intrinsically motivated and, therefore, more greatly valued higher education. As traditional students, Millennials are often extrinsically motivated, valuing the benefits a degree may afford them, as opposed to learning for the sake of accumulating knowledge.

After, the CAOs and SSAOs were interviewed to garner their insights and experiences with these three generations at their own community colleges. The administrators' responses more fervently echoed assumptions gleaned from the literature. As a result, The Attitudes of Three Generations Toward Their Higher Education Objectives Survey was created to assess students' educational objectives and attitudes. As expected, the survey results confirmed the literature and administrator responses, and illustrated some unanticipated results as well.

For example, Millennials overwhelmingly valued the end, a college degree, over the means, knowledge. In that vein, this cohort felt college should be free of charge and less demanding. Conversely, non-traditional students recognized the value in learning and knowledge as much as the degree. Baby Boomers and Gen-X-ers appeared more realistic

and less sanguine about the job market and their place within it. As such, these cohorts recognized the value of higher education and chose to take the opportunity afforded them more seriously.

Unexpectedly, Baby Boomer and Millennial responses were more similar than Generation X-ers, however. While logic would suggest that two cohorts as removed as these would exhibit the greatest differences in objectives and attitudes toward higher education, Generation X-er responses proved more radical. Regardless, student responses overwhelmingly supported assumptions found in the literature and administrator responses.

REFERENCES

Allitt, P. (2005). *I'm the teacher, you're the student.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Almeia, D. A., (1991). Do underprepared students and those with lower academic skills belong in the community college? A question of policy in light of the "mission." *College Review, 18*(28), 28-32.

Aronauer, R. (2005). 3-year degrees prove controversial in U.S. The Chronicle of Higher Education, 52(13), A45. Retrieved from http://chronicle.com/article/3-Year-Degrees-Prove/24103/

Astin, A. W. (1975). *Preventing students from dropping out.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Astin, A.W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 25,* 297-308.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L., & Razavieh. A. (1996). *Introduction to research in education.* New York: Harcourt Brace.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., & Razavieh, A. (2009). *Introduction to research in education.* Belmont: Wadsworth.

Bagozzi, R.P. (1974). Marketing as exchange. *Journal of Marketing, 39*(4), 32-39.

Barton, P. E. (2005, February). One-third of a nation: rising dropout rates and declining *Opportunities* (ETS Policy Information Report). Retrieved from http://www.ets.org/media/education _topics/pdf/onethird.pdf

Bean, J.P. (1980). Dropouts and turnover: The synthesis and test of a causal model of student attrition. *Research in Higher Education, 12*(2), 155-187.

Bean, J.P. (1982). Conceptual models of student attrition: How theory can help the

institutional researcher. In E.T. Pascarella (Ed.), Studying student attrition (pp.

17-33). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bean, J.P. (1983). The application of a model of turnover in work organizations to the

student attrition process. *The Review of Higher Education, 6*(2), 129-148.

Bean, J.P. (1990). Why students leave: Insights from research. In D. Hossler, & J.P. Bean

(Eds.), *The strategic management of college enrollments* (pp. 147-169). San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Blumenstyk, G. (2009, January 15). Report on college spending trends highlights

inequities in financing model. *The Chronicle of Higher Education.*

http://chronicle.com/daily/2009/01/9651n.htm

Booth, N. (1998). *Strategies for fast-changing times: The art of using change to your

advantage.* Roseville: Prima Lifestyle Publishing.

Bye, D., Pushkar, D., & Conway, M. (2007). Motivation, interest, and positive affect in

traditional and nontraditional undergraduate students. *Adult Education Quarterly,

57,* 141-158.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2006). *Basic classification

description.* from

http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications/sub.asp?key=791

CCSSE (2010, May). Overview: A sharpened focus on learning. Austin, TX: Community

College Survey of Student Engagement. http://www.ccsse.org/

Chickering, A. W. (1969). *Education and identity.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, A. M., & Brawer, F. B. (2008). *The American community college* (5th ed.). San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cordasco, F. M., & Romano, L. A. (March, 1967). *Peabody Journal of Education, 44,*

295-299.

Cronk, B.C. (2008). *How to use SPSS: A step-by-step guide to analysis and*

interpretation. Glendale, CA: Pyrczak.

Deegan, W., & Tillery, D. (1985). Renewing the American community college: Priorities

and strategies for effective leadership. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Doyle, T. (2011). Learner centered teaching: Putting the research on learning into

practice. Sterling: Stylus Publishing.

El-Shamy, S. (2004). How to design and deliver: Training for the emerging generations.

San Francisco: Pfeiffer

Ellison, B. J. (2009). Does getting A's really matter? A conceptualization of grades as a

measure of educational outcomes. (UMI No. AAT 3436453) from Proquest.

Eubanks, S. (2006). Executive summary of Millennials go to college by Neil Howe and

William Strauss. Retrieved from http://eubie.com/millennials.pdf

Fain, Blumenstyk, & Sander. (2009). Sharing ideas: Tough times encourage colleges to

collaborate. *The Chronicle of Higher Education, 55*(23), A20.

Finney, T. G., & Finney, R. Z. (2010). Are students their universities' customers? An

exploratory study. *Education + Training, 52*(4), 276-291.

Fissel, J. L. (2012). The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education

objectives survey.

Forman, P. J., & Carlin, L. (2005, October 15). The age of change: Multiple generations in the workforce. *We Connect Online Newsletter, 2*(1).

Georgia Perimeter College (2012). http://depts.gpc.edu/~gpcsacct/resources/ schedule_of_tuition_and_fees_student_accounts.htm retrieved on November 9, 2012.

Georgia Regents University (2012). http://www.georgiahealth.edu/finance/controller /cashiers/SummervilleUGTuitionFees.html retrieved on November 9, 2012

Hake, B. J. (1999). Lifelong learning in late modernity: The challenges to society, organizations and individuals. *Adult Education Quarterly, 49*, 79-90.

Hechinger, J., & Lorin, J. (2012, September 29). Student-loan default rates rise as federal scrutiny grows. *Bloomberg Businessweek.* *http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012- 09-28/student-loan-defaults-soar-as-government-scrutiny-grow*

Holcomb, Z.C. (2011). SPSS basics: Techniques for a first course in statistics. Glendale, CA: Pyrczak.

Hornfeck, D. (2001, July 10). Who deserves a college education? *College Values.* Retrieved from http://www.collegevalues.org/seereview.html

Howe, N. & Strauss, W. (1991). *Generations: The history of America's future 1584-2069.* New York: William Morrow and Company.

Howe, N., & Strauss, W. (2000). *Millennials rising: The next great generation.* New York: Vantage.

Howe, N., & Strauss, W. (2003). *Millenials go to college*: Strategies for a new generation on campus. Great Falls: Lifecourse Associates.

Johnson, C. A. (2010). *Attitudes and Perceptions of General Education Requirements at Career Focused Post-Secondary Institutions* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from Proquest Information and Learning Company. (UMI Number: 3409271).

Joliet Junior College. (2009). College information: History. *Joliet Junior College*. Retrieved from http://www.jjc.edu/about/college-info/Pages/history.aspx

Joyner, P. (2008). Nation's community colleges educate many. *Tidewaternewsdotcom.* Retrieved from http://tidewaternews.com/news/2008/nov/06/nations-community-colleges-educate-many/

Katsinas, S. G. (2002). Looking back and looking forward: A century of community colleges in America. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice 26*, 555-557.

Katsinas, S. G. (2008). Remembering Raymond J. Young and the grass-roots development of community colleges from 1950 to 1976. *Community College Review 35*(4), 336-363. Retrieved from http://crw.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/35/4/336

Knowles, M. (1984). *Andragogy in action*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kroth, M. & Boverie, P. (2000). Life mission and adult learning. *Adult Education Quarterly 50*, 134.

Kumar, R. (2005). *Research methodology: A step by step guide for beginners*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Laing, C., Chao, K. & Robinson, A. (2005). Managing the expectations of non-traditional students: a process of negotiation. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 29*, 169-179.

Langhorst, S. A. (1997). Changing the channel: Community colleges in the information age. *Community College Review 25*(55). Retrieved from http://crw.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/3/55

Learning Environments Research (n.d.). in *Learning & Instruction*. Retrieved from http://www.springer.com/education+%26+language/learning+%26+ instruction/ journal/10984

Leary, T. (1965). *Turn on, tune in, drop out*. Oakland: Ronin Publishing.

Lederman, D. (2005), Graduated but not literate. *Inside Higher Ed, 16.*. Retrieved from www.insidehighered.com/news/2005/12/16/literacy

Levine, A. (1980). *When dreams and heroes died: A portrait of today's college student*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Light, R. J. (2001). *Making the most of college: Students speak their minds*. Cambridge: Harvard.

Lindeman, E. C. (1926). *The meaning of adult education*. New York: New Republic.

Locke, D. (1998). *Increasing multicultural understanding: A comprehensive model*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

McBride, T., & Nief, R. (2009). The Beloit College Mindset List. Retrieved from.http://www.beloit.edu/mindset/

Moltz, D. (2011, April 27). Completion Agenda for Baby Boomers. *Inside Higher Ed.*

Retrieved from http://www.insidehighered.com/news/

2011/04/27/community_colleges_ encouraging_baby_boomers_to_

complete_degrees_and_certificates

NAS (2006). Getting to know Generation X. *Insights.* Retrieved from

http://www.nasrecruitment.com/docs/white_papers/Getting-to-Know-Generation-

X.pdf

National Center for Education Studies (2003, June). Community college academic

preparation and outcomes. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003164

Nespoli, L. A., & Martorana, S. V., (1984). Tensions in defining community college

missions: Problem or opportunity? *Community College Review 11*(3). Retrieved

from http://crw.sagepub.com

Norton, M. S. (1959). Federal aid for education. NASSP Bulletin 43(79). Retrieved from

http://bul.sagepub.com

Oishi, S. M. (2003). *How to conduct in-person interviews for surveys.* Thousand Oaks:

Sage.

Oplatka, I., & Tevel, T. (2006). Liberation and revitalization: The choice and meaning of

higher education among Israeli female students in midlife. *Adult Education*

Quarterly, 57, 62-84.

Palazesi, L. M. (2004). *How baby boomers value their learning experiences as*

consumers of a Florida community college's educational services (Doctoral

dissertation).

Pascarella, E.T., & Terenzini, P.T. (1980). Predicting freshman persistence and voluntary dropout decisions from a theoretical model. *The Journal of Higher Education, 51*(2), 60-74.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). *How college affects students.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Pedersen, R. (2001, March 5). How we got here: It's not How you think. *Community College Week, 13*(15), 4. Retrieved from Education Research Complete database. Retreived from http://searchebscohost.com.proxy.lib.odu.edu/ login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&A =4196363&site=ehost-live

Perricone, J. (2005). No more carrots. *National Education Association, 23,* 64.

Reitzle, M. (2007). The effects of work- and family-related transitions on young people's perception of being adult. *The Journal of Vocational Behavior, 70,* 25-41.

Rickles, P. C. (2009). Make way for millennials!: How today's students are shaping higher education space. *Planning for Higher Education, 37*(2).

Roberts, G. (2009). A comparison of American and international undergraduate students attitudes toward their education at a midwestern university. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from Proquest Information and Learning Company. (UMI Number: 3382630).

Robey-Graham, V. A. (2008). *Teaching multi-generational students: A case study of community college classrooms.* Retrieved from Proquest Digital Dissertations. (AAT 3311756).

SACS (2010, May). Commission on Colleges. Decatur, GA: Southern Association of and Schools. http://www.sacs.org/

Shaul, C. (2007). The attitude toward money as a reward system between the age groups

    corresponding to the boomers, generation x, and generation y employees.

    (Doctoral dissertation). Available from Proquest Information and Learning

    Company. (UMI Number: 3262880).

Somers, P., Hollis, J., & Stokes, T. (2000). The federal government as first creditor on

    student loans: Politics and policy. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*

    22(4), 331-339.

SPSS (2010). Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. www.spss.com

Strauss, W., & Howe, N. (1997). *The fourth turning: What the cycles of history tell us*

    about America's next rendezvous with destiny. New York: Broadway Books.

The Daily Press (2009, January 13). State budget cuts are hitting community colleges

    hard. *Thomas Nelson Community College News @ TNCC.* Retrieved from

    http://www.tncc.edu/news/?p=845

Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent

    research. *Review of Educational Research, 45,* 89–125.

Tinto, V. (1982). Limits of theory and practice in student attrition. *The Journal of Higher*

    Education, 53(6), 687-700.

Tinto, V. (1988). Stages of student departure: Reflections on the longitudinal character

    of student leaving. *The Journal of Higher Education, 59*(4), 438-455.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*

    (2nd Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ulrich, J. (2011). Introduction: A (sub)cultural genealogy". In A. L. Harris (ed.),

    GenXegesis: Essays on alternative youth (3-42). Madison: University of

    Wisconsin Press.

U.S. Department of Education (2010, February). Higher education. Retrieved from

    http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html

Voigt, K. (2007). Individual choice and unequal participation in higher education. *Theory*

    and Research in Education, 5, 87-112.

Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. (2009). Research methods in education: An introduction.

Wolfgang, M. E., & Dowling, W. D. (1981). Differences in motivation of adult and

    younger undergraduates. *The Journal of Higher Education, 52*, 640-648.

Young, J. (1997). Community economic development through community colleges.

    New Directions for Higher Education 25(1), 74-83.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY REQUEST LETTER

Dear Dr. (name):

Hello. My name is Jodi Fissel, and I'm writing because you may share my interest in understanding the current generation of college students that you work with so intensively on a daily basis. I teach history at Georgia Military College, Augusta, and am a PhD candidate in Community College Leadership at Old Dominion University. My dissertation, *Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education objectives in Georgia Community Colleges,* requires me to survey students from three Georgia Community Colleges (one small, one medium, and one large).

According to the Carnegie Classification, (name) College is a large community college in Georgia. Therefore, your help would be greatly appreciated. May I survey one of your classes? My instrument includes 25 questions, requires no identifying information from students, and will take approximately five minutes to administer. I must survey students in morning, afternoon, and evening classes.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Several times I have been asked to give up an entire class period to administer the Noel-Levitz Survey of Student Engagement. I recognize what an imposition a request like this is and promise that my presence and this survey will be as unintrusive as possible.

I would be grateful for your participation as this data will be the culmination of several years' worth of research and will lead to my degree.

Very respectfully yours,

Jodi Fissel

APPENDIX B

SURVEY REQUEST LETTER II

Dear Dr. (name):
APPENDIX
Hello. My name is Jodi Fissel, and I'm writing because you may share my interest in understanding the current generation of college students that you work with so intensively on a daily basis. I teach history at Georgia Military College, Augusta, and am a PhD candidate in Community College Leadership at Old Dominion University. My dissertation, *Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education objectives in Georgia Community Colleges,* requires me to survey students from three Georgia Community Colleges (one small, one medium, and one large).

According to the Carnegie Classification, (name) College is a medium community college in Georgia. Therefore, your help would be greatly appreciated. May I survey one of your classes? My instrument includes 25 questions, requires no identifying information from students, and will take approximately five minutes to administer. I must survey students in morning, afternoon, and evening classes.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Several times I have been asked to give up an entire class period to administer the Noel-Levitz Survey of Student Engagement. I recognize what an imposition a request like this is and promise that my presence and this survey will be as unintrusive as possible.

I would be grateful for your participation as this data will be the culmination of several years' worth of research and will lead to my degree.

Very respectfully yours,

Jodi Fissel

APPENDIX C

SURVEY REQUEST LETTER III

Dear Dr. (name): APPENDIX

Hello. My name is Jodi Fissel, and I'm writing because you may share my interest in understanding the current generati APPENDIX on of college students that you work with so intensively on a daily basis. I teach history at Georgia Military College, Augusta, and am a PhD candidate in Community College Leadership at Old Dominion University. My dissertation, *Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education objectives in Georgia Community Colleges,* requires me to survey students from three Georgia Community Colleges (one small, one medium, and one large).

According to the Carnegie Classification, (name) College is a small community college in Georgia. Therefore, your help would be greatly appreciated. May I survey one of your classes? My instrument includes 25 questions, requires no identifying information from students, and will take approximately five minutes to administer. I must survey students in morning, afternoon, and evening classes.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Several times I have been asked to give up an entire class period to administer the Noel-Levitz Survey of Student Engagement. I recognize what an imposition a request like this is and promise that my presence and this survey will be as unintrusive as possible.

I would be grateful for your participation as this data will be the culmination of several years' worth of research and will lead to my degree.

Very respectfully yours,

Jodi Fissel

APPENDIX D

CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE APPENDIX E

1. Have you noticed any change(s) in student motivation concerning their educational goals?

If so, what was/were it/they?

2. In what ways are today's traditionally-aged students (Millennials) different from their older counterparts (Generation X-ers who are in early middle-age or Baby Boomers who are in late middle-age or near retirement)?

    Academically?

    Socially?

APPENDIX E

EVALUATION INSTRUMENT FOR SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERTS

Thank you for serving as a subject-matter expert. As you proceed through the questions, it is not necessary to provide comments to the items, although you are welcome to do so.

Please complete the "Evaluation" which appears after each proposed survey question.

Thank you for your consideration in completing this assessment.

THE ATTITUDES OF THREE GENERATIONS TOWARD THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION OBJECTIVES SURVEY PROPOSED QUESTIONS

Demographic Questions

1. *What year were you born?*

```
┌──────────────┐
│              │
└──────────────┘
```

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

2. *What is your gender?*

o Male

o Female

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

3. *Do you plan on earning a degree at this college?*

o   Yes

o   No

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

4. *Are you full (12+ hours) or part-time (1-11 hours) student?*
o   Full-time
o   Part-time

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

Educational Objectives Questions

Please answer the following questions by ranking them:

(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, or (4) strongly agree

I am attending college to ...

1. *get a degree to make more money.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

2. *gain self-confidence.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

3. *be independent.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

4. *earn a good quality education.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

5. *become a better and well-rounded person.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

6. *have greater job satisfaction.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

7. *meet people and build friendships.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

8. *get involved in the educational community.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

9. *have greater, long-term security.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

10. *contribute to making a better world.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

11. *understand the liberal arts.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

12. *meet a future life partner.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

13. *make my parents happy.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

14. *become a professional person.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

15. *become competitive in today's economy.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

16. *because I value learning.*

____1   ____2   ____3   ____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

17. *As a student, I consider myself a customer of the college.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

18. *I consider tuition, etc. an expense as opposed to an investment.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

19. *I resent having to pay tuition and college expenses.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

20. *I am entitled to free tuition and college expenses.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

21. *I believe college staff is responsible for my happiness and satisfaction at college.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey. Retain	Omit	Revise
This item pertains to research questions.	Yes	No
This item is clearly written.	Yes	No

22. *I believe the faculty is as responsible for my education as I am.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

23. *I believe faculty are more responsible for my education than I am.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

24. *Because I pay tuition, I believe I should have a say in college matters.*

___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

25. *I resent having to take classes outside of my major.*

_____1   _____2   _____3   _____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

26. *I do not see value in taking classes outside of my major.*

_____1   _____2   _____3   _____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

27. *Because I pay tuition, I believe I should have a say in classroom matters.*

_____1   _____2   _____3   _____4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

28. *Because I pay tuition I believe I should not fail classes.*

    ___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

29. *I believe I am "given" grades as opposed to "earning" them.*

    ___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise
Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

30. *If I work I should not have to work as hard in college.*

    ___1   ___2   ___3   ___4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Evaluation: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

This item should be included in the survey.   Omit   Revise Retain

This item pertains to research questions.   Yes   No

This item is clearly written.   Yes   No

APPENDIX F

PANEL OF EXPERTS INVITATION I

From: Jodi Fissel: jfiss002@odu.edu
To: Dr. Lara Carver
Date: May 16, 2012
Re: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The Attitudes of Three Generations Toward Their Higher Education Objectives in Georgia Community Colleges Survey Content Validity Assessment

Dear Dr. Carver:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a subject-matter expert for my dissertation study, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education objectives in Georgia Community Colleges. Dr. Dennis Gregory, Old Dominion University, is chairing my dissertation committee. Your input is extremely important, and I appreciate the time you are taking out of your busy schedule to participate.

Although there has been much student retention research over the past thirty years, non-residential, community colleges have only been examining retention for a short time. Because most community colleges are serving students of three or more generations simultaneously, it may be beneficial to recognize and examine the traits of each group, so educators may adapt to varying learning styles and value systems. A college's student body is a composite of a host of characters from differing backgrounds, experiences, races, and cultures, so that now more than ever, multiculturalism has come to include "multi-generationalism".

To address this issue, this study will interview the Chief Academic Officer and survey students at three community colleges in Georgia. An initial survey instrument was developed by the researcher by completing a review of the literature in both community college education and generational theory. As a subject-matter expert, you play an important role in determining the content validity of the proposed survey instrument.

To participate in the expert panel, please:
    1) Review the attached study purpose and research questions.
    2) Evaluate the attached proposed survey questions.
In order to ensure your input is considered, I would appreciate received your completed survey returned by Monday, June 4, 2012.

Again, thank you for your participation and contribution toward the success of this study. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at jfiss002@odu.edu or 706-738-1950.

Sincerely,

Jodi Fissel
Doctoral Candidate, Old Dominion University
Associate Professor of History

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERTS

Purpose

The following study will examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia community colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the learning objectives of each group. The researcher will use a sample of students from Georgia Community colleges to compare the following:

Research Questions

1. What are the education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
3. What are the differences between the education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

APPENDIX G

PANEL OF EXPERTS INVITATION II

From: Jodi Fissel: jfiss002@odu.edu
To: Dr. Hara Charlier
Date: May 16, 2012
Re: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The Attitudes of Three Generations Toward Their Higher Education Objectives in Georgia Community Colleges Survey Content Validity Assessment

Dear Dr. Charlier:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a subject-matter expert for my dissertation study, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education objectives in Georgia Community Colleges. Dr. Dennis Gregory, Old Dominion University, is chairing my dissertation committee. Your input is extremely important, and I appreciate the time you are taking out of your busy schedule to participate.

Although there has been much student retention research over the past thirty years, non-residential, community colleges have only been examining retention for a short time. Because most community colleges are serving students of three or more generations simultaneously, it may be beneficial to recognize and examine the traits of each group, so educators may adapt to varying learning styles and value systems. A college's student body is a composite of a host of characters from differing backgrounds, experiences, races, and cultures, so that now more than ever, multiculturalism has come to include "multi-generationalism".

To address this issue, this study will interview the Chief Academic Officer and survey students at three community colleges in Georgia. An initial survey instrument was developed by the researcher by completing a review of the literature in both community college education and generational theory. As a subject-matter expert, you play an important role in determining the content validity of the proposed survey instrument.

To participate in the expert panel, please:
    3) Review the attached study purpose and research questions.
    4) Evaluate the attached proposed survey questions.
In order to ensure your input is considered, I would appreciate received your completed survey returned by Monday, June 4, 2012.

Again, thank you for your participation and contribution toward the success of this study. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at jfiss002@odu.edu or 706-738-1950.

Sincerely,

Jodi Fissel
Doctoral Candidate, Old Dominion University
Associate Professor of History

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERTS

Purpose

The following study will examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia community colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the learning objectives of each group. The researcher will use a sample of students from Georgia Community colleges to compare the following:

Research Questions

1. What are the education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
3. What are the differences between the education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

APPENDIX H

PANEL OF EXPERTS INVITATION III

From: Jodi Fissel: jfiss002@odu.edu
To: Dr. C. J. Curry
Date: May 16, 2012
Re: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The Attitudes of Three Generations Toward Their Higher Education Objectives in Georgia Community Colleges Survey Content Validity Assessment

Dear Dr. Curry:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a subject-matter expert for my dissertation study, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education objectives in Georgia Community Colleges. Dr. Dennis Gregory, Old Dominion University, is chairing my dissertation committee. Your input is extremely important, and I appreciate the time you are taking out of your busy schedule to participate.

Although there has been much student retention research over the past thirty years, non-residential, community colleges have only been examining retention for a short time. Because most community colleges are serving students of three or more generations simultaneously, it may be beneficial to recognize and examine the traits of each group, so educators may adapt to varying learning styles and value systems. A college's student body is a composite of a host of characters from differing backgrounds, experiences, races, and cultures, so that now more than ever, multiculturalism has come to include "multi-generationalism".

To address this issue, this study will interview the Chief Academic Officer and survey students at three community colleges in Georgia. An initial survey instrument was developed by the researcher by completing a review of the literature in both community college education and generational theory. As a subject-matter expert, you play an important role in determining the content validity of the proposed survey instrument.

To participate in the expert panel, please:
    5) Review the attached study purpose and research questions.
    6) Evaluate the attached proposed survey questions.
In order to ensure your input is considered, I would appreciate received your completed survey returned by Monday, June 4, 2012.

Again, thank you for your participation and contribution toward the success of this study. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at jfiss002@odu.edu or 706-738-1950.

Sincerely,

Jodi Fissel
Doctoral Candidate, Old Dominion University
Associate Professor of History

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERTS

Purpose

The following study will examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia community colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the educational objectives of each group. The researcher will use a sample of students from Georgia Community colleges to compare the following:

Research Questions

1. What are the education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
3. What are the differences between the education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment.

APPENDIX I

PANEL OF EXPERTS INVITATION IV

PANEL OF EXPERTS INVITATION

From: Jodi Fissel: jfiss002@odu.edu
To: Dr. Kellie Sorey
Date: May 16, 2012
Re: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The Attitudes of Three Generations Toward Their Higher Education Objectives in Georgia Community Colleges Survey Content Validity Assessment

Dear Dr. Sorey:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a subject-matter expert for my dissertation study, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials: The attitudes of three generations toward their higher education objectives in Georgia Community Colleges. Dr. Dennis Gregory, Old Dominion University, is chairing my dissertation committee. Your input is extremely important, and I appreciate the time you are taking out of your busy schedule to participate.

Although there has been much student retention research over the past thirty years, non-residential, community colleges have only been examining retention for a short time. Because most community colleges are serving students of three or more generations simultaneously, it may be beneficial to recognize and examine the traits of each group, so educators may adapt to varying learning styles and value systems. A college's student body is a composite of a host of characters from differing backgrounds, experiences, races, and cultures, so that now more than ever, multiculturalism has come to include "multi-generationalism".

To address this issue, this study will interview the Chief Academic Officer and survey students at three community colleges in Georgia. An initial survey instrument was developed by the researcher by completing a review of the literature in both community college education and generational theory. As a subject-matter expert, you play an important role in determining the content validity of the proposed survey instrument.

To participate in the expert panel, please:
  7) Review the attached study purpose and research questions.
  8) Evaluate the attached proposed survey questions.
In order to ensure your input is considered, I would appreciate received your completed survey returned by Monday, June 4, 2012.

Again, thank you for your participation and contribution toward the success of this study. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at jfiss002@odu.edu or 706-738-1950.

Sincerely,

Jodi Fissel
Doctoral Candidate, Old Dominion University
Associate Professor of History

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERTS

Purpose

The following study will examine the educational objectives of three generational groups in Georgia community colleges (these groups include the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), to determine the attitudes of each generational group about these objectives, to determine what these objectives are, and to gain input from members of each generation about what and how they believe community colleges must change to enhance that learning environment in terms of meeting the learning objectives of each group. The researcher will use a sample of students from Georgia Community colleges to compare the following:

Research Questions

1. What are the education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
2. What are the higher education objectives of those students from the Baby Boomer generation, Generation X, and the Millennial generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
3. What are the differences between the education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
4. What are the differences between the higher education objectives of students in each generation who are currently attending Georgia Community Colleges?
5. What are the changes students from each generational group who are currently attending Georgia Community colleges believe are necessary to enhance their learning environment?

VITA

Jodi Noles Fissel
Old Dominion University
Darden College of Education, Room 210
Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling
Norfolk, VA 23529

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Community College Leadership, Old Dominion University, in progress.
M.A., History, University of South Carolina, 2002.
Postgraduate Diploma, Oxford Brookes University, 1998.
B.S., History, Ball State University, 1994.

EXPERIENCE

Georgia Military College, Augusta, GA:
- Associate Professor of History, 2002-present

Augusta State University, Augusta, GA:
- Adjunct Instructor, 2002-2007

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC:
- Graduate Teaching Assistant, 1999-2001

Augusta State University, Augusta, GA:
- University College Coordinator, 1998-2000

Indiana Academy for Math, Science, and Humanities, Muncie, IN:
- Admissions Associate, 1997-1998

PRESENTATIONS

Fissel, J. (2012, September). Moodle Moot. Georgia Military College Faculty
Convocation, Milledgeville, GA.

Fissel, J. (2007, April). Collective Responsibility. Holocaust Remembrance Conference,
Fort Gordon, GA.

SERVICE

Faculty Advisor, History Club, 2004-2011
Faculty Advisor, Phi Theta Kappa, 2006-2011