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NON-TRADITIONAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

by
Anis Nooshadi

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Services and Leadership
College of Education
In partial fulfillment of the requirement
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Thesis Chair: Andrew Tinnin, Ed.D.

Committee Members:
Tyrone McCombs, Ph.D.
Dianna Dale, Ph.D.

Dedications

I would like to dedicate my thesis to my lovely mother, Manizheh Yousefi who supported me throughout my studies. I also would like to dedicate my thesis to my husband, Afshin who helped me through my studies and supported me.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my professor, Dr. Drew Tinnin for all of his support and guidance during the capstone research project and Internship Seminar.

My gratitude also, to Dr. Tyrone McCombs, for his guidance through choosing the right path for my Master's. Without his help, I wouldn't complete the Master of Arts in Higher Education.

Abstract

Anis Nooshadi
NON-TRADITIONAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
2020-2021
Drew Tinnin, Ed.D.
Master of Arts in Higher Education

The purpose of this quantitative research was to discover some of the common challenges that non-traditional undergraduate students go through when they return to learning institutions to increase their education. This study focused on some mechanisms that, when put in place, will ensure that students will feel a part of the academic institutions in which they are attending. Another purpose of this study was to comprehend the challenges that non-traditional students go through when trying to balance their family and academic life. The research questions were asked to the participants who had been randomly sampled, and they were to help understand the lifestyle of the non-traditional students. Through this, one should understand the challenges that these students face and the best mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that these challenges are minimized.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

As they seek higher education, non-traditional students in society today continue to grow in the population, yet our understanding of the factors that motivate them to want to succeed has not increased. Different factors make non-traditional students want to go back to school, including the economic difficulties they face, changes in their job requirements, and their desire for both personal and professional development (Buglione, 2012). The lack of isolation from social networks is the main factor leading to a lack of adequate education for non-traditional students. Recent studies have shown that, relative to regular students, these students still have a better chance of passing classes. This occurs even though their presence in schools is filled with various challenges, such as limited offerings of courses, lack of socialization of students, and partial enrollment.

The dynamic demands of home and work faced by most of these students play a very important role in affecting them and making them not pass their exams with 11% of these students have been able to obtain a bachelor's degree (Buglione, 2012). Non-traditional students often face further obstacles, as the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data Structures typically do not account for them. Most of the institutions usually call them adult learners, and there is a use of different definitions which is usually predetermined by the different ages and characteristics that the students might show.

Like other students, non-traditional students require education, but they have been disconnected from higher education a lot. Some of the features that characterize them challenge these students, is related to socioeconomic consequences (Buglione, 2012). In most institutions across the country, where there has also been a high number of non-

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traditional students, these students have increased their enrollment. It will be important for students to ensure that they get the education they need, considering the high demand for an educated workforce, as this will help them meet the criteria necessary for them to get employed.

The increase in the number of institutions that offer adult education to students means that there is an increase in the number of people who are interested in taking part in these studies. These institutions have failed to put the right requirements, which means that the students are catered for during all times (Marshall, 2013). Instead, they have prioritized the education of the traditional students meaning that the non-traditional students are not given the education that they need to pass. Some of the institutions have not tried hard enough, and for the non-traditional students, they usually find it hard to get accustomed to the life and the education routine in these institutions. Coming up with a schedule that can be adoptable by everybody is a very important band (White, 2005). This will help in ensuring that everybody in society has the chance of getting a higher education.

Overview of the Problem

According to (Maxfield, 2006), non-traditional students face various problems and challenges in their day to day lives as they try to adapt to academic life. The students usually identify various problems ranging from academic regimens, the balancing of their academic life with their family, and the lack of supports from the university. The challenges that the students face is similar across the board, and they usually find it hard to be able to effectively adapt to the study habits students are supposed to (Marshall, 2013). The students usually add the academic routine to their busy calendar that they

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have from family responsibilities to other societal and expectations. Due to their age, most of the non-traditional students find it very hard to be able to mingle with the other students freely and feel that the university has neglected them at times (Shapiro, Dundar, Yuan, Harrell, & Wakhungu, 2014). It is because there are no effective orientation programs that are offered to the students as the institutions feel that they are adults. The lack of a good structure in most of the institutions makes it very hard for the students to be able to fit in and at the end of the day, this makes them not perform well in their exams.

This problem will continue to be a vexing issue for a long time to come if it is not taken care of, and this can only be done if it is determined early (Buglione, 2012). If the concerned parties can identify the problem and come up with policies that will ensure that the problem will not affect the future generation of non-traditional students, then the problem will be reduced. In the meantime, it is affecting students across the board, and as such, they do not get to graduate on time. Most of these undergraduate students have gone back to school so they can get a higher education and, get a better job (Buglione, 2012). If the problem is not solved, then the rate of unemployment in the society will continue to grow, and as this event happens, so will the increase of social vices. As such, the appropriate organizations should ensure that they do all they can to ensure that this problem has been remedied.

Statement of the Problem

Non-traditional students in the current educational system are usually overrepresented in the lower social, economic groups, and this is majorly attributed to the financial challenges which they face constantly. The social networks of non-traditional

students are also not good since they rarely go through the orientation programs offered by the school or the social courses. These types of students are attributed to working a lot and studying less while they not getting involved in extracurricular activities in school (Buglione, 2012). These students also do not participate in most of the school activities, such as been in fraternities or games.

The adult students are not like the traditional students due to the constant demands that they have from their families, work, studies, and various demands expected of them to accomplish on time. The students do not get to engage in college life in full, since they only attend class and outside the classroom, they have other things to take care of (Buglione, 2012). These sorts of things prevent non-traditional students from having a thread of college life, and they do not experience it to the fullest (American Council on Education, 2019). The classroom setup also has various challenges which make it hard for one to become fully part of the academic community. Compared to other programs, adult education is perceived as inferior in most institutions (Buglione, 2012). As such, the programs which are taught to these students are usually constructed depending on what the faculty members are comfortable to teach and not based on what is supposed to be taught.

Not only the definition of non-traditional students should be based on their age but also it could be defined by the characteristics of the students and the challenges they face every day. The learning institutions should be able to effectively note the personal factors and characteristics of the students who contribute to any challenges they might have so they can have academic success (Buglione, 2012). Another major problem with non-traditional students is that higher education cannot fully understand effectively to all

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the needs of non-traditional students. The learning institutions do not wholly understand the nature of their students, and they do not give the appropriate education that is required for them (Shapiro et al., 2014). The number of non-traditional students has been on the rise for a long time now, but institutions do not still understand the unique factors which make the success rate of this sort of education to increase on the same merit. The institutions should be able to understand this, then it will play a huge role in ensuring that better education is provided to the students.

Non-traditional students will remain to be disconnected from the higher level of education that they require. The lack of involvement of these students making them have poor social networks and makes it hard for them to have a good academic performance and this has been seen through the poor retention of students, the low graduation numbers, and degree attainment (White, 2005). The classroom which should be the haven for the students is still filled with various challenges, and this is due to the school faculty, not looking at the needs of the students as they consider their education to be inferior as compared to a college education. There is still a very high number of enrolments to school, and the numbers will continue increasing and, there should be a solution to the problem (White, 2005).

Significance of the Problem

The issue that non-traditional students have identified and faced has raised many higher education concerns, and it is receiving national attention. There have been discussions and talk about creating policies and practicing various initiatives at the institutional levels (Merriam, 2001). Through doing this, there will be better and more advanced models of the curriculum which can be taught to these students. There has been

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the introduction of service-learning and civic engagements that have high impact educational practices and have proven to have positive outcomes. Service-learning is becoming very engaging and has been prioritized by most institutions.

Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative research is to discover some of the common challenges that non-traditional undergraduate students go through when they go back to learning institutions to increase their education. A lot of research has been done, and it shows that non-traditional students feel that the generational gap they have between them and the traditional students, what brings about the discrimination they go through and the social alienation (Maxfield, 2006). This study is focused on some mechanisms that, when put in place, will ensure that to students that they will feel a part of the academic institutions they are in. Another purpose of this study is to comprehend the challenges that these students go through when trying to balance their family and academic life. Prioritization is essential, and, the students might find themselves taking their family life more seriously as compared to academics. This at the end of the day makes them fail.

The study will look to find the best mechanisms that can be put in place to allow these students to be able to balance between the two lifestyles with ease (Shapiro et al., 2014). The study will look to find the best support systems which can be put in place to ensure that non-traditional students feel they are wanted in the institutions. Support is very important, and the students usually want to fit in, and this usually helps in ensuring that they fit in the institutions with ease. By doing this, the attitude of these students will change, and they will be able to learn in the best way that they can without having a lot of pressure.

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Research Questions

The research questions that were given to the students who participated in the study ranged through various factors that were thought to have a direct affect on them. Some of the research questions that were asked to those who participated in the study included.

1. What support systems can non-traditional students identify at their institution?

2. How do non-traditional students describe the benefits and challenges of their educational experience?

These questions were asked to the participants who had been randomly sampled, and they were to help understand the lifestyle of the non-traditional students (Mahoney& Anderson, 1988). Through this, one would understand the challenges that these students face and the best mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that these challenges are minimized.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study assumed all respondents who participated in the study would answer to the best of their knowledge and be honest through answering the surveys. It is also expected that the sample consists of non-traditional student population who are currently enrolled at Rowan University. The population that will be selected is based on their enrollment type, characteristics, and age. Since the sampling is from one University, findings might not be applicable to other institutions.

Operational Definitions

1. Non-traditional: Undergraduate students that are 25 or above attending Rowan University.

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2. American Council on Education (ACE): A membership organization for accredited, degree-granting institutions in the United States.

3. Andragogy: The study of non-traditional students and theories in higher education.

4. Extracellular activities (ECA): It is an activity carried out by students that fall beyond the realm of the regular school, college, or university education curriculum. These types of students are attributed to working a lot and studying less while they not getting involved in extracurricular activities in school (Buglione, 2012).

5. Commuter non-traditional student: A student who do not live on campus at Rowan University.

Organization of Remaining Chapters of Study

Chapter II of this study consist of the literature review of non-traditional students based on (1) financial barriers, (2) time management, (3) identity development, (4) impact of motivation, (5) Support systems for non-traditional students, and, all related articles.

Chapter III explains the methodology used in this study. This section covers the research approach, research questions, participants, research design, data collection, data analysis, and research limitations.

Chapter IV presents the findings of the study and data to answer the research questions from surveys and interviews.

Chapter V is summarizing the result of the study and findings. Recommendations for future research also draw upon in this chapter.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In this chapter, literature defining non-traditional students, andragogy, and barriers/issues will be reviewed. Non-traditional andragogy affects these students, their characteristics, age, as well as their enrollment. Barriers/issues that non-traditional students are facing will be reviewed, as well as the support services available for them.

Definition of Non-Traditional Students

According to Bean and Metzner (1985), generally, a non-traditional student can be defined as post-secondary students or candidates who are 25 years old or older. There are several important differences found between traditional and non-traditional students in terms of characteristics. Non-traditional students have different campus supports, instructional supports, and other facilities as compared to traditional students. These types of differences are found among traditional and non-traditional students due to their specific needs which also resulted in having distinct barriers (Chen & Hossler, 2017).

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) defines a non-traditional student as a person who has one or more of the following characteristics: has a delayed enrollment in postsecondary education, is a single parent, is a financially independent parent, is a person who works full time, has dependents other than a spouse, or has not received a standard high school diploma (Buglione, 2012).

It is also observed that many non-traditional students are not attending university or college for career reasons, instead, they value personal enrichment. Along with this, it is also important to know that, in the present time, the population of non-traditional

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students is continuously increasing. Most of the students are parents, full-time employees, caregivers, and retirees (Gilardi & Guglielmetti, 2011).

Non-Traditional Learning Andragogy

Adult learning began to be a separate field of learning when back in the 1970s non-traditional students started to seek to advance in higher education prompted by social context, demographics, and technology. "Andragogy, Malcolm Knowles's theory of learning," became a rallying point for those trying to distinguish the field of adult education (Merriam, Caffarala, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Knowles based his theory on a set of six assumptions. He believed that these assumptions were essential to the design of educational programs for adults that distinguish adult learning from pre-adult learning. These six assumptions explain adults are self-directing, have a reservoir of experience as a resource, are prepared to learn based on their social role, need to immediately apply learned knowledge, are inherently motivated, and need a reason to learn new things. Merriam et al. (2007) defines "Andragogy as a set of assumptions about adult learners that can be used to reinforce the learning transaction by learners and educators alike," (p. 104).

Characteristics of Non-Traditional Students

According to Forbus, Newbold, & Mehta (2010), the size of this student population has been growing. The characteristics of these students are different, such as being over 25 years of age, working full time, and being supported by their families. Most non-traditional students attend part-time schools. The number of non-traditional undergraduate college students rose between 1996 and 2006 at a rate of 30% to 50% (Bye, Pushkar, & Conway, 2007).

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The National Center for Education (NSCES) in timeframe of 1986 to 1992 estimates that in 73% percent of all students, some features of non-traditional learners are present (Compton, Cox, & Laanan, 2006). However, most of the non-traditional students are more likely to work full time, it has been recommended that these students are not influenced by work, commuting, or time restrictions because they have more experience in time management (Lundberg, 2010). These students with more time management experience found themselves to be more effective during their time at college, experienced higher morale levels, and minor anxiety levels (Kearns & Gardiner, 2007).

These stressors are a possible explanation for why non-traditional students are more focused on task-oriented managing plans that focus on the issue. To improve the situation and reduce the amount of tension it creates; students participate in direct action. Task-oriented coping strategies include having a tutor, planning more time for research, or other ways to address the problem that causes stress. The possibility of multiple tasks increases the task-oriented strategy of promoting the emphasis on learning for its own sake rather than out of necessity (Forbus et al., 2010).

Non-Traditional Students Age

There was a study done in 2013 at Rowan University by a graduate student Constant Lisa Wilson entitled "The influence of familial responsibility, extra-curricular activity participation, and employment status on the undergraduate academic performance of traditional and non-traditional aged students". Wilson (2013), examined the non-traditional student population in the United States. If the average age of the U.S. population remains to grow, the average age of higher education enrollment for students will be on the rise too. The percentage of 18-24-year-old college graduates according to

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the Census Bureau has fallen to 36.7% of all college students (The Chronicle: 1999-2000 Almanac, as cited in Wilson, 2013). Also, college classes have changed and there are older and more diverse students. Wilson (2013), examined approximately 57% of all students enrolled in American colleges and universities can be considered non-traditional, 25 or older. Many non-traditional students are either married, working full-time, and have family and children to take care of their costs. Although the number of enrollments from traditional students is either static or declining due to the demographic changes and it sounds like bad news for institutions, but they benefited from the situation. The high number of non-traditional students weighs in and it has been a profit for tertiary institutions.

Barriers and Issues of Non-Traditional Students

Currently, several effective educational policies, strategies, and programs have been developed to support nontraditional students. Non-traditional students face numerous issues and difficulties during their time in school. Issues like financial difficulties due to limited financial support and options. They also might suffer from attitudinal barriers derived from negative perceptions of being a non-traditional student allegedly "adult-learner" which results in having poor self-esteem (Keith, 2007).

With the use of multiple regressions and the findings associated with non-traditional students' achievements, Keith (2007), studied four sets of variables in the analysis which were: early educational experience, multiple roles, institutional barriers, age, and learning skill pressure. Non-traditional students with characteristics more like their traditional-age peers made greater use of academic services. There are different types of barriers been discussed in this article and another article related to the topic such

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as study skill stress, age stress, institutional barriers, etc. (Keith, 2007). According to Gilardi and Guglielmetti (2011), the key barriers in the higher education of non-traditional students are lack of academic flexibility, persistence and completion, social isolation, and inter-role conflict.

Non-Traditional Students Support Service

Non-traditional students do not always feel welcomed or incorporated into the colleges and universities they attend, and all these can be fixed by the institution itself because they have the power to do it. Thus, to create a perfect and welcoming learning experience for non-traditional students, institutions ought to extend their services not only in the classroom per se but also beyond it (NASPA, 2014). A student association or affinity group, particularly for non-traditional students, could address the social isolation faced by many of the non-traditional students. For example, a dedicated on-campus space for non-traditional students in which they meet, socialize, and learn could resolve the sense of belonging needed by these students. The fact is, in one study, the majority of students suggested that they will be interested in a non-traditional student organization (NASPA, 2014).

Non-traditional students are mostly suffering from integral conflicts. These conflicts are curable by universities and in fact, it could be considered as an opportunity and should not be a source of conflict. For example, having affordable on-campus childcare could resolve some of the financial strains especially when it comes to families. Moreover, non-traditional students are more expected to spend time with their families and children. If the institutions set the campus environment in a more family/child-friendly way, for example by having a program inclusive to children and family, so that

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non-traditional students can be involved with their loved ones, it could meet the universities desire for the student to be engaged in campus activities (NASPA, 2014).

Non-Traditional Students Enrollment

Currently, most of the non-traditional students in the United States do not have good study patterns due to their prior detachment with higher education. There are several reasons for this, but it is mostly attributed to the social and economic difficulties that these students endure (Marshall, 2013). Low attainment level is another issue that hinders the non-traditional students from getting the quality of education they demand. It all derived from the day-to-day challenges that they encounter in the classroom which supposedly should play as a haven for these students Eventually, these challenges make the students either quit school or will leave them with poor grades (Schiller, 1999).

There will be a decline in personal income per capita in the United States if the educational gap remains the same and the situation does not improve (Kolb, 1984). Nowadays, companies and organizations invest in their customer's needs a lot which is a good practice, but it might end up leaving some minority groups such as non-traditional students behind, neglected, and discriminated against. It all makes it hard for them to get into the employment market and advance their careers (Marshall, 2013). But if the situation paves the way for these students and has them fulfil their educational goals and graduate, everything would flip and there will be openings for them in the job market. Non-traditional students are competent enough to meet the employers' needs as well as customers' demands, and this makes the perfect candidate for the workforce with no problem. All these are achievable by investigating non-traditional students' needs and requests, and by ensuring that there is an appropriate mechanism established in

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classrooms by educators which guarantees the engagement between non-traditional students and other students (Marshall, 2013).

Adult learners are more interested in learning the skills to prepare them for the job market and they are eager to see and understand the results. Their reason is that they have gone through many experiences in their lifetime and they can integrate those experiences into their education. Although they encounter various challenges in their adult life, they continue looking for education which they believe will eventually change their lifestyle (White, 2005).

More into characteristics of non-traditional students, it is realized that non-traditional students have different preferences in case of forms of learning. Studies have shown that many of them are not accustomed to going to classrooms, writing down notes, and listening to lectures. They find it challenging to sit in class and learn. It explains the dependency of non-traditional students and why it is different than that of traditional students who usually depend on other people to get their tasks done (White, 2005).

Chapter 3

Methodology

Context of the Study

The study was conducted at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. The Rowan University mission states that this University will become a new model for higher education to be *inclusive*, *agile*, and *responsive* presenting diverse and creative educational experiences (Rowan University Board of Trustees, 2020). Rowan University was founded in 1923 as Glassboro Normal School that was used to prepare teachers to teach in local districts school (Rowan History, n.d.). The University consists of 12 colleges and schools as of 2018, plus the Global Learning & Collaborations Branch, which oversees the graduate curriculum, online learning, and other innovative programming for education. The university has a cumulative enrollment of around 18,560 students (undergraduate, graduate, and advanced studies). Rowan provides 74 bachelor's degrees, 51 master's degrees, four doctoral degrees, two advanced degrees, 7 undergraduate degrees, and 38 post-bachelor certificates (Rowan History, n.d.).

Research Questions Based on Literature and Context

The research questions that were given to the students who participated in the study ranged through various factors that were thought to have a direct effect on them. Some of the research questions that were asked to those who participated in the study included.

1. What support systems can non-traditional students identify at their institution?
2. How do non-traditional students describe the benefits and challenges of their educational experience?

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These questions were asked to the participants who had been randomly sampled, and they were to help understand the lifestyle of the non-traditional students (Mahney & Anderson, 1988). Through this, one would understand the challenges that these students face and the best mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that these challenges are minimized.

Methodological Approach and Design

The type of research design used was a Quantitative Research Design (McMillan, 2016). The specific design used is Non-experimental Descriptive studies for survey research (McMillan, 2016, p. 202). The main research questions I want to address, as I described above are based on what/how that is appropriate to answer through quantitative research. Based on the research questions the current study will identify what support systems non-traditional undergraduate students have at Rowan University and how they describe the benefits and challenges of their academic experience.

Data Collection Strategy

The researcher conducted Non-experimental Descriptive studies for survey research (McMillan, 2016, p. 202). The survey is for students who are non-traditional undergraduate students. The survey was conducted in January and February of 2021. The survey instrument was sent to the non-traditional undergraduate student participants via an online link through their student email addresses at Rowan University. This will help keep the student's name confidential, the researcher did not have access to the names of all students, only the names of the participants who responded to the invitation. I hope to get about 300 students to participate. A pilot survey to evaluate the questions was completed with the Principal Investigator, Dr. Drew Tinnin in November 2020, to ensure

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that the survey was as clear as possible. The validity and effectiveness of the instrument focus on the non-traditional undergraduate students at Rowan University. Before surveying data collection, the researcher received IRB permission from Rowan University (McMillan, 2016). The researcher required the institution's permission for these surveys, the consent of its participants (see Appendix B), and the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Population and Sample Selection

The potential participants in these surveys consisted of entire non-traditional undergraduate students at Rowan University. The researcher conducted information from the Tableau Dashboard feature to extract demographic data, including email addresses, for the student population. The population was selected by simple random sampling. According to McMillan (2016), simple "means every member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected". The data consisted primarily of non-traditional students at the age of 25 and above. The selection did include all non-traditional students from an ethnic background, age, gender, geographic area of origin, and marital status. All the records used in this study were extracted from Rowan University Information Systems which is in Banner 2020.

Instrumentation

For the use of this study, a survey instrument was built (McMillan, 2016, p. 203). The survey instrument used in this study is Qualtrics software. Qualtrics is software that is designed to build an online survey, distribute and analyze responses (Qualtrics, 2020). Qualtrics is an official selected tool by Rowan University. Qualtrics currently supports over 11,000 businesses worldwide, including more than 75% of the Fortune 100 and 99

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of the top 100 business schools that use this software to capture, evaluate, and store survey data (Qualtrics, 2020). The results of this study offered a basis for future research in which the study's several designs are evaluated. As non-invasive demographic questions were posed to participants, the risks associated with engaging in this research were limited. It took approximately ten minutes for the survey instrument to complete. Participants were provided with an online survey consent form before taking the survey to ensure that participants knew what to expect. Finally, for participants in this research, there was no cost.

Data Gathering Procedures

The Institutional Review Board at Rowan University submitted and authorized the data before collecting it. The survey instrument was sent to the non-traditional student participants via an online link through their student email addresses at Rowan University. After approval from IRB, the data was collected in the Spring 2020 semester between January and February. The study participant voluntarily decided to take the survey via the link that has been provided to them. The outcome of the data was obtained by anonymous submission.

How Data Analysis is Performed

The data was validated by carrying out descriptive statistics of all variables. The data for frequency, mean, median, mode, spectrum, and variance will be evaluated using descriptive statistics (McMillan, 2016). In Qualtrics, the survey was created, and an anonymous email was sent out via the Qualtrics form method. The student email addresses were obtained from Rowan University's Global Learning & Collaboration and the Banner method of Rowan University's data extraction. The survey itself included

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directions, and a short letter of clarification, as well as thanks (Appendix A), included in the email.

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<center>Chapter 4</center>

<center>**Findings**</center>

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The study was conducted at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. The Rowan University mission states that this University will become a new model for higher education to be *inclusive*, *agile*, and *responsive* presenting diverse and creative educational experiences (Rowan University Board of Trustees, 2020). Rowan University was founded in 1923 as Glassboro Normal School that was used to prepare teachers to teach in local districts school (Rowan History, n.d.). The University consists of 12 colleges and schools as of 2018, plus the Global Learning & Collaborations Branch, which oversees the graduate curriculum, online learning, and another innovative programming for education. The university has a cumulative enrollment of around 18,560 students (undergraduate, graduate, and advanced studies). Rowan provides 74 bachelor's degrees, 51 master's degrees, four doctoral degrees, two advanced degrees, 7 undergraduate degrees, and 38 post-bachelor certificates (Rowan History, n.d.).

Population and Sample Selection

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<center>21</center>

traditional students from an ethnic background, age, gender, geographic area of origin, and marital status. All the records that are going to be used in this study were extracted from Rowan University Student Information System which is Ellucian Banner.

The population for the survey portion of the study was for all non-traditional undergraduate students older than 25 years old as of the Spring 2021 semester. The student email addresses were gathered from Dr. Drew Tinnin, Associate Vice President, Student life at Rowan University. The survey was sent to 744 student's email addresses on February 08, 2021. A total of three reminders have been sent to the students from February 08 to March 1, 2021. Out of 744 surveys sent, the response goal was a total of 200 students which 114 surveys have been completed, which makes a 57% response rate, lower than what I hoped for to get the result.

The survey of non-traditional undergraduate students was representative of the national population of non-traditional undergraduate students. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show similar trends for age, race/ethnicity, and gender.

Figure 1

Age Percentage of the Sample
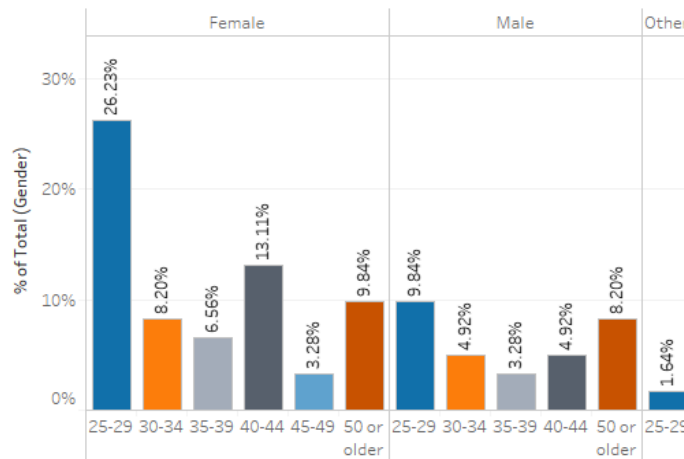
Figure 2

Race and Ethnicity Percentage of the Sample
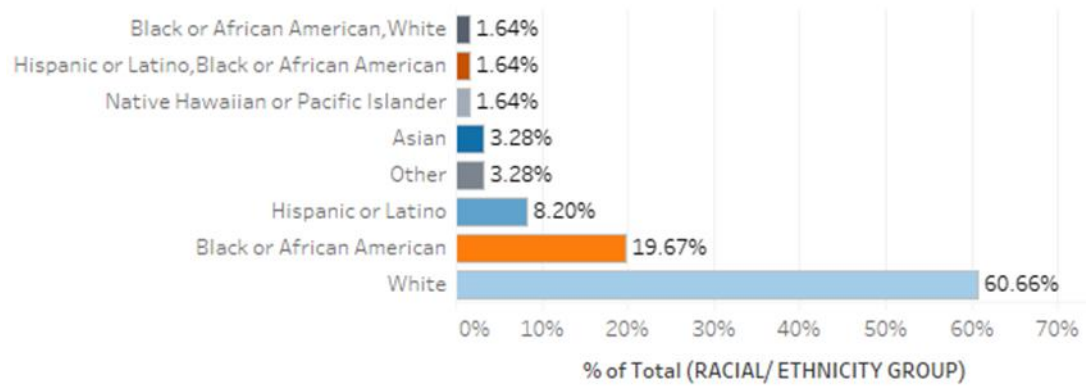
Figure 3

Gender Percentage of the Sample
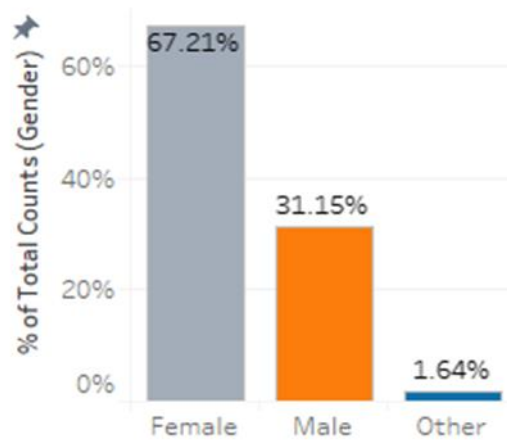
Figure 1, proposes that the largest age unit for the samples was between 25-29 years old, at 26.23%. non-traditional students were perceived to be people who were considerably older than traditional students, as well as possessing other non-traditional traits such as being married and having children. According to total trends, many non-

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traditional students have one or more non-traditional characteristics, such as family

responsibilities, full-time jobs, and part-time college attendance. Figure 3 shows that

49.18% of the samples are single and Figure 5 that 57.38% have no children.

Figure 4

Marital Status Percentage of the Sample
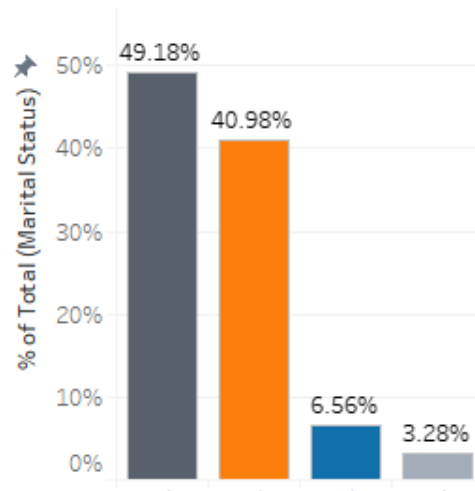
Figure 5

Dependent Children Percentage of the Sample
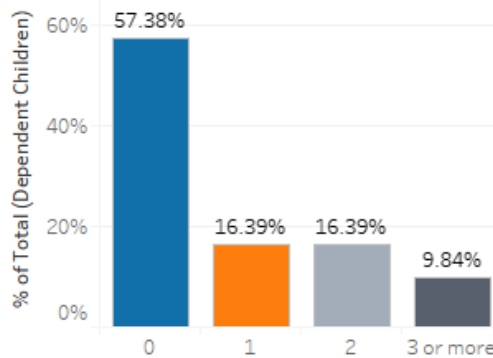
Figure 6 suggests that more non-traditional students attend university full-time

than part-time which shows (67.21% vs 32.79%). These statistics do not correspond with

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the national trends. Figure 7 does show that non-traditional students work full time (49.18%), part-time (22.95%), or not working (27.87%), in comparison to their college studies, which is consistent with both the perceptions and trends.

Figure 6

Enrollment Status Percentage of the Sample
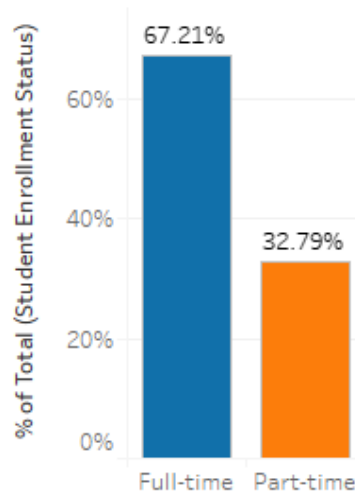
Figure 7

Employment Status Percentage of the Sample
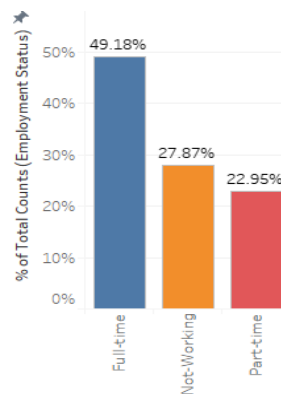
The population for the survey was from Rowan University Global Learning and Partnerships. The researcher limited the study to individuals in three fields that the sample surveys described as important: student service, orientation, and academic advising.

Analysis of the Data

Non-Traditional Enrollment Preferences

Appendix C, Tables 1 to 5 consist of the findings of survey questions administered to the non-traditional undergraduate students at Rowan University. In chapter II, I explained the theory on the reasons why non-traditional students decided to attend college like a transition from divorce, value personal enrichment, and losing a job. The barriers they are facing, like being over 25, working full-time, have dependent other than a spouse (Buglione, 2012).

Table 1 demonstrates the result of a question asking non-traditional students to rank their reason for continuing their education. Students rank to earn a higher degree first (61.16%), to learn self-improvement second (52.89%), and to improve their income third (51.24%). Table 2 suggests that the student's funding source for their education comes from personal/family income (57.89%), student loans (43.86%), and educational grants (31.58%). VA benefits only show (14.04%), and scholarships only (8.77%). Table 3 suggests that 45.6% of non-traditional surveyed attend online only and that would be because of the COVID-19 restrictions that happened during the past year and most classes convert to online, and only 40.4% attend classes on Rowan Main Campus (Glassboro). Table 4 suggests that 50.9% prefer online classes and 26.3% prefer morning classes first as their type of classes, while 10.05% prefer evening classes as second, and

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only 8.8% prefer afternoon classes third. The students ranked traditional lecture class format first by 40% online and 28% small groups and blended format second 26% (see table 5).

Non-Traditional Student Satisfaction

Appendix C, Tables 6 to 10 comprehend the remainder of the result of the student survey administered to the Rowan University non-traditional students. Tables 6 to 10 display the result of Likert-style matrix questions, evaluating the student's satisfaction with Rowan University's non-traditional services and programming.

Table 6 suggests that non-traditional students are generally satisfied to very satisfied with the service provided by the Administration Department. The students were more satisfied when it came to application status awareness during the admission process (61.2%), and admission questions were answered in a timely fashion (54.5%), admission counselor being readily available and knowledgeable of my needs (52.9%), the advisor was available to help during orientation questions (43.0%), and the admission office showed genuine interest in non-traditional success as a student. However, the students were overall satisfied with the admission and orientation program.

Table 7 shows students who used financial aid are generally more satisfied with Financial Aid and Scholarship than dissatisfied. The calculated average of not answered questions in the financial aid section shows that approximately a quarter of students did not use financial aid or in a less likely situation, they were not willing to participate in this matter. They are more satisfied with being confident that the financial aid office can answer their questions (36.4%) and currently having financial aid or scholarships to meet their need (33.1%). However, they were more dissatisfied with being aware of

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scholarships available for non-traditional students (19.8%). More students answered N/A for financial office is helpful and knowledgeable of all the programs and services available to students (36.4%).

Table 8 suggests that students are consistently more satisfied than dissatisfied with Registration and Academic Programs. They are more satisfied with being able to get courses needed for their major (56.2%) and being able to get relevant courses related to their personal development (54.5%), and courses are easy to register for (51.2%). The least satisfied were being able to get courses that fit into their schedules (14.9%) and being able to understand course catalogs (11.6%).

Table 9 shows that students are more satisfied than dissatisfied with Academic Advising and Graduation. The students reported being more satisfied with career exploration services in the Office of Career Advancement helpful (62.81%) and their academic advisor keeping them on track for graduation (51.24%). They are also satisfied with being aware of career and job services (52.07%). The least satisfied are the university officials did a good job explaining the process of applying for and participating in graduation (33.06%); this makes sense because, in most cases, only juniors and seniors are actively involved in the graduation process.

Table 10 demonstrates the student's services are available to non-traditional students. The most satisfying response is campus feels safe at the times of their classes (61.98%) and it is easy to get around campus (57.85%). Higher ratio of dissatisfaction to satisfaction was Rowan Employees being aware of the special needs of non-traditional students (16.53% vs 24.79%); parking is available during the time of my classes (15.7%

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vs 16.53%), and I feel in touch with the Rowan University community (21.49% vs

17.36).

Chapter 5

Summary, Procedure, Findings, and Conclusion

Summary of the Research

Non-traditional students in society today continue to grow in the population, yet our understanding of the factors that motivate them to want to succeed has not increased. Different factors make non-traditional students want to go back to school, including the economic difficulties they face, changes in their job requirements, and their desire for both personal and professional development (Buglione, 2012).

The aim of this quantitative study was to learn about some of the common obstacles that non-traditional undergraduate students face when returning to school to further their education. A lot of research has been done, and it shows that non-traditional students believe the generational difference between them and traditional students, is what causes the inequality and social isolation they experience (Maxfield, 2006). This research aimed to come up with some frameworks that, once implemented, will ensure that students feel a sense of belonging to their academic institution.

Procedures and Methodology

A survey has been created using the Qualtrics survey tool and conducted electronically to the 744 non-traditional students recognized via the Ellucian Banner system. Out of 744 surveys sent, the response goal was a total of 200 students which 121 surveys have been completed. The survey absorbed demographic information from the students, made them rate the reason for continuing their education, assessed their satisfaction with academic advising, orientation, and service provided at the university.

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Findings

- The student sample (which contained the non-traditional undergraduate student population) indicated the largest age section was 25-29 years old (26.23%), single (29.51%), with no children, (57.38%), attending college full-time (67.21%). These statistics do not correspond with the national trends or of what establishes a non-traditional student. In the survey over 70% of the students reported they are at least working part-time, so this measurement consistent with both national and survey ideals.

- Overall, the non-traditional students were more satisfied than unsatisfied with the service given to them. Some areas of dissatisfaction were with available financial aid packages (14.9%); being aware of scholarships for non-traditional students (19.8%).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Rowan University will begin to extend its recruitment efforts to adult undergraduate students, even though existing enrollment policies appear to concentrate on traditional undergraduate students. National statistics and the results suggest that Rowan University will begin to expand its enrollment efforts to non-traditional undergraduate students.

According to the demographic data gathered for the adult student population at Rowan University and the surveyed population of the non-traditional students, the majority of non-traditional students are between the ages of 25-29 and do not have children. Nearly 50% of the students work full-time. Since the majority of non-traditional do not have children, does not seem to be a service that is most desired at this moment.

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Financial aid and scholarship packages, as well as an orientation program that focused on non-traditional needs rather than underage drinking, were among the non-traditional student's needs. Rather than drawing conclusions based on external values, I suggest that university personnel and administrators study the ethnic composition of their student body. They can adapt their programs as potential admissions change the demographics, but I think they can start improving support services and programming for the non-traditional students who are already enrolled.

The research in Chapter II explained some good insight into support services that non-traditional could have from their institution. To create an effective and welcoming learning experience for non-traditional students, institutions ought to extend their services not only in the classroom per se but also beyond it (NASPA, 2014). A student association or affinity group, particularly for non-traditional students, could try to address the social isolation faced by many of the non-traditional students. For example, a dedicated on-campus space for non-traditional students in which they meet, socialize, and learn could resolve the sense of belonging needed by these students. As a result of several responses, the majority of students suggested that they will be interested in a non-traditional student organization (NASPA, 2014). Other services that the university can provide are in terms of, orientation, financial aids, and advising because these areas were the dissatisfactions area from the data results that could resolve from the institution. The university could also improve the admissions, orientation, and advice processes for these programs, resulting in a smoother transition. Aside from these efforts, the university may want to explore following in the footsteps of for-profit institutions by creating accelerated

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programs, credit for prior work experience, and individualized research plans (Ross-Garden, 2011).

The university will benefit from a non-traditional student program or division, because these students are more likely to have other non-traditional characteristics, such as being a commuter or transfer students, it appears that if they do not have these other qualities, they may be overlooked. Having a program tailored specifically for these students can help to centralize services, while also making the students feel more appreciated and a part of the University. The researcher suggests that Rowan University build a dynamic, advanced program with the same strategic emphasis and agility that is used to convert into a nationally ranked research institution. Rowan has the chance to get ahead of the national trend and create an opportunity for this rapidly expanding, underserved population in the area.

Through further research, Rowan University may provide insight into how they can provide enough support systems for non-traditional students. Furthermore, examining the benefits of having a Non-Traditional Student community for these students may provide inside knowledge of their needs and support systems, allowing them to have a more enjoyable college experience. Higher education institutions must adjust to changing demographics on college campuses to meet non-traditional needs. Non-traditional students vary in a variety of ways, including how they approach college, how they learn, what their personal lives require, and their overall college experience.

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Recruitment Email

Non-traditional Undergraduate Students

Dear Students,
Be part of an important quantitative research study!

Are you interested in participating in a research study about Non-traditional Undergraduate Students?

Since you are a Non-traditional Undergraduate Student at Rowan University, we hope you can participate in this study. The purpose of this quantitative research is to determine some of the common challenges that non-traditional students go through when they go back to learning institutions to increase their education.

I am looking for volunteers to participate in this survey. The survey will be approximately 15 minutes and include an online survey. The study will be conducted at Rowan University via an online survey. Students can take the survey between January 15th and February 20th.

Click here to participate!

Please email me at noosha45@students.rowan.edu to ask any questions.

This study has been approved by Rowan University's IRB, (PRO-2020-110)

Anis Nooshadi
Higher Education Intern
Academic Success Center/Disability Resources

Dr. Drew Tinnin
Principal Investigator
tinnin@rowan.edu
(856) 256-4909

Consent Form and Survey

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ONLINE SURVEY

Dear Rowan University Students,

You are invited to participate in this online research survey entitled (Non-Traditional Undergraduate Students). You are included in this survey because your experience has qualified you for this study. Non-traditional Undergraduate students are invited to participate in this study. The number of subjects to be enrolled in the study will be estimated at 300 students.

The survey may take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this survey, do not respond to this online survey. Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey.

This study is being conducted to fulfill the thesis requirement for my program MA in Higher Education. This study is going to look at the Non-traditional Undergraduate Student and their experience at Rowan University. The study will be conducted by Anis Nooshadi, a master's student in Higher Education Administration at Rowan University as part of this thesis research.

There are no risks or discomforts associated with this survey. There may be no direct benefit to you, however, by participating in this study, you may help us understand to discover some of the common challenges that non-traditional undergraduate students go through when they go back to learning institutions to increase their education.

Your response will be kept confidential. We will store the data in a secure computer file and the file will be destroyed once the data has been published. Any part of the research that is published as part of this study will not include your individual information. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact the Principal Investigator at the address provided below, but you do not have to give your identification.

Dr. Drew Tinnin
Department of Educational Services and Leadership
856-256-4909

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at (856) 256-4078– Glassboro/CMSRU.

This study has been approved by the Rowan IRB, (PRO-2020-110)
Please complete the checkbox below.

To participate in this survey, you must be 18 years or older and a non-traditional undergraduate student. Place a check box here   ☐

Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey   ☐

Table B1

Background Information

1. CURRENT AGE
o 25 or under [if CURRENT AGE under 25 = Skip the survey]
o 25-29
o 30-34
o 35-49
o 50-54
o 55-5
o 55 or older

2- GENDER
o Male
o Female
o Transgender
o Other
o Prefer not to answer

3- RACIAL/ ETHNICITY GROUP
o American Indian/ Alaska Native
o Hispanic or Latino
o Asian
o Black or African American
o Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
o White
o Other

4- MARITAL STATUS
o Married
o Divorced
o Widowed
o Single
o Separated

5- NUMBER OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN
o 0
o 1
o 2
o 3 or more

6- CURRENT FAMILY INCOME
o $0
o $1 to $9 999
o $10,000 to $24,999
o $25,000 to $49,999
o $50,000 to $74,999
o $75,000 to $99,999
o $100,000 to $149,999
o $150,000 and greater
o Prefer not to answer

7- STUDENT ENROLLMENT STATUS

- o Full-time
- o Part-time

8- EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- o Full-time
- o Part-time
- o Not-Working

9- REASON FOR CONTINUING YOUR EDUCATION

- o To earn a higher degree
- o Self-improvement
- o For personal satisfaction/fulfillment
- o To earn more income
- o To learn or improve my occupational skills

10- FUNDING SOURCE FOR YOUR EDUCATION

- o Personal/Family Income
- o Persona/Family Savings
- o Veteran's Benefits
- o Social Security Benefits
- o Educational Grants (Pell, private grants, etc.)
- o Student Loans
- o Scholarship (Federal, private, college, etc.)
- o Student Loans (Perkins, Stafford, etc.)
- o Other Loans
- o Reimbursed by Employer

12- WHAT TYPE OF CLASS DO YOU PREFER?

- o Morning classes
- o Afternoon classes
- o Evening classes
- o Weekend classes
- o Online or self-paced classes
- o No preference
- o Other

13- WHICH TYPE OF STUDENT CLASS DO YOU PREFER?

- o Mostly traditional Aged Students (Under 25)
- o Mostly nontraditional Aged Students (Over 25)
- o A mix of traditional and nontraditional students
- o No-preference

14- WHERE DO YOU PREFER TO ATTEND CLASSES?

- o Rowan Main Campus
- o Rowan Camden Campus
- o Rowan Gloucester County
- o Rowan College Burlington County
- o Online only
- o Other

15- WHICH TYPE OF CLASS FORMAT DO YOU PREFER?

o Traditional lecture
o Small groups
o Independent study
o Self-paced
o Online
o Blended (Mix of traditional and online classes)

For each item identified below, select the number that best fits with your judgment of the

level of satisfaction.

Table B2

Description/Identification Survey

Description/Identification of Survey item	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A
Admissions/orientation 1. My admissions questions were answered in a timely fashion.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I felt the orientation program specifically addressed my concerns as an adult student	5	4	3	2	1
3. Advisors were available to help with my questions during orientation.	5	4	3	2	1
4. My admissions acceptance package contained the appropriate materials and instructions for financial aid, registration, and other student services.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Admissions counselors were readily available and knowledgeable of my needs	5	4	3	2	1
6. I was aware of the status of my application during the admission process	5	4	3	2	1
7. The admissions office showed genuine interest in my success as a student.	5	4	3	2	1
Registration and Academics 8. It is easy to register for courses.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I am able to get the courses needed for my major.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I am able to get courses that fit into my schedule.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I am able to get courses that are relevant to my personal development.	5	4	3	2	1
12. Rowan offers majors that are relevant to adult students in the community.	5	4	3	2	1
13. Course catalogs are readily available.	5	4	3	2	1

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Description/Identification of Survey item	*Very Satisfied*	*Somewhat Satisfied*	*Somewhat Dissatisfied*	*Very Dissatisfied*	*N/A*
14. Course catalogs are easy to understand.	5	4	3	2	1
15. Course descriptions are readily available.	5	4	3	2	1
16. Course descriptions are easy to understand	5	4	3	2	1
<u>Financial Aid and Scholarships</u> 17. I am aware of financial aid packages available to adult students.	5	4	3	2	1
18. I am aware of scholarships available to adult students.	5	4	3	2	1
19. The Financial Aid office is helpful and knowledgeable of all the programs and services available to Rowan University students.	5	4	3	2	1
20. I am confident that the Financial Aid office can answer my questions.	5	4	3	2	1
21. I currently have adequate financial aid and/or scholarships to meet my needs.	5	4	3	2	1
<u>Academic Advising/Graduation</u> 22. My academic advisor has been helpful in meeting my education goals.	5	4	3	2	1
23. The Office of Career Advancement has been helpful in planning my career goals.	5	4	3	2	1
24. I found the career exploration services in the Office of Career Advancement helpful.	5	4	3	2	1
25. My academic advisor has helped me stay on track for graduation.	5	4	3	2	1
26. My academic advisor understands my needs as an adult student.	5	4	3	2	1
27. I am aware of career and job services.	5	4	3	2	1
28. I have utilized the job interview preparation services of the Office of Career Advancement.	5	4	3	2	1

Description/Identification of Survey item	*Very Satisfied*	*Somewhat Satisfied*	*Somewhat Dissatisfied*	*Very Dissatisfied*	*N/A*
29. I feel that university officials did a good job explaining the process of applying for and participating in graduation.	5	4	3	2	1
<u>Student Services</u> 30. Student-related services offices are easy to contact and have convenient hours.	5	4	3	2	1
31. Employees in student services are aware of the special needs of adult students.	5	4	3	2	1
32. I feel well informed of what the Rowan University student services offices have to offer me.	5	4	3	2	1
33. I know where to go when I have a specific student-related question.	5	4	3	2	1
34. I feel the university tries to meet the needs of adult students.	5	4	3	2	1
35. I feel like the university makes me feel at home as an adult student.	5	4	3	2	1
36. I feel welcome in courses with primarily traditional-aged students.	5	4	3	2	1
37. The university has specific programs and services for adult students.	5	4	3	2	1
38. It is easy to get around campus.	5	4	3	2	1
39. I can get parking at the times of my classes.	5	4	3	2	1
40.The campus feels safe at the times of my classes.	5	4	3	2	1
41. Securing transportation to and from campus is easy (carpooling, mass transit, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1
42. I utilize the library facilities.	5	4	3	2	1
43. I am aware of receiving credit from non-traditional sources (life experience, CLEP, job experience).	5	4	3	2	1

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Description/Identification of Survey item	*Very Satisfied*	*Somewhat Satisfied*	*Somewhat Dissatisfied*	*Very Dissatisfied*	*N/A*
44. I am able to manage and better understand my life as a result of my education.	5	4	3	2	1
45. Rowan adequately serves the adult student population.	5	4	3	2	1
46. Rowan offers courses and degree programs convenient to adult students.	5	4	3	2	1
47. Rowan offers adequate student services and activities.	5	4	3	2	1
48. I feel in touch with the Rowan University community.	5	4	3	2	1
49.I know where to go for all my questions about Rowan.	5	4	3	2	1
50. I feel like Rowan University cares about my student success.	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix C

Findings

Table C1

Reason for Continuing Your Education

Options	f	%
To earn a higher degree	74	61.16
Self-improvement	64	52.89%
For personal satisfaction/fulfillment	58	47.93
To earn more income	62	51.24
To learn or improve my occupational skills	56	46.28
Total	121	100.0

Table C2

Funding Source for Your Education

Options	f	%
Personal/Family Income	66	57.89
Personal/Family Savings	16	14.04
Veteran's Benefits	16	14.04
Educational Grants (Pell, private grants, etc.)	36	31.58
Student Loans	50	43.86
Scholarship (Federal, private, college, etc.)	10	8.77
Other Loans	4	3.51
Reimbursed by Employer	18	15.79
Total	121	100.0

Table *C*3

Where Do You Prefer to Attend Classes?

Options	*f*	*%*
Online only	52	45.6
Other	8	7.0
Rowan College Burlington County	8	7.0
Rowan Main Campus (Glassboro)	46	40.4
Total	121	100.0

Table C4

What Type of Class Do You Prefer?

Options	*f*	*%*
Afternoon classes	10	8.8
Evening classes	12	10.5
Morning classes	30	26.3
No preference	4	3.5
Online or self-paced classes	58	50.9
Total	121	100.0

Table C5

Which Type of Class Format Do You Prefer?

Options	*f*	*%*
Blended (Mix of traditional and online classes)	26	22.8
Independent study	10	8.8
Online	40	35.1
Other	2	1.8
Self-paced	8	7.0
Small groups	28	24.6
Total	121	100.0

Table *C*6

Admission/Orientation

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*⅟₀*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
My admissions questions were answered in a timely fashion.	66	54.5	36	29.8	6	5	6	0	0	10.7
I felt the orientation program specifically addressed my concerns as an adult student	38	31.4	26	21.5	12	9.9	8	6.6	30	24.8
Advisors were available to help with my questions during orientation.	52	43	18	14.9	8	6.6	4	3.3	32	26.4
My admissions acceptance package contained the appropriate materials and instructions for financial aid, registration, and other student services.	54	44.6	26	21.5	8	6.6	6	5	20	22.3
Admissions counselors were readily available and knowledgeable of my needs	64	52.9	20	16.5	14	11.6	0	0	16	19

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	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
I was aware of the status of my application during the admission process	74	61.2	24	19.8	6	5	0	0	10	8.3
The admissions office showed genuine interest in my success as a student.	54	44.6	30	24.8	6	5	2	1.7	20	16.5

Table C7

Financial Aid/ Scholarships

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
I am aware of financial aid packages available to adult students.	28	23.1	32	26.4	10	8.3	18	14.9	26	21.5
I am aware of scholarships available to adult students.	20	16.5	24	19.8	22	18.2	24	19.8	24	19.8

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A

	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
The Financial Aid office is helpful and knowledgeable of all the programs and services available to Rowan University students.	*34*	*28.1*	*20*	*16.5*	*10*	*8.3*	*6*	*5*	*44*	*36.4*
I am confident that the Financial Aid office can answer my questions.	*44*	*36.4*	*20*	*16.5*	*14*	*11.6*	*12*	*9.9*	*36*	*29.8*
I currently have adequate financial aid and/or scholarships to meet my needs.	*40*	*33.1*	*22*	*18.2*	*14*	*11.6*	*12*	*9.9*	*26*	*21.5*

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Table C8

Registration / Academics

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
It is easy to register for courses.	62	51.2	28	23.1	12	9.9	12	9.9	0	0
I am able to get the courses needed for my major.	68	56.2	32	26.4	4	3.3	10	8.3	0	0
I am able to get courses that fit into my schedule.	50	41.3	38	31.4	18	14.9	8	6.6	0	0
I am able to get courses that are relevant to my personal development.	66	54.5	30	24.8	8	6.6	2	1.7	8	6.6
Rowan offers majors that are relevant to adult students in the community.	58	47.9	36	29.8	6	5	0	0	14	11.6
Course catalogs are readily available.	62	51.2	32	26.4	10	8.3	6	5	4	3.3
Course catalogs are easy to understand.	52	43	42	34.7	14	11.6	4	3.3	2	1.7
Course descriptions are readily available.	60	49.6	38	31.4	10	8.3	4	3.3	0	0
Course descriptions are easy to understand	58	46.3	38	31.4	12	9.9	6	5	0	0

Table C9

Academic Advising / Graduation

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
My academic advisor has been helpful in meeting my education goals.	53	43.8	44	36.36	6	11.57	6	4.96	4	3.31
The Office of Career Advancement has been helpful in planning my career goals.	56	46.28	20	16.53	9	7.44	3	2.48	33	27.27
I found the career exploration services in the Office of Career Advancement helpful.	76	62.81	27	22.31	5	4.13	5	4.13	8	6.61
My academic advisor has helped me stay on track for graduation	62	51.24	40	33.06	11	9.09	6	4.96	2	1.65
My academic advisor understands my needs as an adult student.	57	47.11	39	32.23	13	10.74	7	5.79	5	4.13
I am aware of career and job services.	63	52.07	40	33.06	12	9.92	5	4.13	1	0.83

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I have utilized the job interview preparation services of the Office of Career Advancement.	51	42.15	23	19.01	10	8.26	6	4.96	31	25.62
I feel that university officials did a good job explaining the process of applying for and participating in graduation.	40	33.06	24	19.83	16	13.22	14	11.57	27	22.31

Table C10

Student Services

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Student-related services offices are easy to contact and have convenient hours.	63	52.07	35	28.93	7	5.79	13	10.74	3	2.48
Employees in student services are aware of the special needs of adult students.	31	25.62	30	24.79	12	9.92	20	16.53	28	23.14
I feel well informed of what the Rowan University student services offices have to offer me.	60	45.59	40	33.06	9	7.44	5	4.13	7	5.79
I know where to go when I have a specific student-related question.	58	47.93	40	33.06	15	12.04	8	6.61	0	0

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	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I feel the university tries to meet the needs of adult students.	58	47.93	37	30.58	17	14.05	6	4.96	3	2.48
I feel like the university makes me feel at home as an adult student.	50	41.32	20	16.53	31	25.62	14	11.57	6	4.96
I feel welcome in courses with primarily traditional-aged students.	66	54.55	37	30.58	10	8.26	0	0	8	6.61
The university has specific programs and services for adult students.	57	47.11	24	19.83	16	13.22	15	12.4	9	7.44
It is easy to get around campus.	70	57.85	35	28.1	9	7.44	3	2.48	5	4.13

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	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I can get parking at the times of my classes.	50	41.32	20	16.53	29	23.97	19	15.7	3	2.48
The campus feels safe at the times of my classes.	75	61.98	30	24.79	13	10.74	3	2.48	0	0
Securing transportation to and from campus is easy (carpooling, mass transit, etc.).	41	33.88	22	18.18	36	29.75	15	12.4	7	5.79
I utilize the library facilities.	68	56.2	35	28.93	8	6.61	10	8.26	0	0
I am aware of receiving the credit from non-traditional sources (life experience, CLEP, job experience).	48	39.67	25	20.66	19	15.7	9	7.44	20	16.53

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	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I am able to manage and better understand my life as a result of my education.	68	56.2	30	24.79	5	4.13	18	14.88	0	0
Rowan adequately serves the adult student population.	42	34.71	20	16.53	27	22.31	12	9.92	20	16.53
Rowan offers courses and degree programs convenient to adult students.	62	51.24	28	23.14	7	5.79	4	3.31	20	16.53
Rowan offers adequate student services and activities.	66	54.55	36	29.75	11	9.09	4	3.31	4	3.31
I feel in touch with the Rowan University community.	25	20.66	21	17.36	24	19.83	26	21.49	25	20.66

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		N/A	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I know where to go for all my questions about Rowan.	38	31.4	22	18.18	12	9.92	8	6.61	41	33.88
I feel like Rowan University cares about my student success.	42	34.71	25	20.66	15	12.4	14	11.57	25	20.66