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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Work Policy and its Influence on College Students' Academic Success

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MPhil, Walden University, 2020

MPA, Keller Graduate School of Management, 2013

BS & BA, California State University East Bay, 2000 & 2008

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a public food supplement assistance program offered by the U.S. federal government. Undergraduate students who apply for the program must work at least 20 hours per week while concurrently enrolled in six academic units or more. However, students who work more find less time to commit to their college studies, resulting in a negative impact on their academic performance. This phenomenography study's purpose is to understand from an academic advisor's perspective how SNAP's work policy affects academics among first-generation undergraduate students. Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Goldratt's theory of constraints were the conceptual frameworks utilized in the study. Data collected consisted of in-depth interviews with 16 qualified academic advisors from across 12 community colleges and universities who hold a bachelor's degree or higher and have at least 2 years of experience. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's seven-step process and the inductive coding process. Significant findings were that academic advisors validated their students' challenges and thought the SNAP work policy of 20 hours per week was excessive. The study revealed that no one-size-fits-all approach for students is applicable; few advisors agreed on the implementation and design of the work policy where the average indicates a cap not to exceed 20 hours. Also evident was the number of circumstances not considered when reviewing the SNAP work exemptions. Continued retention of college students and improved government policy that reduces the number of hours required to qualify for SNAP benefits were identified as positive social change measures and could positively impact students' academic success going forward.

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Dedication

This is dedicated to my mother, Annie Mae Ward, my husband Daymon, and my children Avianna and Daymon Jr. Thank you for your support, your patience, and encouragement; it meant the world to me while going through this dissertation journey. I love you all.

Acknowledgments

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

A student may find it difficult to work part-time while enrolled as a full-time college student. It may become more challenging if the student is transitioning from high school to college and is a first-generation student. Some of these students may come from less fortunate economic backgrounds. Low-income students may have to work while attending school to survive and support their families. Although the government offers a program to help families, sometimes the students' policies result in unintended negative consequences. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) may assist these families, but the work policy requirement for students to qualify may also hinder them. For full-time students to be eligible for SNAP benefits, the work policy states they must work at least 20 hours a week to meet program qualifications. Students depend on programs such as these to survive, and the social impact this could make on their future could be positive if the focus were more on academic success and less on employment. Interviewing academic advisors on the balance of work and school and how policies can affect academics has provided insight into what the government can do to adjust the policy and help lift the burden for some of these first- and second-year students transitioning from high school. Adjusting to the first and second year can be challenging, and some may not make it back to attend for the second or third year. Here is where positive social change can make a difference and can benefit this population of students.

Background of the Study

Across the United States, colleges and governments provide statistics and common research problems among first and second-year students; a common pattern involves the challenge of employment interfering with academics. Although exemptions are present in the SNAP program, some students do not qualify (i.e., over age 49, with child, and disabled). As an overview, the literature provides studies with interviews and surveys conducted by students that did not examine an academic advisor's perspective on how students should manage working while attending college, specifically around the work policy for SNAP benefits. The qualitative research question for this study engaged conversation around the policy through a phenomenography approach. Because the focus includes first- and second-year students, academic advisors at community colleges are qualified participants who work with these students. Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Goldratt's theory of constraints (TOC) are conceptual frameworks applied in this study. The TOC provides five steps of focus that consist of (a) identifying the constraint, (b) exploiting the constraint, (c) subordinating the process, (d) elevating the constraint, and (e) continuing to repeat the cycle within a policy constraint. Focus is a behavior, measurement, rule, or policy inhibiting a company from performance improvement (Synchronix Technologies, n.d.). Maslow's hierarchy of needs includes a series of hierarchical needs before a person can achieve "self-actualization;" self-actualization is arguable the best place for a student to enhance academic performance.

Interviewing academic advisors and providing their perspectives has helped discover the safety needs, belongingness/love needs, and esteem needs of students

through Maslow's hierarchy of needs; that is why this framework was deemed appropriate for this study. The TOC identifies what limit factors exist in preventing a business or organization from achieving their goal and improve the constraint to minimize or eliminate the constraint (Gupta et al., 2010). For the sake of the current study, the theory of constraint in policy identifies a policy that may cause limitations to a program not reaching its full potential (Synchronix Technologies, n.d.). Utilizing the TOC allowed for identifying the constraints and limitations the work policy has on the SNAP program in qualifying college students to receive benefits. Interviewing the academic advisors introduced opportunities to improve on the constraints.

Problem Statement

Working students have less time than nonworking students do to devote to their college studies, therefore affecting their academics. What is unknown is if students fulfill the work policy to qualify for SNAP, will the weekly work hour requirement be excessively high for a full-time college schedule? Some students applying for SNAP find themselves being denied benefits due to not meeting many qualifications (Gaines et al., 2014); one evident requirement is the work policy mandate. The current policy states, under the U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service (2016), a student with half-time status or higher must work at least 20 hours a week to qualify for benefits. When the food stamp policy made its way into U.S. society, it was a supplement to assist families experiencing food shortages. Since then, the government has put in place exemptions and policies that may impede an individual's efforts to become self-sufficient, thus keeping them dependent on the program. In the State of California, in Alameda County, between

the years of 2013 and 2017, the number of student applicants to SNAP who were denied because they did not meet eligibility requirements or qualify for any of the exemptions increased every year (Alameda County Social Services Agency, 2018).

As a result of the increasing number of disqualified students for the SNAP program, the government needs to review the student work policy. As studies have shown, most students do not qualify through any of the exemptions, and working 20 hours a week as a full-time student can be challenging for first-generation, low-income students within their first and second year of college (Mamiseishvili, 2010; Richardson et al., 2014). Because previous studies have rendered students' responses, this research study focused on how academic advisors perceive the work policy and how it affects these college students' academics. The literature gap shows that it is unknown how academic advisors perceive the work and school balance, and it is also unknown how useful the SNAP work policy is for the students. Researchers have previously noted that working more gives students less time toward their studies and affects their academic success (Mamiseishvili, 2010; Richardson et al., 2014). However, the existing literature does not explain whether the work policy to qualify for SNAP contributes to academic success. The previous studies also do not address factors that may lead to why the number of work hours is considerably high compared to a full-time college enrollment schedule. Interviewing academic advisors on how they perceive the effects of the work policy on students' academics and the need these college students have for the bare necessities that SNAP benefits provide has addressed the gaps uncovered in the previous studies and has shed light on a potential weakness in public policies.

Purpose

The study's purpose was to understand how SNAP's work policy affects academic success among undergraduate college students during their first 2 years of enrollment. Examining qualitative research methods and phenomenography may explain the issues causing students' academic problems. Utilizing phenomenography allowed me to collect academic advisors' thoughts on the phenomenon of work-and-school balance for first-generation, low-income students entering college directly from high school. Understanding why academics are affected by the work policy may also create a platform for methods that may prevent students from becoming unsuccessful in achieving their educational goals. Since academic advisors guide students by helping them through their educational journey, using these advisors as a research subject made sense. Focusing on how academic advisors perceive this work policy and the school balance may directly address whether the work policy for SNAP affects the employment and academic success balance for these students; and the goodness of the public policy in terms of student success.

Research Question

In addressing the challenges of managing a college education, while also working part-time and adjusting from high school to college as a first-generation student, the following research question provides insight into the stated research problem: How do academic advisors perceive the influence of the work policy required for SNAP benefits on first-generation students' academic success during their first and second years of college?

Conceptual Framework

Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Goldratt's TOC are theories applied in this research study. Both approaches provide pathways of justification and understanding as to why the study is necessary. Goldratt's book, *The Goal-A Process of Ongoing Improvement* in 1984, first introduced the TOC (Goldratt & Cox, 1984). The TOC provides five steps of focus that consist of (a) identifying the constraint, (b) exploiting the constraint, (c) subordinate the process, (d) elevate the constraint, and (e) continue to repeat the cycle within a policy constraint, and it is a behavior, measurement, rule, or policy inhibiting a company from performance improvement (Synchronix Technologies, n.d.). The work policy for full-time students to qualify for SNAP requires students to work at least 20 hours a week, which is considered a constraint within this policy; when students do not meet this qualification, it restricts them from receiving benefits.

Maslow first introduced the hierarchy of needs in 1943 through a paper titled "*A Theory of Human Motivation.*" Maslow's hierarchy of needs consists of five categories of basic needs in hierarchical order: physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization (McLeod, 2017). Food is considered a physiological need, one of our most basic needs to function as human beings (McLeod, 2017). Interviewing academic advisors helped discover the safety needs, belongingness and love needs, and esteem needs. These advisors are more visible to students within their first and second year of college. The work policy may challenge self-actualization with students trying to achieve their full potential in reaching their educational goals. For students to reach self-actualization within the hierarchy of needs, which involves achieving their full potential

(Maslow, 1943), the work policy may need review or a better understanding to achieve that self-fulfillment simultaneously. The research involved finding out how this government program policy affects first and second-year students' academic success. With the two theories applied, the present study asked questions, addressed concerns, and recorded suggestions on what academic advisors perceive are the reasoning behind this policy and its effect on academic success.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative methodology through phenomenography facilitated understanding how the SNAP program work policy affects college students' academics from an academic advisors' perception. Utilizing phenomenography allows a focus on lived experiences of low-income, first-generation students within their first and second year of college, adjusting from high school to a college setting with the balance of work. Understanding why academic success is affected by the work policy may create a platform for preventive methods that serve as obstacles to students achieving their educational goals. Because academic advisors guide these students on their educational paths and the best ways to reach them, it is essential to focus on how they perceive the SNAP work policy and how it directly affects students' academic performance.

The study's topic involves freshman and sophomore college students; therefore, each academic advisor's assigned students correlate with the selected participants within this study. The participants consist of academic advisors who counsel students within their first and second year of college. Between five community colleges located in California-Alameda County, there is a pool of 58 academic advisors that make up the

sample size. From the population of 58, a minimum of 12 interviews is necessary, or until

saturation. Using purposeful sampling, 16 academic advisors participated in interviews.

Based on the list of academic advisors provided from each college, each participant

volunteered and met the minimum requirements of a bachelor's degree and at least 2

years of experience as a part of a purposeful sample. Marshall (1996) has identified

purposeful sampling as the most productive sampling in response to the research

questions, retrieving the data, and synthesizing each interview's findings. Depending on

each participant's preference for conducting the interview, I used an audio and video

recorder for face-to-face, Skype, or phone interviews. Upon completion of the data

collection, the coding and synthesis assisted in synthesizing the data.

The literature review and the interview instrument's open-ended questions

determined that inductive coding best suited the data set's coding. Frankfort-Nachmias et

al. (2015) stated that the most frequent responses to questions are inclusive to the coding

scheme and are used to analyze the data. Typical responses each have a category

(Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015), and for infrequent responses, the categorization was

"other." Every response categorized as the coding scheme must be exhaustive (Frankfort-

Nachmias et al., 2015). The software used for analysis was HyperRESEARCH

(http://www.researchware.com/products/hyperresearch.html).

HyperRESEARCH software was the best fit for the data collection and analysis of

this study. The software allows for portability and multiple devices as necessary for a

researcher who works on the study between work, family, school, and social

organizations. HyperRESEARCH provides researchers the flexibility of on-the-spot

interviews using a flash drive and coding using the scan feature, highlighted in the margins for easy access. I used Rev (https://www.rev.com/) to transcribe all audio data recorded. Although the study consisted of developed theories, HyperRESEARCH has a feature that builds theories that can help create an analysis for the study and transcribe data (HyperRESEARCH, n.d.). Saving time and money for a multi-function software can make a smooth navigation through the data collection and analysis process.

Definitions

Some of the terms in this study are uncommon. Below is a list of defined terms to help guide the reader through this research, analysis, and recommendation.

Academic advisor: One who guides students in meeting their academic goals (Burt et al., 2013); it is a joint partnership as the student assists as well.

Academic success: The situation where an individual can complete educational goals and measure the level of responsibility and self-reliance of being employed on a part-time job while enrolled as a full-time student.

First generation: Students who are enrolling in college as the first in their family to attend.

Full-time student (within the current study's context): Students enrolled in six-units or more and qualified for SNAP benefits are full-time (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). Most colleges consider full-time as 12 units or more, which is average for first- and second-year students.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Formerly known as food stamps, SNAP provides supplemental food assistance to individuals and families who qualify

under the federal guidelines administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016)

Theory of Constraints: TOC is an operations research concept that focuses on the limits or obstacles to goal achievement and systematically improves or eliminates the constraint leading to improved process effectiveness and efficiency (Goldratt & Cox, 1984).

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): An agency within the department oversees the SNAP policies, administrations, and benefit distributions.

Units: College credit hours for each class enrolled and completed.

Work policy: A federal guideline requiring students who are enrolled in at least six academic units to be employed at least 20 hours a week (with regular employment or through a training program through the state in which they reside) to qualify for SNAP (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016).

Assumptions

An assumption can be made that many students have worked while attending college and can graduate and move on with their life as expected. It is not uncommon to do so, but critical in this study that focuses on first-generation students within their first and second college years; some may live below the poverty level or considered low-income. Transitioning from high school to college is a noteworthy adjustment, especially when an individual received government assistance for breakfast and lunch while in high school and then qualifies for fewer assistance options after high school graduation.

For some college students who apply for SNAP, it is due to their economic status. A further aggravation is a public policy requiring them to work at least 20-hours a week to ensure SNAP qualification. Understanding how students balance both employment and academia successfully may shed light on the program's validity and success. The understanding may also lead to questions on if the policy should be modified? The information gleaned from this research can make a difference in whether or not a student stays enrolled in school or qualify to receive the basic needs of food through SNAP.

Scope and Delimitations

This research focuses on first-generation students transitioning from high school to college, serving in their first or second year of college, and who are vulnerable to poverty or in need of government assistance. Interviewing academic advisors and seeking their perspectives provided a deeper and valuable understanding of the effects of working on academic performances. Furthermore, the qualification for SNAP benefits and corresponding work requirements lead to academic failure or challenges. Although other students may also encounter the same issues, first-generation students are at an elevated risk of not returning to school for their second year (Hui et al., 2014). Because the SNAP program provides some of the basic needs listed in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the theory builds on starting with the necessities to survive. For students to experience deprivation of that due to school, the policy as stated becomes challenging. For students to reach self-actualization within Maslow's hierarchy of needs involves achieving one potential (Maslow, 1943). The work policy may need review or a better understanding to achieve that self-fulfillment simultaneously. The SNAP work policy creates a constraint

for students. The TOC focused on the limiting factors in achieving a goal and works toward eliminating the limiting factor to make one's goals achievable.

Limitations

The limitations of using a phenomenography design include accessibility to academic advisors at a junior college or advisors who have not witnessed students' lived experiences using SNAP benefits and their related academic performance. Some of the college websites provided a small autobiography of each academic advisor detailing their educational background and experience in the field, so the risk of encountering anyone unable to answer the questions was minimal. In addressing the accessibility to the advisors, I first needed to receive permission from the junior college. Upon approval, I gave them an option to complete the interview according to their availability and schedule and responded to the questions and follow-up questions. Academic advisors may have biases when it involves the government and program policies. However, because the questions are geared towards understanding and finding a solution to help students, the results identified some of the work policy's constraints.

Significance of the Study

The literature review and this research study focused on how the policy could affect the balance of work and school. The research's significance in approaching the academic advisor's perspectives allowed students to have options other than dropping out of school, creating effective ways for positive social change (Callahan et al., 2012). The 20-hours per week required to meet SNAP qualifications may make a difference in a student's academic success. Broton et al. (2016) conducted a study focused on the

impacts of financial grants on student employment. In the 1970s, when Pell Grants first launched, 75% of the cost for a 4-year public university covered tuition for low-income students (Broton et al., 2016); today the grant only covers 30% of the cost, which results in student loan debt. The results from the academic advisors' interviews addressed justification for positive social change enhancing the students' educational experience within their first and second year of college and beyond.

Significance to Practice

The contribution that using phenomenography may provide could involve changing policy in favor of more students focusing on academics instead of working and trying to survive. Understanding how the work-school balance affects students and their academics may suggest the need for students to qualify for SNAP benefits. Other avenues may not require them to work as many hours or substitute hours for some units enrolled. Although the work policy may be in place to help students become self-sufficient, academic advisors suggested a more efficient way that alleviates the challenges some students are experiencing. Increasing the number of students qualifying for SNAP may prevent student dropouts and increase students' percentage of returning for their second year of college.

Significance of Theory

The potential advanced knowledge gained from this study may influence other academic advisors to improve their method of guiding students. Realizing the vulnerability of students can change an advisor's approach and advisement. Suggestions for changing the work policy can include ideas from the academic advisors who are best

suited to counsel on how many hours a student should work in a week when enrolled on a full-time basis. Policy makers may ponder eliminating the need for students having to choose between education and survival, perhaps making it a goal for achieving retention levels for first- and second-year students.

Significance of Social Change

Social change efforts involve retention of college students and improvement in government policy. With the example mentioned earlier, Alameda County, California, student SNAP denial rates increased every year between 2013 and 2017 because students did not meet eligibility requirements or qualify for any exemptions (Alameda County Social Services Agency, 2018). The government needs to review the work policy for first- and second-year students due to their not qualifying for the program. Some students were deciding to survive instead of pursuing an education. The more students who are returning to school, the better the chances of them continuing to graduate. The more improvements the government makes to students' work policy, the more students qualify for SNAP benefits and academic success achievement. Promoting positive social change through this research enables future research to expand into the first-generation students within their third and fourth year of college.

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Summary

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This qualitative research included presenting the problem with a phenomenography design, using a purposeful sample, inducting coding, and a data analysis plan that focused on the assumptions and limitations that occurred. The research question, conceptual framework, and nature of the study provided the main discipline and

theories to synthesize the results. Chapter 1 provided an understanding of the problem, conceptual framework, research questions, and significance of the research. The literature review in Chapter 2 provides background on past studies and confirms the existing literature gap. Chapter 2 provides a review of the extant literature related to research conducted on SNAP's work policy relative to college students. Chapter 2 also details research studies to include working while enrolled in school and how it influences students' academic success, SNAP benefits, policies and regulations impacting student eligibility, and the academic advisors' contribution to academia and students' success. Chapter 3 presents the methodology, Chapter 4 provides data analysis results, and Chapter 5 presents the findings, recommendations, and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Working a full-time job and taking even one class can be challenging. Some students applying for SNAP find themselves being denied benefits due to not meeting some of the qualifications (Gaines et al., 2014); one criterion is the 20-hours per week work policy. Under U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, the work policy states that a student with half-time status or higher is required to work at least 20 hours a week to qualify for benefits (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). As studies have shown (Mamiseishvili, 2010; Richardson et al., 2014), most students are exempt and do not qualify while working 20 hours a week as a full-time student. This decision can be challenging for low-income students within their first and second college years (Mamiseishvili, 2010; Richardson et al., 2014). Because previous studies have provided students' perspectives on this issue, this research study focuses on academic advisors' perceptions of the work policy and how it affects college students' academics.

Although researchers have discovered that working more gives students less time toward their studies (Mamiseishvili, 2010; Richardson et al., 2014), previous studies have not suggested what can solve the issue. The research also does not address any factors that may lead to why it is essential to focus on academics more than working. Interviewing academic advisors on how they perceive the work policy affecting college students trying to qualify for SNAP benefits may address the gaps found in previous research.

Qualitative research through phenomenography was chosen for this topic to understand the phenomenon of how the SNAP work policy affects academics among

college students. Interviewing academic advisors highlighted the issues causing the problem. Utilizing phenomenography allowed the research to focus on a specific group, specifically low-income first-generation college students adjusting from high school to a college setting. Understanding why academics are affected by the work policy created a platform for preventive methods that prevent students from becoming unsuccessful in achieving their educational goals. Academic advisors advise college students on their educational goals and the best way to reach them is to focus on how they perceive this work policy directly addressing the issue.

Literature Search Strategy

The beginning stages of the literature research were challenging and required assistance from available resources. Inquiries with a reference librarian at Walden University contributed to finding suitable sources. Using the Thoreau Multi-Database Search was the beginning stage of how to research the literature topic. Search terms and combinations were (a) food stamps or SNAP or food relief, (b) higher education or college or university, (c) academic persistence or graduate or drop out, and (d) low income. For these searches, filtering for peer-reviewed articles was necessary. A referral was also made from that learning interaction to enlist help from a librarian within the college study. The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Librarian suggested the following search areas: education; human services; policy, administration, security; multidisciplinary databases. The combination of search terms was (food stamps or SNAP or food relief) AND (college students) with the following databases: Academic Search

Complete; SocIndex; Political Science Complete; Thoreau Multi-Database Search. The articles found help complete the background of the proposal.

After prospectus approval, the conceptual framework shifted to focus on the policy. Another search engine, Google Scholar, provided the Walden University Library connection for access to additional literature. Google Scholar produced articles, theses, and dissertations sent to me via email three times weekly. The search terms and combinations included the following: Maslow's hierarchy of needs for first-generation college students; academic advising and student employment; student constraints with food stamp policy; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program policies and college students; TOC in policy; phenomenography in the conceptual framework. Titles appear from Google Scholar along with the cited number. For example, *Expanding our Understanding of Social Change: A Report From the Definition Task Force of the HLC Special Emphasis Project* (Callahan et al., 2012), cited four times, produced additional literature.

Conceptual Framework

Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Goldratt's TOC are concepts I used in the current research study. Both theories provided pathways of justification as to why the study was necessary and prior successes with these theories. The work policy for full-time students to qualify for SNAP requires students to work at least 20 hours a week. When students do not meet this qualification, they are restricted from receiving benefits. SNAP is a government program that provides a food supplement to a person or families who qualify. Maslow's hierarchy of needs comprises food, which is considered a

physiological need, our most basic needs function as human beings. Interviewing academic advisors assisted in discovering the safety needs, belongingness and love needs, and esteem needs. These advisors are more visible to students within their first and second year of college. The current study involved finding out how this government program policy affects first and second-year students' academic success. With the two theories applied, the current study asked questions, addressed concerns, and recorded suggestions on what academic advisors perceive are the reasoning behind this policy and its effect on academic success.

TOC in Policy

Goldratt first introduced the TOC in the 1980 software called OPT (Optimized Production Time-Table) and also step-by-step in the 1984 book, *The Goal*. The theory identifies what limit factors exist in preventing a business or organization from achieving its goal and improving the constraint to minimize or eliminate the constraint (Gupta et al., 2010). For the sake of the current study, the TOC in policy identifies a policy that may cause limitations to a program not reaching its full potential (Synchronix Technologies, n.d.).

Students not qualifying for the program due to the work policy is a policy constraint. Interviewing academic advisors on how they perceive working 20 hours a week affecting academic success for full-time students resulted in suggestions on how to improve on the constraint, so it does not limit students from receiving SNAP. Gupta et al. (2010) provided an example of using a chain as a TOC policy performance within an organization stating that it is as strong as its weakest link. For improvement of the chain

to happen, the weakest link would need to improve (Gupta et al., 2010), which is another way to think of the work policy and how it affects students' academics. Exploring ideas and essential factors can improve the policy, giving students more access to SNAP without increased workloads as full-time students.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow first implemented the hierarchy of needs in 1943, explaining human motivation with five levels designed as a pyramid (see Figure 1). Each level of the pyramid relates to the current study:

Figure 1

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
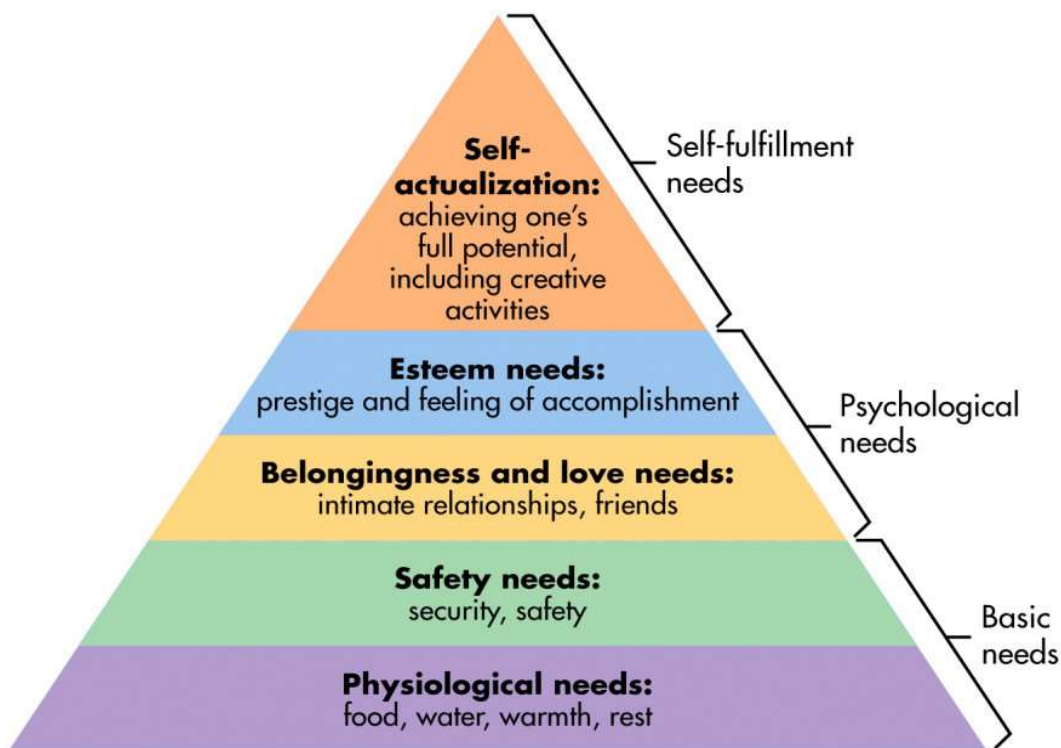
Note. From *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, by S. A. McLeod, 2017, Simply Psychology (www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html).

Each of these levels represents what first-generation students may encounter and sometimes find challenging when entering college. Petty (2014) used Maslow's hierarchy of needs to explain each of the pyramid's levels of motivating first-generation students to push through the adjustment and graduate. The current study includes first- and second-year students who experienced some of these challenges. The workplace policy that prevents them from accessing some of life's basic needs is another reminder of these students' important motivation.

Review of Literature

Each article described in this section expanded on why this research topic is important, and what gaps in the literature remain to be filled with the forthcoming data presentation. Each of the subheadings connect with each other to make sense of the research topic. Studies may have some similarities, but variables may differ, the sample size may differ, which causes results to differ. The articles in this literature review focus on an issue that exists not just in the United States but in different parts of the world.

Employment as a College Student

Wood et al. (2016) conducted a qualitative study involving 28 African American male students attending a southwestern community college. Data collected through a semi-structured interview with predetermined questions would justify unplanned conversations (Wood et al., 2016). Some male students talked about employment as a positive aspect of academic success from the findings, but the majority found it negative and recognized school/work balance difficulties. From a positive perspective, students found employment-related to their studies (Wood et al., 2016) an avenue to their future

job experience. The negative aspect sought out the transition of trying to adjust to work schedules (Wood et al., 2016) that made studying a challenge due to the dedicated time to work and the type of job the student has. It can also be physically draining, causing students to require more sleep and less time to complete homework. This study's limitations include that it involved only one gender and one community college campus, but the recommendations suggested further studies to determine what can improve upon the difficulties of school-work balance.

Another study conducted on the challenges of full-time students and part-time employment involved 30 business students at a university: nine first-year students, 10 second-year students, and 11 third-year students. Similar to Wood et al., Richardson et al. (2014) used semi structured interviews with the questions centered around students' perceptions of the relationship between full-time academics and part-time employment. Some of the students' responses involved coping mechanisms (i.e., using a disciplined approach). Additionally, scheduling is a factor for some of the students living at home with their parents. If the job requires a late shift, and the scheduling does not conflict with class or study time, both could be balanced and render positive results. For others, they have become overwhelmed with work that their academics suffer due to, as one student described, "persistent tiredness," as well as work commitments clashing with the class making it difficult to complete class assignments (Richardson et al., 2014). The limitations are similar to those of Wood et al.'s study in that it involved one university. A small sample of students from one major, but the findings imply that universities should maximize the employment, academic development, and performance of students

(Richardson et al., 2016) by finding ways to cope with the rigorous demand of academic employment.

Although the current research focuses on first and second-year students, Yanbarisova (2015) surveyed 1,988 fourth- and fifth-year students attending college in Russia. Unlike Wood et al., Richardson et al. surveyed the following majors: (a) agriculture, (b) humanities, (c) construction, (d) culture, (e) law, medicine, (f) natural science, (g) technology and engineering, (h) pedagogy, and (i) architecture (Yanbarisova, 2015). The difference with this quantitative study included students who work full-time within and outside their field of study, the location is in Russia, and using students in their fourth and fifth year of college. In reviewing their academic performance while working, the findings rendered adverse effects to academic success when working outside the student's field of study (Yanbarisova, 2015); the lack of relevance to the field and inability to integrate the experience with school made for a job that could be time-consuming. Those working within their field of study perform better than those working outside their field and better than some nonworking students (Yanbarisova, 2015). Because this was a quantitative study and with the necessity of many controlled factors (Yanbarisova, 2015), the suggestion encouraged further investigation of student employment using a qualitative study.

Another quantitative study conducted using 1,841 first-year students enrolled at Italian Universities surveyed through computer-assisted telephonic interviews (Triventi, 2014). Unlike prior research presented in previous paragraphs, the relevance of policy and theoretical perspective is the focus. Within this study, students of lower economic

backgrounds are likely working to finance their education. The possibility this may contribute to the social inequality in academic outcomes (Triventi, 2014) raises an issue. The effectiveness of student employment challenges whether or not the same number of credit completions are found for those working instead of not working. Using a zero-sum hypothesis (Triventi, 2014), the answer would be no, considering work would be a distraction for incoming first-year students, deterring them away from their academic goals and time to study. The zero-sum hypothesis is that employment during college studies having a strong constraint on time usage, meaning time spent working could be spent on academics, i.e., prepping for exams or attending classes (Triventi, 2014). The alternative of using a reconciliation hypothesis (Triventi, 2014) allowed students to regulate their time accordingly between leisure activities and hours of study well enough to maintain academic success regularly. The reconciliation hypothesis allows students to moderate their time dedicated to other activities, ensuring there are enough hours for studies while continuing to maintain educational growth (Triventi, 2014). The suggestion made for future studies is to test these hypotheses in other markets where higher education institutions are located (Triventi, 2014).

Like Triventi's idea of conducting a study using only first-year students-Beauchamp et al. (2016) had a series of questionnaires answered by 378 freshmen college students through a convenience sampling located at junior colleges within the province of Quebec, Canada. 63% of students reported part-time employment upon entrance of college. Their high school average and first semester results predicted whether academic success was affected by those employed vs. unemployed along with those who are secure

in their adulthood or those finding themselves dismissing. The findings indicated that students were more likely challenged in academic success because of their lack of security, not necessarily an adverse effect on employment (Beauchamp et al., 2016). Students who were considered secure were able to handle the increased pressures of academia instead of dismissing students who may have encountered difficulties in achieving academic success (Beauchamp et al., 2016). One crucial limitation discovered in this study was the lack of data collected that could explain if students adjusted schedules, added or dropped activities (Beauchamp et al., 2016) to accommodate the higher demands of their academics and ways to cope with their new environment. If the study were repeated to verify stability over time using the same variables (Beachanp et al. 2016), the data collected would have been useful.

Keeping in mind the idea Beauchamp et al. suggested regarding repeating their study over time, another study presented a similar approach following incoming first-year students through their 4th year of college. Greene and Maggs (2015) used a big university sample located in the United States' Northeastern region. Each student was to complete a longitudinal daily data diary followed 14 days within each of the seven semesters the students were enrolled, resulting in 98 diary days per student (Greene & Maggs, 2015). The research explored the time trade-off hypothesis that employment and extra-curricular activities would associate with less time devoted to academic studies over days and semesters (Greene & Maggs, 2015). Unlike other studies provided, this study did not give a snapshot of time. Instead, it provided an understanding of day-to-day activities in a college student's life over seven semesters. Students were choosing to spend their time on

non-academic activities, dependent on the type of activity and the week's day (Greene &
Maggs, 2015). Because results were conditional dependent on the day of the week and
activity chosen, employment during weekdays resulted in academics' strongest
association. Other findings suggested the importance of understanding when and how
students connected their activities and academics over a period (Greene & Maggs, 2015).
Balancing work and academia's demands benefit students as they enter into adulthood,
establishing behavior patterns. Greene and Maggs highlighted one important aspect for
high school students transitioning to college is time use between academic and non-
academic activities.

Although the time trade-off hypothesis explored the choices students made
between non-academic activities versus academic studies, the exploration of self-efficacy
is a consideration for students deciding for employment during full-time college
enrollment. Hui, Winsler, and Kitsantas (2014) conducted a study of 591 first-year
student participants at a Mid-Atlantic University. The study examined students who were
employed and unemployed as full-time students, focusing on whether self-efficacy and
self-regulation (Hui et al., 2014) made a difference in their academic success. The
questionnaires were completed at two different times, within the first couple of weeks of
the semester and at the end of the term (Hui et al., 2014). It was important to capture how
students cope with the school/work balance within the first year of enrollment as some
students do not return their sophomore year (Hui et al., 2014). The results found that self-
regulated students achieved academic success than those who worked more hours,
rendering a lower grade point average (GPA) and academic performance (Hui et al.,

2014). Also, students working on campus were more successful in academia than those working off-campus, highlighting easier access to academic support such as retrieving a book from the library or meeting with a professor or tutor during breaks (Hui et al., 2014). Yanbarisova (2015) mentioned that student employment that was more study-driven focused, which with jobs on campus, may render similar results. Hui et al. also found that different GPA results may contribute to the emphasis placed on academic merit with on-campus employment instead of off-campus employment. The suggestion was made for universities to find ways to increase on-campus jobs (Hui et al., 2014), allowing students to work fewer hours to self-regulate the school/work balance.

Another aspect that students find themselves looking for coping mechanisms to deal with the school/work balance is paying for their education. Broton et al., (2016) conducted a study focused on the impacts of financial grants on student employment. In the 1970s, when Pell Grants first launched, 75% of the cost for a four-year public university covered tuition for low-income students (Broton et al., 2016). Today the grant only covers 30% of the cost. A survey conducted at the beginning of their second year of college included 1438 students receiving the Wisconsin Scholars Grant (WSG) and completed one of the work behaviors questions (Broton et al., 2016). Findings concluded those students offered the WSG were more likely to work fewer hours or not work at all, and those students working extensively (20+ hours) reduced by 17.11% (Broton et al., 2016). This study's limitations include no national representation, only full-time students, and traditionally-aged students from low-income families attending public colleges and universities in Wisconsin (Broton et al., 2016). Students receiving the WSG rendered

positive outcomes of academic success. Changing their employment status (Broton et al., 2016) to fewer hours or no employment at all suggests the study needs continued research on need-based grant aid for promoting more positive college outcomes.

Much of the findings in previous research suggest that employment can hinder academic success. Mamiseishvili (2010) conducted a study using data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study to find whether employment affects persistence from the first to the second year of college. The sample size was 1,140 and involved low-income, first-generation students identified as a part of families with an income of $25,000 or less that attended four-year postsecondary institutions (Mamiseishvili, 2010). The study results indicated students had a strong predictor of prioritizing their academics among all employment-related variables allowing them to return for their second year of college (Mamiseishvili, 2010). The study also showed that the harmful effects of employment might disseminate if students' perspective changed to focus solely on school first (Mamiseishvili, 2010). Those students having problems staying engaged with college or becoming disinterested may find themselves experiencing the adverse effects of employment on academic success. Another factor to consider in this study is that 51% of this sample size worked more than 20 hours a week (Mamiseishvili, 2010), which ponders suggestions for colleges and universities to better communicate with students through engagement relevancy and meaningful experiences along this college journey.

Previous studies have provided outcomes that employment affected academics in a variety of ways. Neil (2015) completed a study that focused on increasing student

employment between 18 and 24 during college enrollment due to tuition increases. The study analyzed changes in student work patterns that may cause in-semester work (Neil, 2015) at public universities located in Canada, and it was due to the variation in tuition fees across the board. From 1979 to 2011, the increase in fees varied from $2,000 to $4,750, that increased work hours by 42 hours per academic year (Neil, 2015). Between 1997 and 2011, the average student wage was $11.00, which with this calculation, would only render students an additional $465 in income (Neil, 2015)-not enough to combat the rise intuition. The tuition increases resulted in more students borrowing from government programs, how well students managed their living arrangements, and their family background in education and income (Neil, 2015). Although the consideration of different variables is present, the findings did little to explain why there was an increase in students working as the tuition increase was a minor, affecting factor.

SNAP and the Work Policy

Providing background and understanding of the program may allow one to see the importance of the current study and how the research applies to the stated problem. The history of food stamps begins in 1939 with the Secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace, and the first program's administrator, Milo Perkins (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). The idea was to allow people to buy orange stamps equivalent to their food expenditures; 50 cents in blue stamps for every $1.00 of orange stamps purchased (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). Surplus food was purchased with blue stamps, while orange stamps could buy any food type (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). Within four years, the program had

grown to 20 million people costing $262 million (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). The program terminated because the unemployment and food surplus had dissipated.

Over the next 18 years, legislative proposals, reports, and studies facilitated enacting the Food Stamp Program (FSP). On September 21, 1959, the Secretary of Agriculture gave the authorization to operate the pilot FSP through January 31, 1962 (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). On August 31, 1964, Congress passed the Food Stamp Act of 1964, making FSP permanent and allowing improvements to improve nutrition and the agricultural economy among low-income families (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). Over the years, program expansions and regulations made into law allowed the program to become nationwide in 1974 (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). The Food Stamp Act of 1977 (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016) is where college students' work policy begins, working at least 20 hours a week for full-time students to qualify to receive benefits. Exceptions to this policy are as follows:

- under the age of 18 or over the age of 49
- parent caring for a child under the age of six
- parent caring for a child 6-11 years of age and is unable to get childcare to attend work or school
- single parent caring for a child under the age of 12 and has a full-time enrollment
- receiving work-study funds

- receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- unable to work because of a mental or physical disability

- enrolled in specific programs aimed at employment (i.e., job club, employment and training programs, etc.). (Lower-Basch & Lee, 2014; U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016)

As the program continued to develop during the 1980s and early 2000s, the transition was from orange and blue stamps to the electronic benefit transfer (EBT). Another change included its name changed from the FSP to the SNAP (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). Many may not qualify for benefits under these policy exceptions. In reviewing the exceptions, the average first-generation student within their first or second college years would not meet any of the exemptions. One may consider this a policy constraint to students that leads to students working too many hours and interferes with academic success. In some instances, it leads to students dropping out of college.

As SNAP moved into the 21st century, the program improved its mission of reaching out to populations who may have gone unserved. Lower-Basch (2014) talked about the 2014 Farm Bill (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016), which featured the pilot programs for employment and training, allowing individuals to become self-sufficient and providing eligibility for receiving SNAP. Although these programs exist, in a different article from the same journal, the highlight provided SNAP moving in the right direction. However, some students were still without assistance from the program due to the restrictions and exceptions they do not qualify under even with the

new pilot programs introduced through the 2014 Farm Bill (Lower-Basch & Lee, 2014). After reviewing some of the pilot programs' qualifications, the understanding is why some students still would not be allowed to receive SNAP as the programs gear toward job search and job training. Some offer specific class participation that allows students to qualify for SNAP. However, the average 18-year-old who majors in psychology and has 12-16 units would have to work at least 20 hours a week to be eligible for benefits. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program has evolved in finding ways to support more individuals, but a gap continues to exist for college students, especially those first and second-year students.

The introduction of SNAP employment and training programs highlights a different arena for a student working while concurrently being enrolled full-time and participating in work-study programs. Minaya and Scott-Clayton (2016) questioned student subsidized employment, considering the federally funded program varies from college to university and from state to state. The study determined if the federal work-study (FWS) programs make a difference in employment participation amongst students (Minaya & Scott-Clayton, 2016). The data sample included recent cohorts pulled from the Beginning Postsecondary Student Longitudinal Study (BPS 96/01 and BPS 04/09) that consists of a nationally represented sample of 30,545 students who entered college in 1995-96 and 2003-04 school years followed for six years after (Minaya & Scott-Clayton, 2016). The study included both two-year and four-year institutions of higher learning. It rendered 80% of students participating in FWS working an average of 11 hours a week on campus instead of 8% of nonparticipants working an average of 18 hours a week off-

campus (Minaya & Scott-Clayton, 2016). Although SNAP provides eligibility for these students to receive benefits, the FWS program is campus-based and gives the institutions the discretion to disperse FWS funding to students (Minaya & Scott-Clayton, 2016). That is the point Lower-Basch was addressing about some students not meeting the policy exceptions. Not every students' need is achievable, but a gap is present in how students can fulfill their dream of a college education without feeling as if they must choose between survival and education.

Colleges and universities have started food pantries, and human services center on their campuses to combat their students' survival needs. Further, some students cannot find work to fit into the work policy's constraints to receive SNAP, and for some others, that do qualify may still leave them in need. Cady (2016) conducted an interview with a student attending Oregon State University's Human Services Resource Center who has children, lost her job, and was unable to find another job making enough money to take care of her family without a degree. The student was afraid of being evicted and had not eaten in a couple of days; Cady stated she encountered a few students in this situation and felt forced to choose between textbooks or food. Featured in the same journal was an article titled, "A community college where education and public assistance meet" by Michael Baston (2015) that featured La Guardia Community College and a national program titled Benefits Access for College Completion (Baston, 2015). Vice President of Student Affairs, Michael Baston, connects students with public benefits (i.e., SNAP, Medi-Caid, & TANF) to stay enrolled in college. The program has assisted over 10,000 students on his campus with 20 million in benefits over the last couple of years (Baston,

2015). Baston talks about one particular student who left home at the age of 16 after

becoming pregnant, enrolled in the general education development (GED) program. This

student also received public benefits, soon after graduated top of her class with a

bachelor's and master's degree, and now teaches physics at a high school (Baston, 2015).

Baston talked about students leaving school, not so much because they cannot handle

academia between 9 am and 5 pm, but not having access to basic needs to survive

sometimes at 1 am in an emergency room with their child (Baston, 2015). Each article

gives a different perspective; even for students who qualify to receive assistance, they

sometimes are successful at completing college, and some may struggle to stay in school.

Neither of the women featured was required to work because they met the exception of

caring for children to receive assistance. Your average first and second-year 18- or 19-

year-old student may not have these same circumstances. These two scenarios provided

reasons why SNAP may be an essential source to college students.

According to the work policy for receiving SNAP, some students unable to work

the required number of hours per week may find themselves experiencing a negative

chain reaction. As mentioned earlier, some students qualified for SNAP benefits and

succeeded in academia as others may have struggled. Gaines et al. (2014) conducted a

study of 557 undergraduate students at the University of Alabama that resulted in 14%

experiencing food insecurity, and none of them qualify to receive food stamps. The

sample included sophomores, juniors, and seniors with completed surveys across 16

classrooms. The surveys included highlighted factors such as (a) demographics, (b)

financial independence, (c) budgeting behaviors, (d) family support, (e) whether financial

or food preparation, (f) unemployment, (g) credit card ownership, (h) receipt of federal aid and food assistance, and (i) economic hardship (Gaines et al., 2014). The students self-assessed their food security for the last 12 months, and compared to the general public, students were not at an increased risk of food insecurity. However, the problem remains of lack of food assistance available, creating a financial hardship that can affect the academic success (Gaines et al., 2014). Limiting factors involved in this study consist of excluding freshman, pregnant students, part-time students, and graduate students who provided a sample of the traditional college experience (Gaines et al., 2014). This survey also took place after a natural disaster of a tornado located near one university (Gaines et al., 2014), which, as noted previously, highlights the average student not qualifying for SNAP, related to the current study of those sophomore students. Changing the research settings may give different results regarding food insecurity amongst students.

Focusing on a smaller community of students may highlight students' demographics and racial backgrounds likely to experience adverse reactions to food insecurity affecting their academic success. The research Gaines et al. provided was from one central location completed after a natural disaster. Maroto et al., on the other hand, conducted a study at two community colleges, one located in a low-income urban environment and another located in an affluent suburban area in the state of Maryland. A cross-sectional intercept survey involved the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Household Food Security Survey Module, varied demographics, and students self-reporting their GPA (Maroto et al., 2015). The sample size between the two schools was 301 students, that resulted in 56% of these students being food insecure (Maroto et al.,

2015), a massive difference from the 14% presented by Gaines et al. at one university

after a natural disaster. Maroto et al. also included single parents, that the study Gaines et

al. completed did not. Those students who identified themselves as multiracial or African

American was at a higher risk for food insecurity (Maroto et al., 2015). Food secure

students reported GPAs higher at 3.5-4.0 than those food insecure students who reported

lower GPAs of 2.0-2.5 (Maroto et al., 2015). This ratio highlights food insecurity in a

community college setting and reiterates its effect on academic success. The work policy

for SNAP is a factor to consider when reviewing both research studies.

Evaluating the work policy to qualify full-time students for SNAP is challenging

for both the researcher and the student. Broton et al. (2016) highlighted some points to

consider for students transitioning from high school to college. Some of these students

were receiving free lunches at their perspective high schools. They were apart of

households receiving SNAP benefits (Broton et al., 2016), but beginning a higher

education journey does not change that status. The current study focused on how

academic advisors perceive the work policy for SNAP affecting students' academic

success and focused on what changes can remedy the hardships that cause challenges

within their academic journey. To focus on how realistic the hardship is for these

students, Broton and Goldrick-Rab featured a portion of a letter written by Professor

Wick Sloan (2013) of Bunker Hill Community College to federal officials quoted:

> One peanut butter sandwich per school day for each of the nine million students
>
> on a Pell grant. How many of these are the same students who were eligible for
>
> free and reduced lunch in school? No one knows, and no one is counting. How

many are from households on food stamps? No one's asking, either. Why not,

then, 45 million peanut butter sandwiches at colleges each week? Until we come

up with a better idea (Sloan, 2013).

This quote was powerful in bringing to light a realization for some students when

evaluating federal policy's role in students' needs. One may find it a challenge for the

federal government to keep up with these students' adverse actions and what other

adjustments can support completing their college journey.

Although the government has made progress in determining what people can

qualify for SNAP, it does not focus enough on the current study of a student population

affected by the work policy. Besharov (2016) questions whether nutritional assistance is

income support, and one can argue for some of these students, yes, it is income support.

Broton et al. mentioned how difficult it is for students transitioning from high school to

college. A part of the transition is being able to utilize resources to assist students in

achieving graduation from college, but how can that be when they sometimes start off

struggling never getting the opportunity to get ahead. Besharov talks about the increase in

poverty, that caused a chain reaction in an increase in caseloads for SNAP applications.

However, the government also made changes that would allow more people to qualify,

but this percentage did not include full-time students. One of the changes was granting

the states the power to waive the work requirement for non-disabled adults without

dependents (ABAWDs) to receive SNAP (Besharov, 2016). Although full-time students

pursuing a degree were still required to work at least 20 hours a week when some of these

ABAWDs were not working or going to school. Bringing back the point, Broton et al.

discussed the government has not met the challenge of meeting college students' needs. During the transition from high school to college, one may find that first- and second-year students are the most vulnerable in trying to adjust and find their path to academic success and graduation, but this is also when most of them seek academic advising. One may conclude that academic advisors charged themselves with advising these students on being great at what they want to achieve and how to go about that without becoming overwhelmed then giving up.

Providing some statistical data may allow insight into the effect the work policy has on students not qualifying to receive assistance and academic progress. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) estimated eligibility for adults 18-64 years of age at 7,397,039 for SNAP benefits. That is considered one-third of other groups eligible, such as children less than 6 years old, children 6-17 years old, and adults 65 years of age or older (California Department of Social Services, 2018). The group of students addressed in the current study falls under the 18-64 age group. Although CDSS could not provide specific statistics for student ineligibility for SNAP benefits, Alameda County Social Services provided all student applications denied through the Cal Win application system.

For the past five years, 1,954 students were denied SNAP due to not meeting the student work requirement:

Table 1

Alameda County Social Services Agency Student Ineligible SNAP Applications

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017

Student Denials	297	322	404	419	512

Each year, the number of ineligible students has produced a linear trend in California, Alameda County (Alameda County Social Services Agency, 2018). To provide an idea of the percentage of students who may have SNAP benefit eligibility, the United States Department of Education recorded only 6% of students having work-study jobs (i.e., an exemption of the SNAP program guidelines to qualify students for benefits other than the work policy (United States Department of Education, 2013). After reviewing the different statistics and how it relates to the current study, it is essential to understand the positive and negative points of SNAP's work policy as it relates to academics for first- and second-year students.

Academic Advisors and Student Success in Academia

Prior literature published has provided numerous studies on student success and retention with the assistance of academic advising. Burt et al. (2013) conducted a quantitative study that involved 611 students who completed surveys evaluating academic advising's effectiveness through their self-assessment of meeting their needs, expectations, and academic success. The study was conducted at a Midwestern university with a sample size of 94.7% between the ages 18-25; 59.6% were college freshmen, 21.1% were sophomores, 10.9% were juniors, and 10.7% were seniors (Burt et al., 2013). Of the sample size provided, 94.9% were full-time students, 54.8% of students reported being contacted by an academic advisor one or two times a semester, 66% of students reported meeting with their academic advisor once a semester, and 51.2% reported their

advisement meetings lasting 10 to 20 minutes in length (Burt et al., 2013). Providing the percentages may help one understand the dynamic between a student and the academic advisor and how their involvement affects their academic success.

The study's goal was to show how academic advising impacted students' progress through higher GPAs, improved study skills, learning self-efficacy, and personal responsibility (Burt et al., 2013). Advisors empowered students and changed their academic experience; some of these students begin their journey with beliefs doubting their ability to succeed in college (Burt et al., 2013). Burt et al. also brought attention to first-generation students who are similar to first-year students faced with needing additional help in settling into this new academic world, often more than peers who have been in college longer. The advisement sessions with students are unique to each of their challenges in transitioning from high school to college (Burt et al., 2013). Although academic advising is essential on every college level, the focus remains high for first- and second-year students to maintain retention and address these students' specific needs.

Advisement meetings with students have impacted students' progress, and one may ponder how many times a student should meet with their academic advisors to achieve suitable progress. Swecker, Fifolt, and Searby (2013) decided to only utilize full-time first-generation students in the study they conducted, a different sample of students used by Burt et al. The school was specific in using a public research institution located in the southeastern region (Fifolt et al., 2013), and the data collection consisted of the retrieval of historical reports of student academic fact sheets they completed upon entering the fall term for the first time. Specific to the full-time first-generation student

population beginning their first semester (Fifolt et al., 2013), the completion of student fact sheets was in addition to gathering data from an advisor-advisee tracking system set up by the institution to track the numerical value of interactions between students and their advisors on a scale of 0 to 10.

Burt et al. used students from 114 different majors across the Midwestern university, with full and part-time student enrollment participation, and each year represented from freshmen to seniors totaling 611 students. Fifolt et al. were different in their approach to collecting data- no use of surveys, the exclusion of two majors-Arts and Humanities, and Business also excluding part-time students and students who submitted incomplete fact sheets, and their research focused only on full-time first-generation students entering for the first time. After enrollment, students self-reported to provide updates on a sample size of 363 (Fifolt et al., 2013). This resulted in the study illustrating an increase of 13% retention of first-generation students remaining in college. Burt et al. surveyed contacts and meetings between the student and their advisor, Fifolt et al. only counted face-to-face meetings between the student and their advisor.

As engagement and interaction between students and advisors increased, there was improvement in keeping students remaining enrolled (Fifolt et al., 2013). Meanwhile, Burt et al. study resulted in students responding positively to the influence and empowerment received from their academic advisors. Suggestions were made from both studies for colleges and universities to create an environment conducive to students encountering challenges and policies to help retention efforts and increase graduation rates among these students. Services offered through the colleges and universities may

differ because of size, but first- and second-year students may sometimes experience the same challenges whether attending a community college or a four-year university.

The interactions between first-generation students and academic advisors continue to be important, as previous studies have shown (Fifolt et al., 2013; Burt et al., 2013). Although the same services are available to other students, one may agree that first-generation students may not maintain college success. Shumaker and Wood (2016) conducted a study where the focus highlighted the differences in service access, efficacy, and use of the services between first-generation students and non-first-generation students. Using the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) model as a theoretical framework allowed the highlight of men of color (Wood et al., 2015), and with data use from the Community College Success Measure (CCSM), the instrument randomly distributed 17,000 men across 68 community colleges (Shumaker & Wood, 2016).

The sample was limited to 1,398 students at a suburban community college known for its large size and high-transfer rate (Shumaker & Wood, 2016). Data from the CCSM tool included assessing specific factors examined affecting the success of students who are underrepresented and underserved, mainly men of color (Shumaker & Wood, 2016). The study results indicated a difference between access to services, services used, and efficacy between first-generation students and non-first-generation students (Shumaker & Wood, 2016). Although both groups of students rendered the same services, first-generation students did not receive the same degree of benefits offered through their peers' services (Shumaker & Wood, 2016).

Suggestions were made for institutions to create ways to adequately serve first-generation students because, as it stands, institutions are missing the mark, and this population of students is experiencing a negative impact as a result (Shumaker & Wood, 2016). Although it was a small effect size (Shumaker & Wood, 2016), the need to address this issue remains. They added to the additional pressure of working while in college may also hurt first-generation students, especially in their first or second college years. One does not know the stresses of life encountered by these students desiring to complete higher education and fulfill their future career goals, but they may learn from academic advising on managing higher education and work instead of giving into being unsuccessful.

Academic advising may not cater to working students, but one could agree on the need for them far exceeds what has been seen traditionally provided in colleges and universities (Fifolt et al., 2013; Burt et al., 2013). Soria and Bultman (2014) conducted a study using self-identified working-class students who completed a web-based questionnaire with most communication via email. The instrument used, The Student Experience in the Research University (SERU), produced the survey that rendered 213,160 undergraduates from eight public universities in the Midwest, that are large and classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Soria & Bultman, 2014) for having a high level of research activity.

After evaluating completion among the sample, and accounting for missing data, the final sample size of the study was 10,869, mostly females and white students (Soria & Bultman, 2014). Looking at the previous study, Shumaker and Wood also used a

relatively large sample size, but the students were men of color and matriculated at community colleges instead of universities. The study aimed to identify whether these working-class students' educational experiences differ from middle and upper-class students based on their family background, race, employment, academic success, and residence (Soria & Bultman, 2014). All of these variables affected their college experience. Results highlighted working-class students feeling less welcomed especially with African Americans and Hispanics among their social classes, less involved with campus life and organizations, and lower expectations from faculty members (Soria & Bultman, 2014) and their peers from middle and upper-class backgrounds.

With the challenges these students faced, academic advisors could help these same students utilize their family backgrounds and social class to make their college experience better and memorable (Soria & Bultman, 2014). Connecting them with important people on campus and informing them of college procedures would influence the working-class student environment (Soria & Bultman, 2014). Although both studies conducted were with different samples, they both resulted in academic advisors identifying challenges and finding creative ways to combat the issues working-class students and first-generation students face in achieving higher education. The previous studies mentioned so far have highlighted different sample sizes, variables, and demographics, but one could agree the issue of students working while attending college has had some effect on their academic journey across racial lines, whether at community colleges or universities, not necessarily exclusive to only minority groups.

One could agree that first-generation, low-income, students encounter challenges with adjusting to college directly out of high school, no matter the economic background or race. A qualitative study was done by Moschetti and Hudley (2015) using the grounded theory approach, consisting of 20 White students at a Nevada State community college, completing an interview that asked the following questions:

1. How do white working-class, first-generation, community college students manage academic and social integration, and what institutional or interpersonal agents do they identify as assisting them in this process?

2. What did students perceive to be the most difficult aspects of their transition?

3. What factors did they identify as being the most valuable in making a successful transition (Moschetti & Hudley, 2015)?

The students were divided evenly between sex, and ranging in age from age 18 to 22, and with an annual family income of $20,000 to $55,000 (Moschetti & Hudley, 2015). The purpose of asking these questions was to understand the new demands required in adjusting to college life and how their support systems assisted in the transition (Moschetti & Hudley, 2015). Additional information was collected, such as current GPA, demographics, parent(s) educational background and income, and future study goals (Moschetti & Hudley, 2015). As the transcripts from the interviews were coded, responses were analyzed to locate similarities in the answers to support forms (Moschetti & Hudley, 2015). The study divided the support into four patterns:

- family support
- financial resources

- personal characteristics

- institutional support

The study resulted in the majority of the sample depending on emotional and social support from their family, with a number of them having to balance school and work, a little more than half using self-regulation, and a small percentage receiving support from the institution (Moschetti & Hudley, 2015). Unlike the students presented in the study by Soria and Bultman, where the students were of minority decent identifying African Americans, and Hispanics, Moschetti and Hudley highlighted white students only and how the struggle is present no matter what race with the similar economic backgrounds consisting of some low-income students. The students who participated in the current study worked anywhere from 11 hours a week to 35 hours a week (Moschetti & Hudley, 2015) but endured the same scrutiny of academic barriers and challenges as the minority students highlighted in the study completed by Soria and Bultman. Both studies resulted in institutions not doing enough to accommodate this population of students and their disconnection to campus resources to help them achieve their academic goals (Soria & Bultman 2014; Moschetti & Hudley, 2015). Contrary to the samples used in the previous studies mentioned, some low-income white students are a population not spoken of often but do exist among the working-class, first-generation students who also encounter challenges in transitioning from high school to college maintaining their academics.

The attention brought to a population overlooked significant factors focusing on the race/class differential and dynamics created among the attending educational system.

Martin's (2015) study at a university located in the Midwest contained seven students who were recommended through campus staff assistance. During snowball sampling, saturation was reached when there was no new information populating from the participants. Each participant selected had two interviews for 60 minutes each with journal entries between each interview. The phenomenological research consisted of a conceptual framework known as the Social Class Worldview Model (SCWM) (Lui, 2011), that is used to understand the economic structures, social class surroundings, and their feelings (Martin, 2015).

By using phenomenology, Martin wanted to examine low-income white students' lived experiences, and students were chosen with the following criteria:

- registered at the institution as an undergraduate student

- had at least two semesters of college completed

- had eligibility for the Pell Grant Program

- identified themselves as white/caucasian

- parent(s) who did not attend college (Martin, 2015)

Most of the participants worked approximately 40 hours a week and were all females except for one male participant (Martin, 2015). Three themes were identified from the study of social class:

- students spent their time working

- time spent on activities outside the classroom

- how money was spent by the student (Martin, 2015)

Three students have more than one job due to the max work-study positions, and still did

not provide enough income to supplement their needs, making additional work a

necessity (Martin, 2015). Time spent outside the classroom was work, but it was

volunteer work for two of the students. They felt their academics were more important

and used their free time to volunteer within their major (Martin, 2015). The other five

students felt there was no extra time for activities outside of school and work. All seven

students did not receive financial assistance from their parents, and their college expenses

were a priority to pay first then bills (e.g., rent, phone, utilities); this exhibited the

students' financial responsibility, hard work, and self-sufficiency (Martin, 2015).

Students presented opportunities to study abroad and participate in research studies with

faculty that would enhance their plans to pursue graduate education, but because students

could not allocate more time to do so or afraid of jeopardizing their academics further,

they missed out on these opportunities (Martin, 2015). The study was limited to only

students of white/caucasian identity who were low-income at one university, and the

suggestion was made for educators to consider the extent of how much low-income

students can access to increase their social and cultural capital while enrolled in college

(Martin, 2015). As stated by Soria and Bultman and also Shumaker and Wood, the

institutions were encouraged to find ways to accommodate working-class low-income

students to relieve some of the challenges encountered in maintaining their academics

moving forward to graduation, Martin has presented a study with similar considerations.

When looking at the different aspects that may hinder these students from academic

success, one may consider why some students do not make it to graduation and what causes students to leave college.

In reviewing the previous studies (Soria & Bultmann, 2014; Martin, 2015), one could agree that educational institutions may find themselves armed with the task of figuring out how to prevent student dropouts from crucial transition points in their student experience. Price and Tovar (2014) utilized the 2007 administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSE) to examine the correlation between student engagements and how it affects the graduation rate as reported to the 2009 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The study consisted of 261 colleges, that produced 162,394 students who participated in taking the 2007 CCSE. This was 97.8% of the total 166,031 students over 279 colleges that the CCSE administered to, but 18 colleges did not report graduation rates or were not U.S. based institutions, so those students were not included (Price & Tovar, 2014). The data provided through CCSE involved student engagements, that included interactions with faculty, classroom discussions, participation in opportunities to learn (e.g., internships, learning communities, developmental education), student and academic support services, and extra-curricular activities (Price & Tovar, 2014). Students also expressed educational challenges involving synthesizing and memorizing information, assignments, exams, and college in general (Price & Tovar, 2014). Both part-time and full-time students were a part of this study that resulted in the following items being statistically positively correlated to the graduation rates regarding academics:

- students completing projects together

- encouraging class assignments to be completed together with other classmates outside of class

- providing opportunities for students to volunteer to tutor or be paid to tutor other students

- utilizing out of class time with faculty to discuss ideas around readings and material from class (Price & Tovar, 2014)

Some were nonacademic that correlated statistically to graduation rates:

- coping mechanisms to deal with responsibilities such as family and work

- support systems offered through community colleges for students to thrive socially

- frequency in which students received academic advising and career planning services

- finding more efficient ways to provide financial assistance for students to afford college

- provided ways to address support specific to students' needs allowing them to succeed academically at a community college (Price & Tovar, 2014).

The study's limitations included only students who graduated within the two years, the 18 colleges who did not report that were not U.S. based, and because the study excluded private colleges, 96% were participants from public two-year institutions. With an active collaborative learning student engagement and the supportive institutional environment, this statistical study provided results that can increase graduation rates (Price & Tovar, 2014). Comparing this study to what Soria and Bultman completed using the SERU

instrument, both studies used data previously collected through instruments rendering a large sample size of examining student responses. Although Soria and Bultman focused on universities instead of two-year institutions such as Price and Tovar presented, both studies highlighted the need for schools to examine their support systems for students' specific needs and expand on them accordingly. While many of the recommendations made from the studies reviewed involve the institutions expanding on their programs designed to help first-generation students, the difference in how first-generation students experience academic success oppose to non-first-generation students may or may not have similar experiences with their academic success.

In an effort for colleges and universities to provide equality to all students, sometimes services provided for non-first-generation students may not always be suitable for first-generation students, especially those matriculating from low economic and challenging backgrounds. Soria completed another study along with Stebleton (2013) using the SERU instrument again with approximately 58,000 students among six universities to analyze the differences between non-first-generation students and first-generation students' academic achievement pathways. The SERU, which Soria and Bultman also used in a previous study mentioned, is a census scan of the undergraduate experience (Stebleton & Soria, 2013; Soria & Bultman, 2014). The survey had a response rate of 39.97% from 145,150 students who were given the survey ($n = 58,017$). Of that percentile, 26.4% of the respondents were first-generation students (Stebleton & Soria, 2013). The results rendered a statistically significant difference in the following categories:

- feelings of depression, being upset, and stress

- weak English and math skills

- inadequate study skills

- competing family and job responsibilities (Stebleton & Soria, 2013)

First-generation students were statistically lower in the categories listed as those of non-first-generation students, finding that these obstacles significantly affected their opportunity to succeed in college (Stebleton & Soria, 2013), and competing family and job responsibilities had the highest difference between the two groups. The study's limitations include only using universities and information being self-reported on a large survey instrument relying on student responses (Stebleton & Soria, 2013). Suggestions for future studies included using multiple institution types, examining their answers by year in college, and adding a qualitative study analyzing students' journeys (Stebleton & Soria, 2013). In re-accessing, students found challenges involved in balancing school and work. As stated in previous studies (Stebleton & Soria, 2013; Soria & Bultman, 2014), first-generation and non-first-generation students are faced with a lack of motivation when challenges of the balance of life occur. Sometimes students find support systems and ways to keep their motivation to complete their college journey.

Although previous studies have shown negative outcomes for working while in college, some students have encountered a positive experience with the work that has motivated them and set up support systems to succeed in collegiate life. Irlbeck et al. (2014) conducted a study of nine students from different departments located at Texas Tech University (TTU) within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural

Resources (CASNR). Students were interviewed face-to-face, each interview lasting 30-

75 minutes in length (Irlbeck et al., 2014). The theoretical framework used was the Input-

Environment-Outcome (IEO) Model and Astin's Involvement Theory, that detailed the

support systems and motivations of first-generation college students (Irlbeck et al., 2014).

Astin's Model basis in this study shows educational evaluations completeness does not

happen unless information on student inputs (I), the educational environment (E), and

student outcomes (O) are inclusive with the measurement (Astin, 1993). The study's

purpose was to determine what motivated students to stay successful in college and what

support systems they had that contributed to their college experience (Irlbeck et al.,

2014). The questions asked:

- What factors led to the first-generation students' enrollment at TTU?

- In what programs/organizations/activities were students involved?

- On what support groups and support systems are reliable and accountable?

- How satisfied are they with their experiences at the TTU and within CASNR

  thus far (Irlbeck et al., 2014)?

From the questions asked, the results led to students' support systems consisting of

academic advisors/professors, parents, and friends, all of which the students find

themselves confiding in when times are rough (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Irlbeck et al. study

also resulted in three factors that determined the students' motivation for attending

college: self-motivation, parental/family support, and teacher encouragement. One

question specifically focused on the financial aspect that students talked about the

struggle and how a couple of them had to leave school, worked full-time to save money,

and return to school using a budget to finish (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Another student mentioned how he worked all summer to make sure he had enough money to pay for college throughout the year (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Although each student had a different story, that may have included no financial support from family or parents, they all were very determined not to let the financial struggles keep them from achieving their academic goals. Some of the students relied on organizations as support systems, that also encouraged them to succeed. The limitations of this study consist of using only one department within one university and only nine participants who were first-generation students only (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Ideally for future research in duplicating the study, it is suggested to use more participants and other universities to examine differences between the studies. The continuous research among first-generation students may impact the outcome of their academic success in a positive way.

Summary and Conclusion

Each study reviewed in the literature provided insight into how students working can affect their academic success. Some of the studies provided results that demonstrated a negative impact on the success (Soria & Bultman, 2014), and some studies provided positive results where students felt they were succeeding in their academic journey (Price & Tovar, 2014). Given the background of the SNAP program and student qualifications, the research has pointed out the struggles of student hunger, the balance they encounter with working and going to college, how the SNAP program has not catered to the "normal" student, and the differences between the size, demographics, and the colleges where these studies have taken place. Although each study offered suggestions after

completion what can be done differently for future studies, it is unknown how academic advisors perceive the work and school balance. It is also unknown how useful the SNAP work policy is for the "normal" student, what they perceive can be done by the government and educational systems to improve the retention rate of first- and second-year students, and evaluating the importance of work and school balance for first-generation students. Understanding why academics are affected by the work policy created a platform for preventive methods that may evade students from becoming unsuccessful in achieving their educational goals. Magnifying the focus on how academic advisors perceive the SNAP work policy and college balance directly addressed if the policy affects the employment and academic success balance for students as it was not addressed in the reviewed literature.

Utilizing TOC in policy and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs enabled the understanding of how first- and second-year students embrace the importance of the work and school balance and how academic advisors highlighted what changes can be made to assist more students in being successful through their academic journey. Explaining in detail the government's restraints and how the students' needs appear neglected due to these constraints allowed academic advisors to give what they perceive as a successful college experience, an opportunity to be heard among the masses. The research provided in the literature review involved students; the hope is for the data collection process presented to enlighten the literature gap from an academic advisor's perspective.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

This research aimed to understand how SNAP's work policy affects college

students' academic success through qualitative research. Previous studies have confirmed

that working more gives students less time toward their studies and can affect their

academic success (Mamiseishvili, 2010; Richardson et al., 2014). However, these same

studies did not explain whether the work policy to qualify for SNAP contributes to a lack

of academic success. The previous studies also did not address other factors that may lead

to why the number of work hours is considerably high compared to a full-time college

enrollment schedule. This study's phenomenography approach allowed academic

advisors to provide their thoughts on the work and school balance phenomenon for first-

generation, low-income students entering college directly from high school.

Understanding why academics are affected by the SNAP work policy created a platform

for preventive methods that may prevent students from becoming unsuccessful in

achieving their educational goals. Academic advisors guide these students by helping

them through their educational journey. Detailed information provided shows how the

data collection and plan proceeded and the researcher's role.

For this research, I used semi-structured and open-ended questions to interview

academic advisors from community colleges in the State of California, Alameda County.

Explanation of the logic behind participants' selection, the issues of trustworthiness, and

how the data were analyzed are presented in this chapter. In beginning the process, the

rationale and research design clarified why the literature gap regarding this topic draws

focus. Understanding why academic success is affected by the work policy created a

platform for preventive methods that may remove barriers to student success in achieving their educational goals. Magnifying the focus on how academic advisors perceive the SNAP work policy and college balance directly addressed if the policy affects the employment and academic success balance for students as it was not addressed in the reviewed literature.

Research Design and Rationale

In addressing the challenges of managing a full-time college education with part-time employment while securing the basic needs to survive as a student, the following research question was asked: How do academic advisors perceive the effect of the work policy required for SNAP benefits on first-generation students' academic success during their first and second year of college? Using a qualitative methodology for this topic allowed a detailed description of how the work policy requiring 20 hours a week with SNAP affected academics among low-income, first-generation students. As Rudestam and Newton (2015) described it, qualitative research provides a precise account of events, behaviors, and situations regarding opinions and personal involvement, representing words and ideas rather than statistics and numbers. Using qualitative methodology provided an opportunity for academic advisors to explain what they perceive of the policy and how it affects academics, and phenomenography was the best research design to provide those results.

Phenomenography was used to enhance the reader's interest in how SNAP's work policy affects academic performance among college students. Some academic advisors have argued that the policy worked fine as written and should not change because it

teaches students responsibility and independence. Others have opposed the requirement

and argued that 20 hours a week is too much for students to balance their studies and

work responsibilities, specifically within their first and second year of college.

Phenomenography consists of a qualitative research method to map how people perceive,

understand, conceptualize, and experience the phenomena in various aspects of the world

around them (Marton, 1986). Cibanga and Hepworth (2016) stated that what

phenomenologists interpret is the meaning of reality experienced by individuals. Because

academic advisors help students achieve their academic goals, the work policy's

effectiveness or ineffectiveness is essential for them to perceive as students look to them

for guidance. Marton talked about how phenomenography would deal with both

experiential and conceptual and what is thought of as lived. Also, what is culturally

learned and individually developed is how one relates themselves to the world around

them (Marton, 1986). Other approaches may not render the results needed to focus in the

work policy's positives and negatives exclusively.

Other research designs would not have been effective for addressing this study's

research question. A narrative study gives a chronological order of life experiences from

individuals collecting data to research the similarities between the connected events or

actions (Creswell, 2013). Although a series of actions verified from the time of the SNAP

program and the policy induction until now, a narrative study would not explain whether

the policy works for the specific population of students stated or not. Creswell defined

phenomenology as the same meaning of concepts for a group of individuals through their

lived experiences taken from the narrative study. This policy does not work the same for

every student as some students are exempt from the work policy because they may have children in their care under the age of 6, or may have a disability, or may be over the age of 49. The lived experiences of the students would not have the same meaning. Nevertheless, because the lived experiences involved how academic advisors perceive some of these students who do not qualify for SNAP due to the work policy, phenomenography was the best choice.

Grounded theory is defined as a generation of theories to include processes, interactions, or actions that come together by views of a larger sample group (Creswell, 2013). The sample group used would not be significant as using a large student group sample as provided in some of the previous studies mentioned in chapter two, and although the processes to do their job through interactions and actions they have with students are present, it does not include an explanation of effectiveness within the group. If the research topic included culture, the ethnography approach could be an option. Creswell explained how the researcher describes and interprets the learned and shared patterns of beliefs, values, behaviors, and language of a culture-sharing group. Low-income, first-generation students within their first and second year of college may be of any race or nationality, and the academic advisor interviewees may be too. Although the data collection included what academic advisors perceive, it did not focus on similar cultural groupings of race mentioned or asked as a participant's condition. The rationale for using phenomenography involved an educational setting, as stated by Marton, and as the study progressed to data collection, the role of the researcher was that of an observer as opposed to a participant.

Role of the Researcher

The primary and most important role of the researcher in a study is to observe the participants and their behaviors and responses. According to Creswell (2009), an observer may record data in a semi-structured way using questions an inquirer wants answered through a face-to-face interview or via telephone. As a professional with public assistance programs working with SNAP clients directly, the interviews I completed with academic advisors did not conflict professionally or through positions of power. Although enforcing the work policy currently in place comes with the job, it did not create bias as my purpose was to find out how effective or ineffective the policy is for low-income, first-generation students within their first and second year of college. Bias may occur when focusing on this specific group of students being a part of the minority, but when eliminating the bias, the interview questions concentrated explicitly on policy and the restrictions that prevented students from a successful college journey and the basics needed to complete that journey. Rudestam and Newton (2015) suggested that no identification of race or ethnic group should occur as this information is irrelevant to the research study and was not asked or addressed. Addressing any other ethical issues with the research or participants were stated as they occurred, the goal was to eliminate biases and ethical issues for a transparent research study.

Research in the workplace can contribute to fulfilling the gaps that exist within the literature. Addressing the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a policy from a perceived point of view of academic advisors did not pose a conflict of interest for me, as the study examines whether the policy works or not for this population of students. No incentives

were offered because doing so could have presented a sense of coercion, and the

participants were involved solely on a volunteer basis. If a participant asked about the

possibility of receiving an incentive, I explained why no incentive was provided, and at

any time, the participant could remove themselves from the study. Given the pool of

participants, biases and ethical issues remained under control with transparency.

Methodology

I used a qualitative methodology through phenomenography to understand, from

an academic advisor's perspective, how the SNAP work policy affects college students'

academic performance. Each subsection of the Methodology section (i.e., Participant

Selection Logic, Instrumentation, Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, Data

Collection, and Data Analysis Plan) helped fill the gap in the literature described

previously. Having access to community colleges' websites and contact information

assisted with this study's recruitment and participation. Interviewing academic advisors

at their convenience allowed for a smooth transition from data collection to data analysis.

Participant Selection Logic

Because the interviews' topic includes a specific population of students enrolled

in their first and second year of college, academic advisors on junior college campuses

were chosen. Further, this sample also worked closely with the student population. The

group of participants consisted of academic advisors who counseled students. Between all

five community colleges located in California, Alameda County, 58 academic advisors

pool to create a reasonable sample size for using the phenomenography approach. The

rationale for using community colleges instead of universities was the limited sample size

generated from universities located in Alameda County, there are only two. Another reason was that community colleges are two-year institutions where the participants' counsel students within their first and second college years. These students graduate with an Associate of Arts degree and may transfer to a university to further their education and receive a Bachelor's Degree if desired.

Having a variety of community colleges to choose from, made the selection process less challenging. Each junior college provided a website specific to the counseling department that listed staff and an email to contact staff. Most of them provided their educational background and experience in academic advising and counseling, that helped identify those qualified. Some of the websites included counseling assistants; they were not inclusive of the 58 academic advisors. From that total, 16 participants were interviewed using what is called a purposeful sample. Marshall (1996) has identified purposeful sampling as the most productive sampling in response to the research questions, retrieving the data, and synthesizing each interview's findings. One community college received an invitation letter. With the other four community colleges involved, an application was required to submit for permission to conduct research. Each participant volunteering received and signed a consent form. The consent form was only for academic advisors, some schools have career counselors, but the understanding was focused strictly on the academics of first- and second-year students. The goal of meeting the minimum of 16 interviews was to ensure saturation was reached within a reasonable sample size. Creswell stated that saturation is met when enough data has been gathered, and no new information has been contributed to the topic. With a total

of 58 academic advisors from five community colleges, one was able to meet the minimum sample size for this phenomenography research. Forming the Instrumentation process was important as time was limited for participants wishing to be interviewed as a part of this research study.

The sample for this research was selected from the entire population and was also of a suitable size. All the community colleges listed for this research study were two-year institutions, and each academic advisor recruited met the minimum qualification of having counseled first- and second-year students within their career. Any concerns with participants withdrawing or refusing to participate was addressed by recruiting from the next community college district within Alameda County. The state university was the last resource as it was not in the scope of community colleges but has academic advisors who guide first-generation students within their first and second college years. Addressing the issues of non-respondents after adding the additional colleges, as stated by Miller and Smith (1983), was strategically encouraging participants and offering possible positive results that may result in social change. The current study emphasized the importance of students not dropping out and participating in the study allowed for a chain reaction for positive social change in decreasing the dropout rate among students.

Instrumentation

The goal of each interview was to identify a different aspect of what the research topic encompassed. Rudestam and Newton stated that the instrument chosen to complete a qualitative research study would be the human observer; having an interview that is "loosely" structured allowed progression through the interview. The research study

consisted of five semi-structured and open-ended questions, asked during the individual interviews with the academic advisors. The only identifying information revealed was their names and the title of their job during these interviews. Each interview was audio recorded aligned with the availability of the participant. Because the participants were being interviewed on a volunteer basis, allowing the participant, a choice contributed to a comfortable and productive interview. O'Sullivan et al. (2008) discussed open-ended questions are better used to identify a possible range of responses, avoid biases in those responses, and provide an opportunity for participants to elaborate and yield detailed responses. Establishing sufficiency through the interview questions, explains why the data collection instrument fits this qualitative research study.

The saturation of data may create problems with research validation if it is not met. This was considered a potential bad result. Creswell describes meeting saturation as when no additional new information can be added after the reached level of data collected is complete. If saturation was met, the validity of the research may be dependable. This was considered a good result.

Each question created an opportunity to address different parts of the conceptual frameworks of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and TOC in a policy framework. The questions were designed to focus on each conceptual framework's key points to highlight how the work policy affects academics for students. TOC provided five steps of focus: identifying the constraint, exploiting the constraint, subordinate the process, elevating the constraint, and repeating the cycle (Synchronix Technologies, n.d.). Ray et al. (2008) completed a case study using TOC to demonstrate their resources' effectiveness through

a manufacturing organization. Looking at market demand and how the organization could respond to the restraints of meeting the demand, comparing each approach to outsource and how essential it is to the organization growth (Ray et al. 2008) was the key factor in using the same approach with open-ended questions during the in-depth interviews with the academic advisors. The questions gave insight into how effective the work policy is with balancing academics for first-generation students, evaluating each response to consider what fits students adjusting in their first and second year of college. One may agree that looking at basic needs for students to balance work and classes may also show the impact of receiving SNAP benefits on this generation of students and the constraints the work policy provided to prevent students from eligibility.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs consist of five categories of basic needs in hierarchical order: (a) physiological, (b) safety, (c) belongingness and love, (d) esteem, and (e) self-actualization (McLeod, 2017). The first two years of college are associated with the basic physiological needs and safety-coincides with the need for SNAP benefits to students and a review of how effective the work policy is that prevents many from qualifying. Physiological needs include food, water, warmth, and rest, while safety is self-explanatory and includes security (McLeod, 2017). Petty (2014) uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs to focus on first-generation students' transition and what better outcomes can come from how colleges and universities provided services to help them succeed. Because there have been many studies conducted to speak to students about the matter, the current study presented a perspective from academic advisors who regularly counseled this population. Asking a poll of questions generated answers on explaining

the balance of work and school and if the policy was designed to help or hinder students. Some pondered the basic questions of why the work policy is 20 hours a week to qualify for a program that provides some of those basic needs such as food and water. Some argued it is an opportunity for students to transition into adulthood while attending college but is it a good idea straight out of high school, specifically first- and second-year students. Petty explained the importance of each level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is to this genre of students in preparing them for higher education. Motivation and success are key factors in college completion, that are a part of the psychological and self-fulfillment needs of the hierarchy, but at what cost to students could the basic needs be jeopardized. The in-depth interview questions were semi-structured to allow the academic advisors to speak freely in answering the questions presented and clarify how they perceive the work policy is benefiting students or possibly setting them back. Although every student may have a different approach to balancing work and school, they all have the basic needs required to have a positive and productive college journey.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The collection of data is important and difficult to achieve since academic advisors are known to have busy schedules. Email addresses were available for each academic advisor on each school's website. After the community colleges and participants granted permission, and completed the consent forms, they were allowed to choose how to complete the in-depth interview, giving them a sense of comfort and openness to complete the interview. Each interview conducted took place within Alameda County. The interviewer/observer collects the data via face-to-face, Skype, or

phone, using a purposeful sample that Marshall has identified as the most productive sample in retrieving data and synthesizing findings. With a minimum of 12 participants, the schedule consisted of one interview a day within a three-week duration period to collect data. If time permitted to do more than one interview a day, the data collection events would be completed earlier than scheduled. Depending on how each participant selected their method of conducting the interview, an audio and video recorder for face to face, Skype, or phone interviews was record each interaction. Interviews conducted via email are downloaded to a flash drive. If there was a need for additional time for interviews, there was room for adjustments. With setting up scheduled interviews and ways to record data, sometimes unforeseen circumstances occurred, so it was best to prepare and have multiple plans of action.

To confirm meeting the minimum participant accountability, it was imperative to have some colleges on standby to participate in this study. If the pool of 58 academic advisors did not produce at least 12 participants, the range of colleges was expanded to the next community college district and the state university located in Alameda County. If additional participants were necessary beyond that, the state university was considered and also located in Alameda County. During each interview, the opportunity presented itself for follow-up questions depending on the participant's response to each question. Whether video conference or telephone interviews were utilized, both would need transcription from the interview (Janesick, 2016). Once the interviews were completed, Rudestam and Newton suggested informing the participant of the purpose and the results of the study. As stated earlier, contact information was requested to be completed at the

end of the consent form if participants were interested in the study results. At the end of the interview, a debriefing was given to explain the purpose of the study, and for those opting to receive results, would confirm contact information. Upon completion of recruitment, with confirmed participants and the collection of data, the plan for data analysis explaining the coding, any software used, the connection of data to certain research questions, and how to manage discrepant situations was forthcoming.

Data Analysis Plan

The phenomenological approach seems to correlate with the questions asked during the in-depth interviews for the study. Frankfort-Nachmias et al. (2015) discussed the phenomenological approach that provides a social phenomenon of a day-to-day process within a study, with the current study involving academic advisors and how they perceive the work policy affecting students' academics in their first and second year of college. How they can effectively do their job in guiding students through the educational system makes a difference when students can have accessibility to basic needs required to be successful in higher education. Because the work policy for students to qualify for SNAP benefits directly affects students receiving some of the basic needs required to survive, the current study offered some suggestions as to what can be done to get a better understanding of work/school balance or how the government can help change the policy to work more in favor of this generation of students. Taking the answers from the in-depth questions to analyze the coding scheme helped assist in this matter. After completion of the interviews, I analyzed the data by using Colaizzi's seven-step process (1978), that included the following:

1. Reviewing transcripts multiple times.

2. Highlighting relevant statements related to the research problem.

3. Simplifying significant statements.

4. Grouping information into congruent clusters.

5. Developing expressive themes based on the terms and phrases from interviews.

6. Identifying the phenomena through data examination.

7. Member checking.

The analysis and coding process chosen to complete this study converged on the results and used the Rev Transcription service and HyperRESEARCH software capabilities.

Based on the previous research mentioned in chapter two and the open-ended questions provided for the current study, the use of inductive coding best suited this dataset's coding procedure. Frankfort-Nachmias et al. (2015) stated that the most frequent responses to questions are inclusive of the coding scheme and are used to analyze the data. For example, some of the interviews of students mentioned in previous studies in chapter two discussed the work and school balance, had common issues, such as:

- their academics suffered from not having enough time to study due to work

- their financial stability depended on them working

- working was a must to survive and have basic needs of housing and food

- to meet career goals and have the experience to be competitive in the workplace

These were a few of the responses given when students discussed working part time and enrolled in college full-time. Table 2 provides a chart that Creswell (2002) created to explain the inductive coding Process:

Table 2

The Inductive Coding Process

Initial read through text data	Identify specific segments of information	Label the segments of information to create categories	Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories	Create a model incorporating the most important categories
Many pages of text	Many segments of text	30-40 categories	15-20 categories	3-8 categories

(Creswell, 2002, Figure 9.4, p. 266)

Using Colaizzi's seven-step process and inductive coding acknowledged the common responses and provided clarity in the current study with the in-depth questions presented at each interview.

HyperRESEARCH software suited the researcher's needs because it effectively accommodated features such as mobility and phenomenography functions involving more than three interviews. The software allowed the portability and use of multiple computers needed for a constantly moving researcher, whether for work, family, school, or social organizations. As a researcher, HyperRESEARCH provided the flexibility of on-the-spot interviews using a flash drive and using Rev (2017) to transcribe any audio or video data recorded. Rev is a transcription company based in San Francisco, CA. Rev

assisted in transcribing all interviews completed in the current study. Although theories

are present for the current study, HyperRESEARCH has a feature that allows theory

building, that can help the researcher build an essential analysis for the study and is cost-

effective with money-saving options (HyperRESEARCH, n.d.). Saving time and money

for multi-function software caused for smooth navigation through the data collection and

analysis process. In collecting and coding data, discrepant interactions may occur, and the

researcher must have a manner to treat such occurrences. Discrepant responses from the

in-depth interviews, once coded and analyzed using the processes provided previously,

would be addressed immediately for clarification through member checking. How

academic advisors think about each situation with individual students has more value

than just simply answering the questions as asked. This is why the semi-structured

approach to conducting in-depth interviews was so important. Rudestam and Newton

stated that sometimes these findings in discrepant cases were exceptions to the rule and

were opportunities to test a provisional hypothesis. With each participant and their

responses to the questions comes the evaluation of trustworthiness and how to address

them.

Issues of Trustworthiness

The next seven topics discussed in detail the issues of trustworthiness. Each were

defined, allowing a dissection of the data collected and its worthiness, and how important

each of these factors into an academic advisor's response.

Credibility

Credibility was important in validating the data that being collected and evaluated. Rudestam and Newton define credibility as spending an extended period with the participants looking for distorted responses, making sure responses are in great detail, comparing the data as recorded via video or audio, clarifying the findings, and making constant revisions with data becoming more available. With the current study, the semi-structured interviews allowed freedom of detailed responses with follow-up questions that help express their own experience as academic advisors and allowed the researcher to compare each experience. The saturation of the sample was ideal in establishing credibility amongst this population of academic advisors. Utilizing only community colleges provided their experience and focus of working with first-generation students within their first and second college years. Dealing with a specific sample population, one had to provide how to handle transferability in a research study.

Transferability

Transferability was achieved when the results of a study could be applied to other studies with similar contexts. Transferability was important to capture for those phone interviews. The researcher collects and provides data on the behavior and setting of the interview for each participant. Rudestam and Newton describe it as generalizing the sample population and their situations while remaining modest and mindful of the context of their lives. With the current study, the researcher generalized the findings with the small number of participants from each school and detailed each interview, and set accordingly, detailing similarities and differences as they occurred. Although locating the

literature gap was important, it needed to duplicate and sustain dependability after the research study.

Dependability

Dependability was meaningful for reliability concerns. The efficiency and accuracy of recording and transcribing data and training the interviewer is key to replicating a study (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). As the researcher, audio and video recording were given to Rev to provide transcripts from each interview completed (Rev, 2017). Coding each response to a theme is important for others to arrive at similar conclusions when replicating this study. Previous studies and additional information or statistics provided by the academic advisors based on their campus origin and population inclusive of a triangulation method that Rudestam and Newton (2015) noted as modifications occurring after data collection. With five different community colleges used for the current study, it was imperative to confirmability, allowing the study results to stand apart from others.

Confirmability

Confirmability can be considered an audit trail of events that have taken place in each interview and the analysis process. Although the academic advisors were from different colleges and universities around the United States, based on their responses to the interview questions, many of them had common experiences, that allowed confirmability to be evident in the data collection. As Rudestam and Newton mentioned, confirmability allows for a period of self-reflection and may eliminate any biases and assumptions that may influence the research process. The follow-up questions and

responses were important because of some similarities and differences in how each academic advisor guided their students. This is also a period where detailed accounts of responses, gestures, and feelings on particular questions and topics were magnified and noted accordingly. Detailing each step of the interaction between the researcher and participant was included within the ethical procedures, providing the necessary documentation for the data collection process.

Validity

Standardized interview protocol was an important part of research validity. Patton (2015) described interviewing each participant the same as the foundation of validity, asking all participants the same questions in the same manner. If the data collected from the interviewing of participants were true to the phenomenon, one could agree that the research has validity. Because each academic advisor does the same job, the line of questions, and how they were asked were the same. Keeping with the momentum, validity in the data analysis was also processed the same way as Rev transcribed each interview, and each response was coded and grouped to form a theme using the inductive coding process and Colazzi's seven-step process. Although some responses were not as lengthy or as detailed as others, the same process was used to code and analyze, ensuring validity.

Reliability

Patton described involving research designs that are understandable and produce useful results as reliable sources. Phenomenography is a method of interviewing about lived experiences, not of the participant but the lived experiences around them by others

(Marton, 1986). One can view lived experiences as realizations that strengthen the reliability of the research study. Each academic advisor had their own lived experience with each of the students they counseled. Reliability was increased by pointing out the similar solutions each academic advisor used to assist their students through this journey, which at some junction contributed from the follow-up questions asked during the interview. As some shared their own experiences in college, they also shared how successful their approach was in their students' academic journey despite each student having different challenges. Because phenomenography involved lived experiences, this study's replicability can happen, and this study has valid reliability.

Ethical Procedures

The recruitment process for participants also initiated ethical procedures by gaining access and conducting in-depth interviews in a professional and thoughtful manner. Each academic advisor listed as full-time faculty for the five community colleges in Alameda County were given a copy of an informal consent form that includes introducing the researcher. The period in which to get enough participants was three weeks as it was strictly on a volunteer basis. At the end of the three weeks, the goal was to have more than the bare minimum and enough to saturate the academic advisors' population within these five colleges in Alameda County. There are no payments or gifts granted for participating, and each participant would only use their name and title as identifying information for this study. Any concerns with participants withdrawing or refusing were addressed by recruiting from the next community college district within Alameda County. The state university was the last resource. The state university is not in

the scope of community colleges but has academic advisors who guide first-generation students within their first and second college years. Those who withdraw or refuse to participate would receive an exit letter thanking them for their consideration to participate in the study. Addressing the issues of non-respondents after adding the additional colleges, as stated by Miller and Smith, is strategically encouraging participants and offering possible positive results that may result in social change. The current study emphasized the importance of students not dropping out and participating in the study could start a chain reaction for positive social change in decreasing the dropout rate among students. Addressing ethical procedures within the interviews was essential, as this dictates the treatment of data.

Each academic advisor was interviewed and expected to answer how each provided their own experience and how they perceive certain aspects of their job without identifying specific students' information. The questions asked were regarding students' bodies and did not require them to identify any particular student in providing their responses. The questions presented were generalized and did not present any confidentiality issues. The recording of data, flash drives, and documents were kept secure in possession of the researcher for at least one year after the study completion and publishing. At that time, everything would be shredded and destroyed. Because the researcher is an employee of Alameda County Social Services Agency as an Eligibility Service Technician III, there may be a conflict of interest because the researcher process and evaluate applications for SNAP benefits eligibility. Some may be students within this population. Because the study was to understand the work policy and how it affects

students' academics, the study did not directly affect or conflict with the researcher's job duties.

All data provided by participants were not shared with other researchers or organizations. Permission from the community colleges needed to be granted in order to recruit from the perspective campuses. Each interview was recorded via audio, video, or downloaded to a flash drive. The recording of data, flash drives, and documents were kept secure in possession of the researcher for a minimum of one year after the study was completed and published, at which time everything would be shredded and destroyed. A copy of the study/results were provided to each participant at their request and the colleges granted permission to complete the study. Detailed information was requested from each interested party about how they would like the results delivered (i.e., email, mail, hand delivery). Participants could withdraw from the research study at any time, without negative consequences. Should a participant withdraw, the data was eliminated from the study and destroyed.

Summary

The research methods chapter has given a detailed account of the research design and rationale utilized for this research study and the researcher's role during this process. The qualitative methodology and ability to replicate this study were provided so that others may have similar results or may synthesize their work against the results derived from this research. During the participant selection, it was noted that 58 academic advisors would participate. The research study's minimum reached saturation is estimated to be 12 participants.

Providing the list of instruments, procedures to recruit, participation, and data collection, helped explain the methods chapter's main points. The assistance of audio/video devices, transcription services, and documentation gives meaning to the data analysis and ultimately synthesizing the results. Expressing the study's trustworthiness and addressing ethical issues that may occur leaves an unbiased approach and may diffuse conflicts of interests. The next chapter provides each setting of the interviews, the data collection, and the results analyzed and synthesized to fill the gap in the literature provided at the beginning of this study and gain a clear understanding of the findings and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 4: Results

Using qualitative research, this study's purpose was to understand how SNAP's work policy affects college students' academic success. Understanding what academic advisors perceive as issues causing the problem was looked at through using phenomenography. The phenomenography approach allowed academic advisors to provide their thoughts on this phenomenon of the work and balance for first-generation, low-income students entering college directly from high school. Understanding why academics are affected by the work policy created a platform for preventive methods that may evade students from becoming unsuccessful in achieving their educational goals. Academic advisors guide these students by helping them through their educational journey. The focus on how they perceive this work policy and the school balance directly addressed whether SNAP's work policy affects these students' employment and academic success balance.

In addressing the challenges of managing a college education, while working part-time and adjusting from high school to college, as a first-generation student, the research question was as follows: How do academic advisors perceive the effect of the work policy required for SNAP benefits on first-generation students' academic success during their first and second year of college?

The results of the study provided multiple scenarios focusing on SNAP's work policy and how it affected college students' academics. While this chapter highlights the academic advisors' settings and demographics, the data collection and data analysis were just as important in answering the research question. The evidence of trustworthiness and

the research study results bring closure to the chapter summary. In closing, the research question was summarized and answered through a phenomenography point of view with an interruption, which included a global pandemic.

Setting

A disease known as COVID 19, which started in Wuhan, China, made its way to the United States, preventing the possibility of having face-to-face interviews due to mandatory shelter-in-place orders (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). The population of participants working remotely from home immediately made it somewhat challenging to schedule phone interviews due to several possible responsibilities, such as homeschooled children and their daily work duties. With the dramatic shift in everyday life because of what was now considered a pandemic throughout the world (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020), the possibility the pandemic influenced one's interpretations of the research study and the questions asked was evident. The focus became to practicing social distancing, washing hands frequently, and sanitize and clean common surfaces used often. Although all were important to stay clear of COVID-19, I was creative in making the study meaningful to their line of work. Changes that stemmed from the pandemic affected the ability of the sample population to participate in-person interviews, requiring me to expand beyond the original scope mentioned earlier.

Demographics

Originally, the demographics were thought to be sufficient for credible data collection and completing the interview scheduling sample size. Within the local area

where I am employed, Alameda County in the State of California, I was set to utilize five

community colleges. After receiving permission to move forward with data collection

using all seven schools, I could only obtain two interviews out of the 12-minimum in a

two and half month time frame after only receiving permission from two of the five

community colleges and the alternate university. The alternate community college from

another district also declined, and the other three community colleges proved to be

difficult as time passed in getting approvals to begin data collection on their campuses.

After receiving consultation regarding the challenges in obtaining approvals from the

community colleges, it was suggested to change the approach in getting potential

participants.

   According to Marshall, purposeful sampling is the most productive sampling in

response to the research questions, retrieving the data, and synthesizing the findings from

each interview. This sampling method would have worked in the scenario previously

stated; however, I needed a different way to get more potential participants. The use of

snowball sampling to include social media was the approved change needed to move

forward. Snowball sampling allowed gathering information from a specific group of

people who then introduce or refer others to participate in the study, as noted by McLeod.

After using snowball sampling, 16 participants completed the interview process; all

participants were from a mixture of community colleges and universities across the

United States who counseled first- and second-year students. Although the process lasted

four and a half months, FreeConferenceCall.com (https://www.freeconferencecall.com/)

facilitated data collection at each participant's convenience.

Data Collection

Initially, data were to be collected within the five community colleges in Alameda County, but this was changed to all seven schools. Following initial approval, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved changes (Approval no. 09-26-19-0588578), and I was able to move forward using snowball sampling to include social media. Sixteen interviews were completed using advisors from both community colleges and universities. The breakdown is as follows:

- Eight were employed with two-year community colleges.

- Six were employed with four-year universities.

- Two were employed with both a university and a community college.

All interviews were conducted and recorded using FreeConferenceCall.com. Rev.com was used to transcribe all interviews, usually averaging about 2-3 hours for each interview transcription. Because a shelter in place was in order, all participants were not working from their perspective campuses but remotely from home. What is different from the original plan of action has to do with the worldwide pandemic.

As previously stated, participants were given the option to do a face-to-face interview or a phone interview. In addition to the shelter-in-place order, the ordinance had an additional requirement to distance 6 feet from each other and wear a mask (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). To comply and stay safe, it was imperative to collect data via recorded phone line or recorded video interviews. The COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged during the data collection stage, caused several delays during the process. After initial approval to start data collection and making the

first initial contact with each college, the first participant was scheduled three weeks after approval but then rescheduled a week later. Five and half weeks later, the second interview was completed, but the United States was ordered to shelter in place by that time. Although the first two interviews were requested to be via phone, the option was no longer available to do face-to-face interviews. As a result, I was notified that data collection could be done through a few different options such as Zoom, Skype, FreeConferenceCall.com, or any other audio/video options listed on the university's IRB website. Realizing two and half months had passed since receiving approval to start data collection, and only two interviews were completed. Several potential participants had declined or never responded. The change requested and approved through IRB (Approval no. 09-26-19-0588578) allowed use of snowball sampling through social media. Once the change was approved, I began to receive inquiries from potential participants referred from other advisors who did not meet qualifications or who are advisors for a different student population.

The request for the change was submitted to the IRB for approval, to enable additional opportunities to approach potential participants. Submitting the request 6 days after completing the second interview, the change was approved the next day, and the third interview was conducted two and a half weeks after. Over the next six and a half weeks, 13 more interviews were completed to bring the data collection stage to a close. The lack of in-person interaction may have changed the interpretation of the sincerity in dealing with the work and school balance and how it affects first- and second-year students. Data analysis should provide a real sense of how each participant felt as each of

them witnessed their accounts of students they have counseled and struggled with the

work and school balance.

Data Analysis

The data analysis involved using the inductive coding process and Colaizzi's

seven-step process using data derived from the five open-ended questions asked during

each interview (Colaizzi, 1978; Creswell, 2002). The inductive coding process (see Table

2) was created by Creswell and previously referenced in Chapter 3. Although these

processes were used, the HyperResearch software helped organize participants' quotes

under each code to analyze the data better. Because HyperResearch allowed for

portability to a flash drive, coding was processed whenever possible (i.e., awaiting kids'

doctor appointments, during breaks and lunches at work). After coding, I used Colaizzi's

seven-step process to analyze the data as follows:

1. Reviewing transcripts multiple times.

2. Highlighting relevant statements related to the research problem.

3. Simplifying significant statements.

4. Grouping information into congruent clusters.

5. Developing expressive themes based on the terms and phrases from

   interviews.

6. Identifying the phenomena through data examination.

7. Checking members.

The data analysis plan, common issues, and themes were generated that each participant

discussed in their responses to the questions asked.

In reviewing 16 interviews with the assistance of the transcription service Rev.com, 12 codes were generated along with common issues and themes. The academic advisors reported feeling that some of the same struggles they witnessed students facing with the work and school balance and how the SNAP work policy affected their academic success. The codes and themes provided by participants helped answer the research question for this study: How do academic advisors perceive the effect of the work policy required for SNAP benefits on first-generation students' academic success during their first and second year of college?

The five interview questions, which elicited the data used to answer the research question, were as follows:

1. How would you advise low-income, first-generation students on employment while attending college full-time, specifically within their first and second year?

2. What is your experience, if any, in witnessing students drop out because of this work and school balance?

3. What do you think is the impact of the SNAP 20-hour a week work policy requirement on low-income college students?

4. How do you feel these students fair against students not in need of SNAP? Is there any difference?

5. If an opportunity presented itself to change the work policy, what changes would you suggest, if any? If no change and you agree with how the policy is currently written, why?

From the responses received from each interview, the following 12 codes were generated:

- a need for SNAP vs no need for SNAP

- advisor engagement

- full-time status 12+ units and study time 24-36 hours outside of class time

- impact of work policy on educational goals

- mental stability

- resource programs/support systems

- suggested changes/adjustments to SNAP work policy

- supporting family/household

- time management and study skills

- withdraw/dropout rate due to full-time job

- work for financial stability

- work hours vs. school schedule

After I had reviewed each interview transcript, common themes were evident, and what most of the advisors mentioned were issues with the SNAP work policy. The first theme introduced at the beginning of interviews was the possibility of not having students work at all, if possible, to adjust to college life or use resources on campus (i.e., work-study or finding paid internships/jobs within their major). The later idea facilitated the fulfillment of their financial need, allowing students to qualify for SNAP and learn their craft to pursue their career goals after graduation. Academic Advisor Nine (AA9) stated,

> Typically, I would advise students to pursue funding, resources, like work-study,
>
> or anything that ties into their academic career, because with a federal work-study

program, the purpose of it is to avoid individuals creating an excess burden on them while they are in college. Students are strongly encouraged to pursue work studies simply because that schedule is required to work around their academic schedule. So, any kind of service that the college offers that would support their learning and their ability to work is what I would strongly encourage.

Another theme involved academic advisors witnessing students withdrawing from school. The reasoning stems from the students needing to take care of their families and remaining financially stable to survive and for necessities such as food and shelter. Many found it challenging to keep up their studies and work because some assisted with their household's stability. Some of the academic advisors met and strategized with their students and prevented them from withdrawing from classes. Academic Advisor 14 (AA14) stated,

> Unfortunately, I have seen that happen before. Now, if I can get to them before they withdraw, again, I have got those ways of recommending manageable academic schedules so they can maintain a job, which is a requirement, as well as steadily progress through school. When I get to them early, the dropout rate is much, much less. Very, very few of my students actually drop out once we sat down and did an educational plan. Usually, it is the students who might have dropped out before they met me. They are coming back to give it another try. And then I hear the story about them having to drop out before because of the CalWORKs or the CalFresh initiatives. Thus, we would again, sit down and make sure they had a very doable academic program to help them steadily progress.

(CalWORKs is Temporary Assisted for Needy Families-TANF in the State of

California, CalFresh is SNAP in the State of California-both programs are known

in all other states as TANF and SNAP).

Again, the themes explain some of the challenges involved in managing the work and

school balance and support for themselves, and family members in some cases. Other

themes that emerged from the interviews are (a) the how students are at a disadvantage

with the effects of the SNAP 20-hour week work policy, (b) some feeling discouraged

and added stress to an already sensitive situation, (c) having full-time student status, and

(d) trying to qualify for a program to assist with essentials needs to survive. A program

design to relieve some of the stress may be a cause of the stress to survive. Academic

Advisor 13 (AA13) stated,

I think that it is, if it is discouraging for them, because I think that the SNAP

program is good and when students are able to tap into it, but having working 20

hours a week and carrying a full load is the equivalent of asking someone to work

a full-time job and then get off of that full-time job and somehow squeeze in 40 or

20 plus hours or whatever. If you do not, then you may lose that benefit. So now

we are talking about a different level of stress that the SNAP program is designed

to address. Furthermore, that is the one of many, one space essentially that needs.

Thus, I think that, that 20 hours minimum has a significant negative impact on the

level of stress that the students face. In addition to all of the other normal stressors

that come along with being new to college and making that transition.

The next theme that was prominent amongst many involved the difference between students who need the SNAP program versus people not in need. Those who had the support system and necessities were thought to be less stressed, progressed better academically, and had more social life or participated in other on-campus activities besides class. Those who needed the program were working more, having less time for studies, grades tend to be lower, and more stressed about meeting basic needs for themselves and their household. AA14 stated,

> There is a big difference because the students that do not need the program for whatever reason, they have got adequate funding or financial support from family, they can focus a hundred percent on academics, and they tend to do a whole lot better because their time is just dedicated to studying and going to school and maybe some fun stuff on the side. Whereas, the students who are forced to work, obviously, 20 hours of their week is dedicated to someone else, working. It takes energy away from them. They are tired. For them to be able to go home and have the energy to study and do their homework, there is definitely an impact there. So, in my opinion, well no, not just in my opinion, from my experience, from what I have observed, those students who are required to work, low-income students, versus those who are more fortunate, for lack of a better term, low-income students definitely have adverse effects or impacts on their academics.

The last theme involved some discrepant cases, that differed from the majority, but were necessary to include in the analysis. A few academic advisors' perception was different

from others and agreed with how the SNAP work policy is currently written and enforced.

Consistency was evident throughout many of the interviews, but a couple of discrepant scenarios emerged during the analysis, specifically regarding the opportunity to change the SNAP work policy. One of the final themes showed many of them agreed 20 hours a week was too much for a student enrolled full-time and opted for eight or 10 hours; some stated substituting the number of units enrolled for hours worked. Two academic advisors were on the opposing side and agreed with how the work policy is currently written but would like the SNAP program to be available to ALL students. The need to include their perspective involved how they believed ALL students should have access to the program without meeting guidelines and exemptions. Because one of the guidelines for FWS students currently states they cannot work more than 20 hours a week, it does consider the work and school balance as a factor during the implementation of this guideline. Codes and common themes from the data analysis will next provide evidence of trustworthiness.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The next seven topics discussed in detail the issues of trustworthiness. Each were defined by giving a synopsis of the data collected and its worthiness, and the importance of how each of these factored into the academic advisors' responses.

Credibility

Credibility is essential in validating the collected data during analysis. Rudestam and Newton define credibility as spending an extended period with the participants

looking for distorted responses, making sure answers are in great detail, comparing the data as recorded via video or audio, clarifying the findings, and making constant revisions with data becoming more available. With the current study, the semi-structured interviews allowed freedom of detailed responses with some follow-up questions that expressed their own experience as academic advisors and allowed the researcher to compare each experience. Although many of the academic advisors agreed and shared their same sentiments regarding the SNAP work policy, there were a couple of them who did not. Every advisor shared their students' experiences and the challenges they faced maneuvering through their educational journey and it justified no matter the location across the United States or whether it was a junior college or university, the credibility was defined throughout. Saturation did happen during this data collection, establishing credibility amongst the mixed population of academic advisors. Utilizing community colleges and universities across the country provided various experiences and focused on working with first-generation students within their first and second college years. Because the sample population academic advisors spoke of was specific, one could provide how to handle transferability in this research study.

Transferability

Transferability emphasizes the setting's context and a few of those participating in the study relative to the entire population. Transferability is vital to capture for those interviews in a face-to-face setting and phone interviews. The researcher collected and provided data but because of the world pandemic, made it challenging to speak on the behaviors without the face-to-face interviews which changed the setting of the interviews

for each participant. Rudestam and Newton describe it as generalizing the sample

population and their situations while remaining modest and mindful of the context of

their lives. The researcher generalized findings with all schools' participants due to the

COVID-19 pandemic with the current study. Each interview was recorded via audio over

the phone, with detailed similarities and differences as they occurred. Some advisors

were very passionate about the policy and how it affects their students. However, a few

were new to the policy, and their delayed responses and hesitation to answer made it

evident. Although locating the literature gap was important, establishment of

dependability was crucial.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the data's trustworthiness within the research and

reliability refers to the processes' ability and their related outcomes to be replicated. The

efficiency and accuracy of recording and transcribing the data and training the

interviewers are crucial to replicating a study (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). As the

researcher, the audio recording was via phone call through freeconferencecall.com and

transcribed by Rev.com. Each transcription was uploaded to HyperResearch software for

coding and to recognize common themes. The replication of the current study using the

same methods to record interviews were reliable and trusted by the companies and

software provided. When considering future research, the dependability was evident and

may produce similar conclusions when replicating this study. Previous studies and

additional information or statistics provided by the academic advisors based on their

campus origin and population, including a triangulation method, that Rudestam and

Newton noted as modifications occurring after data collection. With community colleges and universities used for the current study, it is imperative to confirmability, allowing the study results to stand apart from others.

Confirmability

Confirmability can be considered an audit trail of events that have taken place in each interview. Corroborating what each academic advisor has said and synthesizing the data through recapturing each step of the data collection process. As Rudestam and Newton mentioned, it allows for a period of self-reflection and may eliminate any biases and assumptions that may influence the research process. The follow-up questions and responses were crucial due to some similarities and differences in how each academic advisor advised their students. Detailed accounts of delayed and vague responses on particular questions and topics were magnified and noted accordingly. Detailing each step of the interaction between the researcher and participant was challenging, considering none of the interviews were face-to-face but having the recording available to listen to repeatedly allowed for confirmability during the data collection process. Trustworthiness was evident throughout the interviews, but details will show through the results.

<div align="center">

Results

</div>

With phenomenography, the interview questions' research study results gave a detailed account of what the academic advisors perceived as the effects the work policy has on the school and work balance for first- and second-year students. Using each of the responses, codes and themes emerged from the advisors' live experiences with students and creating figures to explain them. The first interview question asked, "How would you

advise low-income, first-generation, students on employment while attending college

full-time, specifically within their first and second year?"

Many academic advisors stated their experience with student advisements in this

area, already suggested not working more than 20 hours per week. Some went on to say

10-15 hours a week as others suggested not to work at all, especially if they could bypass

it within their first year of college. Finding jobs that were not as intensive and lenient

towards academic schedules, including time for midterms, finals, and perhaps term

papers that come due, was challenging for a FWS student. Student work-study facilitates

the work and school balance and is typically not labor-intensive. There was a preference

presented of working on or off campus. Most stated on-campus jobs were better to relieve

the stress of transportation back and forth if a student resided on campus. There is a

different level of stress for students residing off campus because students have to worry

about paying for gas and transportation for school and work. Some stated that creating a

foundation and adjustments within the first year was key in how students would perform

and establish study habits during advisement sessions. Examining how they were in high

school and advising on what changes to make now they are in college, such as added

tutoring sessions and time management use. Based on the codes generated from interview

question one, the common pattern was relative to student employment. See Figure 2

below:

Figure 2

Interview Question 1
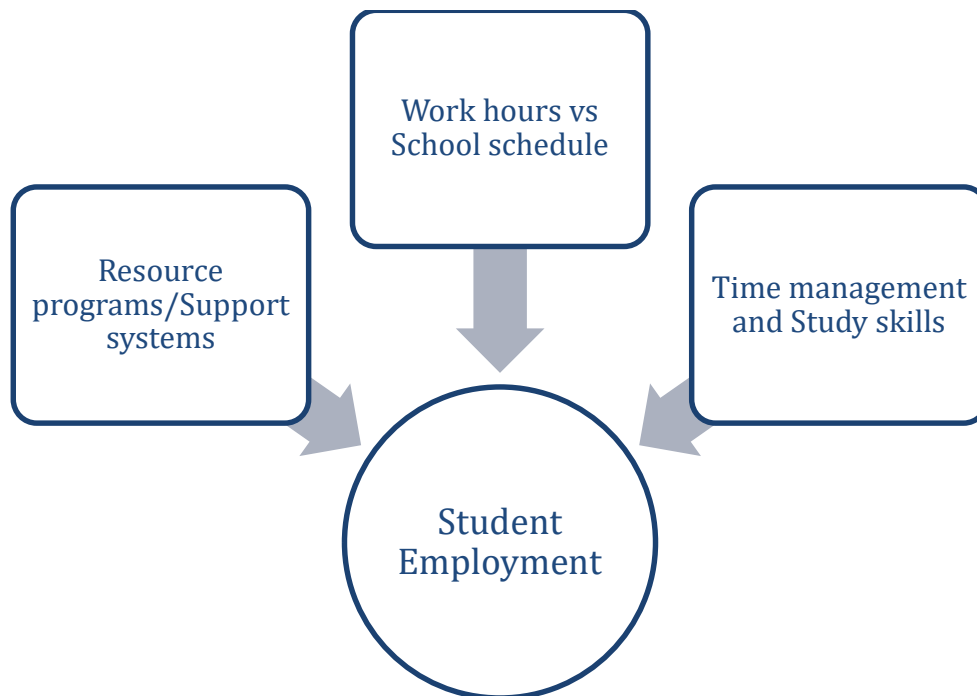
Each academic advisor had their way of advising their students, but all with similar

concerns in mind to make sure their students were on the right track to graduate college.

Each academic advisor also had various students they work with, but all encountered a

percentage of first- and second-year students who may were first-generation college

students.

     The following academic advisors' responses exemplified a different meaning

from what was mostly covered by how others responded. AA6 spoke from a perspective

of having students from both ends of the spectrum, some that qualified for SNAP benefits

through different programs offered that may still have some of the same struggles as

those who do not meet any exemptions, see their response below:

AA6:

Well, majority of our students are actually working part time, or they are

receiving some kind of assistance from the County. Moreover, I specifically work

with the low-income students. The program called Extended Opportunity Program

and Services and Care Program, specifically designed for underrepresented

students. So, we provide additional supportive services to the students in terms of

their meal cards, their book vouchers, and gas cards, in addition to their grant

money, if they qualified. We try to assist the students in anyhow we can

financially and emotionally. We provide counseling services to the students

throughout the academic year they are with us, that will help them to some extent

so they will not have to work to support themselves. We also have a child

development center on campus. When we enroll them into our program, if they

qualified again, they do not have to pay out of their pocket for their children while

they are attending school. So again, that minimize them to go out to work

temporarily while they are in school.

The risk of dropping out in the first year of college makes it crucial to focus on the

work/school balance. The following transmission applies:

AA10:

Okay, so as far as advisement's concerned, I generally tell students to not work at

all if they can avoid it because, studies have shown that when students drop out of

school, usually it is right after that first year of college with, or within that first

year because of, you know, they have not developed strong footing in the higher

education setting. So, if they can afford not to, to work, we don't recommend to

do so your first year until you been to college for a couple semesters and seen

how it works, and within your lifestyle and whatnot. And if you do want to work

after that, we recommend do not work more than 20 hours a week.

After this reply, I asked AA10 a follow-up question: "So, if it is necessary, you

recommend not working more than 20 hours?" AA10 responded,

Right, yeah. If you're trying to, especially if you are trying to be full-time, full-

time for us is generally 12 units or more. Full-time school you cannot be full-time

work, so one of those things has to be part time, so that is we define part-time

work as 20 hour, maximum 20 hours. If someone is working on campus as student

assistant or work-study role, they cannot work more than 20 hours a week.

As agreed with some of the other advisors regarding the number of hours to work per

week, AA1 provided a different approach that included diving deeper and asking open-

ended questions to get more information out of students to assist better them going

forward, see their response below,

AA1:

Okay well, we want to check in to see what they can handle. It is different for

every student because especially for students from high school, some may have,

better study skills than others. In our program we have come across a variety of

our students, just were able to get by, and did not need to study, where some have built good habits, so definitely checking with that and their ability to time manage and study outside of class can make a big difference in their performance.

Thus, that can get tricky especially if they need to work, or they are supporting their household, so definitely trying to give them a platform where they can tell us where they are coming from, we don't want to make any assumptions about that. So, when I work with them I just kind of ask about those questions, open ended to see what they want to do, hope to do and what are just some things to be cautious about.

It can get hard, 20 hours a week is quite a bit, especially for students that are working or taking a full load cause at a full load they are at 12 units, they are expected to study. Study outside of class, anywhere from 24 to 36 hours a week and on top of that they are still going to class, who knows how far they have to commute.

So, there are many factors that are taken into consideration and we want them to be cautious regarding that. When they are working and you are telling, from what I heard, was that they need to work 20 hours a week to be eligible. So, with that we have to talk with them, cause some students cannot handle that and if, some of our students are here on housing and we encourage them to apply but also take a look to see what are some stipulations because we also have a pantry on campus that we encourage them to use as well. Where they do not need to have Calfresh necessarily.

AA13 found it important to look at how students studied during high school and took into account any who have worked during that time to evaluate how the school and work balance could be determined for them. Having those conversations that talked about financial obligations and responsibilities to use to their advantage, see their response below,

> AA13:
>
> Sure. So typically, what I do is I look at their, their historical performance and talk with them about how they performed academically, particularly in high school and post high school, if they did not transition to college immediately. While just trying to assess if they held a part-time job, and if so, how many hours were they committed. Then assessing or trying to determine if there was any type of impact that they felt like there was any impact on how well they did in high school and then transitioning to college. The part, the second part of the conversation is what are your financial needs? Like, what are your needs? Do you have to secure employment? Furthermore, if so, do you know what you need to clear financially to be able to remain in school and meet all your obligations with regards to your courses? So that conversation is broader, we talk about if they are carrying 12 credit hours, many of them because many of the schools in the area, particularly in the state are blocked billed. If a student carries 12 hours, they are billed the same as if they were carrying 15 hours, so between 12 and 15, it is all the same price. Thus, obviously to get most bang for their buck, so to speak, trying to move closer to the 15-credit hour mark is more in their benefit. With that

being said, the conversation is then if you have to carry this and you know you

have to work, and this is what you need to make, what kind of jobs and where can

we link you? What kind of employment can you be linked to where you can

accomplish what you need to accomplish financially, but making sure that you

have enough space in, you know, headspace really to be able to process and do

the work that you need to do to be successful in school?

What was also important is understanding each students' situation on a case-by-case basis

that is how AA8 explained their experience. Having advised students enrolled in 12 units

it would equal at least 36 hours of study time for those classes. They agreed with other

advisors that students should not work more than half of that but one does not fit all, see

their response below,

AA8:

So normally, students who are going to school full-time, specifically that is a

heavy workload, so we were talking about in terms of study time and actual

school time, I do happen to consider that. I understand that the work requirement

is also something that they need to complete, so we want to be sensitive to that.

However, I do ask that they kind of consider work like talent. If they are in

school, say there is 12 units and each class is equivalent to 3 hours a week, if you

are doing the math on that, that is about 36 hours a week alone already, and a

typical work week will be 40 hours for a staff- a student to do, we have to do half

of that. So, you are asking students to do, who have families, to do time-and-half

of what a normal person would do, either going to work or going to school. Also

ask them to consider there is extra academic progress. So sometimes that means

that school hours may have to be reduced, because we are not counting city hours

and all that, and sometimes it depends on their ability, and resilience to be able to

work and go to school at the same time. So, it is a case-by-case scenario, there is

no one fit for all, but typically, I talk about the work-life balance and family.

As each advisor brought similar perspectives on how they advise their students, deriving

the theme included all the repetitive responses and those that provided a bit more detail in

their experiences and how they faced them regularly. Advising students on academic

balance and student employment has its challenges, but as AA8 mentioned, no one fits all

scenarios when dealing with these life experiences through their students.

The next question sheds insight on what happened due to the work and school

balance and an advisor's experience of their students' results. Some had some success

stories in their methods of prepping their students to cope, some unfortunately did not.

The second question asked, "What is your experience, if any, in witnessing students drop

out because of this work and school balance?"

The advisors' evident experiences were repetitive, and included students with

financial and family obligations that had to be dealt with immediately; that at times

resulted in students reducing their school load or withdrawing completely. Some

academic advisors stated the percentage of student withdrawals was low, while others

saw two-three students per semester withdraw from classes. Although measures were

used such as accommodating students, referring resources where applicable, and

maximizing their financial aid packages, sometimes it was still not enough. Advisors

stated their students felt the burden was too great to ignore and had to make the tough decision to leave, some returned, and advisors prevented the same thing from happening again. In other cases, advisors were able to get students to reduce the number of classes enrolled and were still eligible for 75% of their financial aid. Other problems encountered did not refer to financial issues, especially dealing with students exiting foster homes or emancipated youth. Some of those students experienced mental illness, lack of family support, and other resources, so when advisors advised them, the referrals were different and, in some cases, made a difference in the students' outcome. Figure 3 below provides a simplistic view:

Figure 3

Interview Question 2
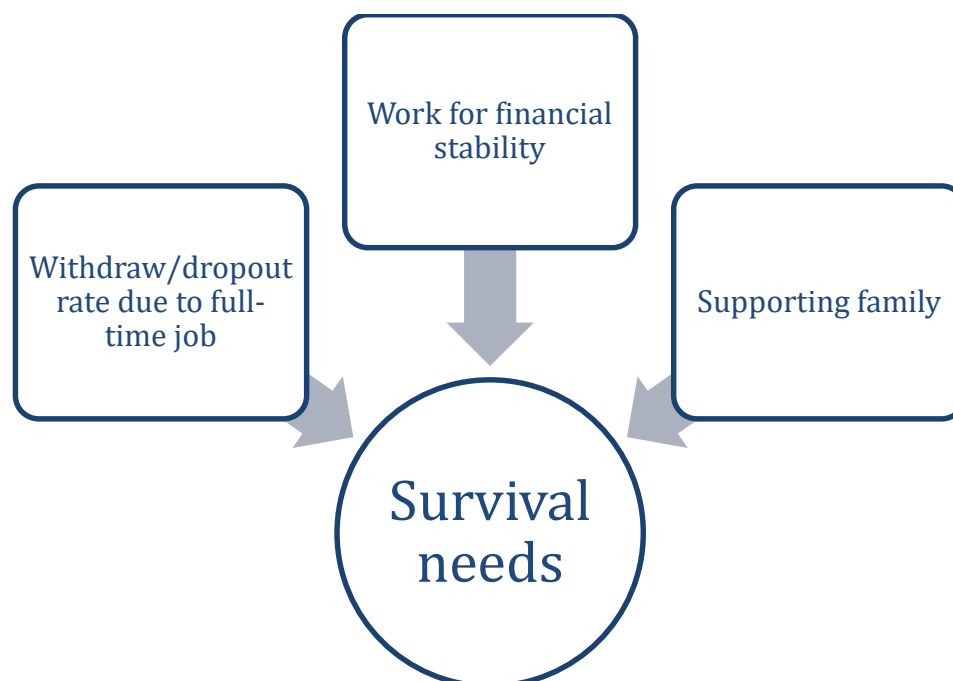
The measures to prevent students from withdrawal status was evident amongst academic advisors, some they were able to stay enrolled but for others it was too late. Some found their students returned later, which was not frowned upon but under extenuating circumstances was necessary. Many of the advisors spoke of the experiences some of their students faced who stayed enrolled. However, grades suffered or reduced the number of classes on their schedule, such as AA1, they mentioned more of their transfer students suffered. However, they did have a percentage of their second-year students experience the same ordeal. See AA1's response below,

AA1:

It is, we have seen it. It happens I think maybe a bit more frequently with transfers, specifically when it comes to the work situation. Just because they have more responsibilities and they are the primary caregiver for somebody, potentially a child, could be a-an older person or even a parent. So, they are not only trying to support themself but someone else. So unfortunately, we again try to talk with them in the first appointment, and unfortunately, I hear it all too often that they are working 36 hours, they are working 40 hours, they are working more than that but they want to go to school full-time. I empathize with them because they are half way there to getting their degree but, having to work so much does have an impact. It makes it challenging because the transfers are coming from community college, it can be different for what is expected at university level and some have to drop out either the first semester or sometimes the second, and the first semester does not look great. So, we try to in terms of our program, we try to be

here and let them know to just be in contact with us as often as possible so that we can try to support them with the challenges and what we try to do is find other resources besides work that maybe can help with cutting costs in some areas. But we also understand that they have to work and, at times, I have seen students where they just do not come back. It is very unfortunate cause it is very promising when they first arrive and then this hit. A colleague of mine and I were talking the other day about a particular student who is in this exact situation. They want to graduate, they are halfway there but they have to work full-time to support themselves, their family, their living is very expensive, and it is unfortunate. So, I have had experience working directly with these students. We do not know if they are going to come back.

After this reply, I asked AA1 a follow-up question: Okay, so I noticed you said that a high amount of them are transfers. Have you had any experience with any first, second year students, maybe freshmen, maybe they get through their first year but then have issues the second year?

AA1:

Yes, sophomores we do see that. They come in during the freshman year, they do not come back. Sophomore is a time that we are mindful of for students. I do not know specifically for sophomores though it is related to work, but I have heard some students tell me it is just too expensive to go to school. So, their cost and money are playing a part and they have left. I have worked with a couple students

who have just told me this route is too expensive for me. I thought it would be

manageable but it is not, can I go to community college instead? Thus, I have had

to have those conversations with them and let them know, just their options at that

point. I have not heard too much about it being connected to work though. Most

of those students either, the ones I have worked with anyways are getting much

financial aid so they are able to cover their housing cost. They will work on

campus but maybe minimal to get some money for food, again, we encourage

them to apply for resources that will help with other things. It does not seem as

high of a rate, but we do have sophomores dropping out for potentially other

reasons but I do not come across too many that are working too many hours.

Although not unusual, one academic advisor's response (AA5) was discrepant compared

to all others as they had never witnessed any student dropout or withdrawal. What they

did mention was their experience of students' grades dropping and was advised to seek

tutoring; see their response below,

AA5:

My experience has not been seeing them drop out. I have seen their grades drop.

However, I have yet to experience any of my students to drop out. If they are

struggling in the class, I encouraged them to seek tutoring and speak with the

instructor and try to find where the disconnect is.

When thinking of preventive measures that are put in place to keep students enrolled,

AA16 mentioned their role helping students through a difficult time and decrease the

dropout rate. See AA16's response below,

AA16:

Oh, wow. I am a student solutions coordinator, which means that it is sort of self-explanatory, student solutions. So, what is unique with my position is usually before a student withdraws, I am one of the persons they have to talk to. Thus, what I get that often, finances are a reason for a student not to continue, whether it is the cost of tuition or things in their personal life, they have to work to help parents or do not have the time. Where I have an example of a freshman student who is a first-generation student this past semester in one of my classes that I teach, which is the freshman seminar course. Moreover, she works a 40-hour week at Cookout just to be able to survive. Furthermore, she is an A student, she makes straight As. Nevertheless, one thing she was had to forego is running track because she works a 40-hour week. So, I see this often. Finances, especially at the university, that most of the time it is linked to tuition, because we do have a high tuition, I see that often. Finances is always pretty much a problem, sprinkled with some other things sometimes.

Advisors sometimes find themselves with enough time in a semester to help students catch up if they have fallen behind. AA3 talks about their students' experience and what they can expect in a 16-week semester if a student falls behind, see their response below,

AA3:

I would say I have witnessed 20% leave or withdraw or stop attending. So, they did not necessarily leave, but they could not attend or complete their coursework, so they just stopped altogether.

After this reply, I asked AA3 a follow-up question: Okay. Furthermore, have you ever witnessed any of them come back at a later date?

AA3:

Yes.

After this reply, I asked AA3 another follow-up question: How has the turnaround time been?

AA3:

The turnaround time is usually about four weeks. I work at a university that is very liberal in allowing students to return. So, our courses are 16 weeks long, which is a little bit longer than most courses. We are in a very rural area. We have about 15 students per class. Furthermore, when a student falls off because of inability to make ends meet, they had to go and work for a few weeks and then come back, it is allowed. They have their coursework turned in a week before final grades are due.

I think it is because we are so small and we live in a rural area, again, and we have a large farming community, so a lot of the students, of course, they are young, and they need to go and help on the farm. This sounds old-school, but it is what we have to do to keep our students in school and allow them to assist on the farm.

There are instances where programs are put in place to prevent dropouts from occurring. AA12 spoke about their program entitled Academic Support Plan, where students receive additional funding. However, they have to complete each step and receive their award at

the end of each semester. Not only does it appear to prevent students from withdrawing but also satisfy a need that students may encounter, see their response below,

AA12:

This is typically what happens in two cases. One, if it is a family obligation. We have had instances where a student had to take on a heavier workload at work, because a parent lost their job, so they had to chip in. Sometimes it may just be a student who feels like they have to work, because they have become seduced by making much money while in high school. Furthermore, typically when it gets to a juggling point of prioritizing, work tends to win.

Furthermore, that is usually when we would see a student, their lack of engagement just with the program itself. We have many requirements built into the program, so this is when they're missing deadlines, missing events, required events that they have to attend. And then we see that bleed over to their academics, where the professor's reporting that the student has not been attending class. And then, that eventually just tapers off into them dropping out of school.

After this reply, I asked AA12 a follow-up question: Okay. You mentioned requirements that are built into the program, can you talk about some of those?

AA12:

Sure. So, the students who are accepted into the program are required to complete community service every semester. They have to complete 30 hours of community service. They have to complete four skill shops every semester, and

they have to attend events. We have campus seminars. We have mentoring

programs that are specific for our male students, same for our female students.

And then we have other components in the program for students who are

struggling academically, where we will put those students on what we call an

ASP, an Academic Support Plan. Those students must complete learning support

hours, which we track and log. So, it is a lot. They have to, and this is every

semester because they have received their award at the end of the term, so they

have to earn the award every semester.

The similarities throughout each response from advisors created an obvious theme for the

second question, highlighting a student's means for survival. Addressing how to balance

the work and school life while taken on family or household responsibilities caused stress

and a struggle to figure out how to do it all without sacrificing something.

With the next question, the focus will shift directly to the SNAP work policy and the
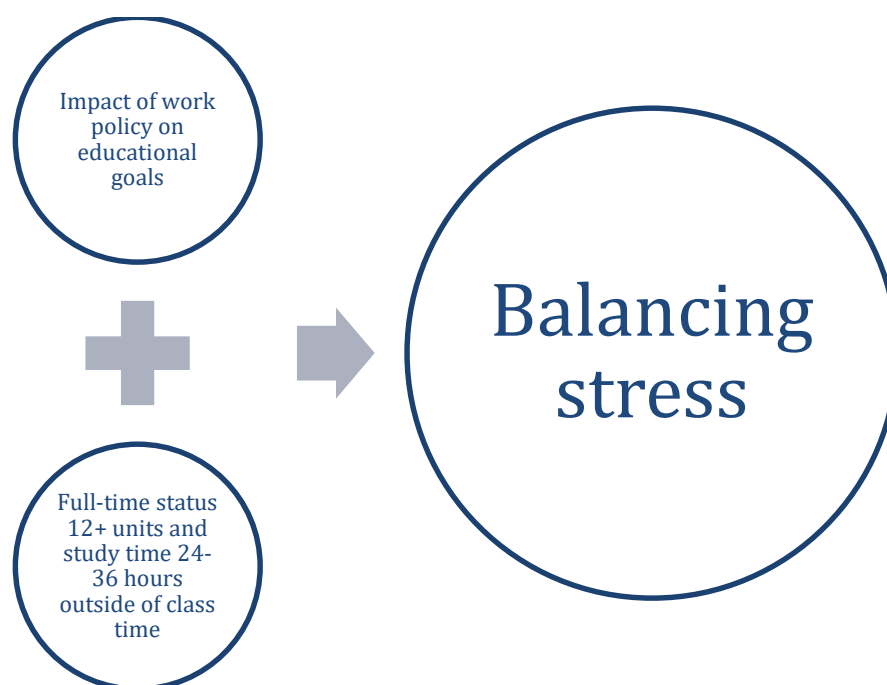
advisors' impact on their students.

The next question highlights how academic advisors feel the policy impacts their

students, specifically low-income students. The population of academic advisors is from

across the U.S., so each environment spoke varies as every advisor may or may not have

encountered the same population of students. Interview Question 3 states, "What do you

think is the impact of the SNAP 20-hour a week work policy requirement on low-income

college students?"

The impact varies as advisors have students who are not impacted by the policy

and other impacted students. Some students work at least 20 hours a week or full-time for

reasons they feel are their responsibility, all while enrolled in school full-time with 12 or more-unit hours. Some are helping their households, as others find it a means of survival. Advisors found scenarios discouraging and felt the disadvantage of finishing college and fulfilling the work policy, in addition to study time outside of class varying from 24-36 hours a week. Figure 4 below provides an overview:

Figure 4

Interview Question 3

Impact of work policy on educational goals

Full-time status 12+ units and study time 24-36 hours outside of class time

Balancing stress

Academic advisors found themselves using unique approaches to keep students enrolled but what happens when the university is pushing for student enrollment to be at 15 units? AA4's response to the next question shows his agreement with other advisors, his responsibility to what the university is pushing, but also highlights those spontaneously challenges students may sometimes encounter. See their response below,

AA4:

I think the biggest impact is, sometimes you get some students who are first-time students coming in, they do not understand the whole college aspect. If they did not have good study habits, it interferes because they want to work and try to figure everything out. We want them to do 20 hours, but sometimes they start to understand they need to study a little longer. Or, they might have some type of setbacks as far as how they take in the information. They might have a professor that teaches their class a little different than what they are accustom to, so it might take them a little longer to learn. Because they need to spend a little more time studying, they cannot work as many hours if they want to get good grades. So, I think that they should really try to understand if you were working full time. You get some students that want what the university is pushing so students will be taking 15 units every semester, and that makes it even harder because they feel that pressure from the university pushing for 15 units, and then they are getting pressure from the program if you want to stay in this program, you got to work your 20 hours. And it is just too much. I just try to get my students to understand you do not have to pressure yourself in doing 15 units each semester. What you can do is, you can take a summer class, and then you would have gotten your 12 in the fall, you take a three in the summer, and now you have that 15 going on. You could also take another 3 over the winter, and that helps you out to where you are staying on the right path to where you are not in school for five, six, seven, eight years, trying to get your bachelor's degree.

When it comes down to those 20 hours, I think they should have some leeway
cause depending on where the student is. Like, you got to meet the student where
the students are at. So, it is okay if this is a first-time freshman coming in, and
they are trying to be a part of that program as well, you got to understand this is
their first time coming to college. They do not have family members who have
ever been to college, do not have anybody they can go to, and talk to get an
understanding. They are still trying to learn what GE's they need to take. What
classes they should and should not be taking. What are some prerequisites? They
do not even understand that they got to take this before they can take another
class. I think that they need to make sure they got a little more leeway, as far as a
freshman coming in or a sophomore. But, once they start becoming a junior or
senior, they have their world going and understand. There is a pattern and study
habits down. They have a routine at a good pace, so now they may be able to
balance that 20 hours. But, not right off the bat when you are coming straight,
fresh out of high school.

The difficulty in learning the balance at such an early age has been evident throughout
the advisors' responses, but AA8 pointed out common issues that can impact students'
academic success related to the SNAP work policy. Having a learning disability,
becoming acclimated to college, trying to accomplish something that would take one and
a half persons to do, are just a few mentioned but see their response below,

AA8:

Well, you know what it is that you are asking them to do, extra things right? I

mean if they are going to school, you know it is either work, school, or training,

or work experience or school education training. You know what they are doing

in school, it should be their primary focus if they have a bigger goal. You know

they are absent since being on SNAP, they were probably getting minimum wage,

and thinking long-term. With the current situation with the cost of living, they are

really never going to be able to pull themselves off of SNAP if they are working.

You are forcing them to work instead of investing that time in their education,

especially if they are meeting academic progress. If they are reaching their goals,

they are completing their units successfully. I do feel that sometimes we are

penalizing students because they can. You are asking somebody, a student that is

going to school full-time, to work part-time, that is asking them to do a duty of

one and a half people. And that is includes if they have family members that also

going to school that need that same amount of support. You are asking them to do

something that typically two people would be doing. So, I do think that puts a lot

of pressure on them and again, because they need to get SNAP to live because

yes, the way of eating, getting food and all these things, they are going to put that

first and so sometimes if that has to be the 20 hours, even with a sick child or

anything of that situation, they are going to focus on doing that first because that

is what they are using to live. So again, we are implementing this, especially if a

student has a learning disability that they are not aware of or if they are returning

to school a first-time student, they are not acclimated to a large university, they do

not know the expectations. Maybe they do not have the technical skills that they

need in terms of being able to use the computer effectively or office programs.

There is not an opportunity for them to relearn these things, so you are asking

them to go back to school, go to work, and do it where they already feel crippled

by the fact that they have to do both. It is just putting in the time where there is

not, something that I feel is not ideal, and students that are on SNAP, they are

able to do it. A lot of times, I do see students persist because again when they are

reminded of the long-term goal, they get a career, they will likely make two or

three times what they are making today, sometimes students understand they see

the value in that, and they persist. Often other things may happen, then the first

thing that goes is their education. And that is just very important. If that

happened, then they get out of the system.

Although the SNAP work policy has an evident impact, there may be a chosen few who

can handle the challenges of adapting to college while pursuing full-time work. Holding a

position that allows a preventive measure of student dropouts has proven to be key with

AA16; see their response below,

AA16:

I am a student solutions coordinator, it is sort of self-explanatory, student

solutions. So, what is unique with my position is usually before a student

withdraws, I am one of the persons they have to come to talk to. I get that often

finances are a reason for a student not continue, whether it is the cost of tuition or

things in their personal life, they have to work to help parents or don't have the

time. I have an example of a freshman student who is a first-generation student, this past semester in one of the classes that I teach which is the freshman seminar course, and she works a 40-hour week at Cookout.

Some of the challenges that students faced are similar to those who have counseled them. AA9 speaks about her experience in college and how some unique situations are not considered for low-income students. Policymakers have not considered the impact when creating this policy, and for advisors trying to find the sympathetic approach works in motivating these students, see their response below,

AA9:

My personal opinion is that the requirement does not consider the many different unique situations that low-income students face. As I said, if it was a student who had children, I feel like they are being penalized. It does not matter the reason they were a single parent. That is not the issue. The issue is recognizing the obligations that they had to attend school and then to get work in and. And I don't think that the individuals who make policy decisions have ever considered the impact of those decisions. And how challenging it could be. When I was in school, I was a single parent and did not have a lot of family support. There were times where I would not sleep at all simply because I had work, I had my son, and I had an internship because I was a social work student. So, I had all of these obligations that had to be fulfilled with a limited support system so, it helped me to be more aware of what was being asked of students, and that is why I think I

went above and beyond the academic advising component simply because I had
been in their shoes.

Many may agree, but one advisor's response was discrepant compared to the others; they mentioned the work policy aligns with what they tell their students; working at least 20 hours a week is okay as other advisors found it challenging for their students. See AA12's response below,

AA12:

Well, I think it is working. It is funny that the 20 hours align with what we already recommend for our students in our program. So, I think it is ideal. I think that also feeds into them feeling a sense of working to earn those benefits as handed to them, not just given to them. So, I think that is good. And 20 hours a week is part of the program that should not cause a hindrance to them being able to still prioritize school.

In reviewing the responses, the impact is evident, and advisors are in a role to prevent students from failing or withdrawing from school and taking advantage of SNAP benefits.

The next question elicits whether the advisors see a difference in the students who need the SNAP program instead of those who do not. Specifically, Interview Question 4 asked, "How do you feel these students fair against students not in need of SNAP? Is there any difference?"

What was interesting to find were two discrepant responses that were different from how others responded. The advisors, all but two, stated there were differences

between those who needed SNAP and those who did not. Most gave reasons that included separate challenges, stress levels, different support systems or the lack thereof, and the level of dedication each student can have to their studies. Figure 5 below show the codes generated from responses with the common patterns:

Figure 5

Interview Question 4
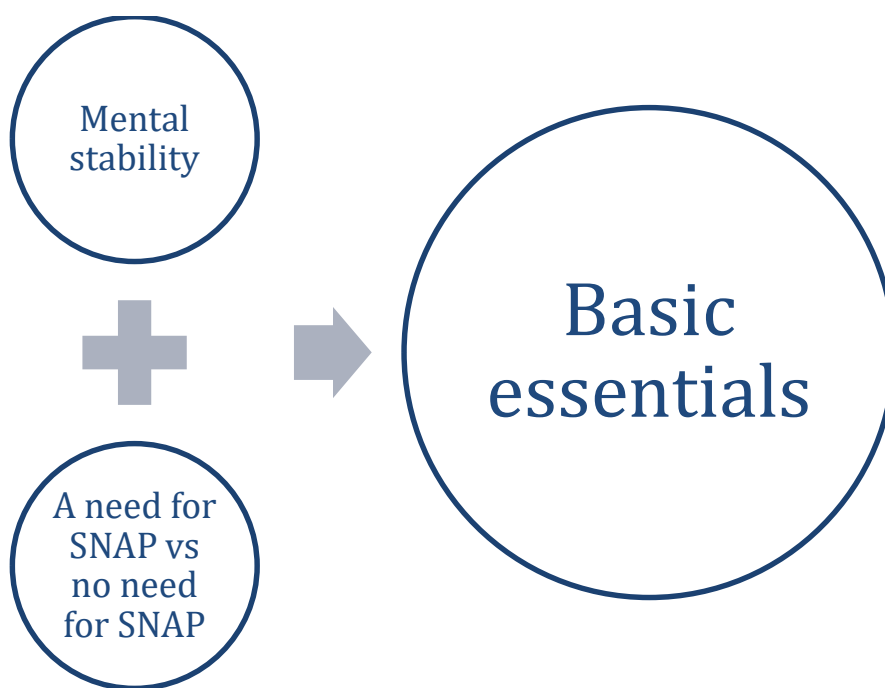
A couple of advisors spoke of students who received full financial packages and lived on campus, making the need a bit less as some of these students are a part of the EOP program that qualifies for SNAP benefits. However, then there are those students who are not a part of the EOP program, who lived off-campus, in need of the SNAP program, and the challenge was much more significant. In addition to those points, AA1

also spoke about the food pantry located on their campus as well as students leaving other

students' free food that is set up in the dining commons, see their response below,

> AA1:
>
> Yes, there is a difference. The students that are in need when they come to see us
> sometimes you can see the concern of "am I going to have enough food or am I
> going to get time to do this or do that." The students who do not have much of a
> need get to, without this worry, have more space more emotional space, more
> clarity on just focusing in class. Go be a college student, they probably have some
> other supports that they can rely on and use outside of that. First-generation, low-
> income students are dealing with how to navigate the system as well. So, asking
> them to also figure out these other, for lack of a better word, adulting things.
> Essentially a lot of students are coming here being away from their family for the
> first time, trying to do things on their own, particularly more for our freshmen,
> going back to that question, or second year. I think those students that do not have
> this need are in a better situation, in my opinion. That is why we have the
> additional support services like our program Excel to help with navigating so they
> do not have to take that alone. We understand there are other things they are also
> dealing with.
>
> After this reply, I asked AA1 a follow-up question: So, I know you mentioned
> that the campus has a pantry. I know that is probably one of the first places you all
> refer them. Are there other things? Or other places? Or other resources you refer
> them to as well?

AA1:

I, unfortunately, do not know exactly how the food banks work but I think they have to apply also to use those services, but that is locally. However, we come across the challenge that if they do not have transportation, because how heavy are the groceries that they are going to carry back? Sometimes we do have something; if there is free food on campus, there is an alert that goes out to students. If they have not connected to that, we encourage them to do so. There are also programs students can share or donate they call them swipes, which is swipes for food. Over at our dining commons I think they have changed, they have changed the name too, Pioneer Kitchen. Over in our dining area, students can donate to other students what we call swipes. Those are the main resources that I can think of at this moment.

Speaking about the difference between living on- or off-campus and financial status was an important factor between those in need of the SNAP instead of those who are not. One thing that stood out in AA16's response was referring to those first-year freshmen as their life being like a snow globe-uncertainty, chaos, and worry. See their response below,

AA16:

There certainly is a difference. Even when you look at resources, getting schoolbooks and whatnot, it makes a difference to me your financial status. It is just one less thing that you have to worry about, one less burden you have to worry about. When we are talking about young freshman college students, your

first year is the most important year, in my opinion, to get started right. And being

on a college campus as a first-generation student, I equate it to like a snow globe,

when you shake it you have all those flurries, if you have ever seen a snow globe

that is what the freshman year is like. It is chaos and trying to get to know the

community, trying to get acquainted with the classes, struggling with finances,

and that is just one more thing that sort of adds fuel to the fire. It impacts first-

generation college students very much so.

Although the financial struggle is referred to throughout many of the advisors' responses,

more can be analyzed considering the affected student's mental state. AA13 speaks of

that difference that is important to have. Those who are not in need have more headspace

to focus than those who are in need, see AA13's response below,

AA13:

I think that there is a difference because it gives the students that do not need it a

bit of an advantage because their basic essential needs are probably not at issue

and meeting those needs is not at issue. Therefore, they can have more mental and

emotional space to dedicate to their study. I believe the research support those

people or persons can focus on the adjustment and the actual coursework do, in

the long run fare better in terms of academic performance than those who have

divided attention.

Sometimes finding work may also be a challenge, how rigorous, and where it is located.

Many things that can add to a students' level of stress, see how AA15 responds and states

it should not be a one-size-fits-all scenario, see their points below,

AA15:

I think there is always room for improvement. I would say it should not be a one size fits all, because we know every student's situation is going to be different. So, maybe for the majority of the students, it would be easy to obtain employment where they are working 20 hours a week, but we have to factor other things in, like transportation. Does the student have the ability to make it to work? Is employment available in their area? What kind of employment are they doing? It could be 20 hours, but if it is rigorous, that could impact how they are doing in school. If it is possible, take it on a case-by-case basis to see what the conditions are for the student. It may not be possible for that student to work the 20 hours. Maybe substitute it for something else, volunteering, professional development workshops that could be available to the student. So, while they are in school, they are still growing in some way, even if they are not necessarily working. They are being prepared for the workforce beyond college.

The two discrepant responses spoke about how they did not see a difference between the two types of students because they were not aware of the students' need for SNAP. One did provide a suggestion of students needing to make adjustments in their academic progress.

AA5:

No, I do not see a difference because, honestly, I do not know when the students come to me. I do not know who is coming, who is a first-generation student, and who is not eligible for the SNAP program until I dig deep into the conversation

with them. So, I do not see a difference. Whether they benefit from SNAP or not, I believe that it is an adjustment that plays a big part in their college success and how they adjust.

AA11:

I do not think there is a difference at all. Every student is an individual, some students use the SNAP program that might not talk about it, or some students do use the SNAP program will talk about it and help students out. But I do not think there is a difference at all.

As stated, there are advisors on both sides of the spectrum that witnessed apparent differences and those that did not. Some emancipated students from foster care and foster homes encounter the challenges of lack of support other students may get from family. Some students may have dropped out early on but decide to come back later in life. With all the scenarios witnessed from advisors, the opportunity presented itself to determine how they would make changes if given the opportunity.

The last question provides some thoughts and changes on the work policy and ways the policy can be improved to increase students' eligibility and provide the essential needs. Interview Question 5 was as follows: "If an opportunity presented itself to change the work policy, what changes would you suggest, if any? If no change and you agree with how the policy is currently written, why?"

All but two agreed they would make changes to the policy if given an opportunity. The recommended changes include eliminating the number of work hours, reducing the number of hours from 20 to 10, or substitute hours for the number of

enrolled academic units. In considering changes to the policy, some outside factors were mentioned, such as travel time if working off-campus, not working on campus-having to worry about transportation, utilizing volunteer hours to substitute for hours worked, and decrease the number of hours worked in the fall and spring semesters and increase the hours over the summer to give an average for the year. These are some of the few common suggestions mentioned by advisors, especially considering approval for work-study is a small percentage of the student population. Figure 6 below shows the codes rendered from the responses along with the common patterns discovered:

Figure 6

Interview Question 5
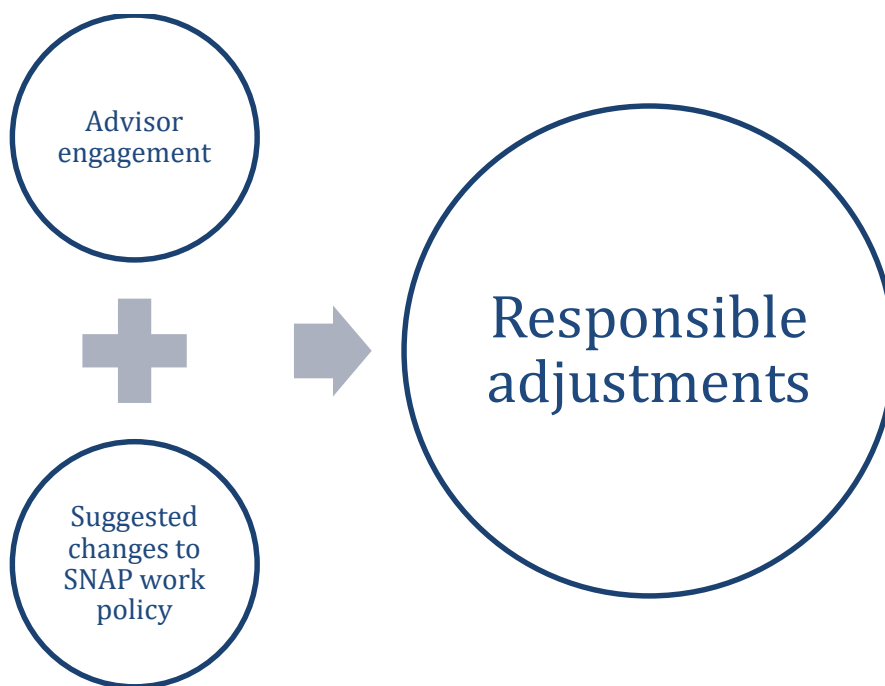
The two discrepant responses (AA5 and AA11) mentioned that they would not make any policy changes. One participant stating they did not want students thinking it was a

handout, but they both did agree that ALL students should be eligible for the SNAP program. See both of their responses below,

AA5:

Okay. I agree with the policy. Because when you look at it, you do not want things handed to them. So, they are from a low income or are first-generation students. You do not want them to say, "Hey, I got this because of this." It gives them a false sense of responsibility. I do agree with the way that it is written. Do I think it should be open to all? I do think it should be open to all college students. Because like I said, college students, it is an adjustment. And just because the federal guidelines say that you make too much money, does not necessarily mean that you come from a wealthy background. I just believe that the opportunity should be given to all college students who are enrolled in six hours or more. And the amount that you receive could be different, but I just think that some assistance should be given to all college students.

AA11 also agreed to no changes as their response is below:

AA11:

I do not think there should be any changes. The program is pretty much set. I do believe that it should be available to every college student. Because every student is struggling, regardless (laughs), that is one thing.

After this reply, I asked AA11 a follow-up question: So that would be the change?

AA11:

Yes. I think it should be available to every student. It is a huge budget, but I think every student should at least have a monthly stipend with the SNAP program. And depending on which campus, I went to a black college, so our cafeteria times were very different. You had a morning cafeteria would go from, let's say for example, from 7:00 to about, say 10:00. That is breakfast, and then 12:00 to 2:00 was lunch, and then 4:00 to 6:00 was dinner. Or 4:00 to 7:00 was dinner. After that, you could not get anything on campus. Everything was closed after the fact. I am speaking on my example, maybe some campuses might be different. But, at some other institutions, they might have 24-hour access to a cafeteria or 24-hour access to a café. So, that SNAP program is beneficial for every student because some students can go off-campus to the local grocery store, local market to get food if need be.

Sometimes academic advisors provided self-experience in addition to lived experiences through their students, giving a realistic view of how the work and school balance affects academia. Although a small percentage of students qualify for SNAP, other programs help them academically to stay enrolled. Other students may not meet any of the exemptions to qualify for SNAP, but advisors such as AA6 find avenues to assist them through their journey in balancing work and school. See AA6's response below,

AA6:

Okay. If I can understand the government policies and everything, I mean there are certain things students have to do while they are in school. So, there is some responsibility attached to it, and perhaps rather than working 20 hours, maybe

give them fewer hours, 10 hours, over 8, depends on how many units are taking. If they are taking 12 hours are reduced to 10 hours, and those 10 hours of work somehow can be maybe taken off for that, those kinds of work experiences in schools. The students do not have to go outside of school, to work. And so that minimize, because we have something similar to the work-study program, those students who are currently working, and they can work up to 20 hours if they qualified, for a week. And we have many students working for us in the OPS department or on campus, and they do not have to actually... It is in between classes. They can go to work 2 hours, 3 hours or on certain spring break, they can work. So, it would be convenient for the students. So, it's not like, um, they have to go outside and when they go home, get ready again. Responsibility. So, all this stuff can be taken care of if the government or the policy can be changed that those work hours for those specific students can be incorporated into on campus and help them find jobs on campus, so they don't have to go outside. That reduces their stress, number one. That reduced their...they do not have to find if the work is after their childcare is over those hours. They can still have quality time with their family, with the kids. And then, they do not have transportation. They do not have to pay extra gas money.

And most importantly, time-consuming. So, I think we have to look at more holistically who is our student population, how they are spending their time, what their stresses are, and what the expenses are. Once we figured that out, is it worthwhile for them to do 20 hours? But if you want them to, then why don't we

use that work experience? Maybe it is somehow... That work experience that they are working, has to relate with their career. So maybe we need to connect with the community colleges or colleges they are attending to get the work experience in and relate to their careers. It is going to be a win-win situation for the students and for the government. That way students are working, but they are benefiting. It is kind of double-dipping, which is a good kind of dipping, so they can benefit from their careers and also meanwhile, support their educational programs.

So, we have to review our policies very carefully regarding who our students are and, most importantly, we need to address the issue, what age group are these students? I know you mentioned 18 years old or older, which we do have. I do not know the age group who qualifies but look at the population. Who are they? Do they have support at home? Do they have family support or not? All that plays a major role when they are attending school. So, do we need to revisit and figure out whether they have emotional support at home, work, or in school? And also, I am going to flat out say, these students who have to work are also limited to do a lot of the campus activities. For example, if a student wants to be a lawyer because, as I said, I have a student who wants to be a lawyer, but then that student has a couple of kids, it is very hard for her to get involved on campus clubs or maybe that work experience they are talking about, maybe they can work in the student activity center as a paid job or not pay job, however. And then that relates to that specific student's career, so she could benefit, or he can benefit, and they could be involved in on-campus clubs, on student activity clubs, or certain other

clubs. So, we have so much on our plate. We have to know who our students are and what their educational goals are individualistic... On an individual level, to assist every student based upon their major also. So, we do have a lot on our plate. We cannot just say, "Oh, you have to work 20 hours. And then you go to school 12 unit, and then take care of your kids after school." That is a lot. I will be honest with you; I am going to tell you something personal. 20 years ago, I had my husband and I had triplets, and I had my master's degree, and we did not have a penny.

We just got married and found out we were pregnant with triplets and no money. And then faced welfare. I was very sad. And then, we were on the WIC program, thank God for the WIC program. We did not have a car through to travel, and we did not have anything. How do you expect us to work when we do not have a car, do not have insurance, and do not work? So, it was crazy. And then finally I told my husband, "I do not care what you do, I will take care of the kids at home." Thank God I was not working at the time. So, he went to work, and I said, "I refuse to do all this 20 hour per week, and report, and all that stuff, and you just go to work. We do not need welfare. And then whatever money we make, we will survive on that." So, we did not use welfare because of that frustration, to be honest, within a month. And I could understand personally the experience these students are having.

On top of that, my husband was not going to school, and I was not going to school. We were done with our school. It was just our circumstances did not allow

us at the time. So, I could understand the frustration with the student's stress level. But at the same time, we have this program EOPS, so they get intense counseling services for the students, but not all the students. If you look at all, the population is in special affinity programs.

So how do we help those students? So, it is this smaller population. We need to holistically look at whom our students are, their population at community colleges or colleges, and are they seeing, getting the help from the counselors, are the regular seeing us, and is somebody helping them in the academic planning and continually? That way they can be successful and I know our students are single parent, who are in the CalWORKs program. Our success rate is pretty high because we provide them all the emotional, financial, and counseling support to those students. They feel part of the community, and they feel a sense of belonging, and then they get encouragement from each other. I used to teach these three single parenting classes, codependency, stress management, and campus and community resources. So, we had our cohort group of single-parent students. They were with each other for the whole one and a half year because it is a one-unit class that is taken one class a semester. And that benefit them, and they were able to help each other out also. We do have to have that support among the students. That way they can help and reach out to each other, and provide resources because they are the best advocate for each other. They know where the resources are and know what their stresses are, and when they can help each other out. So that is how we have been working with the students at our community

college to assist those students. And it has been successful. Our program has existed for a long time and I do not think other colleges, that many colleges, have these specific classes. It was 15 years ago, a long time ago. It was the grant money that somebody wrote a proposal, and it was granted. So, these kinds of programs have to exist.

We at a community college where we used to have a budget that was pretty high, we were the largest single parenting students on campus, 200 students and more. And now it is reduced because the budget depends upon the population. But I believe we have about 60 something students now, but we provide them other workshops, and it is not just one. We invite other counselors or professors to come and do workshops with them so that way we can have spiritual workshops and some other workshops. And it is just helping them out throughout and that is why they thrive in the programs. I do not know the statistics; majority of our students do not drop out because they get that support all around.

One of the works and school balance goals is the ability to stay enrolled in school to reach graduation day but at the same time fulfill the basic needs to survive with benefits from the SNAP program. It is a positive outcome to receive assistance from the SNAP program but what AA8 mentions is a way to transition them out of the program, making it temporary assistance. See their response below,

AA8:

I do believe that there are supposed to be some changes to it. I do not think it needs to be more of a comprehensive evaluation that will be hard to evaluate

every single person as far as what their ability is with regards to hours of school and with regards to work hours. I do believe that if we do make those changes and they reduce their hours, the reward would be that they do well academically in school because they are reaching towards a career goal, an educational goal, that will improve their family's life and take them out of receiving government benefits, I think that the idea to get them to maybe transition them out of the system so that way they are able to support their families through getting a college degree. We know that a lot of times education is something that does improve your family's life. Like if you are an a person with a Bachelor's Degree versus somebody that has no college education, you are probably going to get two or three times more their salary a year, and so again, you are creating generations of students going to college because if you are the first person in your family to go to college, it is likely that your children will go to college, it is likely that your grandchildren will go to college, so now you are creating generations of students who do not have to rely on SNAP. And the thing about that is rehabilitating them back into the economy, creating a strong workforce. Just because theyare physically going to school does not mean that they have all that study time and they are not able to refocus on one thing, they have to always constantly redirect with work and school and family, and I think that is something that is a challenge. So, if they were to make changes to that work hour requirement, that would allow them to do better in school and, as I said, persist. You are taking another layer of challenges off of them. But I do not think that is the a list of one for all. However,

suppose they are doing well with school. In that case, that can be something that replaces work hours because essentially, they are preparing for work, they are doing that, they are getting their education, they are getting the very training that they can enter the workforce, competitively.

Each student is different, and figuring out solutions to best fit the students' scenarios is what AA12 stated best. Utilizing professional development training was an idea that stood out from AA12; it prepares the student for the workforce and gives SNAP eligibility to students in need. See AA12's response below,

AA12:

Since I do not have that much information on it, I would say I do not know. I wish I could answer that. I am not sure how to answer that, since I do not know that much about it. I think there is always room for improvement. It should not be a one-size-fits-all because we know every student's situation will be different. So maybe for the majority of the students, it would be easy to obtain employment where they are working 20 hours a week, but we have to factor other things in, like maybe even transportation. Does the student have the ability to make it to work? Is there employment even available in their area? What kind of employment are they doing? It could be 20 hours, but if it is rigorous, depending on what they are doing, that could impact how they are doing in school. So, if it is possible, take it on a case-by-case basis to see what the conditions are for the student to see if that is possible. It may not be possible for that student to work the 20 hours. Maybe substitute it for something else if they were volunteering, or

professional development workshops that could be available to the student. So, while they are in school, they are still growing in some way, even if they are not necessarily working. They are being prepared for the workforce beyond college. The interview questions and responses rendered diverse results but were also rendered as having similar resolutions to the same challenges. The diversity of how each academic advisor arrived at the same goal has shown perseverance on both the advisor and the student. Each suggestion, referral, resource, or piece of advice given on how one student can survive the work and school balance has shown it is a work in progress and can be accomplished.

Summary

Chapter 4 has presented a detailed account of the collected data, rationale for coding, and common themes derived from the data used for this research study. The participant selection and changes requested allowed the minimum sample size 12 and qualifications to be reached; data saturation was met at seven and concluded with16 participants. The data collected, settings, and demographics consisted of in-depth interviews with 16 qualified academic advisors from across 12 community colleges and universities, who hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher and have at least two years of experience. Data was analyzed using Colaizzi's seven-step process and the inductive coding process.

Significant findings discovered that academic advisors validated their students' challenges and thought the SNAP work policy of 20 hours per week was excessive. Evidence of trustworthiness was addressed through these findings and the results from

the study revealed that no one-size-fits-all approach for students was applicable. Few advisors agreed on the implementation and design of the work policy where the average indicated a cap not to exceed 20 hours was in some scenarios, still excessive. Also evident was the number of circumstances not considered when reviewing the SNAP work exemptions. With the provided list of instruments and procedures used to recruit with some adjustments, the participation and data collection were magnified with main points derived from the interview questions, giving meaning to the data analysis and results. The next chapter will give a clear understanding of the findings compared to the literature found and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The study's purpose was to understand how SNAP's work policy affects college students' academic success through qualitative research. Academic advisors' perceptions of issues causing the problem were explored using phenomenography. A phenomenography approach allowed academic advisors to provide their thoughts on this phenomenon of the work-school balance for first-generation, low-income students entering college directly from high school.

A qualitative, phenomenography methodology was used to understand how the SNAP work policy affects college students' academics. Through academic advisors' perceptions of what was affecting academic success, phenomenography focused on lived experiences of low-income, first-generation students through their advisors. These students were in their first and second year of college, making adjustments from high school to college, all while balancing employment. The data collected helped understand why academic success is affected by the work policy and may have created a platform for preventive methods that can remove obstacles to students achieving their educational goals.

Key findings from the data collection showed students were stressed and discouraged. Some students had to work more than the 20 hours a week as an essential contributor to their household, whereas others were merely trying to make ends meet. Both scenarios had educational goals to complete while trying to qualify to receive SNAP benefits. The advisors witnessed some students who were able to balance work and school with the help of preventive measures they put in place for them to succeed; for

others, it was too late, and grades suffered, or they had withdrawn from classes. The advisors generated ideas on how the program should change to give students a more lucrative incentive, with some agreeing to make SNAP available to all students. A comparison was made between the previous literature and the current study's findings to extend this topic's knowledge.

Interpretation of Findings

The interpretation of findings will either confirm, disconfirm, or extend on the knowledge by comparing previous literature to the current study and will also answer the research question, How do academic advisors perceive the effect of the work policy required for SNAP benefits on first-generation students' academic success during their first and second year of college? Mamiseishvill conducted a study using data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study to find whether employment affects persistence from the first to the second year of college. With a sample size of 1,140 low-income, first-generation students from families with an income of $25,000 or less and who attended four-year postsecondary institutions, results indicated that students had a strong predictor of prioritizing their academic success among all employment-related variables, allowing them to return for their second year of college (Mamiseishvill, 2010). The study also showed that the harmful effects of employment might dissipate if students' perspective changed to focus solely on school first (Mamiseishvill, 2010). Those students having problems staying engaged with college or who had become disinterested found themselves experiencing the adverse effects of employment on academic success. Another factor to consider was that 51% of Mamiseishvill's study

participants worked more than 20 hours a week, which coincides with what some of the advisors in my study witnessed with a percentage of the students they serve, including the following:

- grades suffering from working too many hours

- advisement on preventive measures to improve grades or return to school

- finding jobs on campus or related to a major was more compatible with balancing a work and school schedule

- students withdrawing from school to take care of household/family responsibilities

- creating a school schedule that works with a part-time job

- focused students with great study habits can balance school and work

- suggesting students not work at all, if possible, until adjusted to college life

The academic advisors interviewed in this study witnessed several different outcomes that in some scenarios matched Mamiseishvill's findings, such as grades suffering from working too many hours and students withdrawing from school to take care of their household. On the other hand, there were those that did not fit, such as focusing solely on school, which proved to be difficult when problems arise, as well as availability of on-campus employment, making it easier for students to balance both work and school. The SNAP work policy broadened the study and gave the academic advisor something to consider, considering the relevance.

Academic advisors referred students to support systems and resources to help them along their academic journey. SNAP is one of many resources some advisors are

more familiar with than others. Within the SNAP program, the Food Stamp Act of 1977

(U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016) is where college students' work

policy was initiated, requiring full-time students to work at least 20 hours a week to

qualify for SNAP benefits. Exceptions to the policy are as follows:

- under the age of 18 or over the age of 49

- parent caring for a child under the age of six

- parent caring for a child 6-11 years of age and is unable to get childcare to
  attend work or school

- single parent caring for a child under the age of 12 and has a full-time
  enrollment

- receiving work-study funds

- receiving TANF

- unable to work because of a mental or physical disability

- enrolled in specific programs aimed at employment (i.e., job club,
  employment and training programs, etc.). (Lower-Basch & Lee, 2014; U.S.
  Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016)

As the program continued to develop into the 1980s and early 2000s, the

transition made was from orange and blue stamps to the EBT, and the name changed

from the FSP to the SNAP (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016). In

reviewing the exceptions to the SNAP work policy and taking into account students' first

or second college years, the average student does not qualify for benefits even with these

policy exemptions. As some advisors found themselves referring students to the program,

others found that many of their students did not qualify for the program without having a part-time job. As interviews were completed, a few advisors were not familiar with SNAP. They found themselves referring students to campus resources such as food pantries to meet basic needs, tutors to help with classes, and other preventive measures to keep them in school. A few advisors were aware of the SNAP program. They had on-campus programs that coincide with getting students qualified, whether through FWS or enrolled through special programs such as Job Corps and training to assist with obtaining employment. Other advisors mentioned programs where students were mandated to enroll in at least 15 units and were assisted with book vouchers, allowing them to save money for other necessities. Each advisor experienced a percentage of students already receiving SNAP benefits, whether they have children, were already working through FWS, or working at least 20 hours a week. Unfortunately for others, not being able to access essentials while pursuing educational goals resulted in students making tough choices.

Findings from interviews with the advisors mirrored those from some of the interviews featured from previous literature. Irlbeck et al. (2014) conducted a study of nine students from different departments located at TTU within the CASNR. Students were interviewed face-to-face, each interview lasting 30-75 minutes. The theoretical framework used was the input-environment-outcome (IEO) model and Astin's involvement theory, which detailed the support systems and motivations of first-generation college students (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Astin's model basis in this study shows educational evaluations completeness does not happen unless information on student

inputs (I), the educational environment (E), and student outcomes (O) are inclusive with the measurement (Astin, 1993). The study's purpose was to determine what motivated students to stay successful in college and what support systems they had that contributed to their college experience (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Irlbeck et al.'s interview questions asked,

- What factors led to the first-generation students' enrollment at TTU?

- In what programs/organizations/activities were students involved?

- On what support groups and/or support systems do they depend?

- How satisfied are they with their experiences at the TTU and within CASNR thus far?

The results showed that students' support systems consisted of academic advisors/professors, parents, and friends, all of which students find themselves confiding in when times were rough (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Irlbeck et al.'s study also resulted in three factors that determined the students' motivation for attending college: self-motivation, parental/family support, and teacher encouragement. One question specifically focused on the financial aspect in which students talked about the struggle and how a couple of them had to leave school, worked full-time to save money, and return to school using a budget to help them finish (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Another student mentioned how he worked all summer to make sure he had enough money to pay for college throughout the year (Irlbeck et al., 2014). Although each student had a different story that may have included no financial support from family or parents, they all were very determined not to let the financial struggles keep them from achieving their

academic goals. Some of the students relied on organizations as support systems, which also encouraged them to succeed. The limitations of Irlbeck et al.'s study consist of using only one college within one university and only nine participants who were first-generation students. In the current study, academic advisors I interviewed stated many of the same issues mentioned in Irlbeck et al.'s study. A few advisors did find a percentage of their students at a disadvantage compared to students who have a support system.

Some first-year students who are emancipated foster youth, do not have the same support system as other first-year students. According to advisors, first-generation students who has family but no financial support find it more challenging to receive educational support because it is limited. Some academic advisors stated that they sometimes refer students to partnering organizations such as Lowes who has assisted in employment, and some advisors referred students to mental health counseling to deal with struggles. Some also assisted with housing needs to relieve some of the stress and find ways to make sure students stay in school. Because the work policy limits the number of students who qualify, some advisors feel SNAP should be offered to all students. There are only so many students who can work on campus through the FWS program as there are not enough jobs for everyone. Each college is allocated a percentage of federally funded work-study that is also not guaranteed to everyone who applies for the funding. Each experience provided by the advisors brings light to an issue that has plagued students for a while.

The academic advisors who participated in the study provided their perspective and their own experiences of what they witnessed with the population they serve.

Through this phenomenography, which consists of a qualitative research method to map different ways in which people perceive, understand, conceptualize, and experience the phenomena in and various aspects of the world around them (Marton, 1986), they realize students benefit from getting assistance early on but sometimes are too late to help those who decided to withdraw from school. Some find that students make their way back to school and work on improving study habits and creating methods to make sure it does not happen again. These live experiences help gain insight into students' essentials and how it affects their educational journey.

The SNAP program provides food, which is considered a basic essential to function in everyday life. Considering the current study using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which consists of five categories of basic needs: physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization (McLeod, 2017), the SNAP program provides that physiological need and with the assistance of advisors and other support systems, students have found the safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization falls into place. Petty uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs to focus on first-generation students' transition and what better outcomes can come from how colleges and universities provide services to help them succeed. Some of the referrals mentioned by advisors include mental health, housing, tutoring, food pantry, employment, etc., that can be categorized using Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This conceptual framework focused on what is considered basic for students to succeed in higher education and spotlights the work policy restrictions for the SNAP program.

TOC was used to focus on the restrictions provided through SNAP's work policy and suggestions on ways of improvement. TOC provides five steps of focus, with each step converted to address the current study: identifying the constraint-bringing awareness of the SNAP work policy to light, exploiting the constraint-using the exemptions provided by the government to qualify students for SNAP and helping them balance work and school, subordinate the process-providing a focus on the students who do not qualify for the SNAP program and the challenges they encounter, elevating the constraint-making it known the SNAP work policy is an issue that needs to be addressed accordingly and continuing to repeat the cycle-continue to bring awareness to the imbalance and find ways for the government to address and make a change to the work policy (Synchronix Technologies, n.d.). Ray et al. completed a case study using TOC to demonstrate the effectiveness of its resources throughout a manufacturing organization. Looking at market demand and how the organization can respond to the restraints of meeting the demand, comparing each approach to outsource and how essential it is to the organization growth (Ray et al., 2008) was the critical factor in using the same approach with open-ended questions during the in-depth interviews with the academic advisors. Looking at TOC from an educational background, Balakrishnan et al. (2008) talked about how research and teaching are important influences when dealing with TOC in academia. The authors emphasized experiential learning and moving positively toward better efforts to communicate what is known (Balakrishnan et al. (2008). With the current study using academic advisors' responses, the focus was identifying the constraint on the 20-hour a week work policy with students not meeting any other exemptions. Also, advisors

magnified the exploitation of the constraint by using their position to voice their concerns with the number of hours required to work and how it affects students' academics.

Nevertheless, academic advisors made sure students who met exemptions were able to qualify for SNAP benefits and utilized other resources to help students who were not as fortunate. TOC's subordinating the process showed how academic advisors found ways to assist students who were at a disadvantage, providing reliable resources to keep those students enrolled. Elevating the constraint consisted of suggesting several ways to improve, change, or eliminate SNAP's current work policy, allowing all 16 academic advisors to promote some level of change to the SNAP work policy. Some of those suggestions included eliminating the hours, allowing students to substitute units or using volunteer hours towards hours worked, or simply reducing the number of hours required significantly to qualify for SNAP. The goal remains to continue the cycle in being repetitive, moving towards the SNAP program's growth specifically for college students to benefit from the program positively.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of using a phenomenography design include accessibility to academic advisors at a junior college or advisors who have not witnessed students' lived experiences to fully answer interview questions. In addressing the advisors' accessibility, one would first receive permission from the junior college, which proved extremely difficult during a pandemic. The State of California, on a mandatory shelter-in-place order, and the academic advisors at the community colleges are moving to virtual advising made for a challenging encounter with many non-responses. Upon approval,

initially, they were given the option of how they would like to complete the interview according to their availability and schedule. However, because of the mandatory shelter in place and social distancing orders, interviews were conducted using online virtual programs such as Skype, Zoom, free conference calls, etc. Some academic advisors were unfamiliar with the work policy and/or the entire SNAP program in general, which limited their responses and based their experiences on how they have advised students in scenarios similar to how the work policy is stated. Although biases may have played a part in how they responded due to the government and program policies, the questions were geared towards understanding and finding a solution. The results identified and the suggestions given may alleviate some of the constraints within the work policy. Due to several limitations encountered during the pandemic, recommendations would suggest a repeat of the current study with necessary adjustments.

Recommendations

Recommendations in previous studies involved several alternatives to interviewing students. Alternatives such as involving all freshmen and sophomore students, involving all gender and race, and following up with those same students within their junior and senior year to find out more about their experience balancing school and work. Because the current study involved interviewing academic advisors, the following recommendation for a future study can be made to include one of the academic advisors' students to participate in the interview to get both perspectives simultaneously. Such a scenario can show how similar or different the two could feel about the work and school balance and how SNAP's work policy affects it. Based on previous literature provided

that included multiple studies with student interviews, another recommendation for the future study includes more studies conducted using interviews with academic advisors who counsel students on all grade levels. This approach brings attention to the same issues that may occur beyond the first and second years of college. Referring back to previous literature, some of the same recommendations can relate to the current study.

Using a specific gender, Wood et al. conducted a qualitative study involving 28 African American male students attending a southwestern community college. Data collected through a semi-structured interview with predetermined questions allowed justification of unplanned conversations (Wood et al., 2016). From the findings, some male students talked about employment being a positive aspect of academic success. However, the majority found it negative and recognized the school/work balance's difficulties. From a positive perspective, students found employment-related to their studies (Wood et al., 2016) an avenue to their future job experience. The negative aspect sought out the transition of trying to adjust to work schedules (Wood et al., 2016) that made studying a challenge due to the dedicated time to work and depending on what type of job the student had; it can also be physically draining causing students to require more sleep and less time to complete homework. The limitations of this study were utilizing one gender and one community college campus. However, the recommendations suggested further studies to determine the school/work balance's difficulties. Because some of the outcomes from what academic advisors witnessed in the current study, were similar to what these students experienced in the Wood et al. study, the following recommendation for a future study includes academic advisors not only assisting students

at the beginning of the semester but also at the end of the semester. Did the suggestions academic advisors provide work for the students? How dramatic was the change? Would adjustments need to be made?

Such a study would be interesting to research, considering it can provide feedback to updating the current work policy for SNAP to help more students qualify, especially transitioning from high school where some were receiving reduced lunch and/or SNAP benefits under their parents. In considering the transition from high school to college, Broton and Goldrick-Rab (2016) highlighted some points to consider for students experiencing this transition. Some of these students were receiving free lunches at their perspective high schools. They were apart of households receiving SNAP benefits (Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016), but beginning a higher education journey does not change that status. In reviewing the current study's responses, a couple of the advisors encountered students in a similar, if not the same, scenario. AA4 spoke about emancipated youth and some of the struggles they encountered once they left the foster care system, AA14 works with students who were receiving benefits and try to help them gain eligibility. Just from the two examples provided, the following policy recommendation can be made to survey how many students fit the criteria and what can be done to ease the transition instead of an immediate cut-off from SNAP benefits once the said student has graduated from high school in June and starts college in August. Because policy recommendations to a government program will need an escalated federal level of approval, these should be coupled with the assistance of a government representative who can help facilitate policy changes through the proper channels.

Because the focus of the current study was first- and second-year students, another policy recommendation derived from the academic advisors included substituting units enrolled for hours worked, using volunteer hours as hours worked, and if students are participating in career development courses or program-those can be used to compensate for hours worked as well. Because social service agencies and colleges and universities offer career development programs or volunteer opportunities, the federal government may leave these options to the states to decide as each of them are different in population and number of students served. The result should be a priority for students to remain enrolled in college and care for themselves and their households throughout their academic experience. Positive social change such policy changes to work policy that would allow more students to qualify for the program. More students qualifying for SNAP may also reduce the number of students withdrawing from school, which would also increase graduation rates. In a COVID-19 world, recommendations such as telework in a virtual environment would be key in allowing young mothers to stay home with their children, cut down on stressors in life such as transportation and money for gas. Not being bound by an 8-5 job shows flexibility and with the use of these alternatives, food insecurity would see a reduction by allowing students to qualify for SNAP. Once again, the federal government may allow decisions of this caliber to be made on a state level in partnership with social service agencies, colleges, and universities. Sustainability would prevail not only in academics, but in the communities these students and families are residing. Such positive social change may bring attention to this issue that has allowed students and their communities to suffer too long in this manner.

Implications

Through the study, positive social change can significantly impact first and second-year college students matriculating straight from high school. If the suggestions made by the academic advisors were changes put into place such as: substituting volunteer hours, career program hours, or units enrolled for hours worked, the impact would be huge for decreasing the percentage of students who withdraw or drop out of school and perhaps learn how to truly balance school and work. Two advisors (AA5, AA11) suggested offering SNAP to ALL students but did not feel the work policy needed to be changed. With that suggestion, it is good to make it available to ALL students, but the work policy to remain the same may not eliminate any of the current issues.

TOC provides the five steps of focus: identifying the constraint, exploiting the constraint, subordinate the process, elevating the constraint, and repeating the cycle (Goldratt, 1984); positive social change is feasible. Considering each advisor's suggestion, three advisors (AA2, AA3, AA4) stated reducing the hours. They did not mention by how much but to reduce; it leaves one to think how much of an impact it would have on that student's ability to stay in school or improve their grades, be able to still provide for the household, and not have to choose between working and receiving an education. Another two advisors (AA7, AA9) suggested eliminating the work requirement or reduce to five hours a week; AA9 suggested using volunteer hours to substitute for hours worked. Four advisors also suggested a reduction in hours. However, each of them with a different added gesture: AA1 wants factors outside of class to be considered (i.e., study time, drive time, household responsibilities), AA8 suggested

creating a program that would allow a transition out of the SNAP program once a student starts receiving benefits, AA13 allow the reduction only during fall and spring semesters allowing students to increase their hours over summer breaks, and AA14 suggested requiring students to remain eligible for the SNAP program through progress reports of their academics. All the recommendations mentioned followed the five steps of TOC, and as many were repeated, the expectation of positive social change became evident.

When thinking of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, advisors considered each student who struggled with academics and essentials to meet daily needs. Fatigue from lack of time to study or sleep, stressed about monetary responsibilities, and feelings of being at a disadvantage because of not being able to afford something as simple as food and water. Four advisors suggested substituting or integrating units enrolled for the number of hours worked but each with a different added gesture: AA6 gave an example that included if a student has enrolled 12 units, they would only be required to work eight hours; AA10 suggestion was similar but wanted students to received double the amount of hours worked (i.e., 12 units=24 hours worked), AA12 suggested students volunteer hours or professional development workshop training should be substituted for hours worked also factoring in their responsibilities outside of class-reviewing each student on a case-by-case basis and AA16 does not see any other way to do it because of the limited openings for federally funded work-study positions. The final suggestion made by AA15 suggests that students work the average number of hours on record and partner with other organizations besides the work-study to help students qualify for the SNAP program.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs five categories are physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization (McLeod, 2017); each suggestion contributes to this conceptual framework category. Positive social change happens when influential moves are made to improve one's life, especially contributing to educational goals. A policy review for change can affect improvement, as well.

The work policy attached to the SNAP program has been around for over 40 years. The Food Stamp Act of 1977 (U.S. Department of Food and Nutrition Service, 2016) is where college students' work policy was incepted, having to work at least 20 hours a week for full-time students to qualify for SNAP benefits. So much has changed since the inception of this policy; it leaves one to wonder when the policy was reviewed coincides with what is currently happening with the student population today. Food pantries did not exist back in 1977, but they exist on campuses now in the 21st century. Adjustments to exemptions have been made, but the requirement to work at least 20 hours a week has remained the same. Each suggestion made was inclusive of reducing the number of hours worked, all except two. Using that leverage to invoke change can improve the life of a student dramatically. In current times of COVID-19, food insecurity has been at an all-time high, with food banks seeing sometimes triple the amount of people than normal. The safety net that some have experienced has been strained during this difficult time. Academic advisors are in these roles to see their students succeed and help them in anyway possible; their responses to the interview questions have captured the essence of that and their determination for resilience.

Conclusion

Every interview gave a phenomenography experience that differed by college, by the population of students, and by current state guidelines and policies followed by the advisor and their students. The study is titled The SNAP Work Policy Influence on College Student Academic Success, which brings forth the research question: How do academic advisors perceive the effect of the work policy for SNAP benefits on first-generation students' academic success during their first and second year of college? The SNAP work policy was magnified not from a students' perspective but from the advisors who guide them through their educational journey. Some interviews were similar, while others stood firm in what they believe, which resulted in being the opposite of others. What can be said that was evident was a consensus of agreeing that each student had a unique challenge, but everyone was on board to help see them through those challenges. The requirement to work at least 20 hours a week was found to be an issue with most, especially considering some students worked off-campus, and the jobs were draining at times. All while trying to make sure their households are taken care of and maintaining their full-time status in keeping up with classwork and fulfilling their educational responsibility.

Nevertheless, the result focused on students, their balance between work and school, how the work policy affected that balance, and how change can improve students' experiences. Discovering there was no one-size-fits-all approach to this study, some advisors agree with how the work policy was written. The literature and conceptual framework help identify critical factors revealed in each interview and enable future

researchers to replicate this study and complete additional studies. But also, evident the work policy for SNAP was found to be counterproductive, leading 14 out of the 16 advisors interviewed believing there needs to be improvement from the federal level. The policy recommendations suggested may continue to bring about positive social change for successful students with sustainable communities if the government act in partner with social service agencies and the Department of Education. First and second years in college are crucial for students to adapt and understand what is at stake and how to utilize what is available to them. This study brought attention to a federal policy that has created a barrier for students to reach their potential academic goals.

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Appendix: Abbreviations

ABAWDs-Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents

BPS-Beginning Postsecondary Student Study

CASNR-College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

CCSE-Community College Survey of Student Engagement

CCSM-Community College Success Measure

CDSS-California Department of Social Services

EBT-Electronic Benefit Transfer

FSP-Food Stamp Program

FWS-Federal Work-Study

GED-General Education Development

GPA-Grade Point Average

IEO-Input Environment Outcome

IPEDS-Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

OPT-Optimized Production Time-Table

PCCD-Peralta Community College District

SCWM-Social Class Worldview Model

SEO-Socio-Ecological Outcomes

SERO-Student Experience in the Research University

SNAP-Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

TANF-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TOC-Theory of Constraints

TTU-Texas Tech University

U.S.-United States

USDA-United States Department of Agriculture

WSG-Wisconsin Scholars Grant