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## *Educational Session*

### **2353 - A Phenomenological Study: Understanding the Barriers of Rural Texas Community College Transfer Students**

Partnerships and Collaboration, Special Populations

A phenomenological study took place to understand the barriers rural northeast Texas community college students experience in transferring to regional universities. The study explores the barriers that community college graduates face in transferring to four-year universities and examine possible solutions to these transfer barriers. The study occurred in rural northeast Texas and consisted of interviewing community college graduates regarding transfer obstacles and needed services to aid in the transfer process.

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# A Phenomenological Study: Understanding the Barriers of Rural Texas Community College Transfer Students.



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**From Moment to Movement:  
Shaping the Future of Transfer  
2022 Virtual Conference**



# Introduction

- **Better Job Opportunities** - Two-thirds of high-quality jobs will require education beyond the 12th grade by 2020, and post-high school attainment is a key factor in finding a meaningful and fruitful career.
- **President Obama Administration** - Postsecondary attainment also received support in 2009 when President Obama set a policy goal to increase postsecondary degree attainment among the 25 - to 34-year-old population to 60% by 2020 from 38% in 2009 (Rosenbaum et al., 2016). 60x30 with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- **Higher Income** - A worker with a bachelor's degree earns 84% more than a worker without a degree - an average value of \$2.8 million over the course of a lifetime (Lumina, 2019a). However, access to postsecondary education needs to be more available to everyone to support the effort.

# Background ETCC and TNU Partnership

- **This study will focus on an academic partnership between Texas Northeast University (TNU; pseudonym) and East Texas Community College (ETCC; pseudonym).**
- **This partnership was developed in 1999 under the leadership of the University System (US; pseudonym) and THECB. The purpose of this partnership was to place qualified teachers in rural areas of Texas through the community college pipeline.**
- **This academic partnership encourages students to graduate from ETCC with an associate's degree first and then complete a bachelor's degree on the ETCC campus through TNU.**



## Statement of Problem



- **Community colleges in the United States are essential to the higher education landscape, but questions often arise regarding community college students' aptitude and preparedness to transfer to baccalaureate institutions (Aulck & West, 2017). Enrollment at universities and community colleges has increased greatly, particularly at the community college (Rosenbaum et al., 2016). Forty-four percent of undergraduate students begin at a community college; however, these students face hurdles in continuing their educational journeys at four-year universities (Nuñez & Yoshimi, 2017).**

# Purpose of Study



- **The purpose of this proposed phenomenological study is to explore and identify the barriers community college transfer students in Northeast Texas encountered in transferring to universities to complete their bachelor's degree.**
- **Examine possible solutions to these transfer barriers.**
- **It will take place in rural Northeast Texas and will consist of interviewing community college transfers regarding their perspective of transfer obstacles and needed services to aid to the transfer process.**
- **This study could help Texas university leaders understand and eliminate these obstacles for students and meet 60x30 goals for the Upper East Texas Region.**



## Research Questions

- **Q1. According to east Texas community college transfer students, what are the barriers to a successful transfer to a four-year university?**
- **Q2. According to east Texas community college transfer students, what type of collegiate services are needed to support the successful transfer to a four-year university?**



# Literature Review

## Postsecondary needs and transfer barriers:

- **Only 20% of Texas eighth grade students in 2006 graduated from college by 2017 (THECB, 2020a).**
- **In 9 years, 60% of Texans will need a certificate or degree to help the state stay competitive in the global economy (THECB, 2020b). Changes are critical if students are going to be successful in college degree completion.**
- **According to Maliszewski-Lukszo and Hayes (2020), Seventy-five percent of first-year, first-time community college students aim to complete a baccalaureate degree; only one-quarter of these students go on to transfer, and only 14% complete a bachelor's degree. (p. 32)**

# Literature Review

- **The need for postsecondary education has changed. The United States has gone from an industrial economy to a “knowledge-based society” (Lumina Foundation, 2019a).**
- **This knowledge-based society has created an even stronger need for a post-high school education degree (Lumina Foundation, 2019a).**
- **The student population at American universities has changed dramatically as well. The majority of students in higher education institutions are older, working full time, and have families (Merisotis & Connell, 2019).**
- **According to the Lumina Foundation (2019b), “The vast majority of jobs created since the “Great Recession” require education beyond high school, and that trend shows no sign of abating” (p.1). The data indicated that only half of Americans between the ages of 25-64 hold a credential beyond high school (Lumina Foundation, 2019a).**
- **This data is concerning, particularly as it relates to job attainment and financial sustainability for those who are not receiving a post-secondary degree.**

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# Research Method

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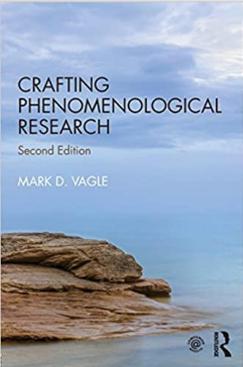
**Phenomenology was the research design of inquiry. According to researchers, phenomenology is a philosophical perspective that underlines all qualitative research (Locke et al., 2010). Locke et al. (2010) stated, “Phenomenology is interested in human consensus as, in other words, how conscious is experienced” (p. 129).**

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**Phenomenology uses “personal narratives as windows into lived experiences of the narrators and attempts to achieve an empathetic understanding of that experience” (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 248).**

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**Phenomenological research is different from other qualitative research approaches in that the subjective experience of the participant is at the center of the inquiry (Gaffney, 2020). Phenomenology is based on Franz Brentano’s consciousness of the developments of psychology (Vagle, 2014)**



# Population



**This study was designed to interview participants who had transferred from ETCC main campus and had successfully transferred to a four-year university.**

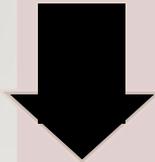


**At the time of the study, ETCC had a total of 2,780 students. There were 1,679 sophomore students at ETCC at the main campus (Institutional Effectiveness & Research, 2020).**

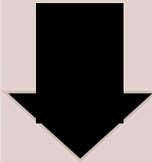


**The student demographics were as follows for ETCC: White/Anglo (51%), Black/African American (10.1%), Hispanic/Latinx (31.5%), and Asian (1.00%) (ETCC Institutional Effectiveness & Research, 2020). It was the goal of the research to have a diverse population representative of ETCC's population.**

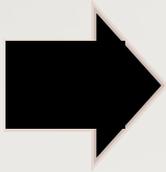
# Sample Population



**In phenomenological research, the initial sample selection has to consider specific characteristics and seeks to be representative of all a priori contextual characteristics in an experiential sense (Henriques, 2014). I randomly selected 100 students to invite to participate in the study from the list provided by ETCC.**



**I purposely chose 15 whose demographics were reflective of ETCC's population. This strategy promoted diversity in the sampling. The goal was to have 15 students participate in the study. I picked participants that were from different majors, including male and female.**



**Saturation of data was met by having 15 participants.  
5 Hispanics/Latinx/ - 5 – African American and 5 Anglo student participants.**

## Materials/Instruments

- ◆ This study consisted of two forms of data collection: a pre-survey and open-ended interviews.
- ◆ Each protocol was field-tested by non-participants to secure the validity of the instrument prior to administration.



## Pre-survey

- ◆ **The pre-survey contained 10 questions and was sent to each student via Survey Monkey.**
- ◆ **The survey asked for demographic information as well as information regarding the responsibilities they may have had while they were attending school, such as accountability to their families, jobs, or other external commitments. It also asked them to go into detail about their expectations upon receiving their associate's degrees at the community college and bachelor's degrees at the university.**



# Qualitative Interviews



- ◆ I performed qualitative interviews in an online format. Since this was a phenomenological study, it was important to learn about the lived experiences of the participants. This type of intense questioning required some interviews to last up to 90 minutes.
- ◆ The interview questions (Appendix B) were based on the student background, student capital, trust and relationship with the institutional agent or protective agent, transfer student shock, financial constraints, pathway/articulation agreement, the 60x30 initiative in Texas, and the role of community college and university partnerships. There was an introduction questions, the two research questions with sub questions.

# Data Collection

**A solicitation email was sent by the researcher/me to participants list sent from ETCC Institutional Effectiveness Office.**

**Interested individuals were sent a consent form to sign and return.**

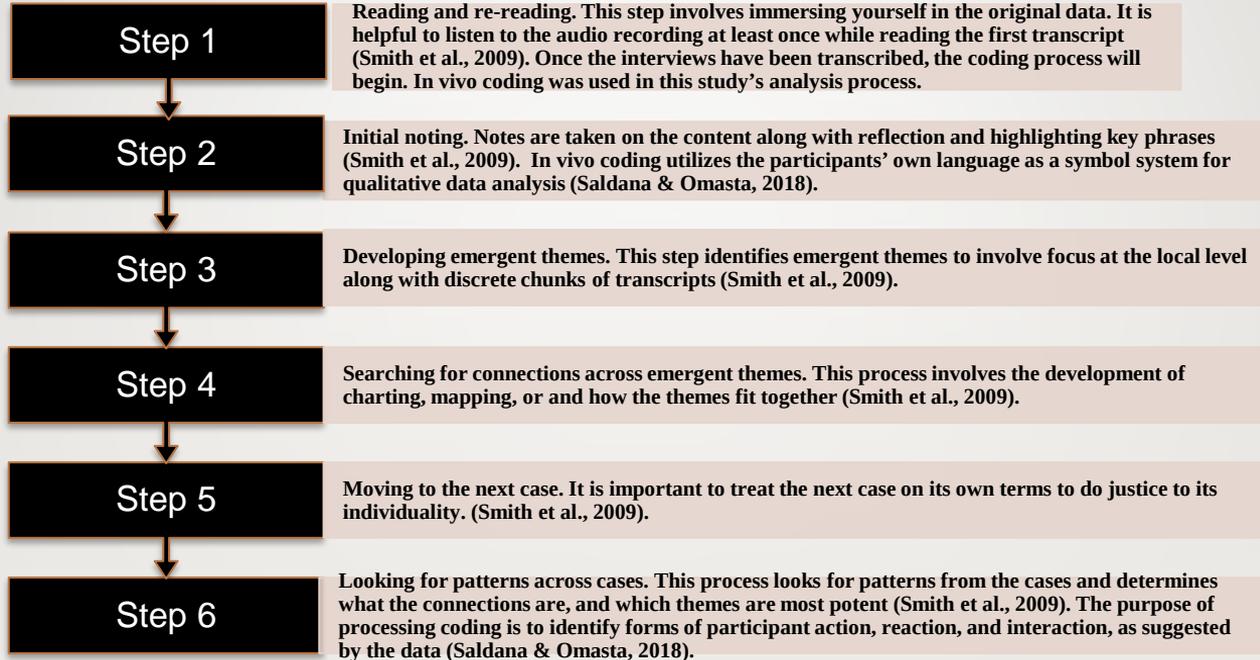
**After consent forms were received, participants were sent the pre-survey Survey Monkey link to the questionnaire to gather baseline information before setting up the interviews.**

**Interviews lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes with each participant that had returned a signed consent form and completed the questionnaires.**

**The audio-visual GoToMeeting interviews were recorded and transcribed through Scribie.com**

**The transcribed copies were sent to participants to verify for accuracy and intent.**

# Data Analysis - Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)



## Presentation of Findings

# Questionnaire and Interview Validation

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**Both instruments – pre-questionnaire and interview guide were field tested.**

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**The pilot study was sent to three former transfer students.**

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**These non-study participants contributed comments that strengthened the pre-questionnaire and interview protocol.**

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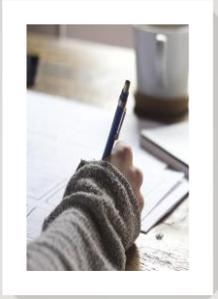
**The suggestions were minor changes aimed at improving the flow of the interview. I also made minor edits to the pre-questionnaire to ensure the questions were clear.**

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# Pre-Questionnaire Findings

- ◆ A total of 15 students that had transferred from ETCC to a university participated in the study. The interview participants consisted of five African American students, with three females and two being male; five Latinx/Hispanic students, including three females and two males; and five Caucasian students, including four females and one male.
- ◆ In addition, the following pseudonyms were assigned to each participant: **SB1-Kim, SB2-April, SB3-Shemetric, SB4-Carl, SB5-Jamal, SB6-Veronica, SB7-Maria, SB8-Stephanie, SB9-Carlos, SB10-Jose, SB11-Ebony, SB12-Elva, SB13-Samantha, SB14-Tom, and SB15-Latoya.** Table 4.1 reflects the initial data retrieved from the pre-questionnaire. This data helped build the foundation for analyzing the lived experiences of each participant.



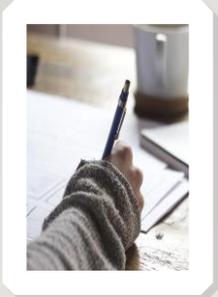
## Information Gathered From Pre-Questionnaire

SB1 Kim	Anglo – Female	1) First-Generation Student: No 2) Support Family: No (husband business owner) 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Undergraduate student, mother, wife, and works part-time at husband's business as needed.
SB2 April	Anglo – Female	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: No (Single) 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Graduate student and full-time job (community college recruiter)
SB3 Shemetric	African American - Female	First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Undergraduate student, mother, and a full-time job (post office worker)



## Information Gathered From Pre-Questionnaire

SB4 Carl	African American – Male	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Bachelor’s degree graduate, full-time job (community college workforce development associate), a part-time job (youth and worship leader), husband, dad, and community leader
SB5 Jamal	African American – Male	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Graduate student, full-time job (farmer and lawn service business), husband, dad, and community leader
SB6 Veronica	Hispanic (Latinx) – Female	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Bachelor’s degree graduate, part-time job, family caregiver, and volunteer



## Information Gathered From Pre-Questionnaire

SB7 -Maria	Hispanic (Latinx) – Female	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: No 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Bachelor’ degree graduate and a full-time job (teacher).
SB8 - Stephanie	Anglo – Female	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Graduate student, full-time job (teacher), mother, and wife
SB9 - Carlos	Hispanic (Latinx) – Male	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Bachelor’s degree graduate, full-time job (operations manager), and husband
SB10 - Jose	Hispanic (Latinx) – Male	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Full-time job, husband, dad, and student
SB11 - Ebony	African American – Female	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Undergraduate student, full-time job (bank), part-time job, and mom
SB12 -Elva	Hispanic (Latinx) – Female	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Bachelor’s degree graduate, and full-time job (teacher)
SB13 - Samantha	Anglo – Female	1) First-Generation Student: No 2) Support Family: No 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Undergraduate student and full-time job (bank) Note: Transferred to university, but due to COVID-19 moved back home and will remain home to complete degree.
SB14 - Tom	Anglo – Male	1) First-Generation Student: No 2) Support Family: No 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Undergraduate student, full-time job, part-time job (family ranch), and father
SB15 - Latoya	African American – Female	1) First-Generation Student: Yes 2) Support Family: Yes 3) Student Responsibilities or Notes: Undergraduate student, full-time job (aide – ISD), mom, and caregiver to grandmother



# Theme 1: Academic Advising

## Lack of Advising

- While some students had a seamless transfer from ETCC to a university, they thought their advising experience on the ETCC campus could have better prepared them to transfer to a university.
- Before the Transfer Center was in operation, students did not know where to start registration or the financial aid process in transferring to a university.
- Students also shared that there was a lack of guidance from ETCC and too many enrollment processes.
- SB4 shared, “Just knowing where to start was a barrier. Students don't know what the opportunities are out there, even at the community college level, and you know, especially university level.”

## Loss of Credit

- While many students did not lose credit, some students had to go back and take another course due to inadequate advising. Some students lose credits; however, it was due to their own choices.
- S8B-Stephanie explained, “Not due to anyone’s fault but my own due to switching majors.” The student mentioned taking dual credit courses, knowing they would not transfer or be needed for their degree. Students also expressed concerns about not knowing what GPA was required to move to specific programs.
- SB8-Stephanie shared, You need to know what GPA is needed to transfer to university. You have to have this GPA and do not let it dip below it. I feel like if there were going to be any issues, it would have been knowing the GPA requirements.

## Theme 2: Personal Issues

### Working Full Time and Long Weekend Hours

- **One of the common themes impacting the students' personal issues was working full time and long weekend hours or graveyard shifts. Students could only take part-time loads due to working full time.**
- **Working full time and hard shifts were barriers for ETCC students' completing their bachelor's degrees.**

### Family Issues

- **Family issues were another concern for students trying to finish their degrees.**
- **Students faced many personal difficulties such as marital problems, children, and pregnancy.**
- **Reliable internet.**
- **One student suffered the loss of a family member tragically due to racial discrimination, and this caused the student stress and anxiety.**

Pell Grant Not  
Covering Full  
University Tuition

## Theme 2: Personal Issues, continued.



### Funding their Degree with Financial Aid

- Many students used financial aid and did not understand the repercussions of the financial aid processes.
- While Pell grants cover full tuition at ETCC, they do not cover the university's full tuition amount, and many students had to take out a loan to pay the difference.
- The financial aid process was daunting and overwhelming for students as SB11-Ebony defined, *"The financial aid process is weird because I did not know what to fill out on the form."*
- Students also faced difficulties with the processes of financial aid and veteran affairs.
- SB4-Carl shared, *"I found myself in the financial aid building a couple of times, but it was because of a lack of understanding the financial aid process and also the GPA requirements for financial aid."*
- Another concern for a student was not knowing the loan amount they borrowed while in school, so they felt unprepared to make student loan payments.
- Several students did not understand the financial aid terminology, like deferred or non-deferred options. This turned into a challenge when students faced student loan payments, and there was anxiety about how the student would make a loan payment. The lack of knowledge on financial aid processes and lack of additional funding to cover tuition cost were obstacles for students.
- SB6-Veronica found the FAFSA form discriminatory as the student is a United States citizen but cannot check the "Born in the United States box, but pays taxes.
- SB7-Maria felt DACA students should be offered more tuition and scholarship opportunities since they cannot apply for federal loans.

Not understanding  
Financial Aid  
Processes  
Daunting

Not knowing the  
amount borrowed  
and how will they  
pay back.

Understanding  
Financial Aid  
Terminology.

FAFSA Form  
discriminatory.

More  
scholarship for  
DACA students.

# Theme 3: Enrollment and Financial Services – RQ2

Early  
Advising

The need for effective collegiate services.

- The third theme regarding RQ2 was the need for more effective collegiate services. Students shared that early advising was key in understanding the bachelor's degree requirement from the beginning of their associate's degrees at the community college.
- For example, community college and university advisors could work together more to provide enrollment information to students.
- Community college and university advisors used transfer vocabulary that could be intimidating for students trying to understand. SB13-Samantha stated, *"I did not even know what a pathway was."*
- Transfer students suggested that community college and university staff be cross-trained in financial aid and enrollment processes.
- Students also recommended that services be offered on Friday afternoons to help students with questions.
- SB8-Stephanie also recommended having more than one staff member in TNU at ETCC offices.
- SB14-Tom recommended, *"Keep the transfer team in place for extra support between community college and university to support transfer students."*
- Students expressed that more substantial enrollment and financial aid services would help students successfully transfer to the university.

Community  
College &  
University  
Advisors Work  
Together

Transfer  
Vocabulary

Cross  
Training of  
Staff

Customer Service  
and Operation  
Hours

Informational Programs on admission and financial aid processes.

# Theme 4: Supporting Transfer at University Level

Informational Videos

The need for informational programs regarding admissions and financial aid process.

Financial Aid Vocabulary

- Students felt that more informational programs regarding admission and financial aid processes were services transfer students needed. For example, they desired information on when students could expect to get a refund and how to enroll in the university.
- SB9-Carlos suggested creating a video or presentation that would help students complete a FAFSA form.
- SB4-Carl also recommended that financial aid vocabulary, such as loan versus grant be included in such a presentation.
- Students expressed the desire to have the enrollment, financial aid, and university instructional technology platform information in one video or presentation to alleviate the overwhelming process.
- Students that transferred to the main campus needed a learning community and support system designed for them. SB13-Samantha shared the negative experience she had transferring from ETCC to TNU stating, *“Nobody reached out to me at the university [on transfer services for students living on campus], and I did not know about the student activities programs the university offered for transfer students.”*

Enrollment Processes in a Technology Platform

Transfer Learning Community

## Theme 4 - Supporting Transfer Students

*I think it's just really important to stress to transfer students how important it is to be involved on campus, and it's scary being a transfer student among a bunch of different freshmen, because essentially you are a freshman. There are many more things catered towards freshmen, so it's really important to be involved, whether it be a job, tutoring, volunteer or whatever. Just being by myself was hard. This was my first time to live away from my family, and my boyfriend lives across the state, so it was tough. It was hard to fit in as a transfer student living on main campus. SB13-Samantha*

## **Interpretation of the Research Findings - Research Questions #1**

*According to northeast Texas community college transfer students, what are the barriers to a successful transfer to a four-year university?*

Academic  
Advisor

Cross  
Training

Loss of  
Credit

Admission  
Process  
GPA

Financial  
Aid Barriers

Personal  
Experiences

# Interpretation of Findings – Research Question #1

- ◆ Academic Advisors - While some of the participants had positive experiences with advisors, several participants thought their transfer experience could have been improved and that the advising they received caused issues during the transfer process.
- ◆ Cross Training - Not every student services staff is educated in some areas. You ask them questions, and some of them do not know the answer, and sometimes they think they know the answer, but they do not. I would always have to check with different academic and financial aid services departments.
- ◆ Loss of Credit - SB1 experienced a missing course due to misadvising; however, faculty and administration supported the student and allowed SB1 to graduate with an associate degree as it was a class needed for the ETCC degree plan.
- ◆ Admission Process - The participant data indicated that many wanted a less overwhelming admission process when transferring from ETCC to TNU.
- ◆ Knowing GPA requirements - for bachelor's degree programs when transferring from community college to university.
- ◆ Financial Aid Barriers - Participant SB5-Jamal found the Veteran Affairs (VA) process regarding financial aid very confusing and frustrating, because answers were not immediately available. SB5-Jamal stated, *“Financial aid staff could be more knowledgeable on VA benefits and how much out-of-pocket expense would be required at the community college and university.”*
- ◆ Personal Experience - Students also shared personal experiences that caused barriers in the transfer process. SB15-Latoya, a teenage mother, did not have internet access at home when she entered community college.

## Interpretation of the Research Findings

*Improving the transfer process is one of the most efficient and effective ways to ensure an adequate workforce and an educated citizenship (Mangan, 2020).*

*According to Mangan (2020), “When done well, the transfer process allows colleges to serve as engines of social mobility. When it falters, inequalities remain entrenched” (p. 8).*

## **Interpretation of the Research Findings - Research Question #2**

*According to northeast Texas community college transfer students, what type of collegiate services are needed to support the successful transfer to a four-year university?*

# Interpretation of the Research Findings - Research Questions

## #2

Academic Advising



Academic Advising - The participants indicated that academic advising needed to be transparent in the transfer process. They shared that community college and university advisors should work together to ensure that everyone was on the “same page”. SB4-Carl stated, “The community college and university advisors should work together more so students understand the enrollment and degree requirements.”



Transfer/Academic Language - Students also expressed that they had not understood the academic language pertaining to transfer students, such as pathways and 2+2 plans. SB13-Samantha said, “I did not know what a pathway or 2+2 plan was when I transferred to the university.”



Communication Efforts - While SB15-Latoya had a good transfer experience, she believed that better communication efforts were needed to ensure she was doing everything right. **She stated that she felt a little insecure since she was a first-generation college student at the community college and university.**



Strong financial aid services - This was particularly important in regard to university loans and learning how to manage living expenses while in college.



Student trainings and literacy on Admissions requirements, financial aid services, and blackboard - The participants suggested requiring training for students during the transfer process on topics such as admissions requirements, blackboard overviews, enrollment steps, and financial aid.



Cross training the staff with other support offices would be helpful. By doing this, the support offices could work together and share information to ensure that they are all working together and giving the same accurate information.



Support Services - Participant SB13-Samantha shared that universities should have support services for all transfer students, not just incoming freshmen.

Transfer and Academic Language

Communication Efforts

Strong Financial Aid Services

Transfer Support Services

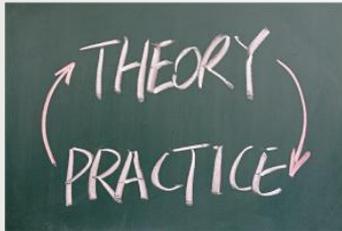
Cross Training Staff

Student Trainings and Literacy

# Implications of Theoretical Framework

## Transfer Shock

The term transfer shock was used in 1965 to describe the initial adjustment students experience in enrolling in a four-year institution (Maliszewski-Lukszo & Hayes, 2020).



## Transfer Capital

The five significant concepts for transfer students' transitions from community college to a university are integration, involvement, environmental pull, capital, and transfer receptivity (Bahr et al., 2013).

- Transfer capital and transfer shock composed the conceptual framework that guided this study.
- Transfer student capital is how students' experiences directed their way from the community college to university (Laanan et al., 2010).
- The alignment of the conceptual framework validated the research through research-based theories.
- Transfer capital is a determining factor in whether students will successfully transfer from community colleges to universities.
- When students face the period of transition to a university from community college, this "culture/transfer shock" can hinder them in completing their degrees (Ivins et al., 2017).
- Faculty members from both the community college and the university have an essential role in ensuring that community college students experience successful transitions from community colleges to universities (Thurston, 2020).



## Implications for Practice

Transparency  
Advising  
Enrollment  
Financial

Personal  
Barriers

Learning  
Management  
System

Scholarship  
Information

First  
Generation  
Transfer  
Students

- Based on the research findings, transfer students wanted transparency and support in the forms of academic advising, enrollment, and financial programs targeted toward transfer students at the university level.
- Effective advising services are essential to keeping students on transfer pathways and ensuring course work is not overlooked (Wyner et al., 2016).
- Students shared that personal barriers such as family issues, work schedule restraints, and lack of internet services are often obstacles for a student transferring to a university and should be considered when attempting to best serve transfer students.
- Participant data demonstrated the students' need to have transfer enrollment information available to them in one setting to inform them of what is expected from them when transferring to a university.
- The participants in the study also expressed a need for the learning management system to be addressed and explained when beginning at the university to help alleviate learning insecurities.
- Students shared their need for understanding the university's admission requirements and course requirements. Their perspectives on their financial aid experiences showed that there was need for financial aid literacy and additional information on scholarships or funding when a Pell Grant does not cover full university tuition.
- The study also revealed that more scholarship information could help alleviate the burden of student loan debt.
- Many participants were first-generation college students and, while there are specialized services offered to first-generation college freshmen, more transfer services should be offered to first-generation college transfer students.

# Limitations

- **This study is limited to a unique and single context which creates a limitation in the possibility that the results would be transferable to another study context.**
- **ETCC and TNU are in rural northeast Texas.**
- **TNU has a site on the ETCC campus which makes this study ideal for an attrition study.**
- **However, the unique nature of the context presents some difficulties regarding transferability.**
- **Researcher positionality is another limitation. While I did not serve as an advisor to any of the participants, I serve as a leader in the organizational context. This could have had an impact on the participants' responses even though it was expressed in the consent form and communication.**
- **Not all participants were TNU transfer students as some transferred to other universities in northeast Texas.**
- **Although demographic information, such as race and gender, was disclosed, these factors were not analyzed in detail to determine any patterns in the data.**
- **The study's qualitative nature does not provide the complete, statistical link between transfer shock and transfer capital that would be clearly persuasive to some audiences.**



# Recommendations for Future Studies

- ◆ **Various recommendations emerged from the results of the interpretive phenomenological analysis of the qualitative interview data.**
- ◆ **Future research could address the study's limitations and explore the issues in greater detail.**
- ◆ **Research connecting gender and ethnicity with transfer student outcomes could also be beneficial.**
- ◆ **Scholars should also consider research on transfer policy in Texas and its implications for Texas transfer students concerning the new THECB 60x30 initiatives in correlation with the Texas Transfer Frameworks that the THECB has initiated.**
- ◆ **Specifically, research for the purpose of improving TNU's partnership with ETCC should include other partnership data.**
- ◆ **Future research that is correlated to the northeast Texas region's economic development regarding job needs and future job growth should also be considered.**
- ◆ **The THECB should consider research on how pathways affect transfer student success and consider utilizing a practitioner support community that helps practitioners produce pathways to bridge the gap between community college and university faculty.**



- **It was my goal to continue the research and fill in the missing gaps in the literature through understanding the experiences rural community college students have when transferring to a university from their perspectives.**
- **The findings from ETCC participants concerning barriers revolved around academic advising, personal issues, enrollment and financial aid services, and transfer support at the university level.**
- **The study also revealed that transfer students need encouragement, empowerment, and financial support from institutional agents when transferring from community college to university to alleviate their anxieties and concerns.**
- **These insights could be a guide to help higher education leaders and state legislatures create policies, transfer-friendly advising structures, seamless pathway models, and funding to support transfer students.**
- **These transfer practices could help grow economic development opportunities in the state and improve the livelihood of individuals in northeast Texas as well as Texas as a whole. Through more higher education training, northeast Texas and Texas will be more competitive in a global economy.**



Thank you!

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