

“WHAT DO I DO?”: EXPLORING ELEMENTS OF SOLICITED ADVICE AND
RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION BETWEEN EMERGING ADULTS
AND THEIR PARENTS

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Nancy DiTunnariello

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“What Do I Do?”: Exploring Elements Of Solicited Advice and Relationship
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By

Nancy DiTunnariello

The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *disquisition* complies with North Dakota State
University’s regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Dr. Ann Burnett

Chair

Dr. Stephenson J. Beck

Dr. Nan Yu

Dr. Brandy A. Randall

Approved:

April 14, 2016

Date

Dr. Mark Meister

Department Chair

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation was to gain a better understanding of how emerging adult children respond to their parents' advice, and uncover connections between advice and parent-child relationship satisfaction. Because emerging adults may experience uncertainty as they move toward adulthood, they may reach out to their parental figures when making new or important decisions. The current study took a closer look at the role elements of advice response theory (ART) played in an emerging adult's decision-making process when asking a parental figure for advice. The study also considered the potential relationship between elements of ART and parent-emerging adult child relationship satisfaction.

A total of 503 participants between the ages of 18 to 25 were recruited from a medium-sized Midwestern land grant institution. Participants completed an online survey to measure elements of ART, parent-child relationship satisfaction, and demographic questions. Six hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed.

According to the findings of this dissertation, emerging adults consider parental advice characteristics and parent as advisor characteristics when deciding on the quality of the advice, and the intention to implement the advice received from their parental figures. Also, emerging adults reported that elements of ART play a role in parent-emerging adult child relationship satisfaction. Findings highlight that it is important for emerging adults to perceive their parental figures as trustworthy because perceived trustworthiness plays a large role in implementation intention, perceived advice quality, and perceived parent-child relationship satisfaction. Also, advice limitations do not play as large a role as previously expected.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Emerging Adulthood.....	3
Parent-Emerging Adult Child Relationships	8
Parent-Emerging Adult Child Relationships and Advice Seeking.....	11
Study Rationale.....	12
Chapter Summary	14
CHAPTER TWO. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	15
Overview.....	15
Relational Uncertainty	15
Advice Response Theory (ART)	20
Family Relationship Satisfaction	25
Chapter Summary	29
CHAPTER THREE. METHOD	30
Overview.....	30
Method Information.....	30
Participants.....	30
Procedures.....	32
Measures	33
Advice response theory measure	34
Parental advice quality	34
Implementation intention.....	34

Parental advice characteristics	35
Parent as advisor characteristics	36
Parent-child relationship satisfaction measure.....	37
Analysis.....	38
Chapter Summary	39
CHAPTER FOUR. RESULTS	41
Overview.....	41
Hierarchical Multiple Regression	41
Description of Variables	42
Data Cleanup and Assumptions.....	43
Statistical Results	44
Hypothesis one.....	44
Hypothesis two.....	46
Hypothesis three.....	48
Hypothesis four.....	50
Hypothesis five	52
Hypothesis six.....	54
Chapter Summary	56
CHAPTER FIVE. DISCUSSION.....	57
Overview.....	57
Summary of Results.....	58
Contributions to Advice Response Theory (ART)	60
Contributions to Parent-Emerging Adult Child Relationship.....	64
Limitations and Directions for Future Research.....	70
Conclusion	72

REFERENCES	74
APPENDIX A. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES	91
APPENDIX B. ADVICE PRIMER AND ADDITIONAL ADVICE QUESTIONS	92
APPENDIX C. ADVICE RESPONSE THEORY MEASURE.....	94
APPENDIX D. PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION MEASURE	96
APPENDIX E. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS.....	97

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Demographic Information.....	31
2. Descriptive Information for Research Variables.....	38
3. Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis _{1(a-d)} : Parental Advice Characteristics and Implementation Intention	46
4. Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis _{2(a-d)} : Parental Advice Characteristics and Parental Advice Quality	48
5. Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis _{3(a,b)} : Parent as Advisor Characteristics and Implementation Intention	50
6. Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis _{4(a,b)} : Parent as Advisor Characteristics and Parental Advice Quality	52
7. Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis _{5(a,b)} : Parent as Advisor Characteristics and Parent-Child Relationship Satisfaction	54
8. Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis ₆ : Parental Advice Quality and Parent-Child Relationship Satisfaction.....	56

CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday, July 8, 2015, a satirical Instagram account called @Sarcasm_Only, posted a picture on Instagram that read: “Being 18-25 is like playing a video game where u’ve (sic) skipped the tutorial & you’re just sort of running about with no idea how anything works.” The post received over 195,000 “likes.” The comments section contained over 12,000 comments and tags revealing that many individuals share this sentiment and fall within the 18-25 age bracket. According to Arnett (2000), the theory of emerging adulthood explains individuals in the United States between the ages of 18-25 are in a developmental stage between adolescence and adulthood. The theory of emerging adulthood is characterized by (1) identity explorations, (2) instability, (3) self-focused thinking, (4) feeling in-between (not an adolescent or adult), and (5) thoughts of increased possibilities (Arnett, 2000, 2006, 2007).

In 1994, Arnett found many college students between the ages of 18-25 did not view themselves as adults for two reasons: (1) they did not claim full responsibility of their lives, or (2) they did not consider themselves as their parents’ equals. More recently, in a study completed on American college students, 69% reported that they would only partially consider themselves adults, and 6% felt they had not reached adulthood at all (Nelson & McNamara Barry, 2005). Many individuals experience emerging adulthood; however, because everyone’s life experiences differ, emerging adults’ experiences and length of time transitioning to adulthood may vary (Arnett, 1994, 2000; Arnett & Tanner, 2006).

The definition of adulthood has changed throughout the years. At one point, more attention was placed on characteristics like age to define adulthood; however, the definition has evolved into a more individualized perception focusing on self-reliance (Côté, 2000). In the

1950s, individuals were considered adults if they left home to live on their own, completed school, entered the workforce, married, and had children (Settersten Jr., & Ray, 2010).

A large number of emerging adults are now remaining home, moving back home with their parental figures (Henig, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2012), or going back to school for alternative degrees. In a national study of individuals 18 and older, one-in-four (24%) have reported moving back with their parents (Pew Research Center, 2012). Henig (2010) reported an estimated 40% of Americans between the ages of 18 to 25 rely on their parents by moving back home at least once during this span of time (Henig, 2010). An estimated 35% of individuals between the ages of 18 to 34 reported having a hard time finding employment, and as a result decided to go back to school. Therefore, it can be concluded that the lifestyles of current individuals between the ages of 18 to 25 offer a different path from what once defined adulthood in the 1950s.

Emerging adults in the United States may require prolonged assistance from parental figures impacting an emerging adults' perception of self-sufficiency. Assistance can come in different forms, including help with finances and managing emotional situations (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992). Emerging adults need financial assistance, and a financial tie between emerging adults and their parents necessitates parental involvement in the lives of their children (Padilla-Walker, Nelson, & Carroll, 2012; Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2001; Tanner, 2006). When facing new circumstances or important decisions in emerging adulthood, emerging adults may also obtain assistance from their parents in the form of advice.

Emerging adulthood is a time of instability and uncertainty because individuals are making new decisions and taking on new responsibilities (Arnett, 2000). Asking for advice is a way to manage the uncertainty that comes with new decisions and responsibilities. This study

uses advice response theory to consider emerging adults' uncertainty with regard to implementing parental advice. This study also considers the level of satisfaction emerging adults perceive from the relationship they have with their parental figures. Chapter one begins with a detailed explanation of emerging adulthood, followed by an overview of parent-emerging adult child relationships. Chapter two will provide a literature review of the theoretical concepts guiding this dissertation.

Emerging Adulthood

The definition of adulthood varies, and can depend on cultural or social realities of the era (Settersten Jr. & Ray, 2010). At one point, the American legal system claimed individuals reached adulthood when they become 18 years of age (Dubas & Petersen, 1996). In some cultures a child's entrance into adulthood is celebrated through puberty rite ceremonies (Maluleke, 2003). Currently, in the United States the legal age of adulthood varies between 18 to 21 years of age depending on state laws (Center for Parent Information and Resources, 2016); however, some individuals may remain reliant on their parents beyond 21 years of age. With the increase in costs and unstable economic conditions, some youth return home after their undergraduate college graduation (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999; Pew Research Center, 2012), or some extend their time in graduate school (Pew Research Center, 2012). Emerging adults are self sufficient in some ways; however, they require assistance in other aspects of life (Arnett, 1994). Because emerging adults may accept responsibility in certain areas of their lives, but not all aspects, the definition of adulthood becomes somewhat muddled. The concept of adulthood is changing because of the resources individuals may or may not have at their disposal (Côté, 2000). The blurry line between adolescence and adulthood has forced American society to define this life stage.

The gray area between adolescence and adulthood, labeled emerging adulthood, is comprised of individuals between the ages of 18 and 25 (Arnett, 2000, 2006, 2007). Life events that can traditionally occur during emerging adulthood include: attending college to earn undergraduate and/or graduate degrees, entering the workforce, or returning home for financial help from parents. Because of the responsibility and decisions that accompany the aforementioned life events, emerging adulthood is a time of instability, uncertainty, and life change (Arnett, 2000, 2006, 2007).

The theory of emerging adulthood helps to explain this time of high variability in an individual's life. Five characteristics help define emerging adulthood (Arnett, 1994, 2000, 2007; Arnett & Tanner, 2006). Emerging adulthood is a time when individuals between the ages of 18 to 25, (1) explore their identities, (2) experience instability and uncertainty, (3) focus on their personal goals and life path, (4) feel they are in-between the stages of adolescence and adulthood, and (5) experience strong feelings of optimism and positivity about their future (Arnett & Tanner, 2006).

The five characteristics used to explain emerging adulthood help to illuminate the intricacies involved during this stage of life. The first characteristic explains that emerging adults question and explore their identities. When emerging adults are transitioning to adulthood, they begin to explore their identity, and decide what they want out of life. Emerging adults continue to ask themselves what makes them the person they are (Arnett, 2006). By questioning their identity, emerging adults figure out who they are and what they are capable of accomplishing (Arnett, 2000).

The second characteristic of emerging adulthood explains how individuals experience instability and uncertainty. Because of new responsibilities and decisions, emerging adults

navigate different roles, and may experience anxiety due to life instability and identity challenges (Arnett, 2007). Emerging adults are not fully self-sufficient during this life stage, and they can find themselves looking to others for assistance. Some emerging adults, as they transition to adulthood, may experience extreme instability, resulting in feelings of trauma (see Bynner, 2005). Arnett (2007) claims that it is a myth that emerging adults “suffer”; instead, they experience instability because this stage has less structure than adolescence. For example, adolescents are required to go to school and live with guardians, whereas individuals experiencing emerging adulthood have higher variability in their life circumstances. Even social media reflect the uneasiness and uncertainty experienced by younger emerging adults through the use of emotionally charged language and tone in blog posts (Mazur & Kozarian, 2010).

The third attribute of emerging adulthood explains emerging adults’ level of self-focus. Emerging adulthood is characterized by minimum obligations to others, allowing individuals to feel as though they must only answer to themselves (self-focus) (Arnett, 2000, 2007). During this life stage, emerging adults put more attention on their future goals (Arnett, 2000, 2007), which some may view as selfish, whereas in reality it is progress toward adulthood (Arnett, 2007; Mazur & Kozarian, 2010). An example of self-focus can be seen in the blog postings of younger emerging adults. According to Mazur and Kozarian (2010) the blog posts of young emerging adults mainly focus on carefully crafted self-presentation, rather than discussing interaction with others.

The fourth characteristic of emerging adulthood explores the transition to adulthood. Emerging adults feel that they are no longer children, but to become adults they must be self-sufficient and fully support themselves; therefore, they find themselves between both developmental stages (Arnett, 1994). In the past, some researchers (Greene, Wheatley, &

Aldava, 1992; Hogan & Astone, 1986) have deemed events like marriage, graduation, and forming a career as indicators of reaching adulthood. Presently, some individuals may meet these markers, but others may still rely on their parents. Emerging adults want to be considered adults; however, because they are not able to fully support themselves, emerging adults are neither adolescence nor adults (Arnett, 2000, 2007; Arnett & Tanner, 2006).

The fifth characteristic of emerging adulthood explains how self-focus allows emerging adults to hope for a better tomorrow (Arnett, 2000). During this period, emerging adults may have the opportunity to explore newfound freedom and new possibilities, creating a sense of eagerness for what the future may hold (Arnett, 2000). The Pew Research Center (2012) released statistical information in 2010 claiming employed individuals between 18 to 24 years of age (54%) made up the lowest percentage reported since 1948. The report also said these individuals have also experienced a greater decrease in weekly earnings compared to other age groups; however, emerging adults maintain a positive outlook as only 9% of individuals surveyed reported believing they will never have enough money to live the life they desire (Pew Research Center, 2012).

Some scholars argue the path adolescents take to reach adulthood may vary because of the social realities at that time (Settersten Jr. & Ray, 2010). One of the social realities contributing to emerging adulthood may be individuals are choosing to get married later in life. Individuals are waiting to be married; therefore, the initial age of marriage has increased for both men and women (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). The average age for marriage in the 1970s was 21 for women and 23 for men, and in 2009 the average marriage age reported was 26 for women and 28 for men (Henig, 2010).

As emerging adults work toward self reliance, changes in the social climate over time have lead them to reach traditional landmark events later, and in a different order than they were historically (Settersten Jr. & Ray, 2010). Even though the path to adulthood can vary, emerging adults do not remain stagnant in the developmental process; they continue to grow. The decisions individuals make during emergent adulthood matter a great deal for their developmental futures. Henig (2010) suggested, “The 20s are like the stem cell of human development,” in which decisions emerging adults make have long-term consequences (para. 60). Emerging adults may not be able to fully support themselves, but their lives are still progressing because the decisions they make affect their lives and the lives of those around them.

The transitional life stage between adolescence and adulthood can be uncertain and difficult. During this time, emerging adults seek their purpose and direction in life. While seeking their purpose, they experience uncertainty and identity exploration. An emerging adult faces different tensions, such as becoming his or her own person but still relying on parents for financial and emotional support, including asking for and/or receiving advice.

Emerging adults in college hear both solicited and unsolicited advice from their parents. Individuals experiencing emerging adulthood are more likely to consider implementing their parent’s advice if they consider the advice practical, and if they consider their parent wise and experienced (Carlson, 2014). In order to better understand the advice response process between emerging adults and their parents, college students between the ages of 18 to 25 years are the focus of this dissertation. The parent-emerging adult child relationship is further explained in the section that follows.

Parent-Emerging Adult Child Relationships

Generally, the communication that occurs between two individuals is important because the interaction can shape the communicative system as a whole, as well as the individuals that make up that system (Galvin, Bylund & Brommel, 2004). In this case, the relationship between emerging adults and their parents can be interdependent if parents and children are actively involved in one another's lives (Veksler & Meyer, 2014). If parents continue to help with decision-making and financial assistance, emerging adult children may continue to rely on parents, and the relationship can become a dependent one.

As parents raise their children, parents' personal values and beliefs become part of the family system, and are ultimately imbedded into the foundation of the family (Schrodt, Witt, & Messersmith, 2008). The interaction between members of the same family is different from other types of interpersonal interactions because family members tend to have shared worldviews, values, and belief systems (Schrodt et al., 2008). Of all the close relationships people cultivate in their lives, the relationship between a child and his or her parents is one of the longest lasting (Golish, 2000). During emerging adulthood, young adults begin to see their parents as more than just parents. Parents become more humanized in the eyes of emerging adult children, and emerging adults learn to empathize with their parents (Arnett, 2004), thus affecting the communication.

Although families can communicate differently, DeFraim and Stinnett (2003) claim there are six elements that have been found to create stronger relationships: (1) a commitment to family and the well-being of family members, (2) positive communication and constructively resolving conflict, (3) expressing affection and confirmation toward family members, (4) enjoying quality time, (5) spiritual well-being, and (6) effectively managing stress and crisis.

When parents help their children in times of need, this exemplifies a commitment to the family. During emerging adulthood, young adults may need help from their parents in the form of financial assistance; therefore, involving parents in their financial decisions (Padilla-Walker et al., 2012; Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2001; Tanner, 2006). Emerging adults may also seek assistance from their parents through asking for advice. Asking for advice creates an open dialogue that may resolve conflict inside and outside of the family, and can lead to confirmation that parents can provide helpful information because they are people too. When emerging adults ask for parental advice it allows for emerging adults and parents to be a part of one another's lives (Myers & Glover, 2007).

The dependence on parents for assistance, and the desire to be a self-sufficient adult, creates a difficult dichotomy as emerging adults experience a shift in their identities. During emerging adulthood, young adults battle with opposing feelings and displays of autonomy and connection (Scabini, 2000). In the eyes of the law in the United States, emerging adults are considered adults when they reach 18 to 21 years of age depending on state laws (Center for Parent Information and Resources, 2016), but emerging adults are not 100% self-sufficient. It can be very challenging for emerging adults if they have a difficult relationship with their parents and cannot utilize their parents as resources.

Some factors like early parent-child interaction patterns, family composition/transitions, and the development/transitions of family members, can predict the quality of the relationship between emerging adults and their parents (Aquilino, 2006). Research has uncovered that the perception of parent-child relationship quality increases as the child matures. Scabini (2000) reported children felt an increase in support and autonomy between late adolescence and the early stages of adulthood, and parents and children found each other more agreeable as children

aged. An increase in support and amicability helps explain how emerging adults and their parents may find themselves closer to each other than ever before, but emerging adults still maintain a level of autonomy (Hinde, 1997). The trust that is present between reliable bonds, like that of a parent and child, helps shape the identity of an emerging adult (Scabini, 2000). There is a delicate balance between autonomy and connectedness during the life stage of emerging adulthood, and ideally, parents work with their children to help guide them in managing newly found independence (Aquilino, 2006).

As emerging adults explore elements of their identity and worldview, career and work situations, and love (Arnett, 2000), issues with family expectations can surface. What emerging adult children expect from themselves in terms of autonomy and self-reliance is not always the same as what their parents expect of them. These autonomy expectations differ across different topics. For example, incoming college students perceive that they would emotionally depend on their parents more than their parents think they would, but parents often hold higher autonomy expectations for their emerging adult children (Kenyon & Koerner, 2009).

Emerging adulthood leads to changes within the original family unit because of identity exploration and uncertainty faced by emerging adults. As identities shift for emerging adults, there is a need for role negotiations between parents and their emerging adult children. Emerging adult children must then find new ways of relating to their parents and other family members (Aquilino, 2006). If parents create a secure foundation and open communication during the stage of emerging adulthood, it will help emerging adults as they explore their changing identities (Bartle-Haring, Brucker, & Hock, 2002). Open communication allows emerging adults to seek counsel from their parents during times of need in their changing world.

Parent-Emerging Adult Child Relationships and Advice Seeking

Emerging adults experience higher-level thinking and more complex thoughts than ever before, allowing them to deal with concepts like diversity and their own role in understanding the world (Labouvie-Vief, 2006). This higher-level thinking, paired with more difficult decisions, complicates decision-making. As individuals transition to adulthood, they require help from mature adults to assist with rationality and consistency as they grow into themselves (Erikson, 1984). This need creates a sort of “necessary alliance between individuals entering adulthood and mature adults who master the task of adulthood” (Labouvie-Vief, 2006, p. 74).

Emerging adults, particularly those attending college, ask their parents for advice on topics like academics and career decision-making (Creamer & Laughlin, 2005). Advice-giving itself is a type of social support and, in a way, influences the process of decision-making (Feng & MacGeorge, 2006, 2010). Parental advice is so important that it is “the most common form of parental assistance reported by adult children under age 40” (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992, p. 70). Not only are emerging adults seeking advice from their parents in different instances, Yaniv (2004) explains people make better decisions in their own lives when they incorporate other perspectives. Emerging adults’ perceptions of the advice they receive from their parents will affect their intention to implement parental advice.

Emerging adults depend on their parents for different forms of support; therefore, parents are important in the decision-making process for emerging adults (Carlson, 2014). A big part of emerging adult wellbeing lies in the relationships they have with their parents (Cooney & Kurz, 1996). Parents must find a balance between allowing their emerging adult children to be autonomous, and offering guidance that parents feel will most benefit their children (Carlson,

2014). In some cases, balancing autonomy and support is difficult when parents are providing financial assistance (Avery, Goldscheider, & Speare, 1992).

When processing emerging-adult child and parental advice, emerging adults receive the most advice on work/life balance, career choice, finances, academics, and social relationships (Carlson, 2014). According to Carlson (2014), emerging adults hear more solicited and unsolicited parental advice on work–life balance, social/relationship concerns, and finances compared to academic and career advice. When emerging adults receive solicited advice from their parents, little information is known about what is responsible for an emerging adults’ decision to implement the advice. Some attributes responsible for implementation of parental advice are whether the advice is practical, perceived parental wisdom, and the perception of autonomy support (Carlson, 2014).

Carlson’s recent work (2016) reported characteristics like advice quality and advice efficacy predict an emerging adults’ intention to implement parental advice. Some parents feel as though just being a parent and having that status should give them permission to participate in their emerging-adult child’s decision-making processes (Padilla-Walker, Nelson, & Knapp, 2013). Emerging adults may not feel their parents should have permission to openly participate in those decision-making processes. This sentiment falls in line with the struggle between emerging-adult autonomy and connection to parents. When emerging adults seek advice from their parents, they have the option to either implement the advice they receive, or consider their own alternative.

Study Rationale

All individuals go through life encountering different milestones. One milestone of particular interest for mental and communicative growth is when a child becomes an adult.

Because of different situational and environmental factors, the transition into adulthood has created a somewhat gray area, coined “emerging adulthood,” and is a time of uncertainty and identity formation for individuals between the ages of 18-25 (Arnett, 2000, 2006, 2007).

Emerging adulthood includes an element of identity exploration, and involves a reliance on others, particularly parental figures. According to laws within the United States, emerging adults are no longer considered children when they reach the age of majority dependent upon state laws (Center for Parent Information and Resources, 2016); however, emerging adults may not identify fully as adults because they may have trouble supporting themselves financially and emotionally. During this time, the relationship emerging adults have with their parents will also change (Aquilino, 2006). Emerging adulthood marks the restructuring of the parent-child relationship, and may affect parent-emerging adult child relationship satisfaction.

Because emerging adults may experience uncertainty as they work toward adulthood, emerging adults may reach out to their parental figures when making new or important decisions. The contradiction emerging adults experience when asking for parental assistance but striving to be full-fledged adults may be evident when emerging adults ask for parental advice. Emerging adults may feel their parents have life experience to help with decisions, but some advice messages can threaten the advice receiver's “face” or self-image (Goldsmith, 1994). Some scholars report that the content of the message is more important than characteristics of the individuals providing the advice (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; MacGeorge, Feng & Thompson, 2008); however, emerging adults may intend to implement advice because of factors like perceived practicality, parental wisdom (Carlson, 2014), advice quality, and advice efficacy (Carlson, 2016).

When emerging adults reach out to their parents for advice on a plethora of topics, different variables play a role in how useful they view the advice. Different variables may also play a role in an emerging adult's decision to implement the advice provided by a parental figure. The relational satisfaction an emerging adult feels toward his or her parental figure may also be influenced by the quality of the advice provided by the parental figure.

Chapter Summary

Chapter one of this dissertation explained the theory of emerging adulthood, and the relationship between emerging adults and their parental figures. In order to better recognize the need for understanding the parent-emerging adult child relationship, this chapter discussed the importance of considering the possible characteristics involved in emerging adults' intention to implement parental advice. Ultimately, the communicative goal of this study is to provide information pertaining to emerging adults' perceptions of advice elements and relationship satisfaction to better assist parent-emerging adult child communication. By understanding if the emerging adult decision-making process affects parent-adult child relationship satisfaction, practitioners will have more information to help address communication challenges in this relationship during a time of uncertainty. The remainder of this dissertation will explore the literature explaining what has led to advice response theory, and what is currently known about advice response theory. Chapter two will also operationalize relationship satisfaction for the purpose of understanding its potential role in emerging adults' decision-making processes.

CHAPTER TWO. LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Emerging adults undergo feelings of identity exploration and uncertainty (Arnett, 2000, 2007). This chapter will begin by discussing how the concept of relational uncertainty provides a lens to better understand the ambiguity emerging adults experience during their transition to adulthood. Emerging adults are faced with new decisions and responsibilities (Arnett, 2000, 2007), and reach out to their parents for advice during the transition to adulthood (Carlson, 2014, 2016; Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Umberson, 1992). To better understand their intent to implement parental advice, Chapter two will also discuss the components of advice response theory, and explore parent-emerging adult child relationship satisfaction.

Relational Uncertainty

The feeling of uncertainty can elicit a variety of contradictory emotions. According to Knobloch and Solomon (1999), in order to fully understand relational uncertainty as a concept, it is important to comprehend that its roots lie within uncertainty reduction theory (URT). Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) explains how in some instances, the idea of the “unknown” can be exciting, and in other situations it can be quite daunting, resulting in stress and anxiety within close relationships (Berger, 1987). Being unsure of oneself or about the intentions of another can cause uncertainty. Uncertainty is a complex feeling, and because of the discomfort it causes, individuals regularly feel the need to reduce it (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). People can reduce uncertainty by seeking and receiving information from others.

Seeking information is important in the development of interpersonal relationships (Berger, 1987). A large body of work explains the effects of uncertainty, and people’s desire to decrease the amount of uncertainty they may face within relationships (Emmers & Canary, 1996;

Berger & Bradac, 1982; Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Knobloch & Satterlee, 2009; Knobloch & Solomon, 2002, 2003, 2005; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001). Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) initially helped explain the desire to decrease uncertainty when meeting someone new (Berger, 1987). In this case, the uncertainty forms because of a person's failure to mentally process his or her own and his or her partner's feelings and behaviors (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Berger & Calabrese, 1975). At its core, URT explores how individuals can feel uncertainty within themselves, with their partners, or within the overall state of relationships.

Of the three components that make up URT, the first element is *self uncertainty* (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Self uncertainty explores the deficiency individuals have in explaining or predicting their behaviors, or how they feel, when interacting with another person. Self uncertainty highlights the disconnect an individual has with his or her internal self. The second element of URT, *partner uncertainty*, explains a failure to decipher another person's behaviors and attitudes (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Lastly, the third facet of URT, *relationship uncertainty*, discusses uncertainty individuals may feel about the relationship that does not necessarily relate to themselves or their partners (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Of these three elements, relationship uncertainty is more complex because it considers outside circumstances that can affect an individual's level of uncertainty. Instead of focusing on an individual, relationship uncertainty places the attention on the couple as a unit (Berger & Bradac, 1982). In the case of relationship uncertainty and family relationships, the attention is placed on the parent-child dyad. Relationship uncertainty is multifaceted because of the different external elements that can cause it, making it more difficult to decrease uncertainty (Berger & Bradac, 1982).

In their initial analysis of uncertainty reduction, Knobloch and Solomon (1999) claimed the way uncertainty was operationalized at that time was predominantly based on an individual's self-report of uncertainty with his or her romantic partner. Knobloch and Solomon (1999) ultimately defined relational uncertainty as "the degree of confidence people have in their perceptions of involvement within close relationships" (p. 264). Relational uncertainty can surface because of a specific situation (Emmers & Canary, 1996; Knobloch & Solomon, 2002), but it can also represent a more global feeling pertaining to the overall relationship (Knobloch, Solomon, & Cruz, 2001; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001). Relational uncertainty's global characteristic showcases how relational uncertainty can be present on a multitude of levels, including significant life events (Bullis, Clark, & Sline, 1993).

Further research uncovered specific areas of content individuals consider when they are uncertain about their relationship. Individuals reported feeling relational uncertainty because of behavioral norms (what is considered suitable behavior), mutuality (uncertainty of the interchange of feelings with their partner), definitional uncertainty (unclear status of the relationship), and uncertainty about the future (possibility for engaging in a long-term relationship) (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999). Additionally, uncertainty was associated with the evaluation of the relationship, relationship goals, and relationship desires (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999).

The complex nature of relational uncertainty can be further understood through six propositions (Knobloch & Satterlee, 2009). The following six propositions claim relationship relational uncertainty (1) accelerates harshness of face threats, (2) makes it more difficult to plan messages, (3) results in the avoidance of sensitive issues, (4) accents the incapacity to understand the meaning behind partner messages, (5) decreases an individuals' assurance in communicating

with his or her partner, and (6) leads to a more negative view of an individual's partner and relationship (Knobloch & Satterlee, 2009). The above components help explain the multidimensionality of relational uncertainty.

The components of relational uncertainty demonstrate it is evident that uncertainty affects many facets of an interpersonal interaction, including a variety of social constructs. A majority of the research on relational uncertainty focuses on romantic relationships (see Jang, Yoo, & Tian, 2011; Knobloch & Solomon, 2003, 2005; Knobloch et al., 2001; Weger Jr. & Emmett, 2009), and has uncovered relational uncertainty's effect on a variety of social constructs. For example, some authors theorize an increase in relational uncertainty creates trouble in processing messages (Knobloch, Miller, Bond, & Mannone, 2007). Scholars have reported relational uncertainty has strong links to cognitive jealousy (Knobloch et al., 2001), as well as avoidance behavior (Jang et al., 2011). Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune (2004), argue relational uncertainty shares a positive association with topic avoidance. Biological approaches to understanding relational uncertainty conclude relational uncertainty decreased cortisol reactions, leading to poor performance on tasks (Priem & Solomon, 2011).

Romantic relationships are highly represented in studies on relational uncertainty. However, relational uncertainty can be more broadly defined as uncertainty within "close relationships" (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Knobloch, 2007; Knobloch & Solomon, 1999). Knobloch and Solomon's (1999) definition of relational uncertainty allows for uncertainty to exist for individuals that are part of the parent-emerging adult child dyad.

The elements that make up relational uncertainty can be applied to a variety of relationships (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Knobloch, 2007). The concept of relational uncertainty emerged to better understand functioning within interpersonal relationships, and provides global

insight (Knobloch, 2008). Some scholars have looked beyond interpersonal romantic relationships and have explored how components of relational uncertainty exist within family relationships. Knobloch and Solomon's (1999) definition of relational uncertainty allows for uncertainty to exist for individuals that are part of the parent-emerging adult child dyad.

The propositions of relational uncertainty can help better understand uncertainty between family members because families experience uncertainty in messages that may affect familial relationships. Individuals in groups share information to decrease uncertainty (Cragan & Shields, 1999); therefore, individuals can do so within their families. Relational uncertainty has been examined in terms of in-law relationships, explaining how topic avoidance and relational uncertainty moderate parents-in-laws' perceptions of their children-in-laws' family in-group status (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). Also, as children-in-laws' uncertainty increases within in-law and marital dyads, their level of satisfaction decreases within these relationships (Mikucki-Enyart, Caughlin & Rittenour, 2015). Adolescents in divorced families reported as the level of uncertainty about their family relationships increased, there was also an increase in avoidance of their divorced family (Afifi & Schrodt, 2003). And in terms of sibling relationships and relational uncertainty (Bevan, Stetzenbach, Batson, & Bullo, 2006), siblings have reported exhibiting more partner uncertainty than relational uncertainty, and these types of uncertainty were associated with how often individuals kept in contact with their siblings, and predicted topic avoidance.

An example of an environmental circumstance that may affect a person's level of relational uncertainty is a life transition. The transition to adulthood experienced by emerging adults can be a time of relational uncertainty with their parents. Emerging adults are in a transitional state because they are taking on more responsibility, but are not completely self-

sufficient. Since emerging adults are not completely self-sufficient, they may continue to rely on their parental figures for assistance as they learn to cope with life changes during their transition to adulthood (Arnett, 2006). Because it has been reported that parental advice is the most common type of assistance provided to children under 40 years of age (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992), advice response theory could help explain emerging adults' intention to implement advice they seek from their parents.

Advice Response Theory (ART)

In times of stress and uncertainty, it is common for individuals to seek advice to help with their decision-making processes. Advice is a multifaceted construct because individuals can solicit advice from others, or others may feel the need to provide advice without being asked to do so. Because of these scenarios, advice can be considered helpful or intrusive; however, whether individuals ask for the advice or not, they reserve the right to decide if they will actually implement it (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). This dissertation will focus on emerging adults soliciting advice from their parents and then deciding how to respond to it. Even though solicited advice is considered helpful, it can still threaten the receiver's face (Goldsmith, 1994). So, even though an emerging adult may solicit advice from their parental figure, the emerging adult's face can be threatened by the act of asking for advice. When an emerging adult seeks parental advice, he or she reveals assistance is needed in some way from their parental figure. Different factors can affect an emerging adult's intention to actually implement the parental advice.

Advice is considered a form of social support, and has garnered attention in the field of communication research (Albrecht, Burleson, & Goldsmith, 1994; Feng & MacGeorge, 2006, 2010). Advice can promote coping (Arora, Rutten, Gustafson, Moser, & Hawkins, 2007),

provide information (Barbee & Cunningham, 1995), and communicate caring (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). On the other hand, it has also been viewed as unhelpful (Servaty-Seib & Burlleson, 2007), or the catalyst to move the conversation forward to other topics (Pearlin & McCall, 1990). These dichotomies highlight the intricacies of advice giving and seeking, and explain a need for further research (MacGeorge et al., 2008). Examples of topics in advice research include peer advice in cyberspace (Suzuki & Calzo, 2004), advice between siblings regarding life plans (Tucker, Barber, & Eccles, 1997), seeking online advice (Briggs, Burford, De Angeli, & Lynch 2002), as well as what distinguishes “good” advice from “bad” advice (MacGeorge et al., 2008).

Previous research on advice focused on identity, role, and relationship implications (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967), but did not consider evaluating action intentions. Early research focused more on the evaluation of messages instead of implementation intention (MacGeorge, Feng, Butlzer, & Budarz, 2004). Originally, the foundation for a majority of advice research had its roots in politeness theories, and specifically on facework (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967; MacGeorge, Lichtman, & Pressey, 2002). For example, if an individual providing advice has a lot of power, and is close with the individual receiving the message, this advice will be less threatening to the face of the provider compared to someone with decreased power and a distant relationship (Cutrona & Suhr, 1994; Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000).

Only recently has advice research begun to explore the effects of the actual advice content (MacGeorge et al., 2004) and advice quality (Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000). Advice response theory (ART) focuses on different dimensions of advice, advice content and implementation intention. Advice response theory (ART) explains how responses to messages are affected by how the advice helps in solving the initial problem (MacGeorge et al., 2004). For

example, advice is viewed as better in quality and more helpful in coping if it is perceived as effective, feasible, and contains little limitations, if any (Feng & Burleson, 2008; Hung & Feeley, 2005; MacGeorge et al., 2004). Also, individuals are more likely to react in a positive way if the advice they receive is the same as what they originally intended to do (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; MacGeorge et al., 2008).

Advice response theory (ART) includes advice source factors (expertise, liking, trust, and similarity), message factors (politeness, response efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation), and advice outcomes (evaluation of advice quality, facilitation of coping, and intention to implement the advice) (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). If an individual given advice decides the provider of advice is favorable (knowledgeable and trustworthy), he or she tends to evaluate the advice received as more worthwhile and polite (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). The positive evaluation of the advice received increases the positive perception of message quality (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010).

Advice response theory (ART) claims different types of advice message features influence the outcome of the situation (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; MacGeorge et al., 2004; MacGeorge, Guntzville, Hanasono, & Feng, 2013). According to Feng and MacGeorge (2010):

“a) message features (as a group) have stronger effects than advisor characteristics, (b) the influence of advisor characteristics is mediated by message features, (c) diverse advice outcomes are differentially predicted by advisor characteristics and message features, and (d) situational factors act to moderate the influence of message features on advice outcomes” (MacGeorge et al, 2013, p. 2).

Overall, elements of the message like politeness, feasibility, limitations, and confirmation play more of a role than how individuals rate the expertise or trustworthiness of the person providing

the advice; however, expertise and trustworthiness do play a role in an individual's judgment of the politeness, efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation of a message. The intent to implement advice considers all of these elements (message factors and source factors), but the decision to implement advice depends on the situation.

Advice has been reported as being the number one form of help parents provide to children under 40 years of age (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992). Previous research has examined the exchange of advice between family members, including which parent a child would speak to for advice about specific content (Greene & Grimsely, 1990). Sprague (1999) uncovered that undergraduate students sought out advice about low-intimacy topics; both males and females preferred seeking advice from their mothers.

In its early stages ART was helpful in understanding message transfer between friends (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). Since then, ART has also been used to better understand parent-emerging adult child relationships (Carlson, 2014, 2016). Emerging adults tend to implement their parents' advice about their careers, work-life balance, personal relationships, and their finances when it is practical, and because they view their parents as authority figures with experience (Carlson, 2014). According to Carlson (2016), predictors of implementation of parental advice include advice quality, empathy, and parental advice efficacy. This research highlights the need to better understand the advice transfer between parents and their children during the transitional stage of emerging adulthood. The current study fulfills Carlson's (2016) call for a larger sample size, and information pertaining to how gender, financial dependence, and trustworthiness may affect emerging adults' advice seeking processes when asking parents for advice.

Overall, literature on emerging adulthood explores how this time of transition includes feelings of uncertainty (Arnett, 2007). If an individual is experiencing uncertainty in his or her life, this can include uncertainty within relationships. Specifically, because of the interdependence that occurs in parent-emerging adult child relationships, relational uncertainty can emerge as the relationship between parent and child is renegotiated during this life-stage change. Relational uncertainty and ART provide lenses to better understand advice processes that occur during the transition to adulthood. During this time, emerging-adults may reach out to their parents for assistance in the form of advice (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Umberson, 1992).

A good deal of parent-child advice research has revolved around parents providing advice to their adolescent children (Barber, 1994; McDowell, Parke, & Wang, 2003; Tucker, Barber, & Eccles, 2001). Carlson (2016) provides insight into emerging adults and parental advice, explaining how message characteristics including advice quality, efficacy, and feasibility positively predict implementation of parental advice. Since emerging adults turn to their parents for advice during times of uncertainty (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Umberson, 1992), it can be assumed that emerging adults value the advisor characteristics of their parental figure; therefore, emerging adults are more likely to implement the parental advice. Lastly, when individuals were surveyed regarding receiving advice, Feng and MacGeorge (2010) uncovered message factors, including response efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation, had independent influences on perceptions of advice quality and intention to implement the advice.

Due to the above findings, this study proposes the following hypotheses regarding parent and emerging-adult child relationships in terms of advice seeking:

H_{1(a-d)}: An emerging adult's perception of parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy_(a), advice feasibility_(b), advice limitations_(c), advice confirmation_(d)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict his or her implementation intention.

H_{2(a-d)}: An emerging adult's perception of parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy_(a), advice feasibility_(b), advice limitations_(c), advice confirmation_(d)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively affect his or her perception of advice quality.

H_{3(a,b)}: An emerging adult's perception of parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict his or her implementation intention.

H_{4(a,b)}: An emerging adult's perception of parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively affect his or her perception of advice quality.

Family Relationship Satisfaction

The parent-child relationship is different compared to other relationships like friendships and romantic relationships because situations known to dissolve friendships and romantic relationships normally do not terminate family relationships (Adams & Blieszner, 1995). The parent-child relationship is the most enduring type of relationship (Golish, 2000; Troll & Fingerman, 1996), and one potential reason for this is because influence in a parent-child relationship is reciprocal (Dixson & Duck, 1993). Because communication phenomena like family relationship satisfaction influence the functioning of the overall relationship (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty, 1999), understanding the reciprocity and mutuality in the parent-emerging adult child relationship is the first step toward uncovering positive relational functioning.

When considering family relationships, five factors are often used to determine the success of families when children are developing through adolescence. These factors include (1) renegotiating rules, (2) providing a positive environment for identity exploration, (3) improving self-esteem, (4) modeling applicable problem-solving, and (5) permitting adolescents to make their own decisions (Noller, 1995). As individuals evolve from adolescents to emerging adults, the transition embodies a majority of these factors. As mentioned in Chapter one, the transition to emerging adulthood is a time of uncertainty and identity exploration, and requires emerging adults renegotiate the relationships they have with their parents (Arnett, 2000, 2006, 2007). For an individual experiencing emerging adulthood, it would seem that a positive relationship with his or her parents would help rather than hinder the shift to adulthood. When parents and children utilize positive communication behaviors like openness and assurance, the family relationship is perceived to be high quality (Straight & Bales, 2003). Because advice can be viewed as a form of parental support (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Hogan & Eggebeen 1995; Umberson, 1992), information on advice implementation and an emerging adult's perceived satisfaction with their parental figure, would help explain the overall state of parent-emerging adult child relationships during emerging adults' transition to adulthood.

A good deal of research has focused on family relational satisfaction, and the findings contribute to understanding how to have more positive relationships with family members. In terms of parental influence, research explains how open communication and an authoritative parenting style are associated with higher rates of family satisfaction for both parents and children (Givertz & Segrin, 2014). Also, when parents invade through verbal, spatial, and mediated forms of invasion, family satisfaction decreases (Ledbetter & Vik, 2012). From the standpoint of children, dimensions of defense mechanisms (secrecy defense, mediated defense,

avoidance defense, direct defense, and peer defense) decrease family satisfaction (Ledbetter & Vik, 2012), and topic avoidance results in more distance and less relationship satisfaction (Dailey & Palomares, 2004). And it seems as though adolescents and emerging adults from traditional households report higher levels of family satisfaction when receiving communicative confirmation from their fathers more so than their mothers (Schrodt & Ledbetter, 2012).

Scholars have examined an assortment of variables intended to better understand the quality of relationships between parents and their children. Some of these constructs include relationship quality (Lye, Klepinger, Hyle, & Nelson, 1995), satisfaction (Colaner, Soliz, & Nelson, 2014), and spirituality/religiosity (Forward, Sansom-Livolsi, & McGovern, 2008; Farrell, DiTunnariello, & Pearson, 2013/2014). Additional variables that have been studied to better understand the relationship between parents and their children include emotional support and advice (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Hogan & Eggebeen 1995; Umberson, 1992).

To date, family satisfaction tied to decision-making is an understudied area within the field of communication. Scholars who study this area seem to be in the medical profession and focus on family satisfaction and the decision-making processes in medical situations (Heyland & Tranmer, 2001; Heyland et al., 2002; Heyland et al., 2003; McDonagh et al., 2004; Wall, Engelberg, Downey, Heyland, & Curtis, 2007). For example, in situations like withdrawal from life support, researchers have uncovered family members reported higher levels of family satisfaction with decision making if it was their family member's wish (Gries, Curtis, Wall, & Engelberg, 2008). When family members self-disclosed about inappropriate topics, family members had lower relational satisfaction (Colaner et al., 2014). Also, when family members provided unwanted advice, there was also a decrease in family relational satisfaction (Colaner et al., 2014). The research on advice and family relationships sheds light on situational elements

that may ultimately affect family members' satisfaction with the family overall. In terms of emerging adults reaching out to their parents for advice, it would be helpful for families to better understand the roles variables like trustworthiness and advice quality play when emerging adults seek advice from their parents.

It is evident that parents are providing support to their emerging adult children in the form of advice (Carlson, 2014, 2016; Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Umberson, 1992). And during the uncertainty experienced in the transition to adulthood, emerging adults will seek advice for different life decisions. Since most adult children claim that they are close with their parents (Lawton, Silverstein, & Bengtson, 1994; Lye, 1996), there may or may not be a connection between closeness and family relationship satisfaction. It would be helpful to explore whether emerging adults who seek advice from their parents also report high levels of satisfaction with the parental figure providing advice. The potential link between seeking advice, and an emerging adults perception of relationship satisfaction with the parental figure providing advice, points at the need to uncover findings related to levels of satisfaction with how emerging adults view their parents as beacons of advice, and the overall quality of the advice provided. Therefore, the following hypotheses are posed:

H_{5(a,b)}: An emerging adult's perception of parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict how satisfied the emerging adult is with the relationship he or she has with his or her parental figure.

H₆: An emerging adult's perception of parental advice quality after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict how satisfied the emerging adult is with the relationship he or she has with his or her parental figure.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explained the foundations of relational uncertainty to set a foundation for understanding the life uncertainty experienced by emerging adults as they transition into adulthood. Emerging adults look to parents for advice during this transitional period (Carlson 2014, 2016); therefore, this chapter also described ART. Because solicited advice carries a positive connotation, but asking for advice can threaten the face of the advice-seeker, this chapter discussed the importance of learning if emerging adults' advice seeking behaviors affect perceptions of relationship satisfaction with the parental figure providing advice. The chapter that follows will discuss this dissertation's method for gathering data.

CHAPTER THREE. METHOD

Overview

This chapter explains the methodological procedures taken to answer the hypotheses proposed in Chapter two (see Appendix A for a complete list of hypotheses). The material that follows will help to explore the six hypotheses posed in Chapter two by defining emerging adulthood, and describing the elements of ART and relationship satisfaction used in this study. First, a detailed description of the participant protocol is provided. Then, a discussion of proper procedures is included, followed by an in-depth look at the measures utilized, and a description of the analyses.

Method Information

Participants

Because this study seeks to understand emerging adults' perceptions of advice from parental figures and their satisfaction with the interpersonal relationship, this study recruited individuals experiencing emerging adulthood as defined by the age requirement, individuals between the ages of 18 to 25 (Arnett, 2000). A total of 503 participants between the ages of 18 to 25 completed an online survey for this study. Participants were college students enrolled at a medium-sized Midwestern land grant institution. Of the 503 participants, 31.6% identified as male, and 68.4% identified as female. In terms of participant ages, participants reported ages between 18 to 25 years of age with an average age of 19.5 years. Most of the participants were White (90.7%) and were first-year students (54.3%). For a detailed overview of participant demographic information, please see Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Information

Variable (%)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
When advice was provided 0 = less than 1 mo. (42.3%); 1 = 1 mo. (14.3%); 2 = 2 mos. (12.3%); 3 = 3 mos. (10.2%); 4 = 4 mos. (4.6%); 5 = 5 mos. (5.4%); 6 = 6 mos. (10.9%)	1.80	2.08
Which parental figure provided advice 0 = father figure (31.0%); 1 = mother figure (69.0%)	.69	.46
Gender 0 = male (31.6%); 1 = female (68.4%)	.68	.47
Age 18 y/o (27.6%); 19 y/o (37.6%); 20 y/o (14.1%); 21 y/o (8.7%); 22 y/o (4.0%); 23 y/o (3.6%); 24 y/o (1.8%); 25 y/o (2.6%)	19.55	1.67
Employment status 1 = work study (9.1%); 2 = work part time (50.3%); 3 = work full time (3.4%); 4 = out of work & looking (12.0%); 5 = out of work & not looking (25.0%); unreported (0.2%)	2.93	1.41
Ethnicity 1 = Asian (5.2%); 2 = American Indian or Alaska Native (0.6%); 3 = Black or African American (1.8%); 4 = Hispanic or Latino(a) (1.2%); 5 = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (0.2%); 6 = White (90.7%); unreported (0.3%)	5.60	1.22
Year in school 1 = first-year (54.3%); 2 = sophomore (21.1%); 3 = junior (12.7%); 4 = senior (5.8%); 5 = senior plus (2.4%); 6 = graduate student (3.2%); unreported (0.5%)	1.90	1.28
Live with parents for part of year 0 = no (28.4%); 1 = yes (71.2%); unreported (0.4%)	.71	.45
Receive financial assistance from parents 0 = no (9.3%); 1 = yes (90.5%); unreported (0.2%)	.91	.29
Children 0 = none (98.4%); 1 = one child (0.4%); unreported (1.2%)	.00	.06
Relationship status 1 = single (97.2%); 2 = married (1.8%); 3 = divorced (0.2%); 4 = separated (0.0%); 5 = widowed (0.2%); 6 = committed partnership (0.6%)	1.06	.45

Note. *N* = 503 participants

Procedures

After receiving approval from the Institution Research Board (Protocol #HS16162), this study utilized convenience sampling in the form of on-campus participant recruiting.

Convenience sampling includes reaching out to a pool of participants that are “readily available and easy to contact” (Higginbottom, 2004, p. 15). Because the age of participants during emerging adulthood parallels the age of traditional college students, this study gathered participation from the students of a medium-sized Midwestern land grant institution. Students were contacted in a variety of ways in order to ask for their volunteer participation in completing the online survey.

Undergraduate and graduate students received an email from a campus-wide research email database asking for their participation. The email contained a brief description of the study, a detailed list of participant criteria, a link to an online survey created on the survey platform Qualtrics, and researcher contact information for any questions. Undergraduate students were recruited from the basic course (Public Speaking) as well as another high enrollment course (Intercultural Communication) at the university. Student volunteers from the Public Speaking course had the opportunity to print the survey’s “thank you” page in order to receive five of the ten research points required for the course. Student volunteers from the Intercultural Communication course also had the opportunity to print the survey’s “thank you” page to receive extra credit in their course. All additional participants recruited through the campus-wide research email database were given the opportunity to be added into a drawing for a \$25 Amazon gift card. The participants’ names were not tied to any survey responses, allowing for anonymity. Participant names were only used to contact the winner of the gift card.

Students in both classes who did not meet the research protocol criteria were provided an alternate assignment from their instructor.

Measures

The survey began with a writing prompt, including questions about the advice participants sought from parents (see Appendix B). Participants were asked to take five minutes to think about and explain in detail an instance within the past six months when they asked a parental figure for advice on a topic that was important to them. The writing prompt acted as a primer to help participants recollect the advice-seeking instance, and recall and report as much of that instance as possible. According to Tiedens and Linton (2001), emotions can surface through writing, and when emotions like uncertainty surface, it can affect a person's judgment. By recalling an instance when a participant asked a parental figure for advice, the participant's emotions and viewpoints would surface in order to answer the questions that followed. The writing prompt served solely as a primer for this dissertation, but will be fertile grounds for future study.

Two previously used and reliable scales (see Appendix C and Appendix D) followed the primer prompt. Emerging adults were asked to remember the time they wrote about when they specifically asked a parental figure (mother figure or father figure) for advice about an important topic. The questions on the survey asked emerging adults to respond about their views on that specific situation only. The second component of the survey included questions to measure elements of ART. This portion of the questionnaire included a scale for each ART element utilized for the purpose of this study, as described below. The third portion of the questionnaire included a scale to measure parent-child relationship satisfaction. The fourth and final portion of the questionnaire included a list of demographic questions (see Appendix E).

Advice response theory measure. The scales used in this study to test ART have been adopted from previous work (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; Goldsmith, 2000; MacGeorge et al., 2004; MacGeorge et al., 2002). Each scale originally produced good levels of reliability. A discussion of each subscale will follow, including definitions for theory terminology.

Parental advice quality. The first subscale on the ART scale is used to measure parental advice quality. This scale, originally titled *advice quality* measures an emerging adult's perception of the face-value worth or overall caliber of advice provided by their parental figure. This scale was adapted from MacGeorge et al.'s (2002) original work, including nine advice messages and five semantic differential questions on a scale from one to seven measuring message (1) effectiveness, (2) helpfulness, (3) appropriateness, (4) sensitivity, and (5) supportiveness. MacGeorge et al.'s (2002) survey reliabilities for all nine advice messages ranged from Cronbach's alpha scores of $\alpha = .82 - .87$. For the purpose of this study, emerging adults were asked to respond to the five semantic differential questions on a scale of one to seven based on their reflection of the time they reported asking a parental figure for advice on an important topic. The five advice quality items were averaged to compute the *parental advice quality* variable, and demonstrated good reliability ($M = 5.93$, $SD = .97$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$).

Implementation intention. The second subscale used to test ART measured emerging adults' implementation intention. This scale was adapted from MacGeorge et al., (2004), and for the purpose of this study, measured emerging adults' intention to implement and follow through with the advice provided by their parental figures. The initial responses to questions proposed by MacGeorge et al (2004) ranged on a five-point Likert scale. In the present study, emerging adults were asked to indicate their reaction to the advice provided by their parental figures for three questions on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree).

The initial reliability reported for this scale by MacGeorge et al (2004) was very good ($\alpha = .93$). In the current study, three items measuring an individual's intent to implement advice were averaged to compute the *implementation intention* variable, and demonstrated high reliability ($M = 5.87, SD = 1.17, \text{Cronbach's } \alpha = .95$).

Parental advice characteristics. The third subscale used to test ART is a combination of four variables originally described as *message factors* (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). Feng and MacGeorge (2010) claimed message variables included: politeness, response efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation. In an effort to focus more on the actual message content of the message variables, politeness was removed, so the components of parental advice characteristics included: *advice efficacy* (perceived ability for advice to produce desired result), *advice feasibility* (perceived possibility for emerging adults to implement advice), *advice limitations* (perceived hindrances, drawbacks, or disadvantages), and *advice confirmation* (emerging adults' perceptions of the advice provided by their parental figures matching with their previous assumptions). Feng and MacGeorge (2010) reported the following Cronbach's alpha scores for the four message variables measured on a five-point Likert scale: advice efficacy ($\alpha = .86$), advice feasibility ($\alpha = .82$), advice confirmation ($\alpha = .90$), and absence of limitations ($\alpha = .85$).

Goldsmith (2000) initially introduced the concept "absence of limitations"; however, for the purpose of this study, it is referred to as *advice limitations*. The initial construction of advice efficacy, advice confirmation, and absence of limitations included three items for each scale with responses measuring on a five-point Likert scale (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). The original advice feasibility scale contained five items on a five-point Likert scale (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). For the purpose of this study, after averaging three items for each scale, the following

variables were computed: *advice efficacy* ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 1.13$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$), *advice feasibility* ($M = 6.16$, $SD = .93$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$), *advice limitations* ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 1.89$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$), and *advice confirmation* ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 1.43$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$). For analysis purposes, the advice limitations scale was reverse coded in order represent consistency in reporting data.

Parent as advisor characteristics. The final scale for the ART portion of the survey explored elements initially labeled “advisor characteristics” (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). Originally considered types of source factors, the scales that made up *source factors* included: expertise, liking, trust, and similarity (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). In this study, the elements of liking and similarity have been removed because family relationships might assume those characteristics, so the *parent as advisor characteristics* is made up of two scales – *expertise* (does an emerging adult feel his or her parental figure has expert knowledge on the important topic?) and *trustworthiness* (does an emerging adult feel his or her parental figure can be trusted?).

Formerly, the expertise scale was made up of three Likert scale items measured on a five-point scale. In the scale's earlier use (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010), the reliability proved acceptable ($\alpha = .85$). For the purpose of this study, the expertise scale indicated an emerging adult's feelings toward his or her parental figure that provided the advice, at the time the advice was delivered. The questions asked about perceptions of parental figure expertise, and asked emerging adults to compare how they viewed the expertise of their parental figures compared to their own expertise. Responses ranged from one (considerably less than mine) to seven (considerably greater than mine). The three items measuring an individual's perception of his or

her parent as an expert were averaged to compute the *expertise* variable, and demonstrated good reliability ($M = 5.35$, $SD = 1.30$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$).

The trustworthiness scale is a semantic differential scale adapted from earlier work (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010), and was initially labeled the Individualized Trust Scale (Wheless & Grotz, 1977). The scale was originally comprised of 14 semantic differential options with high reliability ($\alpha = .91$); however, for the purpose of this study, some items were removed because they were irrelevant to the parent-child relationship. The items removed included: dangerous/safe, deceptive/candid, deceitful/not deceitful, and unfaithful/faithful. In the current study, ten items measuring an individual's perception of his or her parent's level of trustworthiness were averaged to compute the *trustworthiness* variable, and demonstrated high reliability ($M = 6.28$, $SD = .75$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$).

Parent-child relationship satisfaction measure. Another large component of the survey included a scale measuring an emerging adult's perception of relationship satisfaction with the parental figure that provided advice. This measure was adapted from Schrodt, Soliz, and Braithwaite's (2008) study on parent-child relationships, and for this study measured how satisfied an emerging adult is with the parental figure providing advice at the time the advice is provided, as well as satisfaction with the overall interpersonal relationship. Initially, this scale was developed by Huston, McHale, and Crouter (1986), and focused on romantic relationships. The measure is comprised of 10 semantic differential items with seven options, and one overall global measure of relationship satisfaction ranging from completely dissatisfied to completely satisfied. When employed by Schrodt et al. (2008), the Family Relationship Satisfaction Scale, uncovered children's reports of satisfaction with parents and stepparents, and received high reports of reliability ($\alpha = .95$ and $.96$). When utilized to better understand emerging adults'

perceptions of satisfaction with their parental figures, the scale still maintained a high report of reliability. In the current study, the 11 items measuring an individual's perception of relationship satisfaction with the parent providing the advice were averaged to compute the *parent-child relationship satisfaction* variable ($M = 6.17$, $SD = .94$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .96$). For a comprehensive look at the descriptive information for all variables, see Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Information for Research Variables

Variable	# of Items	α	M	SD
Parental advice quality	5	.85	5.93	.97
Implementation intention	3	.95	5.87	1.17
Parental advice characteristics				
Advice efficacy	3	.91	5.74	1.13
Advice feasibility	3	.88	6.16	.93
Advice limitations	3	.92	4.84	1.89
Advice confirmation	3	.94	4.65	1.43
Parent as advisor characteristics				
Expertise	3	.86	5.35	1.30
Trustworthiness	10	.91	6.28	.75
Parent-child relationship satisfaction	11	.96	6.17	.94

Note. $N = 503$ participants

Analysis

After collecting data from emerging adult perspectives, this study utilized hierarchical multiple regression analyses to compute the data in order to draw appropriate conclusions. A hierarchical multiple regression was employed for each hypothesis in order to control for a determined set of demographic variables, and test additional independent variables. This section will discuss what is required to employ a hierarchical multiple regression analysis, followed by how the variables are segmented for this study in particular.

Hierarchical multiple regression refers to a type of statistical analysis that looks to uncover the relationship between variables. This type of analysis requires multiple independent variables measured by continuous or dichotomous level data processed through statistical

software (Green & Salkind, 2011). The analysis allows researchers to test the effects of specific predictors free of the influence of other variables (Green & Salkind, 2011).

What is particularly helpful about this form of data analysis is that, unlike stepwise regression, which chooses the order to add variables, a hierarchical multiple regression allows for the researcher to determine the order the variables will be added into the statistical program formula. Therefore, researchers can determine the order of independent variables in the statistical software as supported by theoretical foundations. This type of analysis is used to assess the relationship between independent and dependent variables while being able to control the effects other independent variables may have on the dependent variable.

The hypotheses proposed in this study seek to understand the relationship between elements of ART and parent-emerging adult child satisfaction while considering additional variables that may influence the overall outcome. Due to this reason, this study utilized six hierarchical multiple regression equations in order to answer each hypothesis. The six hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed in the SPSS Version 23 statistical software system.

Chapter Summary

Chapter three reviewed the methodological procedures necessary to answer the hypotheses proposed in Chapter two. The goals of this study are to help explain emerging adults' perceptions of their parental figures as advice givers, and if the characteristics of advice and advice quality influence implementation intentions and play a role in emerging adults' relationship satisfaction with their parental figures. The findings that result from these analyses will help add to the body of research on parent-child relationships and advice giving, and help

provide information that can be employed for healthier and more satisfying parent-child relationships during times of uncertainty and transition.

CHAPTER FOUR. RESULTS

Overview

This chapter explains the statistical results of hierarchical multiple regression analyses employed to answer the six hypotheses proposed in Chapter two (see Appendix A for a complete list of hypotheses). In order to measure elements of emerging-adults' advice seeking behaviors, participants who sought advice from a parental figure in the past six months were asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire disseminated through the online survey system, Qualtrics, contained components of ART (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; MacGeorge et al., 2004; MacGeorge et al., 2002), perceptions of relationship satisfaction, and demographic questions. After collecting data from 503 participants, six hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed using the SPSS Version 23 statistical software system.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression

Hierarchical multiple regression tests were utilized because this study sought to help explain the relationship between elements of ART, as well as the potential role elements of ART have on relationship satisfaction between emerging adults and their parental figures. Because a hierarchical multiple regression analysis allows researchers to control for the effects additional independent variables may have on the dependent variable (Green & Salkind, 2011), six of these tests were utilized for the current study. The hierarchical multiple regression analyses could not be combined into fewer analyses for the following two reasons: (1) in the current study, the variable parental advice quality took on the role of independent variable and dependent variable in two different hypotheses, and (2) because other hypotheses required an analysis of the independent variables parental advice characteristics and parent as advisor characteristics, on different dependent variables.

Description of Variables

In order to analyze data for this study, the following variables were entered into block one of SPSS and utilized as control variables for all six hypotheses: (1) when the advice was provided, (2) which parental figure was asked to provide advice, (3) the gender identity of the participant, (4) the age of the participant, (5) the ethnicity of the participant, (6) the participant's year in school, (7) if participants lived with a parental figure for part of the year, (8) if participants received financial assistance from a parental figure, (9) if the participant had children, and (10) the participant's relationship status. The demographic variables listed above were selected for the potential role they may play in an emerging adult's process of asking for parental advice. For example, due to potential issues with how much of the situation participants may or may not remember about the incident, the study controlled for (1) when the advice was provided. Carlson (2016) mentioned it may be important to uncover if (2) which parental figure was asked to provide advice, (3) the gender identity of the participant, (4) the age of the participant, (5) the ethnicity of the participant, (7) if participants live with a parental figure for part of the year, and (8) if participants receive financial assistance from a parental figure. Lastly, the definition of emerging adulthood considering individuals falling between the ages of 18 to 25 (Arnett, 2000); however, individuals may experience life events such as going to college, having children, and getting married, yet still may not be 100% self-sufficient from their parents (Arnett, 2000). Therefore, the study controlled for the remaining demographic variables: (6) the participant's year in school, (9) if the participant has children, and (10) the participant's relationship status.

The independent variables entered into SPSS' block two were parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy_(a), advice feasibility_(b), advice limitations_(c), advice confirmation_(d)), and the dependent variable was *implementation intention*. The second hierarchical multiple regression supplied results for H_{2(a-d)}, where the independent variables entered in block two were also parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy_(a), advice feasibility_(b), advice limitations_(c), advice confirmation_(d)), but the dependent variable was perception of parental advice quality. The third hierarchical multiple regression helped to answer H_{3(a,b)}, and included parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) as independent variables of interest, with implementation intention as the dependent variable. The fourth hierarchical multiple regression offered answers for H_{4(a,b)}, and also included parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) as the independent variables of interest, and perception of parental advice quality was the dependent variable. The fifth hierarchical multiple regression helped provide insight for H_{5(a,b)}, which utilized parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) as the independent variables and an emerging adult's perception of relationship satisfaction with their parental figure as the dependent variable. Finally, the sixth hierarchical multiple regression provided information for H₆. In this final hypothesis, the independent variable was an emerging adult's perception of parental advice quality, and the dependent variable was an emerging adult's perception of family relationship satisfaction with their parental figure.

Data Cleanup and Assumptions

Data were collected in the exact manner approved by the Institutional Research Board. After gathering participant responses through the Public Speaking course, the Intercultural Communication course, and the campus wide research listserv, data were reviewed for cleanup

purposes. Initially, the dataset contained 641 participants. Data were removed for a variety of reasons including: (1) survey incompleteness, (2) incompleteness of the written primer question, and (3) if a participant reported an age below 18 years of age, or above 25 years of age. After the data cleanup process, 503 participants remained in the dataset for analysis purposes.

After the data cleanup process, each hypothesis was checked to ensure that all assumptions were met. The assumptions that were met included normal distribution, review of collinearity, and screening for outliers (Green & Salkind, 2011). Using the SPSS Version 23 statistical software system, data were checked for normal distribution using a normal p-p plot of regression standardized residual graph. In terms of a collinearity check, the collinearity tolerance measured higher than .10, and the collinearity VIF measured lower than 10. To screen for outliers, a scatterplot showed very few residuals of more than 3.3 and less than -3.3. To further measure outliers, the Mahalanobis distance found less than 2% of cases fell outside of the critical value for each hypothesis, and the Cook's distance reported for each hypothesis fell below the maximum of 1.0.

Statistical Results

Hypothesis one. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict the relationship between parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy, advice feasibility, advice limitations, and advice confirmation) and implementation intention (see Table 3). For model one, the ten control variables were entered into the equation in block one as independent variables, and implementation intention represented the dependent variable. The results of this analysis indicated the model was not significant, $R^2 = .02$, $F(10, 481) = 1.17$, $p = .306$. This finding explains that the control variables do not account for any change in implementation intention.

For model two, the independent variables of interest were added into block two following the control variables in block one. The results of this analysis suggest there were significant findings, R^2 change = .52, $F(4, 477) = 182.40$, $p < .001$. This means that parental advice characteristics do account for significant portions of the implementation intention after controlling for: when the advice was provided, which parental figure provided the advice, participant gender, participant age, participant ethnicity, participant's year in school, if participants lived with their parents part of the year, if participants received financial assistance from their parents, if participants had children, and the participant's relationship status. Supporting this conclusion is the strength of the final standardized regression coefficients, which were $\beta = .55$, $p < .001$ (advice efficacy), $\beta = .22$, $p < .001$ (advice feasibility), $\beta = .15$, $p < .001$ (advice confirmation), and $\beta = .13$, $p < .001$ (advice limitations). Please see Table 3 below for all final standardized regression coefficients.

Table 3

Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis_{1(a-d)}: Parental Advice Characteristics and Implementation Intention

	Model 1	Model 2
Block 1: Demographic variables		
When advice was provided (0 = less than 1 mo.; 1 = 1 mo.; 2 = 2 mos.) (3 = 3 mos.; 4 = 4 mos.; 5 = 5 mos.; 6 = 6 mos.)	-.04	-.02
Which parental figure (0 = father figure; 1 = mother figure)	-.08	.00
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	-.02	-.02
Age (0 = 18-21 y/o; 1 = 22-25 y/o)	-.05	-.02
Ethnicity (0 = not-White; 1 = White)	-.09	-.06
Year in school (0 = non-first year; 1 = first year)	.03	.01
Live with parents for part of year (0 = no; 1 = yes)	.04	.02
Receive financial assistance from parents (0 = no; 1 = yes)	-.02	-.03
Children (0 = no children; 1 = children)	.04	.02
Relationship status (0 = married; 1 = unmarried)	-.02	-.02
Block 2: Parental advice characteristics		
Advice efficacy	-	.55***
Advice feasibility	-	.22***
Advice limitations	-	.13***
Advice confirmation	-	.15***
Total R^2 (%)	2.40%	61.40%***

Notes. Cell entries for all models are final standardized regression coefficients for blocks 1 and 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis two. A second hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to predict the relationship between parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy, advice feasibility, advice limitations, and advice confirmation) and parental advice quality (see Table 4). For model one, the ten control variables were entered into the equation in block one as independent variables, and parental advice quality represented the dependent variable. The

results of this analysis indicated the model was not significant, $R^2 = .02$, $F(10, 483) = 1.11$, $p = .351$. This finding explains that the control variables do not account for any change in parental advice quality.

For model two, the independent variables of interest were added into block two following the control variables in block one. The results of this analysis suggest there were significant findings, R^2 change = .47, $F(4, 479) = 111.50$, $p < .001$. These results explain that most parental advice characteristics do account for significant portions of the parental advice quality after controlling for: when the advice was provided, which parental figure provided the advice, participant gender, participant age, participant ethnicity, participant's year in school, if participants lived with their parents part of the year, if participants received financial assistance from their parents, if participants had children, and the participant's relationship status. Supporting this conclusion is the strength of the final standardized regression coefficients of three of the four components that make up parental advice characteristics: $\beta = .59$, $p < .001$ (advice efficacy), $\beta = .08$, $p < .05$ (advice feasibility), and $\beta = .15$, $p < .001$ (advice confirmation). Advice limitations were not found to significantly affect parental advice quality. Please see Table 4 below for all final standardized regression coefficients.

Table 4

Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis_{2(a-d)}: Parental Advice Characteristics and Parental Advice Quality

	Model 1	Model 2
Block 1: Demographic variables		
When advice was provided (0 = less than 1 mo.; 1 = 1 mo.; 2 = 2 mos.) (3 = 3 mos.; 4 = 4 mos.; 5 = 5 mos.; 6 = 6 mos.)	.01	.04
Which parental figure (0 = father figure; 1 = mother figure)	-.09	-.02
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	.03	.04
Age (0 = 18-21 y/o; 1 = 22-25 y/o)	-.08	-.06
Ethnicity (0 = non-White; 1 = White)	-.07	-.03
Year in school (0 = non-first year; 1 = first year)	.04	.02
Live with parents for part of year (0 = no; 1 = yes)	-.00	-.02
Receive financial assistance from parents (0 = no; 1 = yes)	-.01	-.02
Children (0 = no children; 1 = children)	.03	.01
Relationship status (0 = married; 1 = unmarried)	-.04	-.05
Block 2: Parental advice characteristics		
Advice efficacy	-	.59***
Advice feasibility	-	.08*
Advice limitations	-	.05
Advice confirmation	-	.15***
Total R^2 (%)	2.30%	49.40%***

Notes. Cell entries for all models are final standardized regression coefficients for blocks 1 and 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis three. A third hierarchical multiple regression analysis was implemented to predict the relationship between parent as advisor characteristics (expertise and trustworthiness) and implementation intention (see Table 5). For model one, the ten control variables were entered into the equation in block one as independent variables, and implementation intention represented the dependent variable. The results of this analysis indicated the model was not

significant, $R^2 = .02$, $F(10, 481) = 1.17$, $p = .306$. This finding explains that the control variables do not account for any change in implementation intention.

For model two, the independent variables of interest were added into block two following the control variables in block one. The results of this analysis suggest there were significant findings, R^2 change = .37, $F(2, 479) = 147.81$, $p < .001$. These results explain that parent as advisor characteristics do account for significant portions of the implementation intention after controlling for: when the advice was provided, which parental figure provided the advice, participant gender, participant age, participant ethnicity, participant's year in school, if participants lived with their parents part of the year, if participants received financial assistance from their parents, if participants had children, and the participant's relationship status. Findings also indicate that one of the demographic variables, ethnicity, also accounts for a portion of the variance of implementation intention. The strength of the final standardized regression coefficients of the three significant variables are: $\beta = .53$, $p < .001$ (trustworthiness), $\beta = .19$ $p < .001$ (expertise), and $\beta = -.08$, $p < .05$ (ethnicity). Please see Table 5 below for all final standardized regression coefficients.

Table 5

Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis_{3(a,b)}: Parent as Advisor Characteristics and Implementation Intention

	Model 1	Model 2
Block 1: Demographic variables		
When advice was provided (0 = less than 1 mo.; 1 = 1 mo.; 2 = 2 mos.) (3 = 3 mos.; 4 = 4 mos.; 5 = 5 mos.; 6 = 6 mos.)	-.04	-.03
Which parental figure (0 = father figure; 1 = mother figure)	-.08	-.03
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	-.02	-.00
Age (0 = 18-21 y/o; 1 = 22-25 y/o)	-.05	-.01
Ethnicity (0 = non-White; 1 = White)	-.09	-.08*
Year in school (0 = non-first year; 1 = first year)	.03	.05
Live with parents for part of year (0 = no; 1 = yes)	.04	-.01
Receive financial assistance from parents (0 = no; 1 = yes)	-.02	-.05
Children (0 = no children; 1 = children)	.04	-.00
Relationship status (0 = married; 1 = unmarried)	-.02	.02
Block 2: Parental as advisor characteristics		
Expertise	-	.19***
Trustworthiness	-	.53***
Total R^2 (%)	2.40%	39.60%***

Notes. Cell entries for all models are final standardized regression coefficients for blocks 1 and 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis four. A fourth hierarchical multiple regression analysis was implemented to predict the relationship between parent as advisor characteristics (expertise and trustworthiness) and parental advice quality (see Table 6). For model one, the ten control variables were entered into the equation in block one as independent variables, and parental advice quality represented the dependent variable. The results of this analysis indicated the model was not significant, $R^2 =$

.02, $F(10, 483) = 1.11$, $p = .351$. This finding explains that the control variables do not account for any change in parental advice quality.

For model two, the independent variables of interest were added into block two following the control variables in block one. The results of this analysis suggest there were significant findings, R^2 change = .51, $F(2, 481) = 258.37$, $p < .001$. These results explain that most parent as advisor characteristics do account for significant portions of the parental advice quality after controlling for: when the advice was provided, which parental figure provided the advice, participant gender, participant age, participant ethnicity, participant's year in school, if participants lived with their parents part of the year, if participants received financial assistance from their parents, if participants had children, and the participant's relationship status. Supporting this conclusion is the strength of the final standardized regression coefficients of the two components that make up parent as advisor characteristics: $\beta = .66$, $p < .001$ (trustworthiness), and $\beta = .16$, $p < .001$ (expertise). Please see Table 6 below for all final standardized regression coefficients.

Table 6

Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis_{4(a,b)}: Parent as Advisor Characteristics and Parental Advice Quality

	Model 1	Model 2
Block 1: Demographic variables		
When advice was provided (0 = less than 1 mo.; 1 = 1 mo.; 2 = 2 mos.) (3 = 3 mos.; 4 = 4 mos.; 5 = 5 mos.; 6 = 6 mos.)	.01	.02
Which parental figure (0 = father figure; 1 = mother figure)	-.09	-.04
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	.03	.04
Age (0 = 18-21 y/o; 1 = 22-25 y/o)	-.08	-.04
Ethnicity (0 = non-White; 1 = White)	-.07	-.06
Year in school (0 = non-first year; 1 = first year)	.04	.06
Live with parents for part of year (0 = no; 1 = yes)	-.00	-.05
Receive financial assistance from parents (0 = no; 1 = yes)	-.01	-.04
Children (0 = no children; 1 = children)	.03	-.02
Relationship status (0 = married; 1 = unmarried)	-.04	-.01
Block 2: Parental as advisor characteristics		
Expertise	-	.16***
Trustworthiness	-	.66***
Total R^2 (%)	2.30%	52.90%***

Notes. Cell entries for all models are final standardized regression coefficients for blocks 1 and 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis five. The fifth hierarchical multiple regression analysis was implemented to predict the relationship between parent as advisor characteristics (expertise and trustworthiness) and parent-child relationship satisfaction (see Table 7). For model one, the ten control variables were entered into the equation in block one as independent variables, and implementation intention represented the dependent variable. The results of this analysis indicated the model

was not significant, $R^2 = .01$, $F(10, 483) = .61$, $p = .809$. This finding explains that the control variables do not account for any change in parent-child relationship satisfaction.

For model two, the independent variables of interest were added into block two following the control variables in block one. The results of this analysis suggest there were significant findings, R^2 change = .65, $F(2, 481) = 459.91$, $p < .001$. These results explain that one parent as advisor characteristic does account for significant portions of parent-child relationship satisfaction after controlling for: when the advice was provided, which parental figure provided the advice, participant gender, participant age, participant ethnicity, participant's year in school, if participants lived with their parents part of the year, if participants received financial assistance from their parents, if participants had children, and the participant's relationship status. Supporting this conclusion is the strength of the final standardized regression coefficient of one of the variables included within parental advice characteristics: $\beta = .81$, $p < .001$ (trustworthiness). Expertise was not found to significantly affect parent-child relationship satisfaction. Please see Table 7 below for all final standardized regression coefficients.

Table 7

Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis_{5(a,b)}: Parent as Advisor Characteristics and Parent-Child Relationship Satisfaction

	Model 1	Model 2
Block 1: Demographic variables		
When advice was provided (0 = less than 1 mo.; 1 = 1 mo.; 2 = 2 mos.) (3 = 3 mos.; 4 = 4 mos.; 5 = 5 mos.; 6 = 6 mos.)	-.03	-.02
Which parental figure (0 = father figure; 1 = mother figure)	-.06	-.01
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	.01	.02
Age (0 = 18-21 y/o; 1 = 22-25 y/o)	-.06	.01
Ethnicity (0 = non-White; 1 = White)	-.02	-.01
Year in school (0 = non-first year; 1 = first year)	-.02	.03
Live with parents for part of year (0 = no; 1 = yes)	.02	-.03
Receive financial assistance from parents (0 = no; 1 = yes)	.03	.00
Children (0 = no children; 1 = children)	.03	-.01
Relationship status (0 = married; 1 = unmarried)	-.05	-.01
Block 2: Parental as advisor characteristics		
Expertise	-	.02
Trustworthiness	-	.81***
Total R^2 (%)	1.20%	66.10%***

Notes. Cell entries for all models are final standardized regression coefficients for blocks 1 and 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis six. The sixth hierarchical multiple regression analysis was implemented to predict the relationship between parental advice quality and parent-child relationship satisfaction (see Table 8). For model one, the ten control variables were entered into the equation in block one as independent variables, and parent-child relationship satisfaction represented the dependent variable. The results of this analysis indicated the model was not significant, $R^2 = .01$,

$F(10, 483) = .607, p = .809$. This finding explains that the control variables do not account for any change in parent-child relationship satisfaction.

For model two, the independent variable of interest was added into block two following the control variables in block one. The results of this analysis suggest there were significant findings, R^2 change = .43, $F(1, 482) = 371.43, p < .001$. These results explain that parental advice quality does account for a significant portion of parent-child relationship satisfaction after controlling for: when the advice was provided, which parental figure provided the advice, participant gender, participant age, participant ethnicity, participant's year in school, if participants lived with their parents part of the year, if participants received financial assistance from their parents, if participants had children, and the participant's relationship status. Supporting this conclusion is the strength of the final standardized regression coefficients for parental advice quality: $\beta = .66, p < .001$. Please see Table 8 below for all final standardized regression coefficients.

Table 8

Final Standardized Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis₆: Parental Advice Quality and Parent-Child Relationship Satisfaction

	Model 1	Model 2
Block 1: Demographic variables		
When advice was provided (0 = less than 1 mo.; 1 = 1 mo.; 2 = 2 mos.) (3 = 3 mos.; 4 = 4 mos.; 5 = 5 mos.; 6 = 6 mos.)	-.03	-.04
Which parental figure (0 = father figure; 1 = mother figure)	-.06	.01
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	.01	-.01
Age (0 = 18-21 y/o; 1 = 22-25 y/o)	-.06	-.01
Ethnicity (0 = non-White; 1 = White)	-.02	.03
Year in school (0 = non-first year; 1 = first year)	-.02	-.04
Live with parents for part of year (0 = no; 1 = yes)	.02	.02
Receive financial assistance from parents (0 = no; 1 = yes)	.03	.03
Children (0 = no children; 1 = children)	.03	.01
Relationship status (0 = married; 1 = unmarried)	-.05	-.02
Block 2: Advice quality		
Advice quality	-	.66***
Total R^2 (%)	1.20%	44.20%***

Notes. Cell entries for all models are final standardized regression coefficients for blocks 1 and 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Chapter Summary

Chapter four explained the reason for the statistical analyses used for the purpose of this study. Six hierarchical multiple regression analyses were employed to test the relationship between elements of ART and parent-child relationship satisfaction in accordance with the six hypotheses proposed in Chapter two (see Appendix A). The chapter that follows will provide a detailed discussion of the statistical findings, contributions to ART, study limitations, and directions for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Overview

The goal of this study was to better understand emerging adults' responses to parental advice by shining light on elements of ART (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; MacGeorge et al., 2008), and also by recognizing how elements of ART affect emerging adults' perceptions of relationship satisfaction with their parental figures. When emerging adults transition into adulthood, they are likely to experience life uncertainty (Arnett, 2000), and reach out to their parents for advice on a plethora of topics (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Carlson, 2014). By considering if an emerging-adult's perception of parental advice affects parent-emerging adult child relationship satisfaction, families and practitioners can better prepare against communicative challenges during an emerging adult's time of life uncertainty as he or she transitions into adulthood.

This study analyzed the perceptions of 503 participants between the ages of 18 to 25 by collecting data through an online questionnaire. The questionnaire began with a writing primer that allowed participants to recall, reflect, and explain a situation within the past six months when they each approached a parental figure for advice. Participants then answered a series of questions on advice processes, parent-child relationship satisfaction, and demographic information. After checking to ensure all statistical assumptions were met, a series of hierarchical multiple regression equations were utilized to answer the hypotheses.

This chapter will begin by providing a summary of results. Next, the chapter will provide this study's contributions to ART. Then, this chapter will explain how findings contribute to better understanding the parent-emerging adult child relationship. The chapter will conclude with information regarding study limitations and directions for future research.

Summary of Results

In order to learn more about the relationships among elements of ART, and between elements of ART and an emerging adult's perception of relationship satisfaction with his or her parental figure, this study employed six hierarchical multiple regression equations. The demographic variables observed for each hypothesis included: (1) when the advice was provided, (2) which parental figure was asked to provide advice, (3) the gender identity of the participant, (4) the age of the participant, (5) the ethnicity of the participant, (6) the participant's year in school, (7) if participants lived with a parental figure for part of the year, (8) if participants received financial assistance from a parental figure, (9) if the participant had children, and (10) the participant's relationship status. In five out of six hypotheses, the control variables did not account for any of the variance in implementation intention, parental advice quality, or parent-child relationship satisfaction. The only hypothesis that reported significant variance of a control variable was $H_{3(a,b)}$. According to the results of $H_{3(a,b)}$, ethnicity accounts for a small portion of the variance in implementation intention when considering parent as advisor characteristics, where trustworthiness and expertise account for larger portions of the variance in implementation intention.

Hypotheses $H_{1(a-d)}$, $H_{2(a-d)}$, $H_{3(a,b)}$, and $H_{4(a,b)}$ specifically focused only on elements of ART. According to the findings reported in $H_{1(a-d)}$, parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy, advice feasibility, advice confirmation, and advice limitations) do account for significant portions of the implementation intention. So, if advice is perceived to reach desired results (advice efficacy), is possible to implement (advice feasibility), matches the participant's own assumptions (advice confirmation), and contains minimal perceived drawbacks (advice limitations), an emerging adult is more likely to implement the advice.

In terms of $H_{2(a-d)}$, the results indicated that most parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy, advice confirmation, and advice feasibility) account for significant variance of parental advice quality. Basically, if an emerging adult perceives the parental advice to reach the desired result, they are more likely to perceive the quality of the advice to be more favorable. Perceptions of advice limitations were not significant; so, the perceptions of advice drawbacks did not have any effect on perceptions of advice quality.

The final hypothesis strictly pertaining to ART, $H_{4(a,b)}$, uncovered that parent as advisor characteristics account for a portion of the variance of parental advice quality. According to these findings, trustworthiness accounts for about 66% and expertise accounts for about 16% of the variance in parental advice quality. Ultimately, if an emerging adult is considering the quality of the advice provided by his or her parental figure, parental trustworthiness holds more weight than parental expertise.

When contemplating elements of ART and parent-child relationship satisfaction, this study uncovered support for both hypotheses $H_{5(a,b)}$ and H_6 . For $H_{5(a,b)}$, only one parent as advisor characteristic (trustworthiness) accounted for a percentage of the variance of parent-child relationship satisfaction. This means that an emerging adult believes that finding his or her parental figure to be trustworthy affects his or her perception of being satisfied with the relationship he or she has with the parental figure. Perceived parental expertise was not significant; therefore, it does not play a role in an emerging adult's perception of relationship satisfaction with the parental figure supplying advice. The final hypothesis, H_6 , revealed that parental advice quality accounts for about 66% of the variance in parent-child relationship satisfaction. So, when an emerging adult perceives an increase in perceived advice quality, he or she also perceives higher relationship satisfaction with his or her parental figure.

The findings of this study answer the call for expanding research on elements of ART (MacGeorge et al., 2013). This study also expands on the ART conversation in terms of the emerging adult population in the United States (Carlson, 2014, 2016). The next section summarizes ART and explains this dissertation's contributions to ART, followed by contributions to the parent-emerging adult child relationship.

Contributions to Advice Response Theory (ART)

According to MacGeorge et al. (2004), ART describes how individuals' responses to messages are affected by how the advice solves an initial problem. Feng and MacGeorge (2010) reported that source factors (expertise, liking, trust, and similarity) and message factors (politeness, response efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation) independently influence advice outcomes (evaluation of advice quality, facilitation of coping, and intention to implement the advice). The results of this study add support to source factors (expertise and trust), message factors (efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation), and advice outcomes (advice quality and intention to implement advice), specifically in the realm of parent-emerging adult child communication. The three major ways this dissertation contributes to ART include (1) answering Carlson's (2016) call to consider demographic variables' effects on elements of ART among an emerging adult population, (2) providing additional support for previous findings, specifically the role of advice limitations, and (3) giving insight into the role elements of ART play in relationship satisfaction.

Carlson (2016) provided an initial investigation into emerging adults and parental advice, explaining how message characteristics including advice quality, efficacy, and feasibility positively predict implementation of parental advice. After making these contributions, Carlson explained the need for scholars to also consider a broader sample size. Carlson (2016) also

explained how future research should consider the relationship between demographic variables on ART elements including: age, ethnicity, parental gender, and financial dependence on parental figures. This dissertation considered these suggestions, reported a sample size of 503 participants, and utilized the suggested variables as control variables. The current study is the largest ART study to date specifically focusing on emerging adults and their parental figures.

The results of this dissertation explain how the age of emerging adults (18-25 years of age) does not contribute to any variance among elements of ART. So, whether an individual is just entering or on the cusp of exiting emerging adulthood does not affect elements of ART. Similar results were found for parental gender and emerging adults' financial dependence on parental figures. Even though 69% of participants reported seeking advice from their mother figure, which is consistent with research (Sprague, 1999), whether emerging adults asked their mother figures or father figures did not play a role in altering any elements of ART.

Ethnicity was the one control variable that did play a minor yet significant role in accounting for part of the variance of implementation intention when considering parent as advisor characteristics (trustworthiness and expertise). In this instance, ethnicity accounted for about 8% of the variance in implementation intention, while trustworthiness and expertise accounted for about 53% and 19%, respectively. According to the results, non-White individuals may be more likely than White individuals to implement parental advice when considering their parents to be trustworthy and experts on the advice topic. This support for recent research claiming ethnicity may play a role in the advice process. Feng (2006) argued the importance of understanding the advice message factors between high-context and low-context cultures. Individuals from low-context cultures, also considered individualistic cultures, seem to be influenced by message factors more so than individuals from high-context cultures, or

collectivistic cultures (Feng, 2006). As Feng's (2006) study specifically focuses on ethnicity differences in message factors, the results from the current study imply that more research is required to look more closely at the decision making processes between parents and their children from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

The second contribution this dissertation makes to ART includes more information on the role of advice limitations. Even though ART is a fairly new theory, since its inception, the role of advice limitations has been in question. The initial introduction of ART reported that advice is deemed higher quality and more helpful if it is considered effective, feasible, and with minimal limitations (Feng & Burlerson, 2008; Hung & Feeley, 2005; MacGeorge et al., 2004). In 2004, MacGeorge et al. claimed that the absence of limitations was the most consistent variable of advice content. However, recent findings show that limitations had a weak influence (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010), or no influence (Guntzviller & MacGeorge, 2013) on message quality.

In terms of advice limitations and parental advice quality, the results of this dissertation support recent advice limitation findings. According to $H_{2(a-d)}$, advice limitations did not seem to play a role in parental advice quality; however, $H_{1(a-d)}$ revealed that advice limitations are considered for advice implementation intention. Even though advice limitations are considered when emerging adults are deciding to implement advice, advice limitations only account for about 13% of the variance in implementation intention. This finding indicates that in terms of the parent-emerging adult child relationship, advice efficacy and advice feasibility carry more weight than advice limitations.

The nonexistent role advice limitations play in parental advice quality, and the minimal role this variable plays in implementation intention sheds light on the advice efficacy and advice feasibility variables. According to ART, advice efficacy represents an emerging adult's

perception of whether or not the advice received will produce his or her desired result. Advice feasibility communicates an emerging adult's perception of whether or not the advice received is possible to complete or carry forward. Using these definitions, it would seem advice feasibility would control a portion of the variance in implementation intention. By also looking at the definition of advice feasibility, an individual most likely factors in any drawbacks or limitations when deciding if the advice received can be carried forward. The *feasibility* of the advice would consider internal and external elements and drawbacks that would help or hinder advice implementation. Advice response theory (ART) may benefit from utilizing advice efficacy and advice feasibility only, rather than advice limitations when observing message factors, and in the case of this dissertation, parental advice characteristics.

The third contribution made to ART is the outcome variable measuring an emerging adult's perception of relationship satisfaction with the parental figure providing the advice. According to the results of $H_{5(a,b)}$ and H_6 , the parent as advisor characteristics (trustworthiness and expertise) do play a role in an emerging adult's perceived relationship satisfaction with the parental figure who provided the advice. Also, as perception of parental advice quality increases, there is an increase in perceived relationship satisfaction. These findings indicate that as elements of ART help to provide information on source factors, message factors, and advice outcomes, there is a direct link from elements of ART to relationship functioning.

Literature on families explains that the five factors used to determine successful families when children are developing include: (1) renegotiating rules, (2) providing a positive environment for identity exploration, (3) improving self-esteem, (4) modeling applicable problem-solving, and (5) permitting adolescents to make their own decisions (Noller, 1995). Emerging adults may also benefit from these factors. When emerging adults ask parental figures

for advice as they are navigating the uncertainty of transitioning to adulthood, their parents are modeling applications of problem solving in order for emerging adults to make their own decisions. It would seem that elements of ART such as trustworthiness and expertise add to the problem-solving element of family success. If an emerging adult views his or her parental figure's trustworthiness and expertise positively, this leads to relationship satisfaction, resulting in a successful advice-seeking instance in terms of relationship functioning.

Emerging adults also consider the quality of parental advice during problem-solving situations when asking for advice, and parent-child relationship satisfaction is indeed an outcome of this thought process. These details tie elements of ART to relationship satisfaction because the source factors, message factors, and advice outcomes affect relationship satisfaction. Because findings indicate most parental advice characteristics play a role in perceived parental advice quality, and parental advice quality plays a role in parent-child relationship satisfaction, these findings suggest parental advice quality could have potential mediating effects between parental advice characteristics and parent-child relationship satisfaction. In other words, quality of advice may mediate advice quality and advice characteristics. This information helps shed light on how elements of ART help or hinder relationship outcomes between parents and their emerging-adult children, and points to ways of maintaining successful and satisfying family functioning.

Contributions to the Parent-Emerging Adult Child Relationship

The findings of this dissertation add valuable insight to the current state of ART; however, findings also bring to light a variety of contributions for the parent-emerging adult child relationship. The transition to adulthood can be a time of identity exploration and life uncertainty for emerging adults in the United States between the ages of 18 to 25 (Arnett, 2000).

During this time, emerging adults reach out to their parents for assistance on a variety of topics as they face new decisions and responsibilities (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Carlson, 2014). The results of this study provide information on how elements of ART affect the relationship between parents and their emerging adult children. The three major ways this dissertation contributes to parent-emerging adult child relationship functioning include (1) the role of advice limitations, (2) the role of trustworthiness, and (3) the role of an emerging adult's perceived level of relationship satisfaction with his or her parental figure providing the advice.

First, the results of this dissertation provide information on how advice limitations affect the parent-emerging adult child relationship. As discussed earlier, advice limitations did not play a role in parental advice quality. A reason for this outcome can be due to the characteristics of the participants. Basically, the components that define emerging adulthood may help better decipher the results. In Arnett's (2000, 2006, 2007) theory, emerging adulthood is characterized by thoughts of increased positivity. If emerging adults maintain thoughts of increased positivity, then they may not weigh the sole thought of advice limitations as strongly as they consider advice efficacy and advice feasibility, when deciding on the quality of the advice. Although advice limitations do not play a role in perceptions of parental advice quality, advice limitations are considered when emerging adults actually thinking about potentially taking a risk to implementing the advice.

The results indicate that when considering implementing the advice, emerging adults think about the potential drawbacks that may occur. The components that define emerging adulthood may also help decipher this outcome. In Arnett's (2000, 2006, 2007) theory, emerging adulthood is characterized by life uncertainty, and a focus on personal goals and life path. When emerging adults are faced with new decisions and responsibilities, it may bring uncertainty and

potential anxiety to the surface of the decision-making process. The uncertainty that surfaces may be heightened when considering actually making a decision, and in this case, deciding whether or not to implement the advice provided by a parental figure. Before deciding to implement advice that will have an effect on an emerging adults' life path, emerging adults may feel the need to consider all possibilities. These possibilities include positive outcomes that complement their overall goal, as well as any limitations or drawbacks that could potentially cause a problem.

These findings, based on the role of advice limitations, suggest that parents should provide and talk through potential advice limitations with their emerging adult children. Even though emerging adults are not considering limitations when judging the quality of the advice, they are placing weight on limitations when deciding to actually implement the advice. Because of this, parental figures may consider helping emerging adults to visualize what the advice would look like if carried forth and put into action. Part of the reason for this is because emerging adults are looking to their parents for assistance because of their life experience as having potentially experienced similar situations when they were younger and not 100% self-sufficient.

While advice limitations (perceived hindrances, drawbacks, or disadvantages) do not play a role in an emerging adult's perception of parental advice quality, advice efficacy (perceived ability for advice to produce desired result), advice feasibility (perceived possibility for emerging adults to implement advice) and advice confirmation (an emerging adult's perception of the advice provided by his or her parental figure matching with their own previous assumptions) were considered in both implementation intention and perceived parental advice quality. These findings indicate when forming advice messages for emerging adult children, parents would benefit from explaining how the advice provided would help to reach the desired result, and how

possible the advice would be to implement. Advice confirmation is an interesting characteristic: individuals like to hear advice with which they already agree. Implementation may be tricky when an emerging adult receives advice that does not reflect his or her original preference. Parents and emerging adults should equally navigate advice confirmation delicately by keeping open minds and providing and requesting examples and evidence to fully process the advice before deciding on the advice's quality, or before deciding whether or not to implement the advice.

The second way this dissertation contributes to parent-emerging adult child relationship functioning is through better understanding the role of trustworthiness. When emerging adults consider the quality of advice provided by parents, more weight is placed on how trustworthy they feel their parents are compared to perceptions of their parents' expertise. These findings shed light on the importance of trust between parents and their emerging adult children. It seems as though regardless which parental figure provides the advice, if parents do or do not provide financial assistance, if emerging adults do or do not live with their parents, or if emerging adults are or are not married, these control variables do not affect emerging adults' perceptions of parental advice quality. Emerging adults judge the quality of advice by how trustworthy they view their parental figures, and to a lesser extent, their parental figures' expertise; however, more weight is placed on the perceptions of trustworthiness.

To help maintain positive perceptions of advice quality, parental figures may want to focus on relational elements like trust when building relationships with emerging adult children during their transition to adulthood, rather than task elements like expertise. According to group research, there are both task and relationship components in interaction (Keyton, 1999). Task messages refer to communication about completing the task at hand, while relational

communication includes messages that help to, "...create the social fabric of a group...by promoting relationships between and among group members" (Keyton, 1999, p. 192). Relational messages are more expressive, and task messages focus more on overall goals or functions (Keyton & Beck, 2009). Task-oriented groups include decision-making groups such as juries, and families are considered groups that have more of a relational goal (Keyton, 1999). For example, according to a study completed on group interactions of a breast cancer support group, task-oriented messages were present more so than relational messages; however, scholars touted the power and tone relational messages brought to the group interactions (Keyton & Beck, 2009). Although the parent-emerging adult child relationship is a dyadic relationship and not a group relationship, interpersonal relationships are embedded within groups; therefore, task and relational messages still exist in those communicative patterns.

In terms of the current study, trustworthiness can be considered a relational element because it focuses on feelings and expression, and expertise is more in line with task-oriented elements because expertise provides knowledge toward an end goal. While task messages were more prevalent in the breast cancer support group, the relational element of trustworthiness seems to carry a great deal of importance in the parent-emerging adult child dyad. Emerging adult children's perceptions of parent figures' trustworthiness and expertise played roles in implementation intention and perceptions of parental advice quality. However, when considering parent-child relationship satisfaction, trustworthiness played a role, but expertise did not. These findings explain that relational and task messages are important in the parent-emerging adult child dyad, but in terms of parent-child relationship satisfaction, the relational element of trustworthiness dominates. So, parents should focus on maintaining positive relationships through trust with their emerging adult children. Some of the ways parents can

build and maintain trust include keeping lines of communication open and honest, and following through on agreements.

The third contribution this dissertation makes to the parent-emerging adult child relationship includes information pertaining to parent-child relationship satisfaction. Findings indicate that in terms of parent as advisor characteristics (trustworthiness and expertise), only trustworthiness plays a role in perceived relationship satisfaction. This finding is important for parental figures to understand because it explains how emerging adult children are not looking for parents to be experts on the topic in question. When seeking advice from a parental figure, emerging adults are more satisfied with the relationship if they deem their parental figure to be trustworthy.

The above findings should encourage parents to continue providing advice to their emerging adult children even if parents are not experts in the subject area. It would be wise for the parent to share that he or she is not an expert in the area; however, the emerging adult approaches the parent because he or she is considering how trustworthy they find the parent. And when there is an increase in trustworthiness, there is also an increase in parent-child relationship satisfaction. Emerging adult children may likely be placing trust at the top of their list of needs because in times of uncertainty, emerging adults are relying on their parental figures to have their best interest in mind, rather than their expertise, which ultimately leads to satisfaction with the state of the relationship.

Not only are emerging adults considering trustworthiness in their perceptions of parent-child relationship satisfaction, there is also a relationship between parental advice quality and parent-child relationship satisfaction. This may be more motivation for parents to take time to craft advice messages. Parental figures should put less energy into feeling as though they have

to be experts issuing advice at that very moment. By taking time to process messages and working with the emerging adult on a way to carry out the advice, emerging adults will have the opportunity to visualize the advice, and have the opportunity to ask questions. If an emerging adult trusts that the parent is considering his or her best interest and providing quality advice, these factors lead to more satisfied relationships.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The findings of the current study both reinforced elements of ART from the perspective of the parent-emerging adult child relationship, and also made valid contributions to the theory and the overall state of parent-child relationships during advice-seeking processes. However, the study is not without limitations. The information that follows will discuss the study limitations and directions for future research.

First, future research should continue to test the role demographic variables may play in the advice-seeking process on a more diverse pool. While this study did answer a call for a larger sample, a majority of the participants fell between the ages of 18 and 19 years of age. Also, the current study did find ethnicity may play a role in implementation intention, but a majority of participants identified with being White from the United States. In the past, Feng (2006) argued the importance of understanding the advice message factors between high-context and low-context cultures; therefore, a more diverse sample should be collected for future studies.

Another demographic variable that should be considered moving forward is the length of time from when the advice situation occurred, and when it was reported and measured. The results of this dissertation shed light on information processing within a six-month timeframe; however, the results could change if the timeframe were extended. To participate in this study, participants completed a writing primer question to assist with retrospective sense making.

Although Tiedens and Linton (2001) discuss how reflecting and writing about situations help emotions surface, it is difficult to ensure the accuracy in recalling memories about an incident.

The second topic of interest for future research includes learning more information on the actual topics discussed and how the perceived severity of topics affects elements of ART. The dissertation researcher asked emerging adults to report on an important topic; therefore, it can be implied that the topics were perceived as being of a serious nature. It would be interesting to see if relationships between variables differ as a function of the severity of a topic. Previous research has explored how family members who disclose inappropriate topics report lower levels of relationship satisfaction (Colaner et al., 2014). According to Carlson (2014), emerging adults often implement parental advice about topics like their careers, work-life balance, personal relationships, their finances when it is practical, and because they view their parents as authority figures with experience. Future research should not only expand on better understanding what emerging adults talk with their parents about when seeking advice (Carlson, 2014), but should also consider how important emerging adults would consider the advice provided by their parents. Not only should this material be presented in a qualitative format to understand the richness attached to the scenarios when seeking advice; the advice topics should be analyzed in conjunction with the quantitative reports of perceptions of parental advice characteristics, parent as advisor characteristics, parental advice quality, implementation intentions, and parent-child relationship satisfaction.

Also, in an effort to increase relationship satisfaction and better understand the advice seeking process, future research should delve into potential mediating effects between elements of ART and parent-child relationship satisfaction. Study results revealed some parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy_(a), advice feasibility_(b), and advice confirmation_(d)) play a role in

perceived parental advice quality. Results also reported parental advice quality accounts for a percentage of the variance in parent-child relationship satisfaction. These results indicate a potential mediating effect of parental advice quality, warranting further research on additional connections between elements of ART and relational outcomes like relationship satisfaction.

The current study did shine light on emerging adults' perceptions of parental advice characteristics, parent as advisor characteristics, and implementation intentions; however, it would be beneficial to learn more about what occurs past the intention to implement the advice. For example, future research may want to illuminate whether the emerging adults did or did not actually implement the advice, how they would rate the advice, and if they would ask that parental figure for advice again in the future. These questions would provide an even deeper understanding of relationship functioning between parents and their emerging adult children.

Lastly, the current study also provided valuable insight from the perspective of emerging adult children as they navigate through uncertainty to work toward the transition to adulthood. Even though the information provided is beneficial to help understand the emerging adult advice seeking process, it would also be valuable for emerging adults and their parents to better understand the advice giver and advice giver's goals (Guntsviller & MacGeorge, 2013). Since this study only analyzed data from one perspective, future research may want to better understand the thought process behind parents' decisions to provide advice, and if elements of ART and emerging adult feedback play a role in the information provided.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to utilize ART to look into the advice seeking process between emerging adult children and their parental figures. Findings from this study added to communication advice literature and relationship functioning between emerging adults and their

parents during the uncertain time of transition before entering adulthood. As emerging adults experience life uncertainty during the life stage directly before adulthood (Arnett, 2000), they continue to reach out to their parents for support in the form of advice (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1992; Carlson, 2014).

According to the findings of this study, an emerging adult does consider parental advice characteristics and parent as advisor characteristics when deciding on the quality of the advice and the intention to implement the advice. Findings particularly indicate that it is important for emerging adults to perceive their parental figures as trustworthy because perceived trustworthiness plays a large role in implementation intention and perceived advice quality. Also, if emerging adults perceive their parents to be trustworthy, they also feel more satisfied with the relationship. The results of this study contribute to ART and the parent-emerging adult child relationship by considering demographic information, the role of advice limitations, the role of trustworthiness, and the role of perceived relationship satisfaction. Future research should continue to consider the emerging-adult decision-making process and its effects on parent-emerging adult child relationship satisfaction. Because the relationship between parents and their children is one of the longest lasting relationships (Golish, 2000), more research on emerging adults' decision-making processes and the role of their parental figures will continue to add depth to ART research. Research on parent-emerging adult child decision-making processes will also assist with better relationship functioning between parents and their children. Just because children choose to leave home, does not mean they have discarded the want or need for parental assistance. The more the field of communication learns of patterns between parents and their emerging adult children in terms of advice-seeking, the more misunderstandings can be decreased, leading to healthier and more satisfying lasting relationships.

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- H_{1(a-d)}: An emerging adult's perception of parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy_(a), advice feasibility_(b), advice limitations_(c), advice confirmation_(d)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict his or her implementation intention.
- H_{2(a-d)}: An emerging adult's perception of parental advice characteristics (advice efficacy_(a), advice feasibility_(b), advice limitations_(c), advice confirmation_(d)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively affect his or her perception of parental advice quality.
- H_{3(a,b)}: An emerging adult's perception of parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict his or her implementation intention.
- H_{4(a,b)}: An emerging adult's perception of parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively affect his or her perception of parental advice quality.
- H_{5(a,b)}: An emerging adult's perception of parent as advisor characteristics (expertise_(a) and trustworthiness_(b)) after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict how satisfied the emerging adult is with the relationship he or she has with his or her parental figure.
- H₆: An emerging adult's perceptions of parental advice quality after asking a parental figure for advice will positively predict how satisfied the emerging adult is with the relationship he or she has with his or her parental figure.

APPENDIX B. ADVICE PRIMER AND ADDITIONAL ADVICE QUESTIONS

1. In the past six months, have you asked a parental figure (mother figure or father figure) for advice about a topic that was important to you?
Yes*
No**
2. **Why have you not asked a parental figure (mother figure or father figure) for advice about a topic that was important to you within the past six months?
3. *In order to answer the questions in this online survey, please think of a time within the last six months when you asked a parental figure (mother figure or father figure) for advice about a topic that was important to you. All of the questions that follow will ask you to respond about your feelings on that one specific situation, at the time that one specific situation took place.

In the space provided below, please take 5 minutes to think about and explain in detail the instance in the past six months when you asked your parental figure for advice on a topic that was important to you.

4. When did you seek this advice from your parental figure?
Less than one month ago
One month ago
Two months ago
Three months ago
Four months ago
Five months ago
Six months ago
5. Which parental figure did you go to for this advice?
Mother figure
Father figure
6. Why did you choose this parental figure?
7. Could you have implemented the advice your parental figure provided since you received it?
Yes
No
8. Have you implemented the advice provided by your parental figure?
Yes
No
9. If you have implemented the advice provided by your parental figure, how helpful did you find the advice to be?
(Not helpful at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Extremely helpful)

10. Why have you not implemented the advice provided by your parental figure?

11. Would you ask your parental figure for advice about a similar topic again? Why/why not?

APPENDIX C. ADVICE RESPONSE THEORY MEASURE

Main Directions: Please think of the episode you explained earlier when you asked a parental figure (mother figure or father figure) for advice about a topic that was important to you within the past six months. All of the questions that follow will ask you to respond about your feelings on that one specific situation, at the time that one specific situation took place.

Parental Advice Quality

Directions: On the scales that follow, please indicate your reaction to the advice your parental figure provided. Select the number that represents your feelings about the advice at the time the advice was provided. Overall, I think the advice I received was...

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------|
| 1. Ineffective: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Effective |
| 2. Unhelpful: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Helpful |
| 3. Inappropriate: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Appropriate |
| 4. Insensitive: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Sensitive |
| 5. Unsupportive: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Supportive |

Implementation Intention

Directions: On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), please indicate your feelings toward the following statements indicating your reaction to the advice your parental figure provided at the time the advice was provided:

6. After receiving advice, I then intended to do what I had been advised.
7. After receiving advice, I then planned to follow the advice I was given.
8. After receiving advice, I then intended to use the advice I had been given.

Parental Advice Characteristics

Advice efficacy. Directions: On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), please indicate your feelings toward the following statements indicating your reaction to the advice your parental figure provided at the time the advice was provided:

9. I believed that the advised action could help to solve my problem.
10. I thought the advised action could solve my difficulties.
11. I perceived that the advised action could help fix my problem.

Advice feasibility. Directions: On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), please indicate your feelings toward the following statements indicating your reaction to the advice your parental figure provided at the time the advice was provided:

12. I was capable of accomplishing the advised action.
13. It was possible for me to do the recommended action.
14. The advice given was something I could do.

Advice limitations. Directions: On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), please indicate your feelings toward the following statements indicating your reaction to the advice your parental figure provided at the time the advice was provided:

15. I could tell that the advised action would have undesirable effects.
16. I could predict that the advised action would have serious drawbacks.

17. I could see that the advised action had significant disadvantages.

Advice confirmation. Directions: On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), please indicate your feelings toward the following statements indicating your reaction to the advice your parental figure provided at the time the advice was provided:

18. The advised action was something I had already planned to do.

19. The advice recommended I do something I already intended to do.

20. I had already anticipated doing what the advice told me to do.

Parent as Advisor Characteristics

Expertise. Directions: On a scale of 1 (considerably less than mine) to 7 (considerably greater than mine), please indicate your feelings toward the following statements indicating your feelings toward your parental figure who provided the advice at the time the advice was provided:

21. This person's expertise with the kind of problem had was . . .

22. This person's knowledge about the type of difficulty I had was . . .

23. This person's experience with situations like the one I faced was . . .

Trustworthiness. Directions: On the scales that follow, please indicate your understanding of the parental figure that provided the advice you were seeking. Select the number that represents your immediate feelings about this parental figure at the time the advice was provided:

- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 24. Untrustworthy: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Trustworthy |
| 25. Divulging: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Confidential |
| 26. Exploitive: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Benevolent |
| 27. Tricky: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Straightforward |
| 28. Disrespectful: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Respectful |
| 29. Inconsiderate: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Considerate |
| 30. Dishonest: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Honest |
| 31. Unreliable: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Reliable |
| 32. Insincere: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Sincere |
| 33. Careless: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Careful |

APPENDIX D. PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION MEASURE

Directions: Please think about your relationship with the parental figure who provided advice, and select the number that most closely describes your feelings toward your parental figure at the time the advice was provided:

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Miserable: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Enjoyable |
| 2. Discouraging: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Hopeful |
| 3. Tied Down: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Free |
| 4. Empty: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Full |
| 5. Boring: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Interesting |
| 6. Disappointing: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Rewarding |
| 7. Doesn't give me much chance: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Brings out the best in me |
| 8. Lonely: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Friendly |
| 9. Hard: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Easy |
| 10. Useless: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | : Worthwhile |

11. All things considered, how satisfied have you been with your relationship with the immediate parental figure who provided advice at the time the advice was provided?

(Completely dissatisfied) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Completely satisfied)

APPENDIX E. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

1. What is your gender identity?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Not listed above – please specify:

2. What is your age? (enter age in years)

3. What is your ethnicity?
 - Asian
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic or Latino(a)
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Not listed above – please specify:

4. If you are currently enrolled in higher education degree program, what is your academic standing?
 - First-year
 - Sophomore
 - Junior
 - Senior
 - Senior Plus
 - Graduate Student
 - Not listed above – please specify:

5. Do you live with a parental figure for an extended amount of time (a month or more) during any part of the year?
 - Yes
 - No

6. Does a parental figure provide you with any form of financial assistance? (Examples: help with tuition, rent, utilities, credit card payments, phone bill, car payments, or car insurance).
 - Yes
 - No

7. What is your current employment status?
 - Work study
 - Working part-time
 - Working full-time
 - Out of work and looking for work
 - Out of work and not looking for work
 - Not listed – please specify:

8. How many children do you have?

Zero

One

Two

Three or more

9. What is your relationship status?

Single

Married

Divorced

Separated

Widowed

Not listed – please specify: