Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATRUE

The Student Parent Experience

Research regarding the college experience is available in abundance. However, research that directly relates to the college experiences of non-traditional college students, specifically students with children, are scarce. The goal in performing the following review of the literature was to discover, inform, and reveal the context relevant and related to the student-parent experience.

Gaining insight on how student-parent experiences differ from other student populations was the inciting point for this exploration and research. The next section in this chapter will provide research on the Applied Science of Positive Behavior Support. This research establishes the understanding of the theoretical framework used to support the rationale for the project development, including research on positive behavior support, applied behavior analysis, and intervention strategies for behavioral change. Positive behavior support methods were incorporated into the website that is designed for this project. The review of literature provided the foundation for discovering 21st century strategies to support this non-traditional population of college students.

Traditional vs. Non-Traditional College Students

Like other non-traditional student populations, student-parents have a higher risk for dropout (Wladis et al., 2018). In one study, student parents were proportionately highest among Black students (47% for women and 25% for men), followed by American Indian/Alaska Native students (41% and 24% for men and women, respectively), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students (39% and 15%), and Hispanic students (32% and 18%) (Gault et al., 2014a). Horn

(1996) contributed a substantial amount of research to The National Center for Educational Statistics related to Enrollment Trends, Persistence and Degree Attainment among nontraditional undergraduate college students. This study used data collected from the three administrations of the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study conducted in 1986–87, 1989–90, and 1992–93 (NPSAS:87, NPSAS:90, and NPSAS:93), which examined the enrollment trends of non-traditional students. The study also gathered data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS:90/94) longitudinal survey to explore the persistence and attainment of nontraditional students who first began their postsecondary education in 1989–90 (Horn, 1996). In this study, Horn (1996) defined a non-traditional student as a student who had one or more of the following seven characteristics: delaying enrollment or part-time enrollment, financially independent or having various responsibilities such as working full time while enrolled, having dependents to support, or did not receive a traditional high school diploma.

Horn (1996) noted three distinct themes categorized non-traditional students. A student was minimally nontraditional if they possessed one of the characteristics mentioned above, moderately nontraditional if they possessed two or three characteristics, and highly nontraditional if they possessed four or more characteristics (Horn, 1996). The data gathered from this study suggested that at least minimally nontraditional students were identified in all three NPSAS surveys. The trends found in the data also showed that the proportion of moderately nontraditional students increased by 31 percent from 1986 to 1992 (Horn, 1996). The interesting discovery of data reported that highly nontraditional students with four or more characteristics was declined from 26 to 23 percent between 1989 and 1992 (Horn, 1996).

Choy (2002) conducted a similar study on nontraditional undergraduates. This study used the same three distinct themes that were introduced in Horn's (1996) study in order to categorize

nontraditional students. Choy (2002) defined "traditional" undergraduate in her study "as one who earns a high school diploma, enrolls full time immediately after finishing high school, depends on parents for financial support, and either does not work during the school year or works part-time" (p. 1). Her perspective on these defining characteristics suggested that the traditional undergraduate is not the rule, rather it is the exception (Choy, 2002). The study also reported that in 1999-2000, almost 27% of undergraduates met all of these criteria. Thus, Choy's findings suggested "the 'traditional' student is not typical" (p. 19). Choy showed that between 1999-2000 three-quarters of all postsecondary students met at least one characteristic to be considered non-traditional. As with Horn's (1996) findings, the rate of nontraditional students increased each year.

Recent research acknowledged the influx of nontraditional students attending college and sought to explore the reason adult learners would choose to enter higher education (Rozvadská & Novotný, 2019). The authors identified nontraditional students as "26 years of age or older who had taken a break from their educational trajectories" (Rozvadská & Novotný, 2019). The focus of the research was to investigate the motives behind non-traditional students starting their pursuit in university studies. An academic motivation scale was used to explore the basis of motivation for the nontraditional student. The data was gathered from a population of first-year students enrolled in either the bachelor's or master's degree programs at Masaryk University. Results from the study were derived from a second analysis of data collected during the first part of a longitudinal online survey. The data showed that nontraditional students were more likely to be women aged 35 and showed to have children with an average age of 11. The researchers suggested that "this finding may be since at this age, children are older and more independent, enabling parents to focus more on their own education pathways" (Rozvadská & Novotný, 2019,

p. 143). According to Rozvadská and Novotný, the three primary motivations for nontraditional students to return to college were: epistemic, professional, and identity. Additional research showed that female parents who returned to college frequently stated they were motivated to return because of the benefits a college education can provide, economic security, personal development, and to set a good example for their children. (Hess et al., 2014).

In addition to the specific motives noted by Rozvadská and Novotný (2019), research showed that age is an important factor that affects student success and degree attainment. Students who enter postsecondary education seeking a degree are, in fact, less likely than traditional students to attain a degree or remain enrolled after 5 years (Horn, 1996). Based on the research, one may conclude that age is not the only factor that distinguishes a traditional student from a non-traditional student, nor is it the main determinant that affects degree attainment.

Choy (2002) found that the differences between traditional and nontraditional college students impacts how they allocate their time and energy. Choy (2002) reported that most traditional students focus their energy toward their studies, while “older students, parents (especially single parents), and students who work full time, have family and work responsibilities competing with school for their time, energy, and financial resources” (p. 1). Specifically addressing college students with children, Choy (2002) found that the challenges for these nontraditional students are “difficulties in obtaining child care and class schedules that do not mesh with work schedules" (p. 2). According to a publication of discussion papers presented by Association of Community College Trustees in the 2016 Invitation Symposium, covered the topics involving supporting success among community college students with children. The views in the papers noted that college students with children, especially those who

are single parents, dedicate more than 30 hours per week toward caring for their dependents (Gault et al., 2017). These time restraints conflict with the educational goals of the parents and decrease their chances of degree attainment (Gault et al., 2017). Choy (2002) suggested institutions should effectively design programs and services to assist these nontraditional students in achieving their academic goals. Also, Choy (2002) asserted that "policymakers and postsecondary administrators need information on how many students are affected, the details of their enrollment patterns, and the nature of their persistence problems" (p. 2).

Challenges of Student Parents

Estimates in the United States have suggested that 40% of the current undergraduate population at American colleges and universities are nontraditional (Choy, 2002). Hittepole noted in a publication guide for chief academic officers and chief student affairs officers that the increasing population of nontraditional college students are parents, caregivers, full-time employees, and retirees (Hittepole, 2018). Despite the reality of all nontraditional students face factors that typical college students do not experience, only 42% of institutions participating in the NASPA Research and Policy Institute Vice President of Student Affairs Census (2014) reported that they did not have nontraditional student services (Hittepole, 2018) Parents are a part of this population who lack support from higher learning institutions.

Moreover, college students with children experience various challenges that may not be experienced by other nontraditional student populations. When compared to their non-parent counterparts, they are more likely to work full-time and spend 35 hours a week or more on caregiving (Gault et al., 2017). This dual lifestyle can create barriers and drastically reduce their possibilities or eliminate their opportunities of achieving academic success if the proper support is not available (Gault et al., 2017). Research also shows issues that impact degree attainment

were some of the following; the need for childcare, unmet financial need, workhours, and part-time enrollment (Gault et al., 2017).

One cross-sectional study investigated time poverty and parenthood of all students enrolled in the most common courses across a wide range of disciplines from all the City University of New York (CUNY) (Wladis et al., 2018). The purpose of this research was to provide colleges and policy makers with targeted interventions that would improve the academic momentum and degree attainment for student-parents as well as deepen the understanding of the factors that reduce college persistence among this particular population (Wladis et al., 2018). The authors suggested that "*time poverty* may illuminate why student parents persist at lower rates than their childless peers" (Wladis et al., 2018, p. 3). Time poverty was defined as the "insufficient time to devote to college work and was measured by assessing both the number of hours and the self-rated quality of time available for college" (Wladis et al., 2018, p. 7). The concept of *time poverty* related to the notion that parenthood requires a significant amount of time, which likely, despite their strong academic qualifications, explains why student-parents have high dropout rates; Wladis et al., 2018). The research included in this study does acknowledged that the relationship among time poverty, parenthood, and college outcomes has not been assessed empirically (Wladis et al., 2018). This research also showed that among student parents, women and ethnic minorities are impacted more by parenthood, and on average have lower incomes, which leads to high dropout rates and higher student debt that increases the socioeconomic stratification across race and gender (Wladis et al., 2018). Wladis et al. (2018) used a Likert scale survey to measure college persistence, or re-enrollment at CUNY in the spring semester and academic momentum, or the number of credits earned by the end of the fall semester. The results showed "students with young children spent significantly more time on

'nondiscretionary' activities, including paid work, housework, and childcare" (Wladis et al., 2018, p. 13). Interestingly the data showed student-parents, when controlling for family size, showed higher household incomes, yet their income was still significantly lower than that of students without children (Wladis et al., 2018). The limitations for this study were the measure of student-parent time, due to the retrospective self-reported nature of the recollections of time use. Overall the study findings indicated that "student parents (particularly those with preschool-aged children) have significantly less time for their studies than their comparable peers, and this finding directly explained differences in college persistence and momentum" (Wladis et al., 2018, p. 16).

Childcare

"There's a growing need for child-care centers on college campuses"- is the title of an article published in 2018 on Market Watch website. The writer of this article, Jillian Berman captured the story of a student-parent and her need for the campus child-care center. The 36 year old student was quoted saying "If I didn't have access to the child care I probably wouldn't be in school" (Berman, 2018, p.1). The article provides further detail on the Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program, which aids colleges in making child care affordable for low-income student parents. (Berman, 2018) Although Congress authorized increased funding for this program and many campuses have a growing population of student parents, funds are still only available through renewable grants. (Berman, 2018)

Research also suggested the "time demands of caregiving make child care options vital to staying in college and graduating" (Gault et al., 2017, p. 1). Evidence showed that:

> Despite the growing number of postsecondary students with children, campus-based child care has been declining in recent years. The proportion of community colleges with child care on campus declined from a high of 53 percent in 2003-2004, to 46 percent in 2013. In public 4-year institutions, the proportion of campuses with child care decreased from 54 to 51 percent from 2002 to 2013 (Gault et al., 2014b, c425).
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> Also,
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> student parents attend community colleges more than any other type of institution (50 percent), and makeup 29 percent of all students at community colleges. Yet on-campus child care facilities are becoming less prevalent, and community colleges have fewer child care facilities than do four-year institutions (Miller, 2010, c325).

According to research nearly five million undergraduate students are also parents (Gault et al., 2017). Parents pursuing higher education make up 45% of the enrolled population in public two-year institutions (Gault et al., 2017). Within that total, nearly 40% of student-parents attending community college are mothers and approximately 29% are fathers (Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2015).

While studies that focused particularly on the impacts of access to childcare and educational outcomes among student-parents are scarce, some evidence has shown that there is a relationship between the two variables (Gault et al., 2017). Data from a study conducted at Monroe Community College (MCC, 2013) in New York showed a correlation between access to campus child care and the academic outcomes of student parents. Results from the study demonstrated that 68% of students with children under the age of six who used the campus child care center were more likely to return to school the following year compared with 51% of their counterparts who did not use the child care center (MCC, 2013). The research further indicated

41% of parents who used child care were also nearly three times more likely to graduate or go on to pursue a B.A. within three years of enrollment compared to 15% of parents who did not (MCC, 2013).

In 2017 The Hamilton Project introduced a policy proposal that focused on supporting student parents with child care and the role it plays in enabling postsecondary progress and completion (Long, 2017). The report included key data stating that in 2015 child care was only provided by 49% of four-year public college institutions (Long, 2017). Also, between 2003-2004 less than 55% of these institutions offered child care (Long, 2017). Long quoted the vice president for research at the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Catherine Hill stating "Students say that if they don't have child care, then the other support services just don't mean that much" (Long, 2017, p. 5)

In addition to the need of child care to attend classes, student-parents require child care support in order to have time to devote to their studies. Effective study time for student parents is diminished when it is interrupted by other activities, such as family responsibilities, and when they are only able to study late at night (Wladis et al., 2018).

Time and Financial Insecurity

According to an analysis of data derived from the American Time Use Survey and reported by the Institute for Women's Policy Research; indicates that single student mothers experience greater time demands and are tasked with delegating their time differently than other women in college (Cruse et al., 2020). Average time spent by single mother student parents in direct child care activities and providing supervisory care for children is 58 hours per week (Cruse et al., 2020).

In addition to time allocated for caregiving " nearly 60% of student parents with low incomes work at least 20 hours per week, with one third of those students working 40 hours or more on top of school" (Cruse et al., 2020 p. 2) More than one in five undergraduate college students are parents of a child under 18 years of age and now as a result of the global pandemic 'COVID-19, student parents presently face heightened disproportionate time and financial insecurity, meeting basic needs and caregiving demands (Cruse et al., 2020).

The Hope Center of Temple University released a report in 2019 before the pandemic started titled "Parenting While In College: Basic Needs Insecurity Among Students With Children" (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020). The executive summary leads the report by covering the benefits of degree attainment for student parents highlighting that the child and the parent "could expect improved social, economic, and health outcomes" (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020 p.2). While the report also noted the concern of limited research about the educational experiences of student parents and low college completion rates (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020). Specifically addressing this issue, the researchers added new questions to the 5th annual #RealCollege survey that pertained directly to the student parents experience. Approximately 167,000 students spread across 171 two-year institutions and 56 four-year institutions responded to the survey (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020). Student parents were asked to indicate their experiences with childcare, mental health, support systems, and basic needs insecurity (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020).

The key findings from this survey ties directly to the financial insecurity that student parents are faced with daily. This study reported "53% of parenting students were food insecure in the prior 30 days , 68% of parenting students were housing insecure in the previous year and 17% of parenting students were homeless in the previous year" (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020 p.2) Further data collected from the survey reported 43% of all parenting students have only one child and

50% of that group are single parents and 33% of all parenting students have two children, in which 29% are single parents (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020). The data also shows one out of 10 parenting students reported having four or more children (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2020).

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2015) obtaining a bachelor's degree in the United States increases a person's earning potential by 68% compared with a high school diploma and reduces the chance of unemployment rate by half. Most students in pursuit of earning a college degree are optimistically awaiting the rewards of financial security (Kruvelis et al., 2020). However, many student-parents struggle to handle the financial strain of supporting their families and their education (Gault et al., 2017). These added pressures may lead student-parents to make desperate decisions (Gault et al., 2017). For instance, they may assume heavy debts or drop out (Gault et al., 2017). Even though earning a college degree can be the surest route out of poverty, obtaining a degree can be difficult for student-parents (Gault et al., 2017). Research showed that the majority of the student parent population at the community college level have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of zero, compared to non-student parents (Gault et al., 2017). Implications from this report suggested that a high number of student-parents are starting their college careers while living at or below the poverty line. The financial need of student parents is significantly greater than their traditional student counterparts and often lead to major financial challenges that can impede degree completion (Gault et al., 2014a). Wladis et al. (2018) reported "more than a quarter of U.S. undergraduates have dependent children; proportions are even higher among low-income and first-generation students (36%) and minorities (e.g., 39% of Black undergraduates" (p. 3).

Strategies for Success

Most research showed that the key to family economic security is higher education (Wladis et al., 2018). Ensuring that student-parents have access to affordable quality child care and other two generation support will have a positive impact on children's success (Wladis et al., 2018). Strategies for success must become a priority for educational institutions, higher education advocates, and policymakers (Wladis et al., 2018).

The Association of Community Colleges Trustees presented a discussion paper in the 2016 Invitational Symposium that listed the following student-parent support suggestions:

> Increase understanding of the student parent population, conduct outreach and offer transition support to make campuses welcoming and responsive to student parents, provide targeted academic services, provide access to financial aid and education, offer tailored mentoring, counseling, and peer support, create links to economic, community, and health services and benefits, help student parents secure affordable housing, improve child care access for students with children, help students find appropriate childcare, help students pay for child care by applying to the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) grant program, transform institutional perspectives of campus child care, and advocate for federal policy change that strengthens support for students with children. (Gault et al., 2017, p 2)

Based on research the report, existing initiatives and new strategies should be expanded to welcome student parents. Gault et al. (2017) argued that this can increase academic success, strengthen career choices, and be beneficial for the next generation. Similarly, a report published by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research asserted The Federal Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS) is necessary to meet a fraction of postsecondary

students' child care needs (Sykes et al., 2016). The research showed that this type of support is imperative to the educational success and longevity of the family economic security for student parents (Sykes et al., 2016). An awareness of the challenges that student-parents face is beginning to surface, and recommendations on ways to support this population have the power to change the narrative (Hittepole, 2018.) According to a written guide for Chief Academic Officers and Chief Student Affairs Officers student support services should include "on-campus space for nontraditional students, student organization or affinity group, affordable on-campus childcare, and campus programing that is inclusive to children and families" (Hittepole, 2018).

Two Generation Program

The two generation (2Gen) approach "simultaneously address[es] the needs of parents and children to improve outcomes for the whole family" (McCann, 2016). Research findings supporting the 2GEn approaches stem from data that shows "the well-being of parents is crucial to their children's social-emotional, physical and economic well-being. And at the same time, parents' ability to succeed in school and the workplace is substantially affected by how well their children are doing" (McCann, 2016). Ascend at the Aspen Institute (2016) suggests that there are five Key Components of the Two-Generation Approach: 1) Postsecondary Education and Employment Pathways; 2) Early Childhood Education and Development; 3) Economic Assets; 4) Health and Well-Being; and 5) Social Capital. At the same time, parents who complete a college degree double their incomes (Cornell Project 2Gen, 2018).

The Ascend Organization contributed to the development and support of the 2Gen approach on a myriad of levels and observed that a parent's level of educational attainment can be used as a strong predictor of their child's success (Cornell Project 2Gen, 2018). The Cornell Project also focuses it efforts toward supporting the whole family by implementing the 2Gen

approach (Cornell Project 2Gen, 2018.). The Cornell Project directs its efforts on research that informs policymakers and practitioners both locally and nationally and serves the progression of families in terms of education, employment, and social environments (Cornell Project 2Gen, 2018).

Applied Science of Positive Behavior Support

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is an applied science that is designed to combine various educational methods to expand an individual's behavior repertoire and provide techniques to change behavior patterns. These changes can lead to two results: better the individual's quality of life and minimize problem behaviors (Carr et al., 2002). In the realms of higher education, positive behavior includes the ability to manage multiple tasks, classroom engagement, and maintaining effective study habits (Tinto, 2012). Positive behaviors are crucial detriments to one's ability to be successful in college (Tinto, 2012). The primary goal of PBS is to encourage and provide a person with strategies to elicit behavioral change that positively correlates with their ideal way of life (Carr et al., 2002).

According to research, the secondary goal of PBS is to eliminate all episodes of those particular problem behaviors (Johnston et al., 2006). Johnston et al. argued that PBS emerges from three major sources: (1) Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), (2) The Normalization/Inclusion Movement, and (3) Person-Centered Values. PBS may best be described as an individualized, problem-solving process grounded in ABA principles (Hieneman, 2015). ABA is the systematic extension of the principles of operant psychology to problems and issues of social importance (Carr et al., 2002). These principles of ABA have made two important contributions to PBS. The first is the conceptual framework of behavior change. The second is a vast number of assessment models and intervention strategies (Carr et al., 2002).

Positive Behavior Support

Positive Behavior was defined by Carr et al. (2002) as skills that increase the possibility of success and personal satisfaction in traditional academics, career, social, and recreational environments as well as community and family settings.

> The primary goal of PBS is to help an individual change his or her lifestyle in a direction that gives all relevant stakeholder (e.g., teacher, employers, parents, friends, and the target person him- or herself) the opportunity to perceive and enjoy an improved quality of life (Carr et al., 2002).
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> The secondary goal of PBS is to render problem behavior irrelevant, inefficient, and ineffective by helping an individual achieve his or her goals in a socially acceptable manner, thus reducing or eliminating altogether, episodes of problem behavior" (Carr et al., 2002).
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> Hieneman (2015) aligns with this definition of PBS. The article states:
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> Individual positive behavior support (PBS) is a process that combines evidence-based practices from applied behavior analysis (ABA) and other disciplines to resolve behavioral challenges and improve independence, participation, and overall quality of life of individuals living and learning in complex community environments" (Hieneman, 2015).

Positive behavior support was formed as an approach to induce advocacy for creating inclusive home, school, work, recreational, and community environments for individuals with disabilities and to rectify concerns of "over aversive and humiliating procedures to manage behavior" (Lucyshyn et al., 2014). Although the PBS emerged as an evidence-based approach for individuals with disabilities and behavior challenges (Carr et al., 2002), it has been successfully

implemented for a vast majority of populations and applied throughout various service systems (e.g., schools, mental health systems, early intervention programs, community agencies) to promote generalized behavioral improvements (Lucyshyn et al., 2014). PBS is perceived as an opportunity to build upon ABA principles by incorporating concepts and strategies from a variety of sources to create interventions for issues and problems where if dissolved promotes enhancing effect on society (Dunlap, 2006; Risley, 2003).

Applied Behavior Analysis

Applied Behavior Analysis was the foundational starting point for Positive Behavior Support (Dunlap et al., 2008). Carr et al. (2002) acknowledged the operant conceptual structure of assessment and intervention technologies that are rooted in ABA act as core components of PBS. It was noted that in some cases both approaches to behavior change can be indistinguishable; however, there are significant differences in definitions and emphases mandate an explicit distinction (Dunlap et al., 2008).

Intervention Strategies for Behavior Change

The infusion of PBS and ABA combines evidence-based practices aligned with formal systems change strategies focused on both improving the valued lifestyle options available for an individual and reducing problem behaviors (Dunlap et al., 2008). Intervention strategies using PBS rely on the individual to define the goals and the parameters of their support. Research showed that PBS is an empirical approach in nature that (a) the practices build from formal scientific principles, (b) the practices are subjected to formal research validation tests, and (c) the practices include the collection and use of publicly interpretable data as part of individual application (Dunlap et al., 2008). The systems approach for PBS intervention practices are

designed to be applied to specific social contexts and to focus on overt variables "that affect fidelity and sustainability of intervention implementation and effects" (Dunlap et al., 2008).

Normalization/Inclusion Movement

Carr et al. (2002) described positive behavior support from the philosophical point of view of the principles and ideals of normalization. The authors explained the perspective of normalization, noting "that people with disabilities should live in the same settings as others and have access to the same opportunities as others (in terms of home, school, work, recreation, and social life)" (Carr et al., 2002). When this principle is applied to the community of student parents,

> the ultimate goal is to ensure that people who are in danger of being devalued are helped to assume valued social roles, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will be accorded respect from others and will receive an equitable share of existing resources (Wolfensberger, 1983, p. 5).

Carr et al. (2002) inferred that this principle of normalization could organically form inclusionary bonds between the outliers, who in this project were student-parents.

Person-Centered Values

According to Carr (1996), "science tells us how we can change things, but values tell us what is worth changing" (p. 6). This ideal directly correlated to valuing college students with children as a population that deserves specific resources aligned with the positive behavior support philosophy. The person-centered value approach of PBS "represents a melding of values and technology in that strategies are judged not only with respect to efficacy (a technological criterion) but also with respect to their ability to enhance personal dignity and opportunities for choice (a values criterion)" (Carr et al., 2002). According to Carr et al. (2002), person-centered

planning, self-determination, and the wraparound approach are three interrelated themes that are the driving force for implementing the perspective of values within the constructs of PBS.

When using the approach of in person-centered planning, the specific needs and goals of the individual drive the creation of new service matrices that are carefully tailored to address the unique characteristics of the individual. Focusing on the specific individual needs of student-parents can be easily considered within the context of normalization and inclusion (Carr et al., 2002). Furthermore, the person-centered approach leads "to produce an intervention plan that emphasizes community participation, meaningful social relationships, and enhanced opportunities for choice, the creation of roles that engender respect from others, and continued development of personal competencies" (Carr et al., 2002, p. 6). The scope of person-centered planning seeks to empower individuals with disabilities, or in this case the special population of student-parents; as such, it almost invariably leads to a focus on the issue of self-determination (Carr et al., 2002).

According to Carr et al. (2002), "self-determination is a multidimensional construct that includes but is not limited to process elements involving choice and decision making, problem-solving, personal goal setting, self-management, self-instruction, and self-advocacy" (p. 6). College students are often grouped in terms of how they should pursue their academic degrees and the amount of time that is deemed appropriate for completion. Non-traditional students are similar to "people with disabilities are often told what they can do, with whom they can do it, and where, when, and how they can do it" (Carr et al., 2002, p. 6). The elements of self-determination involve "changing systems and redesigning environments with a view to minimizing external (often coercive) influences and making the person with disabilities the primary causal agent in his or her own life" (Carr et al., 2002, p. 6). With institutions taking

account for the specific needs of the person and incorporating these principles of positive behavior, support using PBS could combat the barriers of degree completion and inadvertently enhance the overall college experience of the student-parent.

Clark and Hieneman (1999) defined wraparound as the process core philosophy and methods represented by positive behavior support. Carr et al. (2002) inferred that the wraparound incorporates person-centered planning in its emphasis on developing support plans that are needs-driven rather than service-driven. This is a very important distinction in regard to student-parents. The service-driven approach leads to an academic mapping of courses that focus primarily on degree attainment (Carr et al., 2002). Needs-driven approaches will focus on the needs of the student and create a plan in accordance with their barriers that may impact degree attainment (Carr et al., 2002). The study further noted that "such planning has an impact on the entire family system" (Carr et al., 2002, p. 6). Moreover, the wraparound aspect of positive behavior supports also "incorporates a self-determination philosophy in its reliance on a support team whose membership is balanced between experts" (Carr et al., 2002, p. 6).

The experts working with student-parents should be the policymakers and program directors at the community college level and at four-year institutions. The overarching benefit of person-centered values "reflects in its emphasis on assessing strengths rather than deficits and problems" (Carr et al., 2002, p. 6). Further, the benefits of infusing positive behavior support with the dynamics of academic advising, college experience, and educational empowerment creates an environment that is geared toward meeting the basic needs (VanDenBerg & Grealish, 1998).