

Abstract

A comparative study: What do 18- to 29-year-old Dominicans in an urban community college say makes them feel like an adult?

This exploratory quantitative comparative study surveyed 18 to 29-year-old Dominican immigrants (defined as any Dominican that came to the United States (U.S.) after 14 years of age or older) and second-generation (individuals born in the U.S. or territory of Dominican immigrant parents or children who came to the U.S. before the age of 12 years old) enrolled in an urban 2-year community college during fall 2020 and spring 2021. This research sought to test the Emerging Adulthood concept based on Arnett's proposed stage of life theory identified as indications of: *Identity Explorations*; *Experimentation/Possibilities*; *Negativity/Instability*; *Self-Focused*; and *Feeling "In-Between."* The *Other-Focused* factor, not included in Arnett's original study was also explored. The Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood Scale (IDEA), a 31-item inventory, was used to assess the extent to which 18- to 29-year-old Dominicans experience an emerging adulthood phase. Overall quantitative analyses did not generate statistically significant findings. Statistical power were lower than anticipated due to small sample size (N=79). However, mean scores of the subscales' *Identity Exploration* (M=3.42, p=.286), *Self-focused* (M=3.23, p=.133), *Feeling "In-Between"* (M=3.30, p=.515) were not significantly different from the means observed by Reifman et al. (2007). Similar to studies in Latin-American countries/Spanish speaking populations, both immigrant (M=2.78) and second-generation (M=2.61) Dominicans endorsed *Other-Focused* subscale, also generating a positive correlation between *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused* subscales (r=.34, p=.002). Unexpected result in the age split comparison suggested that 24-29 years olds in this study are

experiencing an emerging adulthood stage. Open-ended questions imply influence on the responses due to COVID-19, a global pandemic.

A comparative study: What do 18- to 29-year-old Dominicans in an urban community college say makes them feel like an adult?

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Dedication

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Chapter I: Overview

This research applied the Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood Scale (IDEA)¹ (Reifman, Colwell and Arnett, 2017) to test the applicability of Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood theory with the 18 to 29 year old immigrant Dominicans (defined as anybody that came to the United States (U.S.) after 14 years of age or older) and second-generation Dominicans (individuals born in the U.S. or territory, of Dominican immigrant parents or children who came to the U.S. before the age of 12 years old) enrolled in an urban 2-year community college. The IDEA-S (Spanish) which has been translated and validated in Spanish was offered to participants that preferred to answer survey in Spanish (Sánchez-Queija, Parra, Camacho, and Arnett, 2018). Individual subjects from both groups chose which IDEA language version, English or Spanish, to complete the survey.

The study examined Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood concept, a psychosocial theory that centers around five indicators, as reported by the 18- to 29-year-olds, exhibiting features in the following categories: *Identity Explorations*; *Experimentation/Possibilities*; *Negativity/Instability*; *Self-Focused*; and *Feeling "In-Between."* An *Other-Focused* factor is considered an additional subscale that was included in this study. Reifman et al. (2007) concluded that the *Other-Focused* factor suggests an individual is moving away from the emerging adulthood phase and progressing toward the next life stage, adulthood, typically not included in the IDEA-related studies. As suggested in studies sampling 18- to 29-year-olds from Spanish origin and/or speaking countries and/or Latin American countries, the *Other Focused* factor was included to consider the cultural context necessary when applying the emerging adulthood concept in diverse populations.

¹ The IDEA instrument is also referred to as "Views of Life Survey."

This investigation examined the results from a completed survey utilizing Reifman's et al.'s (2007) "Views of Life Survey" which includes the variables that reflect Arnett's (1994, 2000) psychological features of the emerging adulthood stage from the perspective of the 18 to 29-year-old. The literature review and previous studies, conducting confirmatory factor analyses, supported a quantitative correlational research study to examine Arnett's (1994, 2000) suggested emerging adulthood distinct stage of life. Surveys with Arnett's (1994, 2000) proposed markers of emerging adulthood have mainly been conducted with 18 to 29-year-olds living in 4-year colleges dormitories.

Reifman et al.'s (2007) IDEA scale is an instrument devoted to measuring emerging adulthood with "strong internal consistency and high test-retest reliability" (Sánchez-Queija et al., 2018, p.2). Sánchez-Queija et al. (2018) contend none of the additional studies have attained the results that were originally obtained by Reifman et al. (2007). The IDEA instrument has also been translated into sixteen (16) languages. There are four (4) articles of studies carried out in Spanish (Sánchez-Queija et al., 2018). Sánchez-Queija et al. (2018) validated the IDEA-S (Spanish) questionnaire sampled in Spain with an undergraduate student population in a university campus. They suggested replicating it in the United States.

According to Sánchez-Queija, et al. (2018), there are nine (9) variations of the original IDEA questionnaire, some testing either three, four or six of Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood factors. Many scholars highlighted the need to replicate and confirm if individuals from diverse populations experience any or all of Arnett's (1994, 2000) indicators in their transition to adulthood (Arnett, 2016; Smith, Carroll, Callaghan, Rowcliffe, Sullivan, and Steckler (2015) as cited in Fass, McFall, Peer, Schmolesky, Chalk, Hermann, Chopik, Leighton,

Lazzara, Kemp, DiLillio, and Grahe, 2018; Lisha, Grana, Sun, Rohrbach, Spruijt-Metz, Reifman, and Sussman, 2014).

The study further explored the *Other-Focused* subscale recommended by Reifman et al. (2007). According to Sánchez-Queija et al. (2018), this subscale was not in Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood theory when initially proposed. Instead, the *Other-Focused* subscale is mainly utilized as a supplement and to determine a positive or negative relationship with the *Self-Focused* subscale in the IDEA instrument (Sánchez-Queija et al., 2018). Sánchez-Queija et al.'s (2018) study is the only research found to have maintained Reifman et al.'s (2007) original structure for *Other-Focused* and produced a positive correlation between *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused*, a correlation explained by differences of "individualistic and collectivistic societies" (Kagitcibasi, 2017 as cited in Sánchez Queija et al. 2018, p.4). This study maintained the original structure to verify similar findings given the similarities in culture and religious values between the Dominican Republic, Spain, and other Latin-American countries. For Dominican immigrants, this researcher took into consideration that Dominican immigrants have been socialized in American/Western ideals and values before arriving in the United States.

This research is important to furthering our understanding of the application of emerging adulthood broadly to the Dominican population, but in particular, to the City of New York. New York City (NYC), typically referred to as the melting pot, is one of the cities that continues to see the largest growth of Dominicans among the Hispanic populations. Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010, 2015 and 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2000 U.S. decennial census, the Pew Research Center's fact sheets on Latinos in the United States captured an increase from less than 1M to over 2M Dominicans from 2000 to 2017; confirming over 2 M Dominicans in the metropolitan area: New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (Pew

Research, 2019). At Hostos Community College where this study was implemented, fall 2018 data reported 57% of students enrolled as being Hispanic.

Results from the IDEA English (Reifman et al., 2007) and IDEA-S Spanish (Sánchez Queija et al., 2018) instruments were completed by 18- to 29-year-old students that identified as Dominican, enrolled at Hostos Community College during fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters. Sample Demographic Characteristics include frequencies and percentages for all variables. For hypothesis testing, one sample t-test compared means and standard deviations to Reifman et al.'s original study. Other hypothesis testing involved a Comparison of Sample IDEA Subscale Scores by Identity; Age Group; a Scatterplot of *Self-Focused* vs. *Other-Focused* Scores; Comparison of *Negativity/Instability* and *Feeling In-Between* Subscale Scores by Declared Major; and College Credits Completed. See all tables and figure in chapter V- the results section.

The suggested emerging adulthood theory demands exclusive focus on 18- to 29-year-olds. Arnett (2019) distinguished the developmental cycle while considering external factors such as societal changes and the interplay between these. Nonetheless, Swanson's (2016) review of empirical qualitative and quantitative studies over the course of fifteen years on emerging adulthood theory, confirmed the need to continue to expand the scholarly knowledge on emerging adults by Arnett's (1994, 2000) definition. After careful review of 1,334 peer reviewed studies, Swanson (2016) established the need for emerging adulthood theory "to solidify where it stands as a cultural theory and applicability to minorities and underrepresented groups" (p.399).

Results from this study adds to the discussion of seeking to further an increased understanding regarding Arnett's (1994, 2000) suggested emerging adulthood constructs mentioned as a distinct life stage. Psychosocial theory underpinned this study with reinforcements from life course, multiple context view, ecological and systems theory,

integrative and developmental models which are discussed in greater detail in the theoretical chapter. According to Giele and Elder (1998), the life course model strengths lie in the combination of key theories and research investigating and “connecting social change, social structure, and individual action” (p.6). In current scholarly works, apart from Arnett’s (1994, 2000) proposed life stage as a distinct period, there are no developmental theories that explicitly concentrate on the 18 to 29-year-old. Murray (in Murray and Arnett, 2019) explained that in the life stage viewpoint, as it applies to college students, the concept breaks up into cognitive-structural (hierarchical) and psychosocial (chronological) theories. Unlike cognitive-structural theories, Knafelkamp, Widick, and Parker (1978) concluded that in psychosocial theory there is an acknowledgment “that patterns of psychosocial development are influenced by social and cultural factors, which can vary according to time and place” (as cited in Murray & Arnett, 2019, p.26).

A main contribution to the fields of psychology, education, social work, and Dominican studies are the findings from this study that tested the extent to which a diverse group outside of a traditional 4-year college setting endorsed Arnett’s (1994, 2000) suggested emerging adulthood theory. Focus on 18 to 29-year-old emerging adults in an urban 2-year community college also contributes to social work practice and is aligned with the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics’ (NASW, 2017) focus on cultural competence and social diversity; social justice; service and the dignity and worth of a person.

The following section presents the study problem which highlights the lack of consensus on determining when adolescence ends, and adulthood begins. Focused on Dominicans in an urban higher education setting, the potential consequences on the interplay between education, living arrangements and economic mobility of the emerging adult population are discussed.

Chapter II: Study Problem

This study surveyed immigrant and second-generation Dominicans at Hostos Community College, an urban 2-year school setting, to learn from them about their experiences during the 18 to 29-year-old period of their lives. This research explored the areas of life, work, and school, from the perspective of 18- to 29-year-old, to learn what signals for them the transition or arrival to adulthood? When and what makes them feel like an adult? Arnett's (1994, 2000) suggested emerging adulthood theory was investigated to test the transferability of his recommended markers of adulthood which have not yet been investigated in an urban 2-year community college population. This section provides a brief overview of the age variability and the consequences of not determining when adolescence ends, and adulthood begins. The implications of the research questions to social work practice are also discussed.

The emerging adulthood concept continues to be widely accepted around the world. In America the IDEA instrument, which tests the emerging adulthood concept, has been mainly applied to traditional 4-year college students that live on college campuses. Prior to this study, Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood theory had not yet been examined with an urban 2-year community college student population where emerging adults typically end up in their transition while exploring education, career aspirations and employment goals. Research for this study uncovered that this transitional period is also not framed consistently regarding the age span of samples being included in the studies conducted so far. Scholarly studies and census data reflect variability in determining when adolescence ends and adulthood begins, at times including the 16- and 17-year-olds and stopping at the age of 21, 24 or even 25. Census data at times recognized Arnett's (1994, 2000) proposed stage 18 to 25 years of age. Yet, a recent population report expanded the age cohort from 18- to 34-year-olds (Vespa, 2017) reflecting the

influence and dependency that economics, culture, and socialization have on individuals from this cohort to achieve certain milestones different from previous generations.

There is consensus that there are characteristics in the age cohort that are still associated with the adolescent stage that are changing and merit further investigation, such as living with parents/families, obtaining higher education and postponing marriage and children. For this research, attention was drawn to data and theorists that focused on gaining insight about the expansion of the transition from adolescence. Nevertheless, this study pursued to focus on Arnett's suggested 18 to 29-year-old period to build and expand on similar empirical studies conducted thus far. This study further investigated Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood concept, by comparing two groups: immigrant and second-generation Dominicans to find out the extent to which Dominican's support Arnett's emerging adulthood concept.

Demographic shifts

The literature review on the demographic shifts through the 20th and into the 21st century highlighted the complexity surrounding the transition to adulthood in a universal manner. There are conceptual and demographic studies that suggested attention to the young adult population despite the discourse surrounding age variability and whether it is a stage of life or not. The U.S. Census – Population Characteristics Current Populations report (Vespa, 2017) reviewed changes in the young adulthood group for a period of 40 years. Young adulthood, as defined in this population report, included the ages of 18 to 34. Vespa (2017), author of the report, mentioned Arnett's (2014) proposed period of life between childhood and adulthood. However, the author did not confirm it as a distinct stage. Instead, Vespa (2017) turned his attention to indicators that were different for the 18- to 34-year-olds from 1975-2016 as compared to previous generations.

Vespa (2017) concentrated on the young adults' living arrangements and when they moved from their parents' home. Vespa (2017) explained that the focus needed to be on those two milestones given the young adults' ability to achieve these depended on their financial stability typically tied to education and work experiences (Vespa, 2017). Vespa (2017) concluded great diversity in young adults' experiences in their transition to adulthood from previous generations. Although young adults continue to expect to marry and have children, achieving educational and economic gains make that pathway different and more complicated.

Encouraged by the literature and the need to advance the knowledge on the emerging adulthood topic, this study weighs in by examining a new population different from Arnett's 1994 beginning study and those that followed with mainly white, mid-western students in 4-year college campuses. The analysis in this study focused on 18 to 29-year-old commuters in an urban 2-year community college that have open access and the 2-year educational experience is a steppingstone to increase their college readiness for the transition to a 4-year college and/or a career. In addition, this study adds value to cross-cultural assessments and comparisons between two groups from the same ethnic group: immigrant and second-generation Dominicans.

Structural barriers due to age variability for the emerging adulthood stage

Not settling on the normative age when adolescence ends and adulthood begins has systemic implications with financial consequences for some groups more than others in the 18 to 29-year-old age group. For example, attention to the 18- to 24-year-olds proved to be sporadic and not always inclusive of addressing their concerns. The sidelining of the 18- to 24-year-olds presents structural barriers that especially impact ethnic groups in urban communities. The William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship (1988) report focused on the 16- to 24-year-olds not going to college categorizing them as the "forgotten half."

Their 1988 two-year seminal study reported the lack of attention to the issues encountered by this population and the need for dedicated solutions to address education and economic challenges encountered by this age group.

Over a decade later, a demographic study by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OEIR) published a report released by the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) establishing the nation-wide predicament of the 16- to 24-year-olds not being in school or work. Sum Khatiwada, Pond, Trub, Fogg and Palma (2003) analyzed statistics and data that displayed the growth and status of the 16- to 24-year-old group of people defining them as Out-of-School and Out-of-Work (OSOW). Even with legislation put forth at the time, such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and congress' goals of "leave no worker behind," the authors described the 16- to 24-year-olds as being deserted in limbo between the goals of both of those legislations (Sum et al., (2003). In their study of the data, Sum et al. (2003) projected the future social and economic prospects of the 16- to 24-year-old population to worsen, particularly for those with no postsecondary education.

In higher education

A decade ago, Brock (2010) began to draw attention to the impact demographic shifts would have on the educational system since federal policies took effect in the 60's. He highlighted the focus was no longer on the traditional student in the 4-year colleges but instead on the nontraditional students in the "nonselective community colleges" (Brock, 2010, p. 109). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Association of Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education (ANTSHE) identify a nontraditional student as an adult learner, older than 25 years of age and not starting college immediately after high school. The student may have secondary identifiers such as having a job, being married with a child, and enrolled in

an occupational training program (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2019; Association of Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education (ANTSHE), 2020).

The 18- to 24-year-olds can be considered a subpopulation of the nontraditional student body given their shared characteristics with the nontraditional students as defined by NCES and ANTSHE (2019). Excluding them from the definition disregards the attention required to develop policies, programs and service models that address the needs of the 18- to 24-year-old. If not supported in the transition to an urban community college, they are less likely to succeed in school and/or the world of work. The exclusion calls for an expansion of the NCES and ANTSHE definition and the identification and application of a theoretical approach that includes the 18- to 24-year-olds that are bound to transition to an urban 2-year community college setting predominantly attended by 18- to 29-year-olds.

The literature on nontraditional students confirmed that there is consensus and a need to broaden the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Association of Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education (ANTSHE) definition of nontraditional students used to define students in the community college settings. Broadening the nontraditional definition will be inclusive and more representative of the population that attends urban community colleges. If included in the definition, courses, programs, services offered and policies in those institutions will be improved to meet the needs of *all* nontraditional students identified as those that characteristically deal with life, school, and work (Benitez and DeAro, 2004). Thinking about nontraditional students beyond age aligns with the diversity among the nontraditional student population, the myriad of issues they deal with and their self-perception about transitioning to adulthood. Furthermore, it would adjust to the demographic changes in more

recent decades reported in current population reports reflecting an expansion of the age span from 18 to 34 years old (Vespa, 2017).

Capturing the perception of a Dominican population in a 2-year community college in the Bronx about their transition during the 18- to 29-year-old period, increases understanding to begin to address the educational and employment barriers experienced by individuals in that cohort.

In New York City

In New York City, the issue of the demographic variability among the 18- to 29-year-olds persists. In 2015, the William T. Grant Foundation issued a second report (a little over two decades after their initial report), this time discussing the plight of 16- to 24-year-olds that enter college but do not complete. The foundation's commissions and Sum et al.'s (2003) research set the groundwork and direction to draw attention to 18- to 24-year-olds. Thereafter, in New York City, reports followed in 2013 and 2018 maintaining the South Bronx ranking #1 among New York City (NYC) neighborhoods with the highest concentration of 18- to 24-year-olds; 38% (New York City) and 41% (South Bronx) respectively (Parrot and Treschan, 2013; Treschan and Lew, 2018).

In New York City, the number of 16- to 24-year-olds that are out of school and out of work (OSOW) dropped since 2010 from 18% to 14% (196,789 to 140,302 respectively out of close to 800,000). However, the percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds that are OSOW by race and where they live continued to be a problem. Black and Latinx 18-to 24-year-olds as a subgroup are also more likely to be OSOW (Treschan & Lew, 2018). The data summarized by Treschan & Lew (2018) reflected that during the economic recovery, when compared to other races that dealt with fewer barriers, black and Latinx 18- to 24-year-olds did not fare as well. In fact, 18- to 24-

year-olds from other races advanced during economic recovery. Income levels for those Black and Latinx OSOW were at near poor or poor. Additionally, more than half of the population had Medicaid (52%) and 38% received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (Treschan & Lew, 2018).

Historically unemployment rates for the 18- to 24-year-olds tend to be highest and even more so for Hispanic/Latinos when compared to other groups. This study was conducted during an unprecedented global pandemic (COVID-19). As of June 2020, the Bronx (24.7%) continued to carry a high unemployment rate when compared to NYS (15.6%) and NYC (20.4%). From April to June 2020 at the height of the pandemic, the Bronx unemployment rate increased 8.2% (New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL), June 2020).

In their Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' July 2020 report on unemployment rate based on age, sex, race and Hispanic or Latino population recounted a 75.2% unemployment rate among Hispanic or Latinos for those in the 18 to 24 age group. In neighborhoods such as the South Bronx in New York City structural and systemic barriers have heightened during the crisis. In addition to still being the poorest Congressional District, health and other disparities have amplified during disasters.

Addressing the impacts of a global pandemic on communities and people of color is beyond the scope of this research. However, in light of the global pandemic, COVID-19, a research question regarding this historical life event is important to acknowledge; thus, a question related to COVID-19 was included in the survey: Does being 18 to 29 years old during a global pandemic influence perception about adulthood? This researcher hypothesized that immigrant and second-generation Dominicans 18 to 29 years old in an urban 2-year community college would report exhibiting higher *Instability/Negativity* mean scores due to the pandemic.

The discussion section of this research briefly speaks to the possible influence(s) the current global pandemic-COVID-19 may have had on the perception of emerging adults and their transition to adulthood during the worst public health crisis in the history of the United States.

In the City University of New York (CUNY)

This study sought to gain insight from 18- to 29-year-olds attending Hostos Community College (Hostos) of the City University (CUNY) of New York in the Bronx, New York City. Their opinion about what signals for them that they are in transition or arriving at adulthood is critical now more than ever. In their report, Treschan & Lew (2018) included data from the City University of New York (CUNY) Office of Institutional Research (OIR) indicating an increase in the number of Latinx students enrolled in CUNY's two-year community colleges from 43% in 2006 to 62% in 2016. The 19% enrollment increase in CUNY and the growth of the 18- to 24-year-old Latinx population in the South Bronx ought to be a concern to CUNY schools, including Hostos whose campus is in the South Bronx. Regardless of the increase in enrollments of 18- to 24-year-olds, CUNY's latest Performance Management Process 2019-2020 Data Book released August 14, 2020 (Revised August 26, 2020), focused data on students 25 years or older only.

In 2018, the CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) carried out a CUNY-wide survey to capture the CUNY student experience. From over 100,000 students invited, nearly 21,000 completed the survey in all the CUNY schools (20.8% response rate). At Hostos, 62% of survey participants were under the age of 25 years old (73% CUNY-wide). Of the 3,000 students from Hostos, 492 completed: a 16.4% response rate, just below the total response rate for all community colleges (18.6%) in CUNY (Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA), 2020).

Survey questions concentrated on nine areas connected to work details, academic momentum, college expectation & experience, academic & student support services and course offerings. These areas are important to this study and reveal some interesting conclusions from the student's perspective (APPENDIX A- CUNY Survey Adopted/Summary Table).

Overall students' responses suggested that students enroll in a 2-year community college with the expectation of completing the program and obtaining an associate degree in two years (52% Hostos and 42% CUNY-wide). However, when asked about the number of credits they planned to take each semester, only 27% of Hostos respondents compared to 41% CUNY-wide, confirmed taking 15 credits or more required to graduate on-time. The top two reported reasons for students not taking 15 credits or more, at Hostos and CUNY-wide, were due to work and/or family obligations (47% at Hostos and 41% CUNY-wide). In addition, students expressed that "more courses meant more work" (34% at Hostos and 37% CUNY-wide) (OIRA, 2020).

Key responses from the CUNY-wide student experience survey also revealed that nearly 60% of students, from Hostos and CUNY-wide, reported not being engaged in school activities such as student government, clubs, athletics or events and programs. Instead, students indicated spending most of their time working, traveling to and from school and caring for a family member. For Hostos and other CUNY students nearly 60% of students reported working, with 83% of Hostos students (76% CUNY-wide) working to pay for their living expenses. Hostos and CUNY-wide students (42%) conveyed a desire to work but were not able to find a job. When asked about engaging in on-campus experiential learning activities that could lead to employment, over 50% of Hostos students (34% CUNY-wide) reported not receiving information about those programs and 47% (61% CUNY-wide) communicated not having time (OIRA, 2020).

Close to 90% of CUNY-wide students travel to school via public transportation, with 60% reporting spending 1 to 5 hours commuting per trip. In addition to working and traveling to and from school, students at Hostos and CUNY-wide reflect a spread of their time, also providing care for parents, children, spouse, etc. (26% Hostos/31% CUNY-wide 1-5 hours; 15%/17% 6-10 hours; 12%/10% 11-20 hours; 24%/16% over 20 hours respectively) (OIRA, 2020).

Also important to this study is students' opinion regarding CUNY colleges providing sufficient information to help them choose a career. At Hostos and CUNY-wide, close to half of respondents (43% at Hostos/49% CUNY-wide) remained neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement "my college provides adequate information in choosing a career." Lastly, thirty-three (33%) percent of students at Hostos (39% CUNY-wide) remained neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with being provided with "adequate information in choosing a major" (OIRA, 2020). Consequently, this research also explored Hostos students' stated experience regarding deciding on a major and credit accumulation in connection with their views about transitioning to adulthood.

Why focus on 18 to 29-year-old Dominicans in NYC and CUNY in this study?

Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010, 2015 and 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2000 U.S. decennial census, the Pew Research Center's fact sheets on Latinos in the United States reported that by 2017 the Dominican population had grown to a little over 2 million with New York State holding the largest share of the population: forty-two percent (42%) of which over 1 million are populated in the New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA metropolitan area; with over 64% of Dominican immigrants living in the United States for more than 10 years (Pew Research, 2019).

In the first comprehensive research report on Dominicans in higher education published by CUNY's Dominican Studies Institute (DSI), authors concluded that by the year 2002 the enrollment of Dominicans in college had continuously increased and that among Hispanic students in CUNY schools 77% were Dominicans (Hernandez and Stevens-Acevedo, 2004). An upward trend that continued through 2017 is evidenced at Hostos in the South Bronx. Self-identified Dominicans enrolled at Hostos represented 29 to 30% of the total number of enrolled students for four consecutive years from 2014 to 2017 (Hostos-Office of Institutional Research (OIR), 2019).

Problem implications on ethnic groups

Apart from Arnett's (1994, 2000) recommended stage concentrated on the 18- to 29-year-olds, there are no evolving theories that have explicitly focused to include 18 to 24-year-olds. There are mixed representations and varying characterizations with undesirable implications for this cohort, such as: the Forgotten Half (16- to 24-year olds); Out-of-school and out-of-work (OSOW) (16- to 24-year olds); Disconnected or Opportunity Youth (16- to 24-year olds); and "not in work nor in school or "ninis" (15-24), a term originated from Spanish "ni estudia ni trabaja" generally used throughout Latin America and Spain (W. T. Foundation, 1988; Sum et al., 2003). Although "youth" gets closer to a positive naming, it was referring to those in the '60's protesting not always highlighted in a positive manner when it involved this age group (Keniston, 1970). Essentially, the period between 18- to 24-years of age has isolated and defined youth by the circumstances in which they find themselves encouraging mixed self-perceptions and at times damaging opinions from others. Appendix B (see APPENDIX B – Theorist & Terms Depicting Period Between Adolescence & Adulthood) begins to plot and illustrate the

evolution and shifts in perception regarding the period of time between adolescence and adulthood.

By 1959, Erikson had established life span stages covering that included 18 to 35 years of age. In 2004, Arnett established 18 to 25 and later extended the age to 29 years old. More recently, in 2017, Vespa stretched the age span to 35. In the end, all three scholars draw attention to this group while considering external factors such as societal changes and the interplay between these areas. Settling on an age span that is reflective of societal changes, can heighten awareness to augment attention to the inclusion of 18- to 24-year-olds, usually excluded. An age expansion is vital to help increase the daily functional levels, transition to college and the world of work for all emerging adults transitioning through urban 2-year community colleges.

Arnett's (1994, 2000, 2019) proposed emerging adulthood theory is positioned as a psychosocial theory that centers around five areas during the 18 to 29 years of age period of life: figuring out the self, dealing with instability and seeking stability at work and relationships, emerging adults' focus on the self, overflowing feelings of being in-between as they transition out of adolescence, and filled with optimism (Murray & Arnett, 2019). Concentration on better understanding the interchange between emerging adults' feelings about where they are in Arnett's suggested areas and where society expects them to be is important for social work practitioners in community colleges to better prepare all urban 18-to-29-year-olds for education, work and life.

For this study, to address the multiple institutional barriers that the 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominican's deal within the City University of New York (CUNY) and New York City (NYC), it is important to look at this population from Arnett's (1994, 2000) proposed theoretical perspective that recommended emerging adulthood as a

distinct stage of life age. The proposed theory acknowledges the views of the 18-to-29-year-olds and frames their identified needs around a notion that squarely meets the changeability that comes with the 18 to 29 phase to match their ever-changing needs with investments to deal with the variability during this period of life. Equally important is the perception of the emerging adults themselves regarding what they think and feel about becoming or when they think they have achieved adulthood.

The next chapter discusses the researcher's literature review process, the scholarly works and empirical studies found that focused on increasing the understanding of the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Implications for future research are established.

Chapter III: Literature Review

The literature review in this section establishes Arnett's (1997, 2000) proposed focus on 18- to 29-year-olds as a distinct stage of life named "emerging adulthood." The transition to adulthood has gained attention and momentum ever since Erikson's (1959, 1968) proposed "psychosocial moratorium." Erikson (1959, 1968) defined "psychosocial moratorium" as a time after adolescence, for individuals to figure out their role in life and work; except this time was only afforded to individuals from higher socioeconomic levels. Since Erikson's time, dramatic technological advancements have increased attention to the idea of a period when individuals do not yet feel like adults or see themselves assuming and carrying out adult functions. The literature review emphasized the need to continue to further investigate when adolescence ends and when adulthood begins, from the perspective of the 18 to 29-year-old (Arnett, 1994, 2000).

The systematic literature review features empirical research conducted using the IDEA (Reifman et al., 2007) instrument to test Arnett's suggested factors as indicators of the 18 to 29-year-old experiencing an emerging adulthood stage: *Identity Explorations*; *Experimentation/Possibilities*; *Negativity/Instability*; *Self-Focused*; and *Feeling "In-Between."* Studies conducted on the emerging adulthood topic encouraged additional research inclusive of students outside of a traditional 4-year college setting/not living on campus and of diverse backgrounds. Lastly, studies urged additional inquiry on the role that "*Other-Focused*" and counter factors such as "*Instability/Negativity*" dimensions play in the lives of the 18- to 29-year-olds. Does globalization, culture, time, and place impact how and at which point emerging adults feel and think as if they are transitioning or achieving adulthood? (Arnett, 2013, 2015).

Research on emerging adulthood as a developmental stage

In 1994 Arnett established the need to distinguish emerging adulthood as a life stage different from adolescence and adulthood. Even though Arnett and his emerging adulthood theory continues to be criticized and contested, the emerging adulthood concept first introduced as a distinct developmental life stage from adolescence is now more widely accepted as a possible transitional period of time covering the 18- to 29-years of age span. Arnett's (1994) initial investigation with three hundred and forty-six (N=346) 18- to 23-year-olds (95% of which were 18 to 21 years of age), explored the views of college students about being an adult. Criteria deemed to indicate transition to adulthood included questions exploring ideas dealing with role transitions such as moving out of a parent's home, completing school, full time employment, getting married and the like. This study also concentrated on other items that focused on cognitive (arriving at values separate from the parents), emotional (self-control of emotions, being in a long-term relationship), behavioral (moving away from risk taking behaviors), biological (engaging in sex and having children), chronological (arriving at legal age) and assuming responsibility for self and others (Arnett, 1994).

Arnett's (1994) 41-item questionnaire concluded that college students reported not viewing themselves as adults. According to Arnett (1994), most students reported financial independence and moving out of parent's home as a main indicator of transitioning to adulthood. Later, Arnett (1997) compared results collected from the 346 college students (1994) with responses from one hundred and forty (140) 21- to 28-year-olds confirming and maintaining that for more diverse populations not from Western societies, the transition to adulthood is shaped by the cultural values from which those individuals come.

Mitchell and Syed (2015) mentioned European investigators who have carried out more studies on emerging adults that are not in school than have scholars in the United States (Bynner et al. (2002); Reitzle (2006); Bynner & Parsons (2002); Roberts (2011) as cited in Mitchell & Syed (2015)). However, studies in Europe did not compare their samples to college goers. Mitchell & Syed (2015) go on to mention that even though in the United States there are some studies showing that individuals' educational levels influence more than one subscale, they counter that these do not include comparisons of different educational levels (Osgood et al., 2005; Vuolo et al., 2012; Schoon & Schulenberg, 2013 as cited in Mitchell & Syed, 2015). In their study, Mitchell & Syed (2015) focused on the long-term path of 14 to 30-year-olds, comparing college degree holders, those with some college and those with no college at all. Questions explored in their research centered around what the emerging adulthood stage looked like for the three different groups? Do they all follow the same paths, and at which point in the stage are there differences?

Mitchell & Syed (2015) referenced Arnett & Schwab's (2012) research which focused on three domains that were previously found to be most important to emerging adults: work, love, and financial independence. Like other earlier studies, Mitchell & Syed (2015) concluded that the emerging adulthood stage for those that do not attend or drop out of college is experienced differently (Hendry & Kloep (2010); Carr & Kefalas (2011); Zorotovich (2014)), opposing Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood theory. Like others, Mitchell & Syed (2015) contend that not enough studies are conducted on students that are not college bound and additional research is needed "that focuses only on the non-student experience" (p.2025).

Many scholars challenge researchers to further explore and conduct research with emerging adults not enrolled in higher education (Badger, Nelson & Barry, 2006; Mitchell &

Syed, 2015; Nelson, 2009; Nelson & Chenn, 2007; Schartz, 2016 as cited in Zorotovich & Johnson, 2019), yet none have been found to encourage studies with emerging adults in an urban 2-year community college setting. Building on the work of previous scholars that questioned the generalizability (Co[^]te', 2014; Hendry & Kleep, 2010; Mitchell & Syed, 2015) of the emerging adulthood theory, Zorotovich & Johnson (2019) examined Arnett's (1994, 2000) factors that predict the degree to which emerging adulthood applied to comparison samples of 18- to 29-year-old non-college, college, and graduate students.

Zorotovich & Johnson (2019) focused on Arnett's (1994, 2000) factors such as: *Feeling "In Between,"* intensive *Identity Exploration, Self-Focused,* and sense of *Possibility and Instability*. Overall findings in this study suggested that older participants, particularly male students, from diverse racial and ethnic groups and those that were parenting or married, did not subscribe to Arnett's emerging adulthood indicators. It was also uncovered that racially and ethnically diverse participants in the survey did not adhere to Arnett's (1994, 200) dimension of time off to focus on the self (Zorotovich & Johnson, 2019).

Systematic Literature Review

The systematic literature review for this study sought to identify studies that further explored the transferability of Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood theory using the Reifman et al.'s (2007) IDEA questionnaire in diverse ethnic samples outside of four-year colleges. This in-depth literature analysis of peer reviewed full text empirical studies focused on research that demonstrated the IDEA's instrument construct validity and applicability in diverse populations (Reifman et al., 2007; Facio, Resett, Micocci & Mistrorigo, 2007; Dutra-Thomé & Koller, 2017; Arias & Hernandez, 2007; Perez, Cumsille & Martinez (2008); Lisha, et al., 2014; Fass et al., 2018; Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018; Zorotovich & Johnson, 2019).

The central research question posed in this study explored the extent to which the IDEA (Reifman et al., 2007) scale predicts whether 18 to 29 year old immigrant Dominicans (defined as anybody that came to the U.S. after 14 years of age or older) and second-generation Dominicans (individuals born in the U.S. or territory, of Dominican immigrant parents or children who came to the U.S. before the age of 12 years old) in an urban 2-year community college support any of the proposed factors as signs of emerging adulthood: *Identity Exploration; Experimentation/Possibilities; Negativity/Instability; Self-Focused; and Feeling “In-Between”* (Arnett, 1994, 2000).

The systematic literature review process

Ridley’s (2012) table is suggested for “the multiple purpose of your literature review” (p. 39) as the framework to critically appraise scholarly articles. The researcher concentrated on identifying the title, type of study, sample, findings, recurrent limitations and identified themes in gaps in the studies being reviewed to include articles deemed relevant to the study.

McNeece and Thyer (2004) proposed a rating system for reviewing a body of scholarly works, ranking systematic reviews/quantitative studies highest. The search for quantitative studies was conducted in databases such as Campbell Collaboration, Cochrane, National Institute of Health (NIH)/PubMed/Medline, with ProQuest Central/Education/Psychology, APA PsycINFO, and SAGE Journals/Society of Emerging Adulthood which archived the most pertinent articles. Keywords or phrases included in the searches were Reifman’s (2007) IDEA instrument, Arnett’s markers of adulthood and his markers of 18- to 29-year-olds. Articles containing words such as psychosocial moratorium, prolonged adolescence, Latino/a emerging adults were also reviewed. As key words and phrases narrowed to Arnett’s emerging adulthood

proposed theory and the validation and replication of the IDEA instrument to demonstrate applicability of the emerging adulthood concept, essential articles became available.

What we know and do not know

The IDEA scale (Reifman et al., 2007) has been translated into sixteen languages, including Spanish. Reifman's webpage, dedicated to frequently asked questions regarding the instrument, referenced four of the sixteen research articles as being administered to individuals of Spanish speaking origin or administered in Spanish (Arias and Hernandez, 2007; Facio et al., 2007; Perez, Cumsille & Martinez (2008); Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018). For this study, a careful review of titles, abstracts and select articles was carried out. Selection criteria narrowed to studies confirming the validity and implementation of the instrument in English and Spanish, with sample groups inclusive of 18- to 29-year-olds and of Spanish origin and a diverse population outside of a traditional 4-year college. Lastly, articles that endorsed the *Other-Focused* subscale which was not included with Arnett's original factors but incorporated in the IDEA instrument, were included (Dutra-Thomé & Koller; 2017; Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018).

Facio et al., (2007) investigated how emerging adulthood is experienced in Argentina by examining: a) Argentinian 18- to 27-year-olds' views of being an adult b) the factors determining adulthood; c) their reported experience; and d) the multiplicity of the group around education, work and love. Facio et al. (2007) summarized different findings. However, for the purposes of the present study, the focus was directed to the results from a cohort of 18- to 21-year-olds that completed the IDEA questionnaire to address one of the four issues the researchers explored: the reported experience of those answering the IDEA questionnaire. Authors do not explain why they focused on the 18 to 21-year-old span only for their analysis and did not include results for

the 18 to 27-year-old group. Facio et al. (2007) concluded that like 18 to 26-year-old Americans, more than half of Argentinians were thought to be stuck between adolescence and adulthood.

Facio et al. (2007) compared the mean scores from Reifman et al.'s (2007) research with those of American college students. Facio et al. (2007) found that Argentinians, 18 to 21 years of age recognized this period of their life as a time of *Identity Exploration* (3.29), *Possibilities* (3.11), and *Self-Focused* (3.09) when compared to the mean score of Americans 3.35, 3.37 and 3.23 respectively. Different from Americans, 18- to 21-year-old Argentinians reported experiencing less *Instability* (Ms=2.47 vs. 2.93). The greatest difference between 18 to 21-year-old Argentinian and Americans were found in the *Other-Focused* factor. Seventy-two percent (72%) of Argentinians (Ms=3.09), differing from Americans (Ms=2.47) self-reported this time to be one of responsibilities and taking care of others (Facio et al., 2007). For Argentinians, similar to emerging adults from Latin American countries, this period was not a time to leave the home of the parents. Regardless of school enrollment, most participants delayed marriage and parenthood. Researchers contend that "the findings can apply widely to Argentinians across social classes, except perhaps those in the lowest classes who do not attend secondary school" (Facio et. al., 2007, p.118).

In another study focused on Spanish speaking individuals of Spanish origin, Arias and Hernandez (2007) sampled Mexican and Spanish youth. Arias and Hernandez (2007) structured a seven hundred and twenty (720) subject sample inclusive of males and females, 16 to 34 years of age. Results for nine age groups were examined: 16-17; 18-19 and so on, up to 34 years old. Researchers sampled youth attending High School, in college, others that had previously attended college and postgraduate.

Mexican youth supported more of the dimensions of emerging adulthood. Mexicans scored higher in support of emerging adulthood features explained by their non-working status and still living at home, according to Arias and Hernandez (2007). For Spanish youth, Arias and Hernandez (2007) found more instability and a moratorium situation that delayed the transition to adulthood. Still, their scores reflected Spaniards feeling more autonomous when compared to Mexicans (Arias & Hernandez, 2007). Spaniards reflected cultural expectations of living at home longer because of not finding long-term employment (Arias & Hernandez, 2007).

Generally, results for this study found that samples reported this “period of their life as one of freedom, independence, and possibilities” (Arias & Hernandez, 2007, p.499). The outcomes reported by both groups, Mexicans, and Spaniards, confirmed the variability and uncertainty of when individuals do experience the end of adolescence and when they think adulthood has begun for them. Authors referenced Arnett’s (2004) caution of youth’s views being influenced by circumstances and culture (Arias & Hernandez, 2007). Arias and Hernandez (2007) promoted studies that relied less on college students and warned that “urban samples of Western Hispanics, highly educated and exposed to globalization and new technologies, might accord with the characteristics of emerging adulthood to a considerable extent” (p.501).

In response to Arias and Hernandez’s (2007) suggestion to carry out studies with urban samples, this study pursued to test this theory in an urban 2-year community college, located in the South Bronx in New York City. In addition to looking deeper into an ethnic group to test out “cross-cultural” (Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018) strength in the emerging adulthood concept and the IDEA instrument, the researcher hypothesized that 18 to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college would also report experiencing a period of time when individuals are trying to figure out their role in society, place in life, school

and work. However, for this group, the reasons will likely vary. There will not be significant differences in the overall scores of Arnett's proposed factors and likely small variances within the IDEA subscales; except in *Other-Focused* category (Dutra-Thomé & Koller; 2017; Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018). Like Erikson, Arnett and other current scholars suggested the psychosocial moratorium to be a period only experienced by individuals from high socioeconomic backgrounds and industrialized societies. However, all scholars concur that we require additional context for greater understanding: the goal of the current study.

To empirically test the validity and extent to which the IDEA instrument measured Arnett's conceptions of emerging adulthood in a Chilean population, Perez, Cumsille and Martinez (2008) replicated the IDEA instrument. One hundred and sixty-two (162) Chilean youth, 18-26-year-olds (64% women; 91% college students; 74% living with parents), completed the IDEA questionnaire in Spanish. Validity was found in Chilean youth, but a four-factor analysis was deemed most appropriate. In the Chilean study, the fourth factor was configured so that questions in the survey were related to *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused* which was not found in the original configuration of the administration of the instrument by Arnett. Results in this configuration confirmed conclusions from other studies of emerging adults of Latin-American or Spanish origin that "focus on the self is not necessarily contradictory with interpersonal connection to others" (Perez, Cumsille & Martinez, 2008, p.1). Scholars in this study cite Galambos and Martinez (2007) who highlighted the cultural difference in studies with emerging adults of diverse groups such as Chilean youth. The authors mentioned globalization's effect on the emerging adulthood experience on individualistic values, but resolved that emerging adults remain committed to their families and cultural values (Arnett, 2004; Arias & Hernandez, 2007).

Although not a Spanish speaking population or one of Spanish origin, important to this study are findings from the Portuguese version of the IDEA instrument in a Brazilian sample of 547, 18- to 29-year-olds from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds (Dutra-Thomé & Koller, 2014). Researchers conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to examine the original structure of the IDEA instrument and its transferability to the Brazilian perspective. A major difference found from the original method in which the IDEA instrument was evaluated was item number 23 in the survey “separating from parents” which loaded on to the *Self-Focused* and not among the *Identity Exploration* subscale factor. Scholars for this study concluded that the *Identity Exploration* items are strictly focused on the individuals psychologically figuring things out for themselves and that it has nothing to do with the individual’s self-exploration (Dutra-Thomé & Koller, 2014).

Dutra-Thomé & Koller (2014) also emphasized culture and cited Turkish scholars Atak and Cok, (2008) who reported similar findings, resulting in a collapse of two subscales named “*Self-focused/Experimentation*.” For the Turkish group, this finding was reinforced by societal expectations of parents having to still support this age group. Even though the Brazilian and Turkish samples are not of Spanish speaking or origin, these findings are in accord to the populations from other Latin and Asian countries where family values are held high. Equally important related to this study, Dutra-Thomé & Koller (2014) refer to Facio & Micocci, 2003; Facio et al., 2007; Fuligni, 2007 who highlighted the influence that the Catholic religion had in these groups and the expectation to stay at home and not go away to college. Even So, Dutra-Thomé & Koller (2014) recommended using Brazilian results to improve assessment of the instrument and advocated for maintaining the original items for future studies.

Conclusion and implications for future studies

The main function of appraising a body of knowledge is to arrive at studies that provide the best evidence possible for scholars to demonstrate empirical evidence and the most effective treatment/interventions and/or programs to effectively inform policies based on current empirical research. The IDEA instrument is helping scholars interested in the topic of emerging adulthood further test Arnett's (1994, 2000) suggested stage of life and the factors associated with evidence of the 18 to 29-year-old feeling or thinking like an adult or not.

Studies continually presented differences regarding the age span of when emerging adulthood begins and ends. Research studies, including Arnett's (1994, 1997) reflected changeability in their sample age groups, such as focusing on cohorts between 18 to 21, 18 to 24, 18 to 25, 18 to 26 and 18- to 29-year-olds at different times. Prior to 2007 and the development of the IDEA instrument, Arnett's studies revealed his conceptualization of the emerging adulthood concept over the course of his research. Through time, Arnett's positions shifted from proposing emerging adulthood as a distinct stage of life to perhaps a transitional stage influenced by time, culture, and events.

Since Arnett's (1994, 1997) initial exploration, there have been world-wide studies carried out testing the applicability and validity of emerging adulthood as a life stage experienced by 18- to 29-year-olds (at times including younger age groups and up to 30-year-olds) outside of the traditional college setting, among different racial groups and individuals from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Still, no studies were found related specifically to 18- to 29-year-olds in urban 2-year college settings in the United States.

To test Arnett's (1994, 2000) proposed factors associated with experiencing an emerging adulthood stage of life between two groups using Reifman et al.'s (2007) IDEA instrument,

previous research suggested an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Acock (2016) explains factor analysis to be “a collection of techniques that does an exploratory analysis to see if there are clusters of items that go together” (p.387). In their validation of the Spanish version of the IDEA-S administered to Spanish undergraduate students, Sanchez-Queija et al. (2018) maintained Reifman et al.’s primary study and sought to establish measures for future “cross-cultural studies” (p.2). Results from Reifman et al.’s extended analyses (2007) and Sanchez-Queija et al. (2018) will be used as measures in this study to compare the 18 to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college setting.

Although age is a great indicator aligned to the achievement of expected milestones such as completing secondary school, starting a job/career, or getting married, transitions after the age of 18 vary. For example, not all emerging adults enter college immediately after completing high school, others may begin a family by age 25 but others may not. Others may start a family while in school and not leave their parents’ home. Initially, Arnett (1994, 2000) distinguished emerging adults to be individuals between the ages of 18 to 25 and later expanded to 29. Given the demographic shifts and emerging adults delay in achieving traditional milestones, such as leaving home and starting a family, it is important to further explore 18 to 29-year-old nontraditional students that commute to their community college and are typically balancing school, work and life.

The next chapter discusses reviewed theories conceptually and as applied to emerging adulthood. The theoretical framework, encompassing several theories to match the variability of the sample for this study, is included.

Chapter IV: Theoretical Framework

This section opens with establishing the meaning of a theory in practice for social work followed by background information on theoretical developments in psychology as it relates to emerging adults. Erikson's (1959, 1968) psychosocial moratorium is introduced as it is applied to 18- to 24-year-olds which Arnett (1994, 2000) referred to as emerging adults and extended the age group to 29 years of age. The introduction of psychosocial theory weaves throughout the overall theoretical framework for this study which includes a brief examination of emerging adulthood from the lens of developmental psychology, the life course model and systems theory. A multiple context view (Fuller and Garcia Coll, 2010) and a primer of the integrative model (Coll, Lamberty, Jenkins, McAdoo, Crnie, Wasik and Garcia (1996)) is offered to better understand the development of children of color. The integrative model considers race, ethnicity and culture and reinforces the approach in social stratification theory. This section concludes with a discussion surrounding the question of whether emerging adulthood is a theory or not.

Theory in social work

In his book dedicated to the development of theory in social work, Turner (2011) described theories as evolving over time and explained that social workers find true value and meaning in the practice or application of the theories. Turner (2011) stated "theory is a complex one, dynamic and changing in nature, that not only gives us a basis for ethical and evidence-based practice but also plays a spectrum of roles in the politics and sociology of all professions" (p. 12). Also noting the established position in social work "that our profession has no unitary theory but a plurality of theories" (p.12). According to Turner (2011), it is more important to understand the "interlocking" role that the various theories play in influencing each other. It is in the spirit of that plurality that this study will be explored.

Theoretical background developments in psychology related to the 18 to 29-year-old

Arnett (1994, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2011, 2015) introduced and expanded the emerging adulthood theory over time. In the beginning, Arnett (1994, 2000) proposed 18 to 25 years of age as a distinct life stage. By 2015 Arnett had established emerging adulthood as a distinct life stage covering the ages between 18 to 29 years old. Emerging adulthood as a theory is concentrated on the psychological and self-perceptions of the 18 to 29-year-old about arriving at adulthood or not.

In the study of psychology, Arnett (1994, 2000) asserted that scholarly work on adolescence began with T. Stanley Hall's (1904) two-volume publication postulating adolescent years spanning from 14- to 24-years of age. Present-day scholars and those that followed Hall, identified adolescent years as starting between 10 or 11 and ending by 18 or 19 years old (Arnett, 1994, 2000). Arnett (1994, 2000) concluded that over time, determining factors of when adolescence begins, and ends has shifted from biological reasons to societal changes. In his examinations on studies published in the *Journal of Research on Adolescence* and the *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, Arnett (1994, 2000) found that 90% of the studies published rarely included samples that go beyond 18 years of age. Although the proposed study is not a study in the field of psychology, it is important to note the history of the social work profession rooted in psychology and its guiding principles.

Nevertheless, Arnett (1994, 2000) distinguished contributors whose human developmental theory at least mentioned some sort of extension during the adolescence phase. Beginning with Erik Erikson's (1959, 1968) psychosocial theory and his concept of "psychosocial moratorium," Arnett (1994, 2000) proposed the emerging adulthood stage applied to the 18- to 25-year-old population and later extended it to 29-years of age. Arnett (1994, 2000)

concluded that emerging adults are not adolescent and not yet adults and suggested “a new theory of development from the late teens through the twenties, with a focus on ages 18-25” (p.469). He maintained that “‘*emerging adulthood*,’ is neither adolescence nor adulthood but is theoretically and empirically distinct from them both” (p. 469). Arnett (1994, 2000) described emerging adulthood as an unpredictable and unstable period that cannot be determined by age factor alone. Arnett (1994, 2000) determined emerging adults’ living arrangements and work situations fluctuated. In addition, he concluded that educational achievements, traditionally known to be a step-in to achieving adulthood, were no longer as predictable or linear for most emerging adults but rather were transitional.

Psychosocial Theory

Erik Erikson (1959, 1968), a pioneer in developmental psychology, perceived life stages as an on-going process not defined by age. Erikson’s (1959, 1968) premise centered around eight psychosocial stages that prepare all individuals for the transitions in a person’s life span starting with the following stages (I-VIII) basic trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, identity versus role confusion, intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation and lastly ego integrity versus despair (Bonior, 2016).

For the purposes of this research the researcher focused on Erikson’s stages V and VI – Identity vs. Inferiority and Intimacy vs. Isolation respectively. As previously noted in chapter II of this paper there is variability in the ages that capture adolescence and the young adulthood period. Cowley and Derezotes in Turner (2011) explained that when practicing transpersonal social work (introduced by Cowley in 1996 cited in Turner 2011) in the integrative model of theories, there is a need for a multidimensional assessment to help social workers evaluate more effectively. Cowley & Derezotes (2011) offered an inclusive approach to look at developmental

approaches, displayed in a Multi-dimensional Development (see Table 37-4 in Turner, 2011, p.559). Cowley & Derezotes' (2011) table displays developmental theorists and elements of their theory, for example: physical development (Kruger, 1989), affective development (Basch, 1988), cognitive development (Ivey, 1986), psychosocial development (Erikson, 1950), moral development (Kohlber/Woolf, 1984), and spiritual development (Wilber, 1986) (Turner, 2011). When considering Erikson's psychosocial dimension, authors encouraged the need for practitioners to evaluate how individuals resolve each stage in order to better determine the individual's ability to transition, moving forward onto the next stage of the developmental process (Erikson (1959); Cowley & Derezotes (2011). In their table, Cowley & Derezotes (2011) display Erikson's stage V inclusive of 12 to 22 yrs. old and 22 to 34 yrs. old in stage VI. The authors suggested that in stage V individuals need to "accrue ego strength" which is equal to mastering "fidelity" and for stage VI equal to mastering "love" (p.559). Erikson (1959, 1968) postulated that individuals reaching these stages depended on maturity and societal pressures.

"Psychosocial moratorium," first coined by Erikson (1950, 1968) is described as a time when emerging adults are attempting to figure out who they are and what their role is in society. Psychosocial moratorium (Erikson, 1950, 1968) appears to be a notion that is cyclical historically due to societal economic changes. Regardless of class, in the 21st century, it is important to explore the 18 to 29-year-old period of life for those that are in transition, representative of a diverse group and that commute to college. Sharon (2016) reports that "many researchers have argued that as societies become more complex, the pathways to adulthood are becoming less clear, creating a more challenging developmental task for young people" (Arnett, 2007a; Kloep, Hendry, Gardner, & Seage, 2010 as cited in Sharon, 2016; Co'te', 2014; Vespa, 2017).

While previous and current scholars contend that Arnett's (1994, 2000) extension of age mainly applied to individuals in developed societies (Erikson, 1950, 1968; Arnett 2000; Sharon 2016), Arnett (1994, 2000) highlighted scholars who also defined this period of time for the purposes of the individuals finding themselves (Erikson, 1950, 1968) and exploring their role in life, work, and institutional structures (Keniston, 1971; Levinson, 1978; Sharon, 2016). This research explored emerging adulthood as a process among the 18 to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans enrolled in a 2-year community college in the South Bronx in New York City.

Psychosocial theory in social work

The psychosocial method "is solidly grounded in the idea that people's behaviors develop within the context of many open systems interacting in mutually causative ways" (Robinson and Kaplan in Turner, 2011, p. 389). Psychosocial treatment, birthed by our very own Mary Richmond, gives social workers a comprehensive approach to help clients deal with multiple systems and the varied issues they may be dealing with. Psychosocial treatment in social work, rooted in ecosystems thinking, considers the person-in-environment and its interaction. The psychosocial approach can be of benefit to the emerging adult population during the 18 to 29 period, requiring a comprehensive needs assessment yet encouraging multiple modalities to maximize success and increase wellbeing.

Ecological and systems theory

Germain and Gitterman (1996) emphasized ecological attention on the interchange that takes place between person and the environment and the influence on each other. Ecological systems base acknowledges and offers solutions to life's difficult situations, stress and/or developmental transitions often experienced by people of color and/or marginalized groups. Lum

(2004) proposed “that social work should focus on helping people of color attain a sense of empowerment, resilience, and cultural strengths and competence” (p.91).

Ecological systems model also supports a multicultural awareness to get at the overall functioning and wellness of the emerging adults that are from diverse backgrounds whose character development is affected by “cultural duality” (Lum, 2004). Lum expanded on Chestang’s (1976) explanation of cultural duality as the response and/or how individuals must switch when stepping out to the world from their cultural settings. It is essential for contemporary social workers to understand “cultural pluralism” posed and explained by Pantoja and Perry (1976) as:

“a societal value and a societal goal [that] requires that the society permit the existence of multicultural communities that can live according to their own styles, customs, languages, and values without penalty to their members and without inflicting harm upon or competing for resources among themselves” (as cited in Lum, 2014, p.98).

Systems theory originated by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy (as cited in Turner, 2011), a biologist who proposed the idea of living organisms as organized systems with parts that interact with each other. Bertalanffy’s premise centered on practitioners concentrating on the interaction and exchange that takes place between the systems in the environment (Turner, 2011). Turner (2011) suggested that “GST [General Systems Theory] has provided social work theorists and practitioners with a unique and profound perspective on the complex functioning of individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities in the contemporary 21st century” (p. 253). GST’s focus on context is an important element to the application of a conceptual framework for growing attention on emerging adults that are in transition. The emphasis on process and content are essential components to the success of social work practice when working with the emerging adult population of diverse backgrounds.

The systems concept carried out as an added modality can be suitable for the emerging adult who requires more than one view and warrants additional attention. Turner (2011) elucidated that General Systems Theory “is interdisciplinary, that is, it can be employed for phenomena investigated in different traditional branches of scientific research” (p. 243). Furthermore, Lum (2004) expanded on systems theory endorsing “equifinality,” a term applied to individual systems dealing with “emergence, purpose, goal seeking, and self-regulation” (p.88). Emerging adults are less in transition biologically but in development economically and socially. Lum (2004) explained that in equifinality individuals achieve the same results but in different ways. Psychosocial theory joined with systems and ecological framework support each other and provide an understanding “on the role [that] the social environment” (Lum, 2004, p.90) can play in communities. An increased understanding of the interactions between the emerging adults and the systems they are likely to interrelate with is important to their identity development and the strengthening of their preparation for stepping out of their own neighborhoods and the rest of society.

Ecological systems framework, further developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), aids social work practice solidifying psychosocial theory which is focused on the person and environment interaction. For practitioners that focus their work on the person in the environment, it is vital to concentrate on the exchanges that take place in the four key areas of the environment: “the situation, micro, meso and macro levels” (Turner, 2011, p. 248). Ecological concepts can be instituted in a non-clinical setting. Turner (2011) described ecological systems ideas as “bridg [ing] the gap between micro and macro practice by providing an array of applied and practical treatment strategies and techniques” (p. 253). Contemporary social work practitioners involved in serving the emerging adult population in urban communities and in the

community college settings, must learn to recognize the effects that various systems impose on the emerging adult population.

Although the ecological model does not offer predictions to test, it is a framework central to social work practice that facilitates the process for organizing and lodging concepts (Syed, 2011, 2015). Syed (2015) aligned emerging adulthood to the humanistic theories “meant to develop understandings” (p.18) and not concerned with predictions. Lum (2004) suggested that “ecological theory offers an integrative theory that supports psychosocial and systems theory in a combined manner” (p.90). Germain and Gitterman (1980, 1995, 1996) applied ecological theory to social work practice in their life model. The life model is a strength-based model and positive view that encourages increasing individuals, families, groups, and the community’s ability to function better in their environment.

Multiple context

Fuller and Garcia Coll (2010) presented multiple context views to better understand the development of Latino children and adolescents. Empirically tested theoretical developments demonstrated the importance for researchers to concentrate on deepening the understanding of Latino subgroups and move away from focusing on Latino-White comparisons. The authors referred to the “*immigrant paradox*” (Fuller & Garcia Coll, 2010) as a dynamic found to have meaningful distinctions among the Latino subgroups influenced by “sociocultural histories and local contexts” (Fuller & Garcia Coll, 2010, p.561).

Cultural theories

Coll and colleagues (1996) contend that developmental theories in psychology and in the United States require a different optic to analyze the development process of children of color. Their suggested integrative model, rooted in social stratification theory, highlights the

interchange between race, culture and ethnicity and the impact racism, prejudice, discrimination, oppression, and segregation have on children of color (Coll et al., 1996). Coll et al. (1996) concluded that while conventional theories provide a structure to begin to identify theories that are best suited to better understand the growth of children of color, that “global developmental theories can provide a general framework for the development of more specific predictive models” (p.1893). Such models offered included “organizational” (Cicchetti & Schneider-Rosen, 1986; Sroufe, 1979; Werner, 1948, as cited in Coll et al., 1996), “transactional” (Sameroff & Chandler, 1975; Sameroff & Fiese, 1990, as cited in Coll et al., 1996), and “ecological theories” that consider the persons in their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1983, as cited in Coll et al., 1996). In differentiating how children of color arrive at maturing, Coll et al. (1996) highlighted the influence ecological processes continually have on children of color through time and in particular “on the child’s psychological and social segregation, promoting/inhibiting environments, and family processes” (p.1908).

An integrative model: Theoretical integration for urban emerging adults

The life course model supports a novel approach that blends up-to-date thinking and increased understanding to improve treatment models and address structural concerns. Psychosocial theory anchored in ecological and systems concepts, also embedded in cultural and multiple context views, can make for the critical ingredients needed for an integrative model beneficial to urban emerging adults that are in transition in an urban 2-year community college setting. Ecological, systems and multicultural perspectives provide guiding principles that help support the balance needed in psychosocial developmental stages. The interaction between the environment, the systems and the emerging adults can be analyzed by mapping and identifying where intervention is needed. The process of figuring out in which of the systems there is

disequilibrium allows for focus on pressing issues that may be getting in the way of emerging adults functioning and balancing the various demands from school, work, and life.

Life Course

The life model is the backdrop to this study. The life course model offers an up-to-date view from which to analyze studies dealing with age and the maturation process of individuals within the context of changes happening in societies. In Giele and Elder (1998), Giele's chapter dedicated to a new way of studying the life course, explained "the importance of life course innovation is that it creates uncertainty and establishes new milestones for individuals living in changing times" (p.261). Life course innovation, according to Giele (1998), simultaneously challenges norms and calls for amendments or the development of new policies that adapt to advancements such as the ones being experienced by emerging adults: postponement of marriage and children; higher degree attainment; balancing life, work and school.

Giele (1998) elucidated that typical life course changes become institutionalized and mimicked "through the socialization process and cultural expectations" (p.232). Giele (1998) suggested that men's retirement age and women's changing role in our society are clear examples of the direct connection between institutional and life course changes. She proposed that it is the ability of researchers to identify and seek understanding of the transformation that is taking place in a group, that researchers may be able to confirm that a change is happening for a group.

As part of the research design and analysis for cohorts, Giele (1998) refers to *Intracohort* comparisons to begin to find out why some individuals may experience change and others do not. For this study, in the same manner, emerging adults in the 21st century appear to be experiencing shifts that have yet to be empirically explained. Increasingly, we continue to witness the 18- to 29-year-olds move away from achieving traditional markers experienced by

previous age groups at designated times, such as: leaving parents' home, marrying, and having children at a later age. By comparing immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college, this research considers theoretical perspectives to gain understanding from the standpoint of the 18- to 29-year-olds about what are the factors they report that make them feel as if they are moving toward or have arrived at adulthood.

Is emerging adulthood a theory?

Syed (2015) tackles scholars questioning emerging adulthood being a theory and not a new concept. He addressed criticisms that expressed emerging adulthood being trendy, not applicable to everyone in the age group and not conforming to the universal stages in psychology's lead developmental theories. Furthermore, emerging adulthood is presented by Arnett as a stage full of possibilities when, in fact, some may argue it is a stage driven by social and economic factors (Co'te', 2000, 2006; Co'te' & Byneer, 2008 as cited in Syed, 2015).

In his analysis of "development" as a stage (Flavell, 1963, 1971 as cited in Syed, 2015) or a process (Erikson, 1950, 1968 as cited in Syed, 2015), Syed (2015) compared emerging adulthood to the elder age stage and suggested further studying the heterogeneity of the phase. Syed (2015) aligns emerging adulthood with humanistic theories that seek to increase understanding. According to Syed (2015), emerging adulthood has "inspired, new knowledge and research" (p.21), satisfying a main criterion for being a theory. Syed (2015) also concluded that emerging adulthood is "a theory in development" (p.22), still needing further investigation, a thinking that is rattling Erikson's widely accepted developed life stage theory.

Syed (2015) examined the emerging adulthood theory by addressing it through six main criticisms: (1) disputes that a developmental theory should not be based on historical trends (Hendry & Kloep, 2007a as cited in Syed, 2015); (2) suggestions that emerging adulthood is not

a new theory (Co`te', 2000; Hartmann & Swartz, 2006; Waters et al., 2011 as cited in Syed, 2015) (3) questions whether social and economic factors force individuals to experience an emerging adulthood stage contrary to Arnett's (2004) view of it being the "age possibilities" (Co`te', 2000, 2006; Co`te' & Bynner, 2008, as cited in Syed, 2015); (4) queries whether emerging adulthood has generalizability as a stage of life (Bynner, 2005; Hendry & Kloep, 2007a, 2007b, 2011; Kloep & Hendry, 2011 as cited in Syed, 2015) (5) examines whether emerging adulthood is at the crossroads of an enduring deliberation of development happening in stages (Flavell, 1963, 1971 as cited in Syed, 2015) or as a nonstop process (Erikson, 1950 as cited in Syed, 2015) and lastly (6) questions emerging adulthood being a theory at all (Hendry, 2011; Hendry & Kloep, 2007a, 2007b, 2011; Kloep & Hendry, 2011 as cited in Syed, 2015).

Syed (2015) ignites the debate surrounding emerging adulthood as a theory to encourage additional research in the field. Syed (2015) defended and challenged Arnett's position of emerging adulthood as a new phase in the life span and a theory. Syed (2015) reinforced Arnett's (2000, 2011) position indicating that emerging adulthood is "not considered a universal life stage but instead one that has emerged in certain industrialized societies due to social and economic changes that have led to delays in marriage, parenthood, and the assumption of other adult roles" (p.11). Syed (2015) defined "emerging adulthood, as a sociological phenomenon, as a social and cultural *context* that must be navigated by young people who pass through it" (p.17) and concluded that emerging adulthood is a "theory in development" (p.22) still requiring further investigation. Although not explained by Arnett in the literature, Syed (2015) suggested that Arnett positioned emerging adulthood as a cultural theory.

Theory or not, the emerging adulthood idea offers a focus on the 18 to 29-year-olds. Perez and Landreman (in Murray & Arnett, 2019) encouraged the application of the emerging

adulthood concept as a foundation for working with college students and not a theory per se to prevent misuse of its applicability on “minoritized individuals” (p.54). Therefore, the goal for urban community colleges that work with diverse students can be to embed integrative processes with clinical foundations, and a toolbox for the social work practitioners, educators and others that work in the higher education setting. Furthermore, authors suggested that the evolution of the emerging adulthood concept is set to confront social disparities head on. Perez & Landreman (in Murry & Arnett, 2019) concluded “research that examines the pathways to and through adulthood must shift to reflect the changes in our social and historical context” (p.55).

The next chapter lays out the research questions and related hypotheses based on findings from the literature review. Grounded on the examination of empirical studies found in the literature review, Reifman et al.’s (2007) IDEA scale was used to explore the transition to adulthood with an ethnic sample outside of a traditional four-year college with 18- to 29-year-olds in an urban 2-year community college to which they commute.

Chapter V: The Research Question (and related Hypotheses)

This section presents the questions supported by the literature review and theories discussed for this research. This study sought to examine the extent to which the Reifman et al.'s (2007) Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (IDEA) scale predicted whether 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year college support the five subfactors identified by Arnett (1994, 2000) as markers of emerging adulthood: *Identity Exploration, Instability/Negativity, Experimentation/Possibilities, Self-Focused*; and *Feeling "In Between."* This research also explored a sixth factor, *Other Focused*, not included in Arnett's principal studies but incorporated and considered a supplemental factor by Reifman et al. (2007). Scholars that integrated the *Other-Focused* factor in samples of Spanish speaking and/or individuals of Latin origins found there were significant differences in their findings when compared to the Reifman et al.'s general population.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In their study, Sánchez-Queija, Parra, Camacho, & Arnett (2018), suggested results against Reifman et al.'s original scores in Study 3 be examined. Reifman et al.'s (2007) IDEA instrument provided a chart with scoring instructions for each item number associated with questions related to each subscale factor. For all research questions, it was anticipated that the higher the scores in each item and the overall totals for all subscales, the more likely it is that individuals are experiencing the emerging adulthood phase according to Arnett's factors (Reifman et al., 2007).

RQ1: To what extent do 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans enrolled in an urban 2- year community college mimic Arnett's emerging adulthood concept found in the 18 to 29-year-old general population?

H1: 18 to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college will mimic Arnett’s markers of emerging adulthood concept found in the 18 to 29-year-old general population. Overall total IDEA subscale scores will not be significantly different from Reifman et al.’s original scores from a general population.

H1a. Both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in a 2-year community college will report support for *Other-Focused* subscale during the 18 to 29-year-old period of their lives.

H1b. The results for *Other-Focused* and *Self-Focused* factors will show a positive relationship for immigrant and second-generation Dominicans 18- to 29-year-old in an urban 2-year community college.

RQ2: To what extent will immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college 18 to 23 years of age be closer to transitioning from adolescence reflecting higher mean subscale scores when compared to the 24 to 29-year-old age group that are closer to adulthood?

H2: Immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college who are 18 to 23-years old will score higher on the IDEA subscale scores suggesting them being in the emerging adulthood phase when compared to 24- to 29-year-olds that are moving away from emerging adulthood and nearing adulthood.

RQ3-6: To what extent is there an influence between each dependent variable: *Identity Exploration, Instability/Negativity, Experimentation/Possibilities, Self-Focused; Feeling “In Between,” Other-Focused* and the following independent variables: living with parent, gender, age, identity, employment, relationship status, college credits, and decided on a college major?

H3a. Second-generation Dominicans that live at home and do not work will likely report higher *Instability/Negativity* when compared to immigrant Dominicans.

H3b. Both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans 18 to 29-year-old that have not yet decided on a college major in an urban 2-year community college are more likely to report “*Feeling “In-Between”* and *Instability/Negativity* subscales suggesting experiencing an emerging adulthood stage, not yet sure about their role in their career development process.

H3c. Both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans 18 to 29-years old that have up to 30 college credits are less likely to report *Identity Exploration*, *Experimentation/Possibilities*, and *Self-Focused* factors indicating moving away from emerging adulthood and closer to adulthood and clarifying their role in society as they get closer to solidifying their career choice.

Hypothesis Overview

Below is Table 5.1: Overview of Hypothesis, illustrating a summary of each question and method of analysis.

Table 5.1: Overview of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Variables	Method of Analysis
<p>H1: 18 to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college will mimic Arnett’s markers of emerging adulthood concept found in the 18 to 29-year-old general population. Overall total IDEA subscale scores will not be significantly different from Reifman et al.’s original scores from a general population.</p> <p>H1a. Both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in a 2-year community college will report support for <i>Other-Focused</i> subscale during the 18 to 29-year-old period of their lives.</p> <p>H1b. The results for <i>Other-Focused</i></p>	<p>Frequencies of Emerging Adulthood factors <i>Identity Exploration</i>, <i>Instability/Negativity</i>, <i>Experimentation/Possibilities</i>, <i>Self-Focused</i>; and <i>Feeling “In-Between;”</i> the sixth factor, <i>Other Focused</i> (DV)</p>	<p>Coded and grouped responses</p> <p>Descriptive statistics using percentages and frequencies</p> <p>One sample t-test</p> <p>Mann-Whitney tests</p> <p>Shapiro-Wilk tests for p value</p> <p>Levene’s test for variances</p> <p>Pearson correlation</p>

<p>and <i>Self-Focused</i> factors will show a positive relationship for immigrant and second-generation Dominicans 18- to 29-year-old in an urban 2-year community college.</p>		
<p>H2: Immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college who are <u>18-to 23-years old</u> will score higher on the IDEA subscale scores suggesting them being on the emerging adulthood phase when compared to <u>24- to 29-year-olds</u> that are moving away from emerging adulthood and nearing adulthood.</p>	<p>Frequencies of Emerging Adulthood factors <i>Identity Exploration, Instability/Negativity, Experimentation/Possibilities, Self-Focused; Feeling “In-Between;” Other Focused</i> (DV)</p> <p>18 to 23-years old (IV) 24-to 29-years old (IV)</p>	<p>Independent sample t-test</p> <p>Shapiro-Wilk tests for p value</p> <p>Levene’s test for variances</p>
<p>H3. Relationship between DV and IV:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Second-generation Dominicans that <u>live at home</u> and <u>do not work</u> will likely report higher <i>Instability/Negativity</i> when compared to immigrant Dominicans. Both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans 18 to 29-year-old that have <u>not yet decided on a major</u> in an urban 2-year community college are more likely to report “<i>Feeling “In-Between”</i>” and <i>Instability/Negativity</i> subscales suggesting experiencing an emerging adulthood stage; not yet sure about their role in their career development process. Both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans 18 to 29-years old that have <u>up to 30 college credits</u> are less likely to be in <i>Identity Exploration, Experimentation/Possibilities,</i> and <i>Self-Focused</i> factors indicating moving away from emerging adulthood and closer to adulthood and clarifying their role in society as they get closer to solidifying their career choice. 	<p><i>Identity Exploration, Instability/Negativity, Experimentation/Possibilities, Self-Focused; Feeling “In-Between;” Other Focused</i> (DV)</p> <p>relationship, identity, housing, age, college credits, decided on a college a major and employment (IV)</p>	<p>Multiple Regression</p>

Exploratory Questions (EQ): Related to the global pandemic-COVID-19

EQ1: In a few words, what does ‘adulging’ mean to you?

EQ2: What is your major?

EQ3: What is your outlook in life during this time a global pandemic COVID-19?

EQ4: Additional thoughts you have about this period of your life.

The next Table 5.2: Exploratory Questions/Open-Ended display the open-ended questions included in the survey.

Table 5.2: Exploratory Questions/Open-Ended

In a few words, what does ‘adulging’ mean to you?	Open-ended	Coded and grouped responses Descriptive statistics using percentages and frequencies
What is your major?	Open-ended	Coded and grouped responses Descriptive statistics using percentages and frequencies
What is your outlook in life during this time a global pandemic COVID-19?	Open-ended	Coded and grouped responses Descriptive statistics using percentages and frequencies
Additional thoughts you have about this period of your life.	Open-ended	Coded and grouped responses Descriptive statistics using percentages and frequencies

The next chapter delineates the research methodology and design, sample population, recruitment for the study, variables, and results.

Chapter VI: Research Methodology

This chapter lays out the method employed in this research. Approval for this study was obtained from Yeshiva University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (APPENDIX D- IRB Approval Letter). The survey was administered online via SurveyMonkey. Student participation was voluntary, and information gathered was de-identified. Students had the option to discontinue participating in the study at any time, without any penalty. This study posed no risk to students. The research design, survey research, sample population, procedures, instrument utilized and data analyses, are included in this chapter. Operational definitions of the dependent and independent variables conclude this section.

Research Design

This exploratory quantitative comparative study collected the results from a survey administered to two groups of 18 to 29-year-olds enrolled at Hostos Community College: immigrant and second-generation Dominicans. This study explored the degree to which Arnett's (1994, 2000) emerging adulthood concept can be considered a distinct stage of life and the extent to which his proposed factors associated with experiencing a stage or a process applied to a specific ethnic group. By administering the IDEA instrument to an ethnic group and comparing results to Reifman et al.'s original research and previous studies with similar populations, a quantitative methodology was employed to get at the "generalizable statistical findings" (Rubin and Babbie, 2014, p.67).

Exploratory/open-ended questions were added to the IDEA survey to seek additional understanding for this sample. This research was not a mixed-method study. In their definition Creswell and Clark (2011) explained, mixed methods combine "methods, philosophy and research design orientation" (p.4) to arrive at the main aspects needed to carry out a mixed

methods study. Creswell & Clark (2011) clarified that a main characteristic of mixed methods is that it “combines the procedures into specific research designs that direct the plan for conducting the study” (p.5). According to Creswell & Clark (2011), critical decisions must be made at various points of the research process that inform the selection of the mixed methods design. Researcher must consider the interaction between the quantitative and qualitative data, which data to give priority to and sequencing. Lastly and equally important, a mixed methods study requires time, resources and extensive previous experience in carrying out both quantitative and qualitative research separately (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Steps outlined and researcher background needed to carry out a mixed methods study by Creswell and Clark is not supported by the researcher carrying out this study.

In lieu of a mixed methods design, this researcher determined that utilizing open coding, the first stage of coding in a computer assisted qualitative data analysis process would be applied for optimal results for the purposes of this study. In open coding, Friese (2014) explained there are three components to the process: noticing things, collecting things, and thinking about things. In Microsoft Excel, the researcher collected all statements provided by respondents and organized clusters of answers that repeated key words. This process allowed for a categorization of nineteen (19) themes. A code for each theme was created to determine statistical frequencies and arrive at proportions for each theme.

Survey research

The literature review of empirical studies recommended utilizing Reifman et al.’s (2007) IDEA instrument, also known as Views of Life Survey. The Reifman et al.’s original subscale clusters were maintained for this study: *Identity Exploration*, *Instability/Negativity*, *Experimentation/Possibilities*, *Self-Focused*; and *Feeling “In-Between.”* A supplemental sixth

factor - *Other Focused* was included. Via SurveyMonkey, the 31-item questionnaire was emailed to students enrolled at Hostos, an urban 2-year community college setting, during fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters. The survey was offered in English and Spanish. Interviewees from both groups could choose in which language to answer questions. Anonymity details are explained below in the ethics section of this chapter.

Additional questions were added to the survey asking demographics, living arrangements, employment, education, and relationship status. Open-ended questions were also included to provide additional understanding. Open-ended responses were exported to a Microsoft Excel document. Open coding guided the process for analyzing open-ended responses. In Microsoft Excel, the answers were grouped into themes and coded to be able to calculate frequencies and proportions among the themes (see Results chapter). Most respondents provided comments (see APPENDIX G, H, I).

This study examined and compared the results of the self-administered IDEA survey answered in English and Spanish by 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominican students enrolled at Hostos Community College. Rubin and Babbie (2011) explained the advantages of using surveys for social scientific research. In addition to its practicality, combined with a standardized questionnaire, researchers can obtain greater accuracy in results like the ones expected in this study which involves the description of characteristics from a student body. Even though one cannot demonstrate causality, if achieved, results from a large enough sample can confirm generalizability. A survey also permits the examination of several variables at the same time and the relationship with each other, if any (Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

Although the IDEA instrument in English and Spanish has been tested for validity and reliability, a fundamental weakness in survey research is designing questions that apply to *all*

individuals and are deemed fitting to the sample population (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). For this study, while the IDEA survey results revealed the opinions of the 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans at Hostos, an urban 2-year community college setting, findings do not explain what is happening for them at this time in the different areas of their lives. Lastly, even if the results generated from the responses in the survey indicate individuals reporting experiencing an emerging adulthood stage during the 18 to 29 period of their lives, it does not mean they support Arnett's proposed stage of life (Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

Sample Population

In coordination with the Hostos Community College's Office of Institutional Research (OIRA), 18- to 29-year-old students that self-identified Dominican in their CUNY enrollment application were asked to volunteer to participate in the IDEA survey. Previously data showed that from over 7,000 students that enrolled at Hostos from 2014-2017, each year on average close to 1400 students enrolled self-reported the Dominican Republic as their country of origin. See Table 6.1: Sample Selection from Overall Student Population for participant recruitment from sample population. In total, seventy-nine (79) students opened and completed the IDEA 31-questions survey.

Table 6.1: Sample Selection from Overall Student Population

# of Hostos enrolled students Fall 2020 Identified 18- to 29-year-olds immigrant/second-gen Dominicans	Total # of students emailed	# of surveys completed English & Spanish	Total # of respondents
712	483	6 English/ 7 Spanish	13
# of Hostos students in Listserv Spring 2021	Total # of students emailed		
3,536	3,184	57 English/ 9 Spanish	66
Total # of emails:	4,248	Total # surveys completed:	79
			Total # of sample for study analysis
# of respondents did not complete criteria question	3	Total # of valid surveys for analysis	76

Students were able to open a survey via their school email or a personal email if provided from their personal computer, phone or compatible device that allowed them to take the survey on their own. Other than the student's email address, which was used to deliver the survey, the questionnaire did not include any identifiable questions that may result in answers with individual's personal information. In SurveyMonkey's setting possibilities, the anonymous response feature was turned on to omit students' emails and IP addresses in the collect responses' options. Survey respondents were guided to contact the Director of Career Services, a designated staff member of OIRA's office, if they wished to inquire further about the survey and/or research.

Procedure

Students were asked to participate in the survey via email invite through their school and a personal email when provided. Survey was set up so that students could receive the survey in

more than one email account but submit one response with one IP address only. Email (APPENDIX D-Participant Request Letter) blasts were started during the month of January 2021 for fall 2020 enrollees, in between fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters on different days of the week and weekend at various times during the day and afternoon. During the month of January eight (8) email blasts were sent to 489 students that identified as immigrant and/or second-generation Dominicans. For the month of February, six (6) email invites were set up before the start of the spring semester 2021.

Through February 2021, thirteen (13) surveys were completed. To increase responses, Office of Career Services expanded the reach of volunteers for the survey by inviting students through the schools list-serve inclusive of 3,536 emails from the general population. Request to participate letter in the email was updated (APPENDIX E– Updated Participant Request LetterV2) specifying criteria needed to complete survey: 18–29-year-old, immigrant, and second-generation Dominicans. Six (6) batches of 500 emails and one (1) batch of 92 emails were done during the month of March 2021 for a total of 3,184 emails. Survey respondents could choose the language to complete the survey, English or Spanish.

SurveyMonkey’s insight and data trends captured a 90% completion rate for students that completed a survey in English and 81% for those that chose to answer in Spanish. A small number of respondents selected Spanish (13). For both languages, Mondays was the day of the week that most respondents completed surveys throughout. In both languages, the survey took about 7 minutes to complete.

The IDEA instrument – English and Spanish

Instructions for the 31-item questionnaire IDEA-Views of Life Survey asked that participants focus on the present and consider this time in their life, most recent years and how

they thought the coming years were unfolding. Participants were asked to think about a five-year period, with the present time being in the middle (Reifman et al., 2007). For each of the 31 phrases in the IDEA survey, participants were asked to show the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the phrase that expressed their view about this period in their life by selecting if they: (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Somewhat Disagree; (3) Somewhat Agree; or (4) Strongly Agree. Reifman et al. arranged the 31 phrases in IDEA-Views of Life Survey into six subscales with averages for the purposes of analysis: *Identity Exploration*, *Experimentation/Possibilities*, *Negativity/Instability*, *Self-Focused*, and *Feeling "In-Between"* and the supplemental sixth factor - *Other Focused*.

Arnett's (1994, 2000) five subscales plus the supplemental one measured in the IDEA, are not always included in all studies. The supplemental subscale (Reifman et al., 2007) was explored in this study as suggested in findings from previous research related to Latin America samples (Arias and Hernandez, 2007; Facio et al., 2007; Perez, Cumsille & Martinez (2008); Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018). Reifman et al., (2007) suggested that the sixth supplemental subscale *Other-Focused* not be calculated in the total score for the IDEA instrument. In addition to considering it an additional subscale, researchers concluded that the *Other-Focused* subscale is counter to the rest of the subscales, indicating the individual is moving closer to adulthood and not experiencing the emerging adulthood stage. However, this study wanted to test the positive correlation between *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused* found in populations similar to the research sample to be used in this study. Reifman et al. (2007) recommended correlational analysis between subscales, suggesting that high correlations, for example, $r = .6, .7$, justifies the inclusion of all subscales in the analysis.

To further explore Arnett’s proposed factors associated with experiencing an emerging adulthood stage of life in immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college, Reifman et al.’s (2007) IDEA instrument was implemented. To validate the IDEA instrument, Reifman’s original study included data from five studies inclusive of various age groups. For the purposes of this study, measures of mean scores and variances from Study 3, included in Reifman et al.’s (2007) manuscript extensive analyses (Table 5, p.34) were compared to those in this study (See below Table 6.2: Reifman’s et al. (2007) Study 3 Age Means Comparison). The “*Feeling In-Between*” factor was introduced and included for the first time in Study 3 (Reifman, 2007, p.4). A dimension mainly associated with Arnett’s premise of emerging adulthood being the age of identity exploration and a time of possibilities. This explains the exclusion of the mean scores in the split sample by age group for the “*Feeling In-Between*” dimension in table 6.2 below. Reifman’s Study 3 mainly included adolescent respondents (ages 13-17) and researchers for Study 3 were encouraged to also obtain participation from individuals in their 20’s (Reifman et al.’s, 2007, p.9).

Following is Table 6.2: Reifman’s et al. (2007) study 3 Age Means Comparison. This table reflects Reifman’s et al. (2007) results from their original studies.

Table 6.2: Reifman’s et al. (2007) study 3 Age Means Comparison

Factors	31items Subscales Reliability n=243 (18 to 70 years old)	Total Sample M (18-29)	Split Sample by age group M (18-23)	Split Sample by age group M (24-29)
<i>Identity Exploration</i>	12, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28	3.36	3.35	3.00
<i>Experimentation/ Possibilities</i>	1, 2, 4, 16, 21	3.28	3.37	3.22
<i>Negativity /Instability</i>	3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 17, 20	2.90	2.93	2.83
<i>Self-Focused</i>	5, 7, 10, 15, 19, 22	3.32	3.23	3.12
<i>Other-Focused</i>	13, 14, 18	2.54	2.47	2.93

<i>Feeling “In-Between”</i>	29, 30, 31	3.26		-	-
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Source: Reifman et al.’s (2007) manuscript extensive analyses

Measures

Dependent Variables

Reifman et al.’s (2007) original subscale factors are the dependent variables for this study: *Identity Exploration*, *Experimentation/Possibilities*, *Negativity/Instability*, *Self-Focused*, *Feeling “In-Between”* and the supplemental sixth factor, *Other Focused*. The IDEA survey provided the questions that fall under each of the subfactors to arrive at the averages for all six subfactors. The mean scores for each of the subfactors below were used to measure and compare factors.

Identity Exploration subscale contains questions 12, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28.

Experimentation/Possibilities include questions 1, 2, 4, 16 and 21. *Negativity/Instability* encompass questions 3, 6, 8, 9, 11,17 and 20. *Self-Focused* covers questions 5, 7, 10, 15, 19 and 22. *Feeling “In-Between”* inclusive of questions 29, 30 and 31. The supplemental factor, *Other Focused* consist of questions 13, 14, and 18.

Independent Variables

The independent variables for this study were grouped in the following domains: Relationship status, identity, housing, education, age, college credits, decided on a college a major and employment.

As discussed in earlier chapters, previous and current scholars described the emerging adulthood period of time as a time for individuals to find themselves, explore their role in life, work and in society (Erikson, 1950, 1968; Arnett’s 1994, 2000; Keniston,1971; Levinson, 1978; Sharon 2016). Arnett posed emerging adulthood as an unpredictable period that cannot be determined by age factor alone. He explained that living arrangements and work situations

change. Educational achievement was also described as no longer being a step-in to arriving at adulthood.

From his studies, Arnett (1994) concluded that most students reported financial independence and leaving the parent's home as a key marker for transitioning to adulthood. Other scholars, also focused on financial independence, work and love (Mitchell & Syed (2015) referenced Arnett & Schwab's (2012)). Most recent scholar, Vespa (2017), also determined housing and when the individuals move from their parents' home as crucial factors for determining when individuals arrive at adulthood. Vespa (2017) also confirmed the interdependency that financial stability, education and work experiences has on living arrangements and the individuals' ability to move from their parents' home; thus, claiming true independence.

Relationship. This variable was measured by a drop-down menu offering: Single, never married; Married; Divorced; Separated; In a domestic partnership or civil union; single but cohabitating with a significant other. How long individuals were in a relationship was asked. Drop down menu covered and measured the following categories: Less than 6 months; 6 months to 1 year; 1 to 2 years; 2 years plus. Parenthood was operationalized as a yes or no and for participants with children, respondents could select one of the following: 1, 2, 3 or more

Housing. Living arrangements asked if individuals were living alone, with immediate family, extended family, with roommate, or with parents. Individuals were also asked about their contribution to the household, did they: rent; own; pay for a room; or did not contribute to their housing.

Education. Individuals participating in the survey were students enrolled at Hostos Community College during the fall 2020 and spring semester of 2021. In consultation with OIRA staff, based

on credit accumulation at the college, the number of college credits obtained at the time of the survey were operationalized in the following groups: 0-5; 6-10; 11-15; 16-20; 21-25; 26-30. In addition, students were asked whether students had decided on a major: yes or no.

Employment. Students were asked about their current employment. Were they working or not: yes or no and what was the type of employment: full, p/t, or were they self-employed? The length of time working or not working was grouped: less than 6 months; 6 months to 1 year; 1 to 2 years; or 2 years plus.

Descriptive Variables

This study collected demographic information to describe the sample. Demographics included: age (criteria variable), did individual identify immigrant or second-generation Dominican (also a criteria variable), their heritage-asking if one or both parents were Dominicans, gender, race and ethnicity.

Criteria variables included 18- to 29-year-olds and whether participants were immigrant or second-generation Dominican. (APPENDIX F- Complete Survey in English and Spanish).

Summary of Variables and Data Analyses

Survey responses were exported from SurveyMonkey into a Microsoft Excel document. Pre-analysis included cleaning of the data from responses received (see Table 6.2: Summarizes details of the research sample selection). Data from seventy-nine (79) subjects were collected, three (3) respondents did not answer criteria questions and at times questions were skipped resulting in seventy-two (72) observations. Assumption about what caused missing values was tested. Missing value analysis revealed MCAR test $\chi^2 = 19.5607$, $DF = 16$; $p = 0.2407$; meaning missing completely at random (MCAR) (Rubin, 1987 as cited in Acock, 2016).

Results from the survey were uploaded to Statistic Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a statistical analysis software. Missing data were handled using pairwise exclusion. Value labels were assigned to all variables and IDEA questions were grouped, recoded, and renamed in SPSS to conduct comparisons between dependent and independent variables.

Means and standard deviations for age and each subfactor grouped were generated: *Identity Exploration, Instability/Negativity, Experimentation/Possibilities, Self-Focused*; and *Feeling “In-Between”* and the sixth factor, *Other Focused*. Frequencies and percentages for all independent variables were carried out to describe and tabulate data (see Table 7.1- Sample Demographic Characteristics in Chapter VII- Results). A one sample t-test compared the overall sample and age groups statistical *t* and *p* values based on Reifman et al.’s original scores (RQ1). Independent sample t-tests were followed to test and compare means between two age groups: 18-23 vs. 24-29 (RQ2). A Pearson correlation tested the relationship between Self-Focused and Other Focused subfactors. Multiple regression was carried out to test if any associations between dependent and independent variables exist.

Ruben & Babbie (2011) explained that multiple regression analysis shows the correlation between each independent and dependent variable, if any. To determine degree to which there is an association between independent and dependent variables, multiple linear regression tests were applied for each subfactor (DV) and eight (8) independent variables (RQ3-6). Bartlett, Kotrlik and Higgins (2001) (citing Miller and Kuncce (1973) and Halinski and Feldt (1970)), suggested the ten to one ratio of observations to independent variables for a small sample size.

Exploratory/Open-Ended Questions

The survey also included exploratory/open-ended questions. One question asked, “in a few words, what does ‘adulthood’ mean to you?” (APPENDIX G-Meaning of “Adulthood”

Responses). Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines adulting as behaving and doing the things that an adult is expected to do. This study was carried out during a global pandemic-COVID 19, a life event (APPENDIX H- Open-ended Responses–Global Pandemic-COVID-19 –Life Event.

Participants were asked, “what is your outlook in life during this time COVID-19, a global pandemic? Obtaining participants’ opinions might increase understanding regarding any influence a life event might have in their transition to adulthood along with asking for additional thoughts in general. Participants were also asked to provide additional comments: “additional thoughts you have about this period of your life” (APPENDIX I- Open-ended Responses- Additional Thoughts).

The following table, Table 6.3: Variable, Measurement, and Use of Variables, shows names of dependent and independent variables explored, operational definition, level of measurement and variable use for this study.

Table 6.3: Variable, Measurement, and Use of Variables

Variable name	Operational Definition	Level of Measurement	Variable Use
Frequencies	IDEA- 32 items Likert scale Mean scores obtained for subfactors	Interval	Dependent
Age Group	18-29	Ratio	Criteria
Gender	Female; Male; Transgender; Non-binary	Nominal	Descriptive
Heritage	Identity: Immigrant or second-generation Dominican	Nominal (Dichotomous)	Criteria
	Which parent is Dominican: Mother/Father/both parents Dominicans	Nominal	
Relationship	Marital: Single, never married; Married; Divorced; Separated; In a domestic partnership or civil union; single but cohabitating with a significant other	Nominal	Independent
	Relationship – length: Less than 6 months; 6 months to 1 year; 1 to 2 years; 2 years plus	Ratio	Independent
	Parenthood: Yes or No	Nominal	Independent

	Number of children: 1, 2, 3 or more	Ratio	Independent
Housing	Living arrangements: alone, with immediate family, extended family, with roommate, with parents	Nominal	Independent
	Contribution to household: Rent; own; pay for a room; Do not contribute to housing		
Education	College Credits: Number of college credits: 0-5; 6-10; 11-15; 16-20; 21-25; 26- 30	Ratio	Independent
	Major: Decided Major: Yes or No	Nominal	Independent
Employment Status	Currently employed: Yes or No	Nominal	Independent
	Type of employment: Full, P/T, Self-employed	Nominal	Independent
	Length of time working: Less than 6 months; 6 months to 1 year; 1 to 2 years; 2 years plus	Ratio	Independent
	Length of time not working: Less than 6 months; 6 months to 1 year; 1 to 2 years; 2 years or more	Ratio	Independent

Chapter VII: Results

This chapter contains the results of the data analyses conducted to address the research questions and hypotheses. First, a demographic description of the sample is presented, followed by the results of the analyses conducted to answer each research and open-ended questions.

Demographic Description of the Sample

Seventy-nine (79) surveys were collected, three (3) respondents did not answer criteria questions and there were skipped questions resulting in seventy-two (72) participants. Sample size was smaller than anticipated. Assumption about what caused missing values was tested. Missing value analysis revealed MCAR test $\chi^2 = 19.5607$, $DF = 16$; $p = 0.2407$; meaning missing completely at random (MCAR; Rubin, 1987 as cited in Acock, 2016). Table 7.1: Sample Demographic Characteristics displays demographic characteristics of respondents. The average age of the participants was approximately 22 years ($SD = 3.00$). Among the 18- to 29-year-old sample for this study, most respondents were in the 18- to 23-year-old group ($n = 50$, 63.8%) and thirty-three percent in the 24- to 28-year-old grouping ($n = 26$, 32.9%) none were 29 years old.

Similar to the overall student body at Hostos, a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), most respondents identified Hispanic/Latino/Spanish Origin ethnicity and Hispanic race ($n = 74$, 93.7%). Similarly, the majority of respondents were female ($n = 59$, 74.7%), mirroring the college's student body. Most participants identified themselves as immigrants ($n = 44$, 55.7%) and indicated that they had Dominican heritage from both parents ($n = 68$, 86.1%). Majority of participants indicated they were single and had never been married ($n = 58$, 73.4%) and were not a parent ($n = 63$, 79.7%). For those reporting being in a relationship, it was observed that the

majority were in a relationship for 2 years or more ($n = 38, 48.1\%$) and those of single status were single for less than 6 months ($n = 27, 34.2\%$).

The largest proportion of participants indicated that they lived with parents ($n = 28, 35.4\%$) and second largest living with immediate family ($n = 23, 29.1\%$) which makes an overwhelming majority of respondents living with family members. Participants living outside familial domiciles most commonly rented their place of residence ($n = 38, 48.1\%$) and the rest of the majority stated making no contribution to the household ($n = 25, 31.6\%$).

Over half of participants revealed that they were not employed ($n = 42, 53.2\%$) and for those employed ($n = 30, 38.0\%$), they were split in employment type: full-time and part-time. The largest proportion of participants had earned between 26-30 college credits ($n = 31, 39.2\%$), and most respondents had declared a major ($n = 61, 77.2\%$). An open-ended question asked respondents to write in their chosen major. Allied health majors were the most popular and the rest spread across more evenly: accounting, animation/digital design, criminal justice, early childhood, dental hygiene, and game design.

Table 7.1: Sample Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	17	21.5
Female	59	74.7
Age		
18-23	50	63.8
24-29	26	32.9
Identity		
Immigrant	44	55.7
Second-generation	32	40.5
Heritage		
Mother	3	3.8
Father	5	6.3
Both	68	86.1
Ethnicity		

Hispanic Latino or Spanish	74	93.7
Not Hispanic Latino or Spanish	2	2.5
Race		
Hispanic	67	84.8
Black or African American	3	3.8
Multiple or Other	6	7.6
Relationship status		
Married	8	10.1
Domestic partnership	4	5.1
Single cohabitating	6	7.6
Single never married	58	73.4
Relationship length		
Less than 6 months	27	34.2
6 months to 1 year	8	10.1
1 to 2 years	2	2.5
2 years or more	38	48.1
Parent		
No	63	79.7
Yes	11	13.9
Number of children		
1	7	8.9
2	2	2.5
3 or more	2	2.5
Household members		
Lives alone	4	5.1
Lives with immediate family	23	29.1
Lives with extended family	6	7.6
Lives with roommates	4	5.1
Lives with partner	7	8.9
Lives with parents	28	35.4
Housing status/contribution		
Rent	38	48.1
Own	1	1.3
Pay for room	8	10.1
No contribution	25	31.6
College credits		
0-5	14	17.7
6-10	7	8.9
11-15	7	8.9
16-20	7	8.9
21-25	6	7.6
26-30	31	39.2
Declared college major		
No	11	13.9

Yes	61	77.2
Employed		
No	42	53.2
Yes	30	38.0
Employment type		
Full time	15	19.0
Part time	15	19.0
Time employed		
Less than 6 months	11	13.9
6 months to 1 year	5	6.3
1 to 2 years	8	10.1
2 years or more	6	7.6
Time unemployed		
Less than 6 months	22	27.8
6 months to 1 year	11	13.9
1 to 2 years	3	3.8
2 years or more	6	7.6

Hypotheses Testing

One Sample T-tests

RQ1: To what extent do 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans enrolled in an urban 2- year community college mimic Arnett's emerging adulthood concepts found in the 18 to 29-year-old general population?

To address this question and its corresponding hypothesis, composite scores were created by averaging the responses to the questions corresponding to the IDEA subscales (*Identity Exploration, Experimentation/Possibilities, Negativity/Instability, Self-Focused, Other-Focused, and Feeling "In-Between"*), and the sample means of the scores were compared to the means observed by Reifman et al. (2007) using one-sample *t*-tests. One-sample *t*-tests are appropriate to conduct when the aim of the research is to compare values in a sample to pre-determined hypothesized values. The one-sample *t*-test tests the null hypothesis that the sample mean is equal to the hypothesized mean. When comparing total mean scores across the entire sample

population (all ages), there were no significant differences between the observed group and Reifman et al.'s (2007) mean scores in the subscales of *Identity Exploration* ($M= 3.42, p = .286$), *Self-Focused* ($M=3.23, p = .133$), and *Feeling "In-Between"* ($M= 3.30, p = .515$). On the other hand, mean scores for the subfactor *Experimentation/Possibilities* ($M=3.08, p = .009$) was significantly lower than the means observed by Reifman et al. (2007). The means for *Negativity/Instability* ($M= 3.09, p = .014$) and *Other-Focused* ($M=2.73, p= .011$) subfactors were significantly higher than the means observed by Reifman et al. (2007). Table 7.2: Comparison Sample IDEA Subscale Scores to scores from Reifman et al. (2007), displays the results of the comparisons.

For the 18-23 age group, there was statistical significance for the subfactor *Experimentation/Possibilities* ($M=3.10, p = .008$) between the observed sample in this study and Reifman et al.'s group; suggesting that immigrant and second-generation Dominicans endorse or think that this period of their life is a time of experimentation and possibilities. All other comparisons for the 18-23 age group were not significant (all p -values $> .05$), indicating that *Identity Exploration* ($M=3.35, p=.959$) *Negativity/Instability* ($M=3.01, p=.414$), *Self-Focused* ($M=3.19, p=.634$), and *Other-Focused* ($M=2.59, p=.137$) scores were similar across the samples for this age group. For the 24-29 age group, the means for *Identity Exploration* ($M=3.54, p < .001$) and *Negativity/Instability* ($M=3.21, p = .008$) were significantly higher than the means for this age group observed by Reifman et al. (2007). All other comparisons for the 24-29 age group were not significant (all p -values $> .05$), indicating that *Experimentation/Possibilities* ($M=3.03, p=.144$), *Self-Focused* ($M=3.29, p=.061$), and *Other-Focused* ($M=2.94, p=.966$) scores were similar across the samples for this age group. Interpretation of findings will be discussed further in Chapter VIII Discussion.

Table 7.2: Comparison Sample IDEA Subscale Scores to scores from Reifman et al. (2007)

Total Sample Scores	<i>M (SD)</i>	Reifman <i>M</i>	<i>t</i> (78)	<i>P</i>
<i>Identity exploration</i>	3.42 (0.52)	3.36	1.07	.286
<i>Experimentation/Possibilities</i>	3.08 (0.66)	3.28	-2.67	.009
<i>Negativity/Instability</i>	3.09 (0.65)	2.90	2.52	.014
<i>Self-Focused</i>	3.23 (0.55)	3.32	-1.52	.133
<i>Other-Focused</i>	2.73 (0.65)	2.54	2.60	.011
<i>Feeling “In-Between”</i>	3.30 (0.59)	3.26	0.65	.515

18-23 Age Group Scores	<i>M (SD)</i>	Reifman <i>M</i>	<i>t</i> (49)	<i>P</i>
<i>Identity exploration</i>	3.35 (0.59)	3.35	0.05	.959
<i>Experimentation/Possibilities</i>	3.10 (0.69)	3.37	-2.76	.008
<i>Negativity/Instability</i>	3.01 (0.65)	2.93	0.82	.414
<i>Self-Focused</i>	3.19 (0.59)	3.23	-0.48	.634
<i>Other-Focused</i>	2.59 (0.58)	2.47	1.51	.137

24-29 Age Group Scores	<i>M (SD)</i>	Reifman <i>M</i>	<i>t</i> (25)	<i>P</i>
<i>Identity exploration</i>	3.54 (0.39)	3.00	7.04	< .001
<i>Experimentation/Possibilities</i>	3.03 (0.64)	3.22	-1.51	.144
<i>Negativity/Instability</i>	3.21 (0.68)	2.83	2.90	.008
<i>Self-focused</i>	3.29 (0.46)	3.12	1.96	.061
<i>Other-focused</i>	2.94 (0.71)	2.93	0.04	.966

Independent T-test

Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to compare the IDEA subscale scores of immigrant and second-generation participants. Before interpreting the results of the *t*-tests, the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were tested. An examination of histograms revealed that the subscale scores were not normally distributed. Levene’s tests showed that the variances were equal between groups for each subscale (all *p*-values > .05).

The results of the *t*-tests are displayed in Table 7.3: Comparison of Participants’ IDEA Subscale Scores by Identity. All comparisons were not significant, indicating that there were no significant differences between immigrant and second-generation participants on the subscales of

Identity Exploration, Experimentation/Possibilities, Negativity/Instability, Self-Focused, Other-Focused, and Feeling “In-Between.” Because the assumption of normality was violated, non-parametric *t*-tests (i.e., Mann-Whitney tests) were conducted to corroborate the results of the parametric *t*-tests. The results were not significant for any of the subscales (Mann-Whitney Tests of IDEA Subscale Scores by Identity), which confirmed the non-significant results of the *t*-tests.

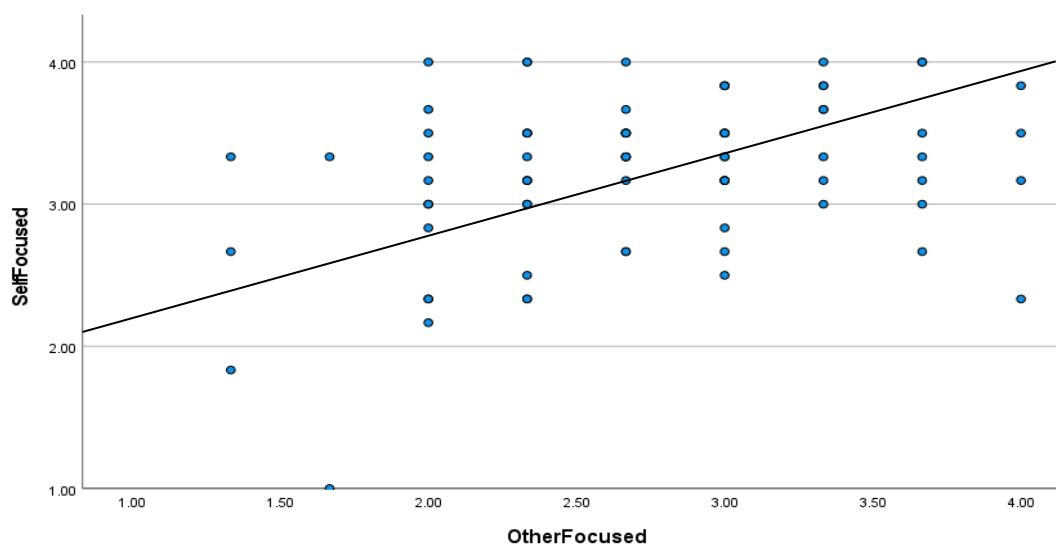
Table 7.3: Comparison of Participants’ IDEA Subscale Scores by Identity

Subscale	Immigrant <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Second- generation <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>t</i> (74)	<i>p</i>
<i>Identity Exploration</i>	3.37 (0.57)	3.49 (0.48)	-0.97	.336
<i>Experimentation/Possibilities</i>	2.96 (0.74)	3.24 (0.53)	-1.81	.074
<i>Negativity/Instability</i>	3.11 (0.65)	3.04 (0.69)	0.46	.645
<i>Self-Focused</i>	3.14 (0.62)	3.34 (0.42)	-1.54	.127
<i>Other-Focused</i>	2.78 (0.65)	2.61 (0.63)	1.12	.268
<i>Feeling “In-Between”</i>	3.32 (0.57)	3.23 (0.62)	0.64	.522

Pearson Correlation

To address the questions of immigrant and second-generation Dominicans endorsing the *Other-Focused* subfactor and a positive relationship between *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused* subfactors, descriptive statistics and a correlation were conducted for the *Other-Focused* subscale. Among immigrant participants, the mean *Other-Focused* score was 2.78 (*SD* = 0.65), and for second-generation participants the mean score was 2.61 (*SD* = 0.63). A Pearson correlation was conducted between the *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused* subscales. The correlation between the subscales was significant ($r = .34, p = .002, 95\% \text{ CI } [.10, .54]$), indicating that there was a positive relationship between the *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused* factors. A scatterplot showed a somewhat moderate, positive, linear relationship between the variables (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Scatterplot of *Self-Focused* vs. *Other-Focused* Scores



RQ2: To what extent will immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college 18 to 23 years of age be closer to transitioning from adolescence reflecting higher mean subscale scores when compared to the 24 to 29-year-old age group that are nearing young adulthood?

To address this question and its corresponding hypotheses, independent sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the IDEA subscales scores of the 18-23 age and 24-29 age groups. Before interpreting the results of the *t*-tests, the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were tested. An examination of histograms revealed that the subscale scores were not normally distributed. Levene's tests revealed that the variances were equal between groups for each subscale (all *p*-values > .05). Because the assumption of normality was violated, non-parametric *t*-tests (i.e., Mann-Whitney tests) were conducted to corroborate the results of the parametric *t*-tests.

The results of the *t*-test are displayed in Table 7.5: Comparison of Sample IDEA Subscale Scores by Age Group. The results for the *Other-Focused* subscale were significant, *t*

(74) = -2.27, $p = .026$, indicating that older participants ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 0.71$) had higher scores on the *Other-Focused* subscale than younger participants ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 0.58$). All other comparisons were not significant, both for the parametric and non-parametric tests (all p -values $> .05$), indicating that there were no significant differences between age groups on the subscales of *Identity Exploration*, *Experimentation/Possibilities*, *Negativity/Instability*, *Self-Focused*, and *Feeling “In-Between.”*

Table 7.4: Comparison of Sample IDEA Subscale Scores by Age Group

Subscale	18-23 M (SD)	24-29 M (SD)	$t(74)$	p	D
<i>Identity exploration</i>	3.35 (0.59)	3.54 (0.39)	-1.44	.153	-0.35
<i>Experimentation/Possibilities</i>	3.10 (0.69)	3.03 (0.64)	0.42	.673	0.10
<i>Negativity/Instability</i>	3.01 (0.65)	3.21 (0.68)	-1.31	.195	-0.32
<i>Self-Focused</i>	3.19 (0.59)	3.29 (0.46)	-0.79	.432	-0.19
<i>Other-Focused</i>	2.59 (0.58)	2.94 (0.71)	-2.27	.026	-0.55
<i>Feeling “In-Between”</i>	3.25 (0.62)	3.35 (0.54)	-0.69	.492	-0.17

Multiple Regression

A series of multiple regression analyses were conducted to investigate differences for each subfactor (dependent variables) while controlling for common covariates (independent variables). To investigate differences in IDEA scores by living arrangements and college credits when controlling for common covariates (i.e., age, gender, identity, employment, relationship status and decided on a college major).

RQ3-6: Are there any associations and/or differences when comparing each subfactor Identity Exploration, Experimentation/Possibilities, Negativity/Instability, Self-Focused, Other-Focused and Feeling “In-Between” and the following independent variables: living with parents, gender, age, identity, employment relationship status, college credits and decided on a college major.

As demonstrated in Table 7.5: Multiple Regression for Each Subfactor, when controlling for variables: age, gender, employment, relationship status and decided on a college major to find out differences in subfactors scores by living arrangements and college credits, only the following independent variables showed some associations and significance. **Age** had a positive association with *Other-Focused* $b=.07$, 95% CI, .01 to .12; $p = .01$, $R^2 = 0.25$. There is a negative association between **Identity** and *Other-Focused* $b=-.37$, 95% CI, -.66 to -.07; $p = .01$, $R^2 = 0.25$. There is a negative association between **college credits** and *Self-Focused* $b=-.06$, 95% CI, -.12 to -.00; $p = .04$, $R^2 = 0.17$. There is a negative association between **college credits** and *Other-Focused* $b=-.08$, 95% CI, -.15 to -.01; $p = .02$, $R^2 = 0.25$. **Decided on a college major** has a positive association with *Experimentation/Possibilities*, $b=.43$, 95% CI, .00 to .86; $p = .04$, $R^2 = 0.16$. There is a positive association between **Decided on college major** and *Self-Focused* $b=.33$, 95% CI, .00 to .66; $p = .04$, $R^2 = 0.17$.

Table 7.5: Multiple Regression for Each Subfactor

Effect	Estimate (B)	SE	95% CI		P
			LL	UL	
<i>Identity Exploration ON</i>					
Living with parents	.08	.13	-.18	.35	.54
Gender	.13	.14	-.15	.42	.34
Age	.02	.02	-.02	.06	.33
Identity	.00	.11	-.23	.24	.97
Employment	.03	.12	-.21	.27	.80
Relationship status	-.21	.29	-.81	.37	.46
College credits	-.03	.03	-.09	.02	.20
Decided on a college major	.32	.16	-.00	.64	.05
<i>Experimentation/Possibilities</i>					
Living with parents	.21	.17	-.13	.57	.22
Gender	-.11	.18	-.49	.26	.53
Age	-.00	.02	-.06	.05	.92
Identity	.16	.15	-.14	.48	.29
Employment	-.07	.16	-.40	.24	.62
Relationship status	-.04	.39	-.82	.74	.91
College Credits	-.04	.03	-.12	.03	.23

Decided on a college major*	.43	.21	.00	.86	.04
<i>Negativity/Instability</i>					
Living with parents	-.02	.19	-.41	.35	.87
Gender	.29	.20	-.10	.70	.14
Age	.02	.03	-.03	.08	.43
Identity	-.12	.16	-.46	.20	.44
Employment	-.05	.17	-.40	.28	.73
Relationship status	.01	.42	-.82	.85	.97
College credits	-.02	.04	-.11	.05	.52
Decided on a college major	-.00	.22	-.46	.45	.98
<i>Self-Focused</i>					
Living with parents	.11	.13	-.16	.38	.42
Gender	-.09	.14	-.38	.19	.53
Age	.01	.02	-.03	.05	.57
Identity	.09	.12	-.15	.33	.44
Employment	.02	.12	-.22	.27	.81
Relationship status	.03	.30	-.57	.64	.90
College credits*	-.06	.03	-.12	-.00	.04
Decided on a college major*	.33	.16	.00	.66	.04
<i>Other-Focused</i>					
Living with parent	.25	.16	-.07	.58	.13
Gender	.11	.17	-.24	.46	.52
Age**	.07	.02	.01	.12	.01
Identity**	-.37	.14	-.66	-.07	.01
Employment	-.27	.15	-.57	.02	.07
Relationship status	.07	.36	-.66	.80	.84
College credits*	-.08	.03	-.15	-.01	.02
Decided on a college major	.22	.20	-.17	.62	.25
<i>Feeling "In-Between"</i>					
Living with parent	-.14	.16	-.48	.19	.39
Gender	-.10	.17	-.46	.25	.57
Age	-.00	.02	-.06	.04	.82
Identity	-.10	.15	-.40	.20	.50
Employment	.12	.15	-.18	.42	.43
Relationship status	.18	.37	-.56	.93	.61
College credits	-.03	.03	-.11	.03	.34
Decided on a college major	.05	.20	-.35	.46	.79

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Exploratory/Open-Ended

Life Event – COVID-19-Global Pandemic

Although there is no comparison measure or data collected for before the pandemic, an exploratory question related to a life event was included: What is your outlook in life during this time COVID-19, a global pandemic? The one sample t-test analyses conducted on *Negativity/Instability* based on total sample mean scores was $M=3.09$. When comparing the means in the age split 18–23-year-olds ($M=3.01$) and 24–29-year-olds ($M=3.21$) there is a small difference in total mean scores. A between group comparison revealed that both second-generation Dominicans ($M=3.04$) immigrant Dominicans ($M=3.11$) do not mimic Reifman et al.'s ($M=2.90$) mean scores in the *Negativity/Instability* subfactor.

Open-ended responses were exported to a Microsoft Excel document. In Excel, answers were grouped into themes and coded to be able to calculate frequencies and proportions among the themes. Most respondents provided comments.

Respondents were asked: “In a few words, what does “adulthood” mean to you?” Seventy-eight (78) of seventy-nine (79) respondents provided an answer to this question (APPENDIX G–Open-ended Responses –Meaning of “Adulthood”). From the seventy-eight (78) open-ended responses, one hundred and thirty (130) common answers fell into nineteen (19) themes for the meaning of “adulthood.” Responsibilities (24%) was the most common theme followed by growing up/maturing (15%); independence (14%); accountability (12%); financial independence (8%); knowing (6%) and stability (5%). Other common themes defined adulthood as prioritizing, planning, formulating their own belief and being in a long-lasting relationship.

Regardless of responses in English or Spanish, “adulthood” was mainly defined as: growing up and assuming additional responsibilities, being completely financially independent, making their own decisions and creating a meaningful relationship with self and others:

“It means to be independent and take care of responsibilities. It’s to grow up and handle things, everything on your own.”

“Having “sponsibility” (Angelica the rugrats) responsibility. Being held accountable for your action and no do overs anymore.”

“Becoming more independent, trying to define the goals to achieve in life and reach goals that was Plan and not planned.”

“24 & still trying to figure it out. So far being financially responsible (paying bills & trying to save). Setting boundaries. Foregoing that “last drink” cus you know better and have to be up early. Getting your own car/health insurance m.”

“To realize how my present actions can affect my future life, to create new and long-lasting relationships and build a base to my future goals.”

“Adulthood means having responsibilities, having a stable life, having a good credit score, having good health, and being able to provide for your family.”

“La palabra Adultandote quiere decir que uno va creciendo mas ahacia la madurez para poder ser mas independiente de si mismo, no solamente en lo del financiamiento pero tambien en todo lo de mas que viene a nuestras vida. eso creo que significa para mi la palabra adultandote para mi en este momento.”

Two respondents disclosed somewhat negative thoughts and feelings best captured by their answer:

“Going from teenager to an adult is such a hard and complicated transition. There are many things we are not taught from a young age and now we are presented with a whole another set of responsibilities, much of them out of our knowledge and comfort zone. Adulthood is a very stressful phase of our lives, we wonder if this was really what we aimed for when we wished to be older, and is when our mental health waivers the most, as we wonder if we are a failure.”

A life event question was included considering a global pandemic-COVID-19 was happening at the time of the research. When asked for their “outlook on life at this time during a global pandemic COVID-19,” sixty-eight (68) respondents offered answers (APPENDIX H–

Open-ended Responses–Global Pandemic-COVID-19 –Life Event). Responses coalesced into two main themes, optimism (47%) and uncertainty (38%):

“In a weird way, optimistic about things looking up for this pandemic to end.”

“There is hope for a better future. COVID makes it is difficult for a lot of people. But it’s not a time for despair it’s time to believe and have faith.”

“Ha sido muy difcil pero he sabido sobrellevarlo.”

“It's been an eye opener. To myself and the society. Also to who I want to be and how I want to contribute to this world. I'm grateful.”

“I don’t even know to be honest.”

There were comments that contained expressions relevant to the 18- to 29-year-old cohort. Words like “YOLO,” meaning to say: you only live once. A statement such as, “I hate it here” not necessarily meaning to be negative but rather an expression of how they are feeling in that moment.

“YOLO. Life is temporary. I want to make choices that bring me joy because I might die tomorrow. Gotta live in the present. Love loudly.”

“I hate it here.”

Lastly, thirty-seven (37) respondents expressed additional thoughts (APPENDIX I–Open-ended Responses-Additional Thoughts). Additional comments provided continued the theme related to respondents thinking about this period of their life and in some cases blending their reflections regarding the global pandemic. Most statements (67%) merged in the uncertainty bucket with students reflecting feeling stuck. Also expressing this being a bad and challenging time, full of stress, worries and anxiety. Lastly, voicing hopelessness and this time feeling threaten.

“Anxiety for today, and what is going to happen tomorrow?”

“i feel stuck”

“Very bad”

The rest of the responses grouped into a more positive light (37%), described as this being a transformative and spiritual time to focus on wellness.

“Woah.”

“I’ve been pushing myself to do better and stay on track with classes even though my own problems and taking classes online with kids. It’s honestly making me see what I’m capable of.”

“Life is stressful, but hope is the last thing we hold on to.”

“La vida nos ha puesto en prueba y este es un momento para sacar fuerzas y seguir adelante a pesar de todas las dificultades.”

Conclusion

The IDEA survey was administered to 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans enrolled in an urban 2-year community college. This study explored the degree to which Arnett’s emerging adulthood concept can be considered a distinct stage of life and the extent to which his proposed factors associated with experiencing a stage or a process apply to a specific ethnic group. Exploratory/open-ended questions were added to the IDEA survey to seek additional understanding.

Overall quantitative analyses did not generate statistically significant findings. Common covariates suggested in the literature review that were tested for this study were inconclusive. However, multiple regression analyses produced associations between some independent variables and subfactors. Open-ended questions provided considerable recurrent themes regarding what participants thought “adulthood” meant to them, their view on life during a global pandemic-COVID-19 and additional related comments.

The next chapter discusses implications of the research findings, the limitations of this study, implications of the findings and conclusions that might inform social work practice

particularly in 2-year community colleges in New York City that serve large number of Dominican students.

Chapter VIII: Discussion

This chapter focuses on research findings and the methodological limitations. This section concludes with the current position of Arnett's emerging adulthood theory against findings for this study and implications for future studies.

Research findings: Quantitative analysis

The comparison between 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans contributes to the body of scholarly works in the emerging adulthood topic. The literature review conducted for this study recommended continual review of the emerging adulthood concept as a cultural theory (Syed, 2015; Swanson, 2016). In addition, the study strived for increased understanding of differences that might exist between subgroups in their environment (Fuller & Garcia Coll, 2010).

To date, Arnett's emerging adulthood concept and Reifman et al.'s IDEA instrument have not been tested enough in diverse populations outside of a 4-year traditional college. This study examined and compared commuters in an urban 2-year community college setting: 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans. The researcher expected that there would not be significant differences in the overall mean scores between immigrant and second-generation Dominicans of Arnett's proposed factors and likely small variances within the IDEA subscales and that the reasons for the variation in said group would vary, except in *Other-Focused* category (Dutra-Thomé & Koller; 2017; Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018).

Age Variable

As anticipated, the 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans from an urban community college mirrored Reifman et al.'s original mean scores from the general population on a number of Arnett's suggested subfactors based on IDEA scale. Total sample

mean scores for the hallmark features of emerging adulthood: *Identity Exploration*, *Self-Focused*, and *Feeling “In-Between”* did not significantly differ from the mean scores observed by Reifman et al.’s (2007) original study, even when age split (18- to 23-year-olds and 24- to 29-year-olds) data was examined.

These results provide evidence that the sample of Dominican students used in this study experience emerging adulthood in a similar manner to those students surveyed in the Reifman et al. study in terms of the IDEA measure. In addition, similar to studies carried out with a sample population of Latin and/or Spanish speaking countries, the current study suggested that as individuals get older, they are likely to be more in support of the *Other-Focused* subfactor. Second-generation Dominicans are individuals born in the U.S. or that came to the U.S. before the age of 12 years old which may mean that even though they identify Dominican they are influenced by the dominant environment and culture they are growing up in. Even though immigrant Dominicans are born in the Dominican Republic and come to the United States after 14 years of age, these years still include formative developmental years. Nevertheless, these findings lean towards areas of exploration to determine the extent to which immigrant Dominicans experience the emerging adulthood stage considering their arrival to the United States at 14 years of age or older.

***Other-Focused* Subfactor: Identity, college credits, and decided on college major variables**

Findings from this study carried out at Hostos, a 2-year community college inclusive of a diverse population, suggested a positive association between *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused*. Like other studies conducted by scholars exploring the emerging adulthood concept in individuals of Latin American or Spanish origin, a positive correlation was also found between the *Self-Focused* and *Other-Focused* subscales in this group (Arias and Hernandez, 2007; Facio

et al., 2007; Perez, Cumsille & Martinez (2008); Sanchez-Queija et al., 2018). This positive correlation suggests that immigrant and second-generation Dominicans focused on the self does not mean they are not focused on others (Galambos & Martinez, 2007; Perez, Cumsille & Martinez, 2008). Although this sample population may be influenced by American/Western values, 86% of the sample reported both parents, mother and father being Dominican. Culturally, Dominican emerging adults are expected to remain connected and integrated to the family which may explain these finding. A future study of both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans might consider exploring if this expectation is influenced by culture.

An interesting and unexpected finding in this research was the negative association with *Other-Focused* and identity. Participants that identified second-generation Dominicans were found to be slightly more *Other-Focused*. The researcher expected a higher cultural expectation for immigrant Dominicans considering the reliance immigration status may play with other family members. Nevertheless, this finding might be explained by 64% of the sample population living with parents or family members. The idea of moving out of a parent's or family's home may not be realistic in New York City (NYC). The cost of living, high rents, and home ownership in NYC may now seem an unattainable goal for second-generation Dominicans resorting to staying with parents or family. During COVID-19, a global pandemic/life event, an independent living arrangement may be less attainable for second-generation Dominicans. Even so, identity may not necessarily be the factor that explains this slight variance. Further investigation is necessary to determine reasons why both groups supported *Other-Focused* subfactor.

Further, the premium placed on education by Dominicans cannot be underestimated. The current study suggested that the more college credits students had obtained, the more likely they

are focused on others. Educational achievements are highly regarded and valued in Dominicans. The obtainment of college credits determines when a student will graduate from college. An individual graduating from college, is a family and community pride. In the Dominican culture, individual personal and professional accomplishments are shared with family and the community at large. Successes become opportunities to celebrate and bring immediate and extended families, friends, and others together.

The emphasis on education in the Dominican culture is reflected in the number of Dominicans that continue to enroll in colleges that are part of the City University of New York (CUNY) of which Hostos Community College is part of. Enrollment of Dominican students at Hostos and in CUNY schools continued to be the highest amongst Latinos through 2020. While at Hostos and other CUNY schools credit accumulation and on-time graduation has improved, not all students are obtaining their associates degree in 2 years. While credit accumulation is important to students, deciding on a college major influences completion of the associates degree on time. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of participants reported having decided on a college major which also plays an important role in determining when a student will graduate or not from a liberal arts 2-year community college like Hostos. Students in the 2-year community college system, do not have 4-years to figure things out or time to change their minds about their major. A student switching his or her major is likely to increase years to their completion.

Experimentation/Possibilities and Self-Focused Subfactors: Deciding on a college major variable

Findings from this study suggested that for immigrant and second-generation Dominicans number of college credits does not impact focus on self or others. However, deciding on a college major influenced *Experimentation/Possibilities and Self-Focused*. Arnett (2019)

described the *Self-Focused* subfactor as the time that emerging adults will have less dedication to others and that even though parents of “American ethnic groups” may contribute to emerging adult’s decision-making, “the individualism of American life” takes over and those emerging adults ultimately make their own choices focused on self (p.19). This study suggested that this focus on the self does not mean that they are not dedicated to others. On the contrary, both groups appeared to endorse *Other-Focused* and second-generation Dominicans supported *Other-Focused* slightly more than immigrant Dominicans. This finding, to be further explored in future studies might be explained by higher expectations for second-generation Dominicans that are born in the US. The notion is that if you are born in the US there is guaranteed access to more opportunities. An immigrant Dominican and others might often wonder why an American born Dominican might not achieve educational and other success more readily. Systemic barriers might not be considered by the immigrant group. The US is perceived as the land of opportunity. A future study might explore differences, if any, in perception regarding experiences with institutions that either help advance or structurally hinder opportunities.

Increased understanding is needed regarding the schools in the neighborhoods that the majority of American born Dominicans attend up to prior to enrolling in college. In spite of the cost of Catholic schools, a high number of Dominicans still send their children to Catholic schools. A study that investigates if this thinking is encouraged by the thought that their children will receive a better education in a Catholic school than a public school; or do they enroll their children in Catholic schools for religious reasons. Regardless, financial sacrifices are made by the family to ensure that their children achieve a solid educational foundation.

Typically, because education is a highly held value and understood to be a way to upward mobility, for higher education, individuals commuting or going away to college receive

unconditional support from families. This support comes with expectations and tradeoffs. An individual's success is likely to filter to others and assisting others is almost a given. Results from this study suggested that Hostos and other community colleges in CUNY can benefit from an increased understanding of the interdependency between education, living arrangements, and economics which can be more pronounced for both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans from a newer immigrant group.

Dominican immigrants can still be considered a relatively new immigrant group. Generationally, education, living arrangements (as found in this study) and financial gains have not yet positioned second-generation Dominicans further ahead from immigrant Dominicans. At the time of participation in the survey for this research, an overwhelming majority of participants in this sample lived with parents (35%) or with immediate family (29%) and 31.6% (n=25) reported making no contribution to the household. In addition to most participants not being employed (n = 42, 53.2%) and for those employed (n = 30, 38.0%), they were split in employment type: full-time and part-time. Although this study was carried out at the height of a global pandemic-COVID-19 requiring a sudden shut down affecting individuals' ability to continue school and work suggest that variables such as living at home or with family, going to school and barely working are variables to further explore in future studies with this population and a larger sample.

Conclusion

Findings from this study appear to generally support Arnett's (2000) proposed emerging adulthood framework and seem to encourage the need to continue to apply Reifman et al.'s (2007) IDEA instrument in diverse populations not living in dormitories and/or not in school. Results from this research, suggested that immigrant and second-generation Dominicans mimic a

general population experiencing the hallmark features of *Identity Exploration*, *Self-Focused*, and *Feeling “In-Between.”* Similarly, the observed group was in support of the *Other-Focused* subfactor. Like other studies with individuals from Latin America and/or Spanish language, findings from this study suggested that 18- to 29-year-olds focus on self does not counter their concentrating on others (Galambos & Martinez, 2007; Perez, Cumsille & Marinez, 2008).

Unlike Reifman et al.’s group, immigrant and second-generation Dominicans reported experiencing higher *Negativity/Instability*, perhaps connected to structural barriers amplified by current global pandemic. An area to be further explored in future research.

Exploratory/Open-Ended Findings

Meaning of “adulthood” from respondents’ perspective

When asked for the meaning of “adulthood” in the open-ended questions, 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans also expressed the top conditions for becoming an adult that were consistently found in previous studies by Arnett (2000) and more recently Nelson and Luster (2015): “accepting responsibility for oneself, making decisions on their own and becoming financially independent” (in Murray & Arnett, 2019, p.20).

Open-ended responses captured thinking around the central research question for this study: What do 18- to 29-year-old Dominicans in an urban community college say makes them feel like an adult? Regardless of responses in English or Spanish, the most common themes when responding to the meaning of “adulthood” collapsed into responsibilities (24%) followed by growing up/maturing (15%); independence (14%); accountability (12%); and financial independence (8%). Other related themes defined adulthood as knowing and having stability, prioritizing, planning, and formulating their own belief and being in a long-lasting relationship. Sentiments expressed by respondents:

“having responsibilities, having a stable life, having a good credit score, having good health, and being able to provide for your family.”

“So far being financially responsible (paying bills & trying to save).”

“To realize how my present actions can affect my future life, to create new and long-lasting relationships and build a base to my future goals.”

Life Event – COVID-19-Global Pandemic

This study was carried out during a global pandemic-COVID-19, an unprecedented life event. In a survey, administered at the onset of COVID-19, CUNY students were found to be concerned with the disruption in completing their college degree which is understood to be what helps them participate economically, gain long term health and social benefits (Jones, Mamze, Ngo, Lamberson and Freudenberg (March 2021). A thinking also expressed by participants of this study which emphasized the pandemic as creating “moments of uncertainty” and “stressfulness.”

Methodological Limitations

Sample

Survey research has the capacity to reach a sizable sample which increases the potential for generalizability (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). However, this study included seventy-two (72) observations, a smaller sample size than anticipated. Rubin & Babbie (2011) also explained that a weakness in survey research is creating questions that apply to *all* individuals and are considered suitable to the sample population. The study design also limits generalizability to all 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans due to the sample of 18- to 29-year-olds all being enrolled in one CUNY school in one neighborhood, the Bronx.

Ultimately, 4,248 emails were sent out over the course of two semesters. Survey for this research was emailed during the global pandemic-COVID-19 which suddenly forced online

learning and remote activities for all students. At the time of the study, the survey could only be requested via email and students were flooded with school emails while also carrying out all of their schoolwork via the internet/remotely and/or dealing with unprecedented circumstances.

Even though p values suggest some level of significance for some variables, confidence intervals were very large. Fit indices were checked, R^2 was above .15 suggesting predicting models explain some of the differences for three of the subfactors: *Experimentation/Possibilities* (16%), *Self-Focused* (17%) and *Other-Focused* (25%). Future studies, with a larger sample size are encouraged.

The Instrument

This study sought to test the generalizability of Arnett's emerging adulthood concept by applying Reifman et al.'s IDEA instrument which has not been tested sufficiently in diverse populations and outside of a 4-year traditional college. As expected, the sample population for this study carried out in a 2-year community college, mimicked Reifman et al.'s original study. When comparing overall mean scores, there were no significant differences. Nonetheless, to confirm applicability of the instrument and endorsement of some of Arnett's proposed markers of adulthood for immigrant and second-generation Dominicans a larger sample size study through other CUNY 2-year community colleges in the various boroughs of NYC is encouraged. Furthermore, even though the IDEA instrument in English and Spanish had been tested for validity and reliability, results generated from surveying the opinions of the 18- to 29-year-old immigrant and second-generation Dominicans in an urban 2-year community college setting might not fully explain what exactly was impacting their lives at the time of the survey. This survey was administered during a global pandemic-COVID-19 which might have influenced

emerging adults' perception as to where they think they are in their transition to adulthood during this period of their life.

Weinback & Grinnell (2007) explained the errors in drawing conclusions about relationships in social work practice. According to Weinback & Grinnell, a Type I error happens when a researcher rejects the null hypothesis and determines that there is a relationship between variables in the sample population when in fact there is no relationship. On the other hand, a Type II error takes place when the researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis and determines that there is no relationship between variables obtained from the sample population when there is a relationship; it may just be that the relationship is not yet identified (2007). Still, Weinback & Grinnell encouraged “knowledge-based social work practitioners” (2007, p.95) to engage in understanding, arriving at conclusions and making suggestions to the field.

Current position of the emerging adulthood theory

In his latest book *Emerging Adulthood and Higher Education: A New Student Development Paradigm* directed at educators, Arnett (2019) positioned his proposed five features of emerging adulthood as a new model for student development in higher education settings. Still, Arnett (2019) does not consider the *Other-Focused* factor and maintains that his “focus here [is] on the American experience, as this was the original focus of the theory” (p.11). Findings from this study challenge Arnett’s position and question emerging adulthood as a global life stage if *Other-Focused* subfactor is not included. To propose emerging adulthood as a theory, *Other-Focused* subfactor must be considered outside of individualistic/American/Westernized society. Ethnic groups such as Spanish and/or individuals from Latino origin like the sample from this study demonstrate that in collectivist societies this factor is important, and it is not countered to focusing on the self. The positive relationship found

between self and others and the variables identified in this study that influence that relationship suggest a need to inform social workers and educators that interact with this group of students and in higher education.

From Arnett's point of view, *Identity Exploration* is strongly linked to students that only reside in residence halls on a college campus, described by Arnett (2019) as "a social island set off from the rest of society." He explained that in these college settings emerging adults get to discover love, think about their role in society while responsibilities are on hold (Arnett, 2019). The question remains, what happens to identity formation for those that do not attend traditional 4-year colleges and live in a dormitory? Findings from this study encourage future studies across CUNY community colleges, with a larger sample size of diverse students that commute to school.

In this latest publication, Arnett's (2019) updated discussion of the features of emerging adulthood, *Negativity* is dropped from the *Negativity/Instability* subfactor. Thus, *Instability* is now solely considered and mainly discussed around emerging adults needing to be working and reworking a "Plan." However, there is no mention of what might be happening in society and the impact a life event could have on the emerging adult's life. In this study, answers from the open-ended question related to the global pandemic-COVID-19 reflected a lot of uncertainty at this time. At higher institutions like Hostos where this study was carried out and in CUNY as a whole the impacts of the pandemic are still unfolding. In the open-ended answers from the sample, uncertainty was a recurrent theme, particularly as it relates to what is happening to their education which again is understood to be a critical milestone that will determine their ability to claim true independence and transition to adulthood.

According to Arnett (2019) *Identity Exploration, Instability and Self-Focused* coalesce and create a *Feeling “In-Between”* for those that are in between adolescence and “young adulthood.” Arnett (2019) associates adolescence with still living at home and “young adulthood” with being married, a parent and holding a stable job. In 2007, Arnett suggested that *Identity Exploration* replaced Erikson’s “psychosocial moratorium,” thought to be a period “granted to young people in such [industrialized] societies” (Erikson, 1953, p.2). Arnett does not make it clear that “young adulthood” is Erikson’s (1953) stage for those between 18 to 35 years of age (APPENDIX A- Theorist & Terms Depicting Period Between Adolescence & Adulthood).

The introduction of the “young adulthood” term for the 18- to 29-year-old contradicts Arnett’s original proposed position that the 18- to 29-year-old period of time is a distinct emerging adulthood stage of life. The 18- to 29-year-olds that participated in this study suggested experiencing *Feeling “In-Between”* but more so connected to the obtainment of their education, the influence of culture or a life event. Nevertheless, future research might consider further exploring factors that contribute to 18 to 29 or even 35-year-olds feel “in-between.” Are factors such as being married, a parent or holding a stable job associated with successful transition to adulthood.

Arnett (2019) maintained that “emerging adulthood is the age of possibilities” (p.21). More recently, Arnett presented the *Possibilities/Optimism* feature as the time when emerging adults can reinvent themselves and differentiate from their parents also replacing *Experimentation* with *Optimism* for the *Experimentation/Possibilities* subfactor. Findings from this study suggest that for immigrant and second-generation Dominicans there is a positive relationship with others: does this mean that *Possibilities/Optimism* actually means

differentiating themselves from their parents or does it simply mean claiming financial independence which, in turn, means living on their own, paying their own bills.

Arnett (2019) concluded that the proposed features *Identity Explorations*, *Instability*, *Self-Focused*, *Feeling “In-Between,”* and *Possibilities/Optimism* “do not expire on graduation day” (p.23) but instead continue through the twenties. Even though Arnett (2000) challenged others to revisit and further explore Erikson’s (1968) identity formation which is central to psychosocial developmental theory in maintaining his original five subfactors and not considering the *Other-Focused* subfactor, Arnett does not leave room for diversity and increased attention to the issues that might impact identity formation in diverse groups.

Implications for Future Research

This study applied the IDEA instrument and compared results against Reifman et al.’s (2007) original research to test Arnett’s emerging adulthood concept in a diverse group of students that do not dorm in a traditional 4-year college. Results add to similar findings from other groups that have similarities in culture and religious values such as the Dominican Republic, Spain, and other Latin-American countries. For Dominican immigrants, this researcher took into consideration that Dominican immigrants have been socialized in American/Western ideals and values before arriving in the United States.

In this study, both immigrant and second-generation Dominicans appear to endorse the *Other-Focused* subscale when the total sample was tested, and age groups were split. Further investigation is necessary to determine reasons why immigrant and second-generation Dominicans supported *Other-Focused* and the positive relationship between self and others.

Findings from this study seem to fall in line with what recent scholars are concluding. Vespa’s (2017) recent population report which included 18- to 34-year-olds, which covers an age

span that is closer to Erikson's (1953) stage "young adulthood," for those between 18 to 35 years of age which indicated the impact that economics, culture, and socialization have on individuals from this cohort to realizing milestones different from previous generations. Like more recent scholars, findings from this study suggest concentrating on the young adults' living arrangements and when they are able to move from their parents' and family's home given the reliance on education and work experiences with emerging adults financial stability. The majority of the sample population in this study were living at home with parents or family members, going to school and working (some P/T and others F/T) with 48% renting and 31% making no contribution to their living arrangement. For 18- to 35-year-olds in the 21st century, the interconnection between education, employment and their ability to leave the home is an important area to further explore in future studies.

In his examination, Syed (2015) concluded that emerging adulthood is a "theory in development" (p.22) requiring additional inquiry. Syed (2015) and Perez & Landreman in Murray & Arnett (2019) further expounded and positioned emerging adulthood as a time when emerging adults pass by reacting to what is happening in their environment thus, influencing their perception. This survey was carried out during a global pandemic-COVID-19; future research might consider further investigating the extent to which the global pandemic is impacting the emerging adults during this life event. Thinking, also proposed by Wilson and Love in Murray & Arnett (2019), which entailed discussing with student affairs programs to consider when working with emerging adults. Wilson & Love concluded that "theorists may want to do more work to understand autonomy and interdependence in the current environment." They also suggested considering "what it means to become an adult while staying more closely tethered to parents than many in prior generations" (p.169).

Conclusion

This study expected to: 1) increase understanding of Arnett's proposed emerging adulthood theory applied outside of a traditional four-year college setting by examining commuters in an urban 2-year community college; 2) confirm applicability of the emerging adulthood theory to an ethnic group using the IDEA instrument; and 3) expand the knowledge for other groups demographically and culturally such as immigrants and second-generation Dominicans, 18 to 29 years of age.

The IDEA survey was applied in a 2-year community college setting to test the transferability of Arnett's (1994, 2000) theory that suggests indicators of emerging adulthood and markers of adulthood. Immigrants and second-generation Dominicans remain the largest ethnic group in NYC and in the City University of New York (CUNY) educational system (Hernandez and Stevens-Acevedo, 2004). In NYC and in CUNY Dominicans are the largest population among other ethnic groups (Hernandez & Stevens-Acevedo, 2004). In NYC there is a cumulative experience of Dominicans because of the demographic masses. By continuing to study current 18 to 29-year-old immigrants and second-generation Dominicans, we can begin to improve our understanding and shape the future of Dominicans in New York City and the CUNY system.

To further explore and validate the similarities found in mean scores to Reifman's original study and associations in variables tested in immigrant and second-generation Dominicans, administering the IDEA survey to a larger sample size across the CUNY educational system is recommended. Although this research was not a qualitative study, results from the open-ended responses from the survey inform social work practice in educational settings from the perspective of the emerging adults themselves. This researcher sought to learn from the emerging adults what they think makes them feel like in adulthood? What is their view

about where they stand between adolescence and adulthood? Generally, immigrant and second-generation Dominicans endorsed Arnett's proposed features of emerging adulthood. Though this study is a step in the right direction, additional cross-cultural research is required.

When adolescence ends and adulthood begins is a subject matter mainly debated and explored in the field of psychology. Nevertheless, this study sought to explore it from the person-in-environment lens, a social work perspective. In addition, it sought to increase the understanding of Arnett's proposed emerging adulthood theory applied outside of a traditional four-year college setting by examining commuters in an urban 2-year community college and confirming applicability of the emerging adulthood theory to an ethnic group using the IDEA scale. This study looked to expand cross-cultural knowledge for other groups demographically and culturally such as immigrant and second-generation Dominicans, 18 to 29 years of age, contributing to social work practice and Dominican Studies to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Eighteen - to 29-year-olds do not leap from adolescence to adulthood. It is important to continue to find out from their perspective about their transition from adolescence to adulthood. Is emerging adulthood a stage marked by chronological age, an individual's psychological state of mind and feelings about the transition to becoming an adult or is it influenced by life events, at times wedged by societal and cultural expectations? Results from this study hint at cultural expectations and life events influencing the transition to becoming an adult; still needing to be further explored in greater detail.

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APPENDIX A

CUNY Survey Adopted/Summary Table
2018 student Experience Survey: A survey of CUNY undergraduate students

Totals	CUNY	Community Colleges	Hostos
Completed Survey	21,000	6,477	492
Survey response rate	20.80%	18.60%	16.40%
Age			
Under 25 years old respondents	73%	73%	62%
25 years old or older	27%	27%	38%
Race/Ethnicity			
Black	28.00%	26.00%	32.00%
Hispanic	31.00%	39.00%	61.00%
Household Income			
Less than \$10,000	19.00%	26.00%	29.00%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	13.00%	16.00%	18.00%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	10.00%	11.00%	12.00%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	7.00%	6.00%	5.00%
\$35,000 plus 6 or less respondents			
SES:			
Fully dependent	41.00%	39.00%	32.00%
Partially dependent	27.00%	26.00%	23.00%
Not dependent	32.00%	35.00%	45.00%
Living arrangements (in order of majority for this survey)			
Parent(s)/Guardian(s)	68.00%	67.00%	57.00%
Spouse or Domestic Partner	11.00%	13.00%	16.00%
Other relatives	13.00%	13.00%	12.00%
Children	7.00%	9.00%	14.00%
Friends/Roommates	7.00%	6.00%	7.00%
Other students	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Employment			
working	56%	52%	59%
working to pay for living expenses	76%	78%	83%
Expressed wanting to work but could not find a job	42%	46%	42%
Academic Expectations			
Expected to complete AA degree in 2 years	42%	59%	52%
Confirmed taking 15+ credit a semester	41%	36%	27%
Reason for not taking 15+ credits a semester:			
work and/or family obligations	41%	43%	47%
more courses meant more work	37%	33%	34%
could not register for:			
A required course to enter my major	21%	22%	24%
A required course for my major	54%	50%	47%

CUNY Survey Adopted/Summary Table
2018 student Experience Survey: A survey of CUNY undergraduate students

Engagement			
Not engaged in school activities: student gov't, clubs, athletics or events & programs	55%	58%	57%
Did not participate in paid/unpaid internship, CO-op, clinicals, service learning, research study, civic engagement, etc.	61%	72%	69%
Did not participate in Experiential Learning Opportunities (ELO) due to:			
Not receiving the information for the opportunity	34%	38%	50%
Did not have time to participate	61%	58%	47%
Institutional assistance in choosing a career			
remained neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement "my college provides adequate information in choosing a career."	49%	41%	43%
remained neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with being provided with "adequate information in choosing a major"	39%	33%	33%
Main means of commuting			
Subway	66%	60%	74%
Bus	17%	29%	19%
Time spent			
1- 5 hours			
Caring for parents, children, spouse, etc.	31%	31%	26%
Traveling to and from school	56%	60%	57%
6-10 hours			
Caring for parents, children, spouse, etc.	17%	17%	15%
Traveling to and from school	24%	22%	22%
11-20 hours			
Caring for parents, children, spouse, etc.	10%	10%	12%
Traveling to and from school	11%	10%	8%
Over 20 hours			
Caring for parents, children, spouse, etc.	16%	19%	24%
Traveling to and from school	4%	4%	4%
Hours Working (paying job)			
1-10 hours	17%	16%	20%
11-20 hours	31%	29%	22%
21-34 hours	26%	27%	29%
35 or more hours	27%	26%	29%

APPENDIX B

Theorist & Terms Depicting Period Between Adolescence & Adulthood

This chart begins to illustrate the development and shift in perception regarding the period of time between adolescence and adulthood.

Theorist	Theory	Term	Year	Meaning/who it applies to	Characteristics/Features
Erik Erikson	Psychosocial	Young Adulthood and Prolonged Adolescence/Early adulthood	1953	18 to 35 years of age and coined "psychosocial moratorium" for individuals in industrialized societies/"granted to young people in such societies" (p.2)	Marriage, parenthood, education
Kenneth Keniston	Social Psychology	Youth	1970	college students protesting in the late '60s	Marriage, parenthood, education
Jeffrey J. Arnett	Psychology	Emerging Adult	1994	Erikson's "psychosocial moratorium;" referred to the 18 to 25-year-old; by 2015 extended it to 29; not adolescent nor adults; normative knowledge skills (Arnett, 2004) not adolescents nor adults	1. identity exploration 2. instability 3. self-focused 4. feeling in between 5. age of possibilities 6. other focused introduced as a counterpoint to self-focused
		Political terms			
		The forgotten half	1988	16-24-year-olds	
		Out-of-school and out-of-work (OSOW)	2003	16 -24-year-olds	
		Disconnected/ Opportunity youth/ "Ninis"	after 2000	16 -24-year-olds	

APPENDIX C Original IDEA Instrument & Instructions

The IDEA: Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood

The IDEA instrument is shown below in actual questionnaire format. Please cite the instrument as:

Reifman, A., Arnett, J. J., & Colwell, M. J. (2007, Summer). Emerging adulthood: Theory, assessment, and application. *Journal of Youth Development, 2* (1).

[Online journal access now appears to be limited to members of the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents. Please e-mail alan.reifman@ttu.edu for copies of this article.]

Instructions on how to compute the subscales are given at the bottom.

Views of Life Survey

- First, please think about this time in your life. By “time in your life,” we are referring to the present time, plus the last few years that have gone by, and the next few years to come, as you see them. In short, you should think about a roughly five-year period, with the present time right in the middle.
- For each phrase shown below, please place a check mark in one of the columns to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree that the phrase describes this time in your life. For example, if you “Somewhat Agree” that this is a “time of exploration,” then on the same line as the phrase, you would put a check mark in the column headed by “Somewhat Agree” (3).
- Be sure to put only one check mark per line.

Is this period of your life a ...	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Somewhat Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
1. time of many possibilities?				
2. time of exploration?				
3. time of confusion?				
4. time of experimentation?				
5. time of personal freedom?				
6. time of feeling restricted?				
7. time of responsibility for yourself?				
8. time of feeling stressed out?				
9. time of instability?				
10. time of optimism?				
11. time of high pressure?				
12. time of finding out who you are?				



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APPENDIX D IRB Approval

December 4, 2020

Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham
Yeshiva University Wurzweiler School of Social Work
2495 Amsterdam Ave
New York, NY 10033

Dear Ms. Fernandez-Ketcham

SUBJECT: IRB EXEMPTION—REGULATORY OPINION
Investigator: Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham
Sponsor: Yeshiva University Wurzweiler School of Social Work
Protocol Title: A correlational study comparing immigrant
and second-generation Dominicans

This is in response to your request for an exempt status determination for the above-referenced protocol. WCG IRB's IRB Affairs Department reviewed the study under the Common Rule and applicable guidance.

We believe the study is exempt under 45 CFR § 46.104(d)(2), because the research only includes interactions involving educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observations of public behavior; and the information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

This exemption determination can apply to multiple sites, but it does not apply to any institution that has an institutional policy of requiring an entity other than WCG IRB (such as an internal IRB) to make exemption determinations. WCG IRB cannot provide an exemption that overrides the jurisdiction of a local IRB or other institutional mechanism for determining exemptions. You are responsible for ensuring that each site to which this exemption applies can and will accept

APPENDIX D IRB Approval

WCG IRB's exemption decision.

WCG IRB's determination of an Exemption only applies to US regulations; it does not apply to regulations or determinations for research conducted outside of the US. Please discuss with the local IRB authorities in the country where this activity is taking place to determine if local IRB review is required.

Please note that any future changes to the project may affect its exempt status, and you may want to contact WCG IRB about the effect these changes may have Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham 2 December 4, 2020 on the exemption status before implementing them. WCG IRB does not impose an expiration date on its IRB exemption determinations.

If you have any questions, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact R. Bert Wilkins, JD MHA CIP at 360-252-2852, or email RegulatoryAffairs@wirb.com.

RBW:dao
D2 Exemption – Fernandez-Ketcham
cc: Lynn Levy, Yeshiva University
WCG IRB Accounting
WCG IRB Work Order #1-1375849-1

APPENDIX E
Participation Request Letter in English

Dear Participant (Emerging Adult, 18 to 29 years old):

I am Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham, a doctoral candidate at Yeshiva University, Wurzweiler School of Social Work. I am asking for your participation in a survey that seeks your opinion about your status during this period of your life, 18 to 29 years of age.

The purpose of the Study:

This study seeks your opinion. What do you think about this period of your life, starting with the present time.

Consent Information:

Your answers will inform understanding of emerging adults, primarily 18- to 29-year-old Dominicans. The questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The survey does not include any identifiable questions that may result in answers containing your recognizable information. Your participation is entirely voluntary. All emails will not be included as part of the results collected and summarized. By hitting the submit button, you are consenting to participate in this survey. This study poses no risk to you.

Confidentiality:

To protect confidentiality, SurveyMonkey's anonymous response feature will be turned on to omit your email and IP address in the collect responses' options. Summaries of data will be collected and reviewed in totals.

The Institutional Review Board of Yeshiva University has approved this study.

- The survey is online and by hitting the SUBMIT button, you are consenting to participate in this study.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary and will be de-identified. Data will be analyzed aggregately.
- You can discontinue participating in the study at any time without any penalty.
- All written and published information will be reported as group data with no references to agency or names.

Thank you so much for participating!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/emergingadulthoodsurvey>

For any questions regarding this research please contact designated staff in the Office of Institutional Research and Advancement (OIRA).

Sincerely,
Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham

APPENDIX E

Participation Request Letter in Spanish

Estimado Participante (Adulto Emergente, 18 a 29 años):

Soy Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham, candidata de doctorado en la Universidad Yeshiva, Escuela Wurzweiler de Trabajo Social. Pido su participación en una encuesta que busca su opinión sobre su estado durante este período de su vida, de 18 a 29 años de edad.

El propósito del estudio:

Este estudio busca su opinión. ¿Qué piensas de este período de tu vida, empezando con este momento en el presente.

Información de consentimiento:

Sus respuestas informarán sobre la comprensión de los adultos emergentes, principalmente Dominicanos de 18 a 29 años. El cuestionario debe tardar aproximadamente 10 minutos en completarse. La encuesta no incluye ninguna pregunta identificable que pueda dar lugar a respuestas que contengan su información reconocible. Al pulsar el botón ENVIAR, usted da su consentimiento para participar en esta encuesta. Este estudio no representa ningún riesgo para usted.

Confidencialidad:

Para proteger la confidencialidad, la función de respuesta anónima de SurveyMonkey se activará para omitir su correo electrónico y dirección IP en las opciones de las respuestas de recopilación. Los resúmenes de los datos se recopilarán y revisarán en totales.

La Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad de Yeshiva ha aprobado este estudio.

- La encuesta está en línea y pulsando el botón ENVIAR, usted está consintiendo participar en este estudio.
- Su participación es totalmente voluntaria y será desidentificada. Los datos se analizarán de forma agregada.
- Puede dejar de participar en el estudio en cualquier momento sin ninguna penalización.
- Toda la información escrita y publicada se notificará como datos de grupo sin referencias a la agencia o nombres.

¡Muchas gracias por participar! <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/adultoemergenteencuesta>

Para cualquier pregunta con respecto a esta investigación por favor póngase en contacto con el personal de la Oficina de Investigación Institucional y Avance (OIRA).

Sinceramente,
Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham

APPENDIX E
Participation Request LetterV2

Dear Students/Saludos Estudiantes,

I am Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham, a doctoral candidate at Yeshiva University, Wurzweiler School of Social Work. **If you are 18 to 29 years old and identify Dominican**, I would appreciate your participation in a survey that seeks your opinion about your status during this period of your life.

What do you think about this period of your life, starting with the present time

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/emergingadulthoodsurvey>

Please find letter attached with more information about this study:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:fb7e232e-4a75-4c07-b3ae-0eb5bdcfade8>

For any questions regarding this research please contact designated staff in the [Office of Institutional Research and Advancement \(OIRA\)](#).

Thank you so much for participating!

Soy Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham, candidata a doctorado en la Universidad Yeshiva, Wurzweiler School of Social Work. **Si usted tiene de 18 a 29 años e identifica a Dominicana/o**, agradecería su participación en una encuesta que busca su opinión sobre su estado durante este período de su vida.

¿Qué piensas de este período de tu vida, empezando con este momento en el presente:

<https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/adultoemergenteencuesta>

Por favor, encuentre la carta adjunta con más información sobre este estudio:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:fb7e232e-4a75-4c07-b3ae-0eb5bdcfade8>

Para cualquier pregunta con respecto a esta investigación por favor póngase en contacto con el personal de la [Oficina de Investigación Institucional y Avance \(OIRA\)](#).

¡Muchas gracias por su participación!

APPENDIX F

Complete Survey English

Views of Life Survey

1. Instructions:

First, **please think about this time in your life.**

By “time in your life,” we are referring to the present time, plus the last few years that have gone by, and the next few years to come, as you see them. In short, you should think about a roughly five-year period, with the present time right in the middle.

For each phrase shown below, please place a check mark in one of the columns to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree that the phrase describes this time in your life. For example, if you “Somewhat Agree” that this is a “time of exploration,” then on the same line as the phrase, you would put a check mark in the column headed by “Somewhat Agree” (3).

* Is this period of your life a....

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Somewhat Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
time of many possibilities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of exploration?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of confusion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of experimentation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of personal freedom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of feeling restricted?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of responsibility for yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of feeling stressed out?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of instability?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of optimism?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of high pressure?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of finding out who you are?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of settling down?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of responsibility for others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of independence?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Somewhat Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
time of open choices?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of unpredictability?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of commitments to others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of self-sufficiency?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of many worries?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of trying out new things?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of focusing on yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of separating from parents?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of defining yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of planning for the future?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of seeking a sense of meaning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of deciding on your own beliefs and values?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of learning to think for yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of feeling adult in some ways but not others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of gradually becoming an adult?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
time of being not sure whether you have reached full adulthood?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* In a few words, what does "adulthood" mean to you?

Views of Life Survey

2. Tell me about yourself

* What is your age?

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29

* What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Non-binary - I do not consider myself female, male or transgender

* Are you- **Dominican immigrant** defined as anybody that came to the United States (US) after 14 years of age or older. **Second-generation Dominican** defined as individuals born in the US or territory, or of Dominican immigrant parents or children who came to the US before the age of 12 years old.

- Immigrant Dominican
- Second-generation Dominican

* Heritage - Are both your parents Dominicans?

- Mother
- Father
- Both

* Ethnicity - the term "Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin" is defined as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. Please tell us how you identify?

- Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin
 - Not Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin
-

Views of Life Survey

3. Ethnicity

* If not Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin, please tell us how you identify:

Views of Life Survey

4. Race

* Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- White / Caucasian
- Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify)

Views of Life Survey

5. Relationship Status

* What is your relationship status?

- Married
 - Widowed
 - Divorced
 - Separated
 - In a domestic partnership or civil union
 - Single but cohabitating with a significant other
 - Single, never married
-
-

Views of Life Survey

6. Length in relationship

* How long in the previously stated relationship status?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- 1 to 2 years
- 2 years plus

Views of Life Survey

7. Parenthood

* Do you have children?

- Yes
- No

Views of Life Survey

8. Number of children

How many children do you have?

- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

Views of Life Survey

9. Housing

* What are your living arrangements?

- Alone
- With immediate family
- With extended family
- With roommate(s)
- With partner
- With parent(s)

* Do you?

- Rent
- Own
- Pay for a room
- Do not have to contribute to housing expenses

Views of Life Survey

10. Education

* To your knowledge, how many college credits have you obtained so far?

- 0-5 college credits
- 6-10 college credits
- 11-15 college credits
- 16-20 college credits
- 21-25 college credits
- 26-30 college credits

* Have you decided on a major?

- Yes
- No

Views of Life Survey

11. College Major

* What is your major?

Views of Life Survey

12. Employment Status

* Are you employed?

- Yes
 No

Views of Life Survey

13. Type of Employment

* Is your current employment?

- Full-time
 Part-time
 Self-employed

Views of Life Survey

14. Length of time employed

* How long have you been employed (in current position)?

- 6 months - 1 year
 1.5 - 2 years
 2.5 - 3 years

Views of Life Survey

15. Length of time unemployment

* How long long ago did you last have a job?

- 1 - 6 months
- 7 months - 1 year
- 1 year or more

Views of Life Survey

16. Please provide last thoughts about this period of your life. Thank you!

* What is your outlook on life at this time during a global pandemic-COVID-19?

Additional thoughts you have about this period of your life:

Complete Survey Spanish

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Instrucciones:

Primero, por favor **piensa en este momento de tu vida**.

Por "tiempo en tu vida", nos referimos al tiempo presente, más los últimos años que han pasado, y los próximos años por venir, como los ves. En resumen, usted debe pensar en un período de aproximadamente cinco años, con el tiempo actual justo en el medio.

• Para cada frase que se muestra a continuación, coloque una marca de verificación en una de las columnas para indicar el grado en que está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo que la frase describe este momento en su vida. Por ejemplo, si estas "Algo de acuerdo" que este momento de tu vida es un "tiempo de exploración", entonces en la misma línea que la frase, pondría una marca de verificación en la columna encabezada por "Algo de acuerdo" (3).

Asegúrese de poner solo una marca de verificación por línea.

* 1. Este periodo de tu vida es un tiempo de...

	Muy en desacuerdo (1)	Algo en desacuerdo (2)	Algo de acuerdo (3)	Muy de acuerdo (4)
1. Muchas posibilidades?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Exploración y búsqueda?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Confusión?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Experimentación?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Libertad personal?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Sentirse limitado/a?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Responsabilizarte de ti mismo/a?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Sentirte estresado/a?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. De inestabilidad?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Optimismo?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Mucha presión?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Descubrir quién eres?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Establecerte?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Responsabilizarte de otras personas?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Muy en desacuerdo (1)	Algo en desacuerdo (2)	Algo de acuerdo (3)	Muy de acuerdo (4)
15. Independencia?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Muchas opciones y oportunidades?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Tiempo impredecible?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Compromiso con los demás?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. Autosuficiencia?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Muchas preocupaciones?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. De intentar cosas nuevas?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Centrarte en ti mismo/a?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Distanciarte de tus padres?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Definirte a ti mismo/a?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Planificar el futuro?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Buscar un sentido o significado?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Decidir tus creencias y valores?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Aprender a pensar por ti mismo/a?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. Sentirse adulto/a en algunos casos y en otros no?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Ir convirtiéndote en adulto/a?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Sentir inseguridad sobre si has llegado definitivamente a la adultez?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 2. Brevemente, que opinías lo que quiere decir "adultandote?"



Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Cuéntame de ti mismo

* 3. Edad:

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29

* 4. Género:

- Mujer
- Hombre
- Transgénero
- No binario - no me considero mujer, ni hombre o transgénero

* 5. Eres **Inmigrante Dominicana/o**, definido como cualquiera que vino a los Estados Unidos (EE.UU.) después de 14 años de edad o más o **Segunda Generación Dominicana/o**, individuos nacido en los Estados Unidos o territorio, de padres inmigrantes Dominicanos o niños que llegaron a los Estados Unidos antes de la edad de 12 años de edad.

- Inmigrante Dominicana/o
- Segunda Generación Dominicana

* 6. Heritage - ¿Quien de tus padres es/son Dominicanos?

- Madre
 - Padre
 - Los dos
-

* 7. Origen étnico- el término "Hispana/o or Latina/o o origen Español" definido como una persona Cubana, Mexicana/O, Puertorriqueña/o. Dominicana/o, Sur o Centroamericana/o, o otra cultura de origen Español , a pesar de la raza. Por favor, díganos cómo se identifica.

- Origen Hispana/o o Latina/o o Español
- No Hispana/o o Latina/o o Origen Español

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Origen étnico

* 8. Cómo identifica:

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Raza

* 9. ¿Cual raza/etnicidad te describe mejor? (Por favor, elija sólo una respuesta.)

- Indio Americano o Nativo de Alaska
- Asiático
- Nativo Hawaiano u Otro Isleño del Pacífico
- Hispana/o
- Negro o afroamericano
- Blanco

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Estado civil/Relación

* 10. Estas

- Casada/o
- Viuda/o
- Divorciada/o
- Separada/o
- En una asociación doméstica o unión civil
- Soltera/o pero conviviendo con otra/o
- Soltera/o nunca me case

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

La duración de estado civil/relación

* 11. ¿Cuánto tiempo en su estado civil/Relación?

- Menos de 6 meses
- 6 meses a 1 año
- De 1 a 2 años
- 2 años o más

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Paternidad

* 12. ¿Tiene hijos/hijas?

- Si
- No

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Número de niños

13. ¿Cuanto hijos/hijas?

- 1
- 2
- 3 o mas

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Arreglo de Vida

* 14. ¿Con quién vives?

- Sola/o
- Con familia inmediata
- Con familia extendida
- Con compañeros de cuarto
- Con compañero

* 15. Vivienda:

- Alquiler de apartamento
- Dueño
- Alquiler habitación
- No tengo que contribuir a los gastos de vivienda

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Educación

* 16. ¿Cuántos créditos universitarios piensas que has obtenido hasta ahora?

- 0-5 créditos universitarios
- 6-10 créditos universitarios
- 11-15 créditos universitarios
- 16-20 créditos universitarios
- 21-25 créditos universitarios
- 26-30 créditos universitarios
-

* 17. ¿Te has decidido por una especialidad en tus estudios?

- Sí
 No

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Especialidad

* 18. ¿Cuál es su especialidad?

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Empleo

* 19. ¿está empleado?

- Sí
 No

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

Tipo de empleo

* 20. Trabajas:

- Tiempo completo
 Tiempo parcial
 Trabajado por cuenta propia

* 21. Número de meses/años trabajando (en el presente):

- 6 meses a 1 año
 1.5 - 2 años
 2.5 - 3 años
-

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

La duración del tiempo fuera de empleo

* 22. ¿Cuándo fue la última vez que tuvo un trabajo?

- 1 - 6 meses
- 7 meses - 1 año
- 1 año o mas

Encuesta De La Vida: Cual es tu opinion sobre este tiempo de tu vida, durante 18 a 29 años de edad?

¡Gracias!

Por favor, proporcione los últimos pensamientos sobre este período de su vida.

* 23. ¿Cuál es su perspectiva de la vida en este momento durante una pandemia global-COVID-19?

24. Proporcione cualquier último pensamiento que tenga sobre este período de su vida:

APPENDIX G

Open-ended Responses –Meaning of “Adulthood”

A	
1	In a few words, what does "adulthood" mean to you?
2	It's to be aware of your duties and put what is important first.
3	Growing up/responsibility
4	Taking responsibility
5	Adulthood means to me is actually knowing yourself and finding who you are in this world.
6	Hard
7	Take care of yourself and paying your own bills.
8	Becoming more independent, trying to define the goals to achieve in life and reach goals that was Plan and not planned
9	When your independent without depending on anyone to get things done.
10	taking responsibility for your actions
11	Behaving like an adult and be responsible
12	It means to be independent and take care of responsibilities. It's to grow up and handle things, everything on your own.
13	Stress, depression, anxiety, loneliness
14	Take responsibility for yours actions and start building your own path to the future.
15	the practice of behaving in a way characteristic of a responsible adult, especially the accomplishment of mundane but necessary tasks.
16	Take responsibility for your actions
17	Responsibility, knowing what you want, take your own decisions, become self aware of things around you.
18	Responsibilities,
19	adulthood to me means having your own place, bills, and personal responsibilities. on your own
20	Adulthood means prioritizing responsibilities over desires and taking care of what needs to be done first
21	Adulthood means being older to do what you like to do and deciding for yourself in life.
22	Taking accountability for one's future and doing all that can be done to reach success.
23	The word "adulthood" means to me being able to perform everyday tasks that most adults do.
24	Being able to support yourself
25	knowing how and when to act a certain way.
26	Being an adult means to be fully responsible for oneself.
27	To me adulthood means growing mentally, focusing on you, responsibilities and maturity.
28	taking care of yourself and others
29	A lot of responsibilities!
30	Adulthood means to grow as a person and define your own belief, where you want to go, and what you want to do.
31	An adult for me is someone that is prepare for take a responsibility.
32	Having "sponsibility" (Angelica the rugrats) responsibility. Being held accountable for your action and no do overs anymore

Open-ended Responses –Meaning of “Adulthood”

	A
33	Being responsible and owning your actions
34	adulthood to me means taking certain new responsibilities for yourself & becoming more openminded & mature.
35	24 & still trying to figure it out. So far being financially responsible (paying bills & trying to save). Setting boundaries. Foregoing that “last drink” cus you know better and have to be up early. Getting your own car/health insurance m.
36	Being independent and responsible
37	To realize how my present actions can affect my future life, to create new and long-lasting relationships and build a base to my future goals
38	Reaching stability, having responsibilities and feeling satisfied where you are in life.
39	To be more aware and responsible for your actions
40	Being independent reaching your goals be mature and responsible
41	Going from teenager to an adult is such a hard and complicated transition. There are many things we are not taught from a young age and now we are presented with a whole another set of responsibilities, much of them out of our knowledge and comfort zone. Adulthood is a very stressful phase of our lives, we wonder if this was really what we aimed for when we wished to be older, and is when our mental health waivers the most, as we wonder if we are a failure.
42	Adulthood is being fully respond for yourself and you responsibilities. Having the responsibilities and will to fulfill all of your needs, desires and goals.
43	Responsabilidad, independencia y madurez
44	Handling your responsibilities in timely manner such as bills chores ,Taking care of yourself and children making sure you yourself and children are well nurtured
45	Being an Adult who has responsibilities and acting in a civilized manner.
46	To look past the mistakes I've made and learn from them.
47	A lot of responsibilities, having a job. Being financially stable.
48	It means being more responsible
49	Having responsibilities like rent and bills, grocery shopping, kids, buying a house, stable income and job

Open-ended Responses –Meaning of “Adulthood”

	A
50	Being stable by yourself not having to rely on anyone
51	Being responsible for myself and not depend on no body
52	Adulthood means being in charge of myself and make my own things
53	What adulthood means to me is finally having the capability to fend for yourself and do many things that can make you acquire skills to best suit your well-being.
54	Being independent and responsible. Finding out who I am and having a sense of self.. Detached from others ideas of me. Being accountable for my own happiness and life experience.
55	Be responsible and take good decisions and take risk to learn somethings new.
56	Adulthood is full of responsibilities and learning to prioritize time.
57	Adulthood means responsibility.
58	being an adult is assuming all responsibility for yourselfe.
59	Taking more stressful and responsible to handle alone.
60	My definition of adulthood is when a person becomes fully independent, financially, and having stability. Adulthood doesn't mean that everything will be perfect as long as you know what's right from wrong, and take responsibility for your actions.
61	Adulthood means having responsibilities, having a stable life, having a good credit score, having good health, and being able to provide for your family.
62	a lot of responsibilities.
63	To literally be fine on your own.
64	aprendiendo a ser adulto
65	Encaminadote a ti mismo a la adultez.
66	Getting older for the passing day
67	Asumir responsabilidades
68	Sería el proceso de una persona que a travez del tiempo va evolucionando adquiriendo nuevos conocimientos de madurez.
69	Creciendo , pasando de adolescente a adulto
70	Nunca he escuchado esa palabra, pero suena como cuando te pones una ropa “vistiéndote”. Parece que es encajar en el pensamiento y las acciones de la adultez.
71	Cambios en la vida cotidiana como tener responsabilidades
72	Tomar responsabilidad por mi misma y de mis propias necesidades.
73	La palabra Adulthood quiere decir que uno va creciendo mas ahacia la madurez para poder ser mas independiente de si mismo, no solamente en lo del financiamiento pero tambien en todo lo de mas que viene a nuestras vida. eso creo que significa para mi la palabra adulthood para mi en este momento.
74	Creciendo
75	Creer
76	ser una persona adulta que estoy creciendo y madurando
77	El desarrollo de crecer con la madurez del adulto.
78	Que tenemos que tomar decisiones en cosas que antes no hacíamos.
79	Hacer cosas antes de tiempo debido a diversas circunstancias que te impulsan a ser adulto antes de lo debido.

APPENDIX H

Open-ended Responses–Global Pandemic-COVID-19 –Life Event

A	
1	What is your outlook on life at this time during a global pandemic COVID-19?
2	To move forward
3	I don't even know to be honest
4	It's been difficult
5	In a weird way, optimistic about things looking up for this pandemic to end.
6	Is hard
7	Everything is stressful being online I feel trap do to Covid
8	Keep on track on my goals, understand the situation that we go through any time. And stay positive + optimistic
9	To keep moving forward
10	go with the flow, plan ahead for what ever may come
11	That I should start acting like an adult and hope that things go back to normal.
12	There is hope for a better future. COVID makes it is difficult for a lot of people. But it's not a time for despair it's time to believe and have faith.
13	This is not easy
14	Enjoy every second of your life with your loved one
15	Not being able to visit some family members or do my daily routines from before the pandemic
16	Getting used to the new normal
17	Full time student
18	Complicated
19	social meter officially dead, a lot of restrictions
20	Bleak, depressing
21	Bad
22	A positive outlook on life during pandemic
23	Very stressful for school and financial
24	Life's being difficult for many of us, but we ought to keep going and hope that things get better.
25	Life is challenging us to do better
26	I wish it will slow down
27	Technology will be a major resource to socialize like never before
28	I think everything is going to be better, and that we need to stay in calm and wait for the best.
29	My perspective is to relax and wait for good news every day that I wake up.
30	This could have been avoided as this is something we seen in the past history
31	Positive
32	Unmotivational.
33	YOLO. Life is temporary. I want to make choices that bring me joy because I might die tomorrow. Gotta live in the present. Love loudly.
34	Chaotic
35	We should take care of our loved ones and try to maintain a stable financial status
36	Im honestly hoping for things to go back to "normal" soon as they did with all past pandemics.
37	Look for a job
38	Life is stressful, but hope is the last thing we hold on to.

Open-ended Responses-Global Pandemic-COVID-19 –Life Event

	A
39	I believe this is a time of taking extra measures of precaution when it comes to cleanliness and well being/health. Also this is a time of reinventing yourself and taking advantage of the new remote style of living, learning and working. There are a lot of business opportunities.
40	Well too comfortable
41	Cautiously optimistic
42	Stressedful
43	Business
44	I hate it here
45	Nothing
46	Life is too short and we need to live it
47	Everyone needs to take care of their well-being, and especially their mental health in the current situation of the pandemic.
48	It's been an eye opener. To myself and the society. Also to who I want to be and how I want to contribute to this world. I'm grateful.
49	We have to be carefully with every step that we do and help other people
50	Moments of uncertainty.
51	Stressful
52	stay positive and hope for the best
53	More stress and depression
54	Life is unpredictable and time like this teaches you to value others and yourself more
55	My outlook on life during this global pandemic is remain focus and accomplish all of my goals.
56	Spiritual
57	Hay que respetar a los demas y respetarse uno mismo
58	Que puede mejorar
59	Un cambio de vida drástico
60	Creo que debemos darle Gracias a Dios por el simple hecho que estamos vivos con salud y poder mi familia y mis dos hijas bien
61	Tener control mental
62	Es salvaje y caótica. Con un toque de miedo a la muerte de los seres queridos
63	Ha sido muy difícil pero he sabido sobrellevarlo.
64	Tenemos que ser mas cuidadosos
65	Innovación
66	Cambios
67	Que si la gente cogiera mas conciencia hubieramos terminado esto hace mucho
68	Preocupante.
69	Estar preparado para cualquier cosa

APPENDIX I

Open Ended Responses - Additional Thoughts

A	
1	Please provide any last thoughts you may have about this period of your life:
2	It where you wonder what if or what it can be.
3	Anxiety for today, and what is going to happen tomorrow?
4	Don't let this pandemic stop me from finishing school
5	Take advantage of every moment in life, not matter how bad it seems.
6	i feel stuck
7	Very bad
8	No
9	This time has been challenging to me psychologically and emotionally in many aspects but it has been bringing the best of me. There is beauty in the struggle.
10	It's too stressful
11	Discover yourself
12	Too much going on to have to deal with a pandemic, and adjust to remote learning/work
13	Transformative learning experience
14	Does it get easier?
15	nightmare ends
16	I've been pushing myself to do better and stay on track with classes even though my own problems and taking classes online with kids. It's honestly making me see what I'm capable of.
17	My wonder is If I'm going to get a job soon
18	I believe this is also a time of rest and healing. Prioritizing mental health and self care is a must.
19	I need to obtain a job
20	Once this pandemic subsides it will stay on my mind for years to come.
21	It's my time to grow and learn more about myself
22	I've felt hopeless and drained at times but I have to pick myself up and keep pushing forward
23	No
24	Life is hard but you can make it simple doing something that you like also is difficult times
25	Anything is forever
26	It is important to remain focus on what you want and need to achieve in life.
27	Woah
28	el tiempo es valioso y hay que aprovecharlo al maximo, hay que aprender lo mas que uno pueda. Para estar al servicio de los demas. por que somos todos uno en este mundo.
29	Hay muchas oportunidades pero por no estar presente se abstiene a llegar
30	Tiempos dificiles que Dios me ha permitido sobrellevar.
31	Paciencia
32	Tratando de mejorar
33	El pensamiento que tengo ahora sobre mi vida es que a pesar de los malos tiempos es que tenemos que tener fe de que todo estara bien mas adelante y seguir confiando en Dios el que todo lo puede.
34	Creatividad
35	Intentar no pensar mucho en lo que vendra cuando el presente es incierto
36	Estoy en una etapa con extras, pero tratando de sobrellevar la situación por la que estamos viviendo de la forma más tranquila posible para cuidarnos todos de esta pandemia.
37	todas las dificultades