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MILITARY VETERANS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: APPLICATION OF ADULT
DEVELOPMENT THEORIES TO SELECTED ROWAN UNIVERSITY
UNDERGRADUATE VETERANS

by
Jennifer Deborah Dahan

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
5/20/08

Approved by

Dr. Burton R. Sisco

Date Approved May 20, 2008

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ABSTRACT

Jennifer Deborah Dahan

MILITARY VETERANS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: APPLICATION OF ADULT
DEVELOPMENT THEORIES TO SELECTED ROWAN
UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE VETERANS

2007/08

Dr. Burton R. Sisco

Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of all undergraduate veterans in college after serving in a military setting, by using Schlossberg's transition theory and mattering study, and Mezirow's theory of transformative learning. Of particular interest was how veterans described their experiences, as well as what transitional issues they faced, and what the university might do to meet their needs. The methods used were both quantitative and qualitative, administering an interview protocol, as well as a survey instrument based on the Schlossberg, Lassalle and Golec survey created in 1990. The findings suggested that most students believe they matter on a college campus, however their needs suggested they often feel out-of-place in the classroom and their experience sometimes gets in the way of interactions with other students. Conclusions showed that most veterans at Rowan University seem satisfied with the services made available to them through the Academic Success Center and the Veterans Affairs Office. Nevertheless, some feel that professors should be more thoughtful when dealing with veteran students, as well as benefits should be made more readily available and easier to access. Overall, the college experience for participating veteran students has been positive.

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Lastly, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Sisco, my advisor and professor, whose constant dedication and encouragement was a huge support to me during these past two years. My deepest gratitude to all the effort he put into grading our papers, meeting with us individually and keeping us motivated as we crossed the finish line.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to all the veterans in the United States. You do not always get recognized for all the dedication and service you provide to this country. We are all forever in your debt. Thank you!

I also dedicate this to my three sisters: Jessica, the listener; Abigail, the realist; and Rebecca, our ray of sunshine. I love you three so much and I am proud to be your older sister!

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

When students enter college after high school, they embark upon a journey of self-actualization, learning and growth. Numerous theories have sought to explain the challenging progression of growth in a college student's experience, and much of the research has focused upon traditional-aged undergraduate students with suggestions for how to serve these students well. However, less is known about the psychological, physical, and emotional issues war veterans experience upon ending their service. Due to the Iraq War from 2002 to present, there is a growing number of Iraq War veterans entering institutions of higher education, and therefore an increasing need to understand the developmental levels of maturity these students undergo.

Statement of the Problem

Since the fall of the Twin Towers in a terrorist attack on September 11, 2002, the United States has been battling Iraq in what has been proved to be a difficult time for the troops. According to Baron-Faust (1997), "young adulthood is a high risk period for the onset of psychiatric symptoms, with the typical age of onset for serious mental illnesses being between the ages of 17 and 25" (p. 1). The operations since 2002 have involved the soldiers in perilous security duty (Hoge, Castro, Messer, McGurk, Cotting, & Koffman, 2004). Due to this psychological health constraint, research has shown that the percentage of combat soldiers returning from duty in Iraq have returned with post-

traumatic stress disorder, including depression and anxiety (Hoge et al., 2004).

Despite the growing numbers of veterans needing emotional support upon their return, there is an increase in the number of war veterans applying and attending universities (Arnott, 2007). At Rowan University, in Glassboro, New Jersey alone, there were 71 more veteran students in 2007 than in 2006 (Arnott, 2007). Mostly, this is due to veterans wishing to use their G.I. Bill in order to achieve educational success (Smith-Osborne, 2006). Due to the increasing rate, these non-traditional students will need help from higher education institutions in transitioning back to the college lifestyle. According to a study by Smith-Osborne (2006), “success in the educational system has been found to be associated with healthy lifestyle behaviors, occupational achievement, financial security, and increased opportunities later in life” (p. 6). More research is needed that focuses on the passage from military service to the transition back into college, and the fundamental psychological aspects associated with the shift.

Significance of the Study

The study examined how war veterans, using Schlossberg’s transition theory and mattering study, and Mezirow’s transformative theory, transitioned back into the higher education lifestyle after serving in any military setting. The findings of this study can be incorporated in teaching future and current administrators how to use Schlossberg’s four “S” and five mattering foundations, and Mezirow’s transformative learning, to better understand veteran student motivation, as well as emotional, and physical distress they may feel upon being in college after military service. This study can also encourage university faculty and staff to focus more on this growing population as a means of serving the students better.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of undergraduate veterans in college after serving in a military setting, by using Schlossberg's transition theory and mattering study, and Mezirow's theory of transformative learning. Of particular interest was how veterans described their experiences, as well as what transitional issues they faced, and what the university might do to meet their needs.

Assumptions and Limitations

Due to ease of access, the study was limited to Rowan University students, specifically those who veterans in the armed forces and who, for some, have left the country to serve internationally during their military service and are now returning to complete or begin their college education. Similarly, the study assumed that Schlossberg and Mezirow's theories were applicable to veteran students. Only those who returned the survey and volunteered to be interviewed participated in the study, and it was assumed that those who responded were honest and truthful. It was presumed that the students chosen to participate were either veterans returning from international service and starting their path towards a college education, or veterans who had begun their education at Rowan University, left for military reasons, and then returned to complete their degree. There was the potential for researcher bias in an attempt to inform how Schlossberg's transition steps and five mattering foundations, and Mezirow's transformative learning theory are used to explain veteran student development.

Operational Definitions

1. **Development:** A growth process where one acts on experiences and influences (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). For the purpose of this study, development within veteran students was reviewed.
2. **Mattering:** As defined by Schlossberg, Chickering, Lynch (1989), it is our “belief, right or wrong, that we matter to someone else” (p.5). For the purpose of this study, it will be used to define Schlossberg’s mattering study.
3. **Mental Health:** As defined by a study done by Hoge et al. (2004), the outcomes of veteran mental health included “major depression, generalized anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, which were evaluated on the basis of standardized, self-administered screening instruments” (p. 1). For the purpose of this study, the emotional and physical health of the veteran students may be a factor in how well they are pursuing their education at Rowan University.
4. **Transition:** As defined by Schlossberg (1989), a transition “can be said to occur if an event or non-event results in change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one’s behavior and relationships” (p.18). For the purpose of this study, transition will consist of any undergraduate veteran going to college or returning to college after being away.
5. **United States Defense Forces:** Military units that operate under the federal government of the United States (U.S. Army Website, 2007). For the purpose of this study, veterans who participated can belong to any defense group: National Guard, Marines, Army, Coast Guard, Air Force, etc..., who engaged in international military service during the course of their duty.

6. Veterans: As defined by the dictionary, it is a person who has served in a military force, especially one who has fought in a war (Dictionary.com, 2007). For the purpose of this study, veterans are any individuals have engaged in military service before coming to pursue their education. Having served internationally is a plus to show how student service outside of the United States may affect their learning in a higher education setting.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What do selected Rowan University undergraduate veterans report regarding the five focus areas of mattering on a college campus?
2. What are the educational and social needs of returning veterans?
3. How well do the veterans report that Rowan is meeting those needs?
4. What recommendations do they make to help improve the Rowan University's service to veterans?

Overview of the Report

Chapter two provides a review of relevant literature on the United States army, the history of the G.I. Bill, and the war in Iraq and its impact on the soldiers. It also reviews Schlossberg's transition theory and mattering study, as well as Mezirow's transformative learning theory, and research done on the experiences of veteran students. Also included is a brief description of the only student veterans association in the country, and its purpose.

Chapter three provides a description of the study methodology and includes how the study was conducted. Described is the following: population and sample selection, a

description of the data collection instruments, the procedures used in gathering the data, and description of how the data were analyzed.

Chapter four presents the findings and results of the study, addressing the research questions posed in the introduction chapter. Presented is a profile of the study subjects, the findings organized by the research questions, and a report of statistical significance.

Chapter five summarizes and discusses the major findings, incorporating the meaning of the findings, what was learned from the literature reviewed in chapter two, conclusions, and recommendations for practice and further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Barack Obama, a possible leader of the Democratic Party, in the run for presidency, stated that “as President, I won’t stand for hundreds of thousands of veterans waiting for benefits” (Associated Press, 2007, p.1). Institutions of higher education strive to promote higher learning for students, an education that will not only support them in the future, but also impress valuable experiences about life which will make them grow and mature.

With the growing number of Iraq veterans returning to the United States, there has been an increase in the number of veterans attending colleges and universities. Rowan University alone had 145 veterans in the year 2005-2006, and last year that number increased by 71 students, for a total of 216 veterans attending Rowan University (Arnott, 2007).

To better understand war veterans, the main components of the United States army, and the history of the GI Bill must first be understood. Then, the theoretical framework for this study encompasses Schlossberg’s transition theory and mattering study, and Mezirow’s transformative learning theory.

The United States Army

The United States Army has four values which are instilled in all soldiers: Strength, Character, Will, and Power (U.S. Army Website, 2007). Being one of the largest fighting forces in the entire world, the U.S. Army is divided into three main

components: the Active Army, the Army Reserves, and the National Guard (U.S. Army Website, 2007). The Active Army consisted of more than 491,000 soldiers at the end of 1996 that were on active duty, and on call to respond to orders from the Commander-In-Chief (Congressional Budget Office, 1996). The bulk of the Army's resources are spent on pay, operations, maintenance, and training of these forces, leaving less than \$10 billion for reserve forces (Congressional Budget, Office, 1996).

The Army Reserves, although provided with the same training as full time active recruits, only serve once a month, and are usually able to remain in school and continue their education (U.S. Army Website, 2007). Reservists not only provide security and defense to the United States, but also "human necessities such as food and water, shelter, medical treatment or more during times of emergencies" (U.S. Army, 2007, p.1).

Lastly, the National Guard, also civilians who service the country on a part-time basis, is usually called upon during natural disasters or civil disturbances. The President, however, has the power to activate the National Guard to "assist with federal needs such as combating terrorism abroad, or providing help in famine and war ravaged areas of the world" (U.S. Army, 2007, p.1).

The History of the G.I. Bill

The United States has an unsurpassed system of assistance for veterans, dating back to Abraham Lincoln's words "to care for him who shall have born the battle," which showed the nations commitment to veterans (Medal of Honor Website, 2007). In 1944, President Roosevelt signed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, which is now known as the G.I. Bill of Rights. This bill created much discussion and opposed viewpoints; however the government anticipated economic depression and lack of jobs

after millions of veterans returned from the war and therefore decided to pass the bill (Medal of Honor Website, 2007). In 1947, veterans made up 49% of those admitted into a higher education institution (GI Bill Website, 2007).

The G.I. Bill's main benefits were as follows: It gave servicemen and women the occasion to resume their education by paying tuition and offering monthly living allowances, it provided unemployment checks for those veterans unable to find jobs, as well as job-finding assistance, and it gave home loans to returning soldiers wanting to purchase a home (GI Bill Website, 2007). As of October 1, 2007, the G.I. Bill's institutional training rates for those completing an enlistment of full time three years were \$1,101.00 (GI Bill Website, 2007). The goals of the Bill were accomplished, according to legislation, because "they [veterans] have been compelled to make greater economic sacrifice and every other kind of sacrifice than the rest of us, and are entitled to definite action to help take care of their special problems" (GI Bill Website, 2007, p. 3).

The War in Iraq and its Impact on the Active Defense Force

September 11, 2002 and the fall of the World Trade Towers in New York City, proved to be a difficult time in American history. People were distraught and wanted to receive answers on the reason behind the terrorist attacks, as well as the people behind the attacks. On September 12, 2002, President Bush addressed the United Nations and made his case for war stating that "action will be unavoidable unless Saddam Hussein complies with a litany of past UN resolutions" (Borger & Traynor, 2002, p. 1).

As updated by the U.S. Department of Defense, as of November 16, 2004, 10,726 soldiers were injured in the war: 1361 of them had died, 1004 killed in action, 5174 were wounded in action and could not return to duty, and 4191 were not wounded as severely

and returned to duty. This was considered the largest burden of casualties since the Vietnam War (Gawande, 2004).

With regards to mental health, a survey completed in July 2004 suggested that exposure to combat was greater for those in Iraq than Afghanistan (Hoge et al., 2004). Seventy one to 86% of soldiers and Marines deployed in Iraq had engaged in a firefight and been in direct contact with the enemy, more than 90% reported being shot at, and most reporting handling dead bodies, knowing someone who was injured or killed, as well as killing themselves (Hoge et al., 2004). Outcomes included “major depression, generalized anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder” (Hoge et al., 2004, p.1).

Schlossberg’s Transition Theory

One of the first things Schlossberg, Chickering, and Lynch (1989) discuss in the book *Improving Higher Education Environments for Adults*, is that all adults differ, and therefore cannot be categorized. Schlossberg (1989) has divided resources or deficits for coping with change, in the 4 “S” system: Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies. Situation consists of whether the individual sees a life change as positive, negative, stressful, or important for independence; Self is seeing the person’s history when making transitions, and deciding “is the person basically optimistic and able to deal with ambiguity? If so, he or she will bring to the transition the greatest resource of all: a strong sense of self” (Schlossberg, et al., p.18). Support can either mean financially or emotionally; and lastly, Strategies involves the individual to find ways to cope with transition, whether it be personal, academic, or other (Schlossberg et al., 1989).

Although Chickering’s vectors apply to both traditional-aged students, as well as adult learners, Schlossberg, Chickering and Lynch list the ways they are different,

including multiple responsibilities and demands, more concern for application rather than theory, and more experiences.

The authors discuss how universities can help design programs for adult learners. “Awareness is the first step toward understanding and action. One way to heighten our awareness is to select adult students at random and listen to their experiences of finding their way into the institution, deciding what programs to pursue...” (Schlossberg et al., p.58). By having recruitment activities, information sessions, available financial aid information, and efficient registration, we can start to help these non-traditional students (Schlossberg et al., 1989). A prime example is the Veteran Student’s Association that Rowan University is starting for the increasing veteran population on campus. At the second meeting of the organization, the veterans suggested that they did not have the time to meet in person and therefore would rather have a way to communicate online to plan activities and other veteran needs. This clearly demonstrates what Schlossberg, Lynch & Chickering state that universities and colleges need to find ways to obtain information from students that fit their conditions and schedules.

Schlossberg’s Mattering Study

Although the original term “mattering” came from sociologist Morris Rosenberg, in 1981, Schlossberg conceived the notion that mattering is about feeling as an individual, that we “matter” in people’s life and make a difference (Schlossberg, 1989). Mattering was originally defined as “a motive: the feelings that others depend on us, are interested in us, are concerned with our fate, or experience us as an ego-extension” (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981, p. 165). “Schlossberg found that it was important to adult students at an educational institution to feel they matter and are significant to

others” (Kettle, 2001, p.4). Five foundations, developed by Schlossberg, Lassalle, and Golec (1990), were conceptualized and relate to adult learners. These were: Attention, Importance, Dependence, Ego-extension, and Appreciation (Schlossberg et al.).

In relation to adult, or nontraditional students, Schlossberg et al., identified five focused areas: administration, advising, faculty, multiple roles, and peers.

Administration focuses on how the student perceives the university’s policies and procedures; advising relates to how well the university advisors respond to student questions, student problems, and how well they furnish information about academics to the student; the faculty area conveys how accepted the student feels within the classroom; multiple roles focuses on how well the campus recognizes the demanding adult student schedule; and peers assesses how much the student feels they belong, or matter on campus, whether in or out-of-the classroom (Kettle, 2001).

The five foundations of mattering: attention, importance, dependence, ego-extension, and appreciation, are the basis for Schlossberg et al.’s research (1990). Attention is based on an individual feeling noticed, whether in a new setting, new classroom, or new job (Schlossberg, 1989). Importance is the belief that “the other person cares about what we want, think, and do, or is concerned with our fate...” (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Kettle, 2001, p. 10). Dependence is the back-and-forth pull of feeling dependent on others, and having others depend on us (Kettle, 2001). Ego-extension can relate more significantly to a parent-child relationship, where the parent is proud when the child succeeds, and feels the same similar disappointment when the child does not (Kettle). “To feel appreciated by others for what we are and what we do is to feel we matter to others...sometimes this can be a burden when we fail, but it

also confirms that we matter to someone” (Kettle, p. 11). Lastly, appreciation includes having someone such as an administrator, professor, or advisor, or any other important figure, acknowledge and appreciate the adult student’s efforts (Kettle). By showing to the student that their efforts have not gone unnoticed, the student will more likely to immerse themselves in their learning (Kettle).

Kettle’s study (2001) on nontraditional students mattering on a college campus relates to veterans in higher education. Since most veterans participated in the armed forces for years, they are considered nontraditional students. Kettle shares in her study that nontraditional students are distinguished from traditional students in age, residence, and working. Traditional student ages range from 18 to 22, whereas nontraditional students are upward of 22 years of age (Kettle). With regards to residence, most nontraditional students are negatively impacted by their commuting, which requires “time, energy, and financial resources whether by walking, bicycling, driving or public transportation” (Kettle, p. 23). Lastly, a large majority of nontraditional students have off campus jobs while maintaining a full load of courses, which can have a negative impact (Kettle). “Nontraditional students need different accommodations than traditional students in order to meet their unique needs and enhance their chances of being successful...it remains a challenge to any institution to meet the needs of adult students” (Kettle, p.26).

Mezirow’s Transformative Theory

Mezirow and Associates (2000) explains that adults have an urgent need to understand, learn and make meaning of our personal experiences. Learning is using the

past to lead the way for future action (Mezirow & Associates, 2000). According to

Mezirow:

transformative learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action...involves participation in constructive discourse to use the experience of others to assess reasons justifying these assumptions, and making an action decision based on the resulting insight. (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8)

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning focuses on changing the adult students' assumptions and zoning in on experiences to aid in becoming an autonomous thinker (Mezirow, 1997). Dramatic change in the way we see ourselves and our world is a major component of transformational learning. Through this learning, we are "freed from uncritical acceptance of others' purposes, values, and beliefs" (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p.133).

There are two domains to learning Mezirow took from Jurgen Habermas in 1984: instrumental learning, and communicative learning. Instrumental learning focuses on control and manipulation of others in order to solve problems; whereas communicative learning centers on meaning and understanding others and their values, beliefs and feelings (Mezirow, 2000).

There are four steps to the learning process according to Mezirow and Associates (2000): "Elaborating existing frames of reference, learning new frames of reference, transforming points of view, and transforming habits of mind" (p.19). Elaborating

existing frames of reference means expanding our personal point of view; then by learning new frames of reference, individuals can stumble upon a new group and make them see their “shortcomings;” transforming a point of view comes only when the individual becomes more tolerant and accepting of others (Mezirow, 1997). Only when this occurs does it lead to transforming habits of mind (Mezirow, 1997). By transforming a frame of reference that is seemingly problematic and interpreting it to make it more dependable, is transformative learning (Mezirow & Associates, 2000).

Mezirow states that adult learners usually have short-term targets or objectives they need to accomplish to meet the requirements for something (Mezirow, 1997). As educators, it is best to understand these goals and help adult students reach them (Mezirow, 1997). Mezirow states that “transformative learning is not an add-on. It is the essence of adult education...the goal of adult education is to help the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his or her own values, meanings, and purposes rather than to critically act on those of others” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 11). Adult learners “view learning to think as autonomous, responsible persons” (Mezirow, 1997, p.8). To become a more socially responsible thinker, the educator must help the non-traditional student achieve his or her short-term goal, which aids in instrumental learning (Mezirow, 1997). However, long-term goals take communicative learning (Mezirow, 1997).

Having the experience is not enough and the learner must re-examine himself and whether his or her new meanings are authentic (Merriam et al., 2007). Mezirow and Associates (2000) explains the concept of discourse which involves a “critical assessment of assumptions...leads towards a clearer understanding by tapping collective experience

to arrive at a tentative best judgment” (p.11). By finding a “voice”, the individual can feel his or her inclusion and other people’s dependence on them (Mezirow & Associates, 2000).

With regards to veterans, after returning from war, they must critically assess their experience and reflect on personal past to help them grow into their future self as an adult learner. The army establishes new points of view, which are transformed when the student enters an institution of higher education. As Mezirow (1997) states regarding adult learners:

the process [transformative learning] involves transforming frames of reference through critical reflection of assumptions, validating contested beliefs through discourse, taking action on one’s reflective insight, and critically assessing it. This understanding of the nature of significant adult learning provides the educator with a rationale for selecting appropriate educational practices and actively resisting social and cultural forces that distort and delimit adult learning. (p. 11)

Cohen (1997) mentions how negative experiences can be turned into positive experiences for the student. For example, transformations may occur when the student begins to complete more classwork and understand it, which in turn may transform their self-concept (as cited in Mezirow & Associates, 2000). Mezirow and Associates (2000) state that transformations follow the following 10 phases: a disorienting dilemma, self-examination with feelings of fear, anger or shame, a critical assessment of assumptions, recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared, exploration of options for new roles and relationships, planning a course of action,

acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans, provisional trying of new roles, building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships, a reintegration of one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. "Perspective transformation occurs within the bounds of meaning structures made up of meaning perspectives, which are defined as 'broad sets of predispositions resulting from psycho-cultural assumptions, which determine the horizons of our expectations' and meaning schemes" (Kelley, 2001, p.18).

Kelley (2001) studied adult learners enrolled in an undergraduate program at the University of Alaska. She wanted to describe the characteristics associated with adult learning, as well as determine if questioning, reflecting, and sharing perspectives influenced adult learners. Using focus groups, she found that "the learners' belief that the social interactive nature of their human service educational experience contributed to their learning and understanding supports the basic characteristics associated with adult education as well as the teaching theories of Mezirow's perspective transformation theory" (p. 65).

Universities and their Veteran Support Groups

The University of California, San Diego, created a Veteran Student Association for the purpose of:

ensuring that all veterans are receiving all the benefits entitled to them, providing a link to readjustment counseling services if needed, lobbying at the state and federal levels for increases in benefits for student veterans, providing an atmosphere of great fellowship for like-minded individuals, and assisting in any way in helping our former brothers and sisters in arms

realize their full potential in academia, the workplace and in their social circle. (SDSU Website, 2007)

This organization has a website designed to help veteran students seek the help they may need to make that transition back into a higher education institution after being away for so long. Services include claims assistance, client advocacy, case maintenance, information and referral, program liaison with VA health services, VA veterans centers, and VA regional offices, and veterans service organizations (SDSU Website, 2007). It also shows how an organization can truly make a difference in individuals by focusing on their experiences instead of their isolation (Erickson, 1968).

Similarly, the University of Minnesota provides a Veteran Transition Center where veterans can meet and relax. Services offer breakfast on Mondays and free pizza and soda on Fridays. Ledebuhr, a speaker during the Veteran Appreciation Day, stated that “the climate for veterans has changed significantly...since then, we’ve been trying to get the word out to student veterans on campus that we’re here to serve them and build a support network” (Moore, 2007, p.1). Moreover, Justin Riechers, a junior at the University of Minnesota, stated the importance of having veteran friends and that “having a strong support network can be critical for transitioning students...for some people, it’s hard for them to stay in college if they don’t have a good couple of buddies to hang out with” (Moore, 2007, p.1).

Summary of the Literature Review

The number of veteran students entering institutions of higher education is greatly increasing as Iraq War veterans are returning. Students are realizing the importance of an education and after completing service in Iraq, they are now returning to claim their

benefits. The G.I. Bill of 1944, gave the opportunity for service men and women returning from war, to have a college education paid for by the United States, as well as be able to collect unemployment if jobs were scarce, and give loans so veterans could purchase homes.

The war in Iraq, which preceded the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center in New York City, proved to be a hard time in American history. After less than two years of war, nearly 10,000 soldiers were injured, many died in combat. Studies were conducted and showed that numerous veterans returned with mental health problems and post-traumatic stress disorder, signs of depression, and difficulties in returning to “normal” life.

Schlossberg’s theory of transition centers upon the four Ss for coping with change: Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies. Each of these is a way of thinking for the individual adult student when making important transitions in their lives, such as coming back to school after serving in the army in another country. Schlossberg stresses that universities and colleges need to fit to the students’ schedules, because adult students have very different priorities than traditional college-aged students.

Schlossberg, Lassalle, and Golec’s (1990) research on mattering centers upon five foundations, attention, importance, dependence, ego-extension, and appreciation, and five subscales, administration, advising, faculty, multiple roles, and peers, which relate to the adult learner. The nontraditional student needs to feel as though they matter not only to other peers, but administrators and faculty, as well, which can help smooth their transition back into academia.

Mezirow's theory of transformation focuses four main steps to becoming an independent thinker. He found that by elaborating on a point of view, and establishing new points of view, the individual can transform personal thinking and become more tolerant of others. His theory relates to adult learners which is important for veteran students because they are trying to assess their experience to help them grow as a student.

These theories help understand more profoundly the transition of a veteran student returning from Iraq, back into an institution of higher education, and what physical, emotional or psychological issues they may deal with from the war. Similarly, more focus should be placed on what universities in general can do to meet those needs, similar to the University of California, San Diego, and the first Veteran's Association established in the United States, and the University of Minnesota and their Veteran Transition Center, serving the purpose of aiding veteran students' transition back into "regular life."

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

The study was conducted at Rowan University, in Glassboro, New Jersey. The college is a leading public university known for its beauty and moderate price. *US News & World Report* rated Rowan University in the “Top Tier” of Northern Regional Universities.

First opened in 1923 with a mission to train elementary school teachers, Rowan has evolved into a comprehensive institution offering degrees from the baccalaureate to doctorate. The school is composed of approximately 10,000 students, with more than 150 clubs and organizations, 39 masters programs, and a doctoral degree in educational leadership. It is divided into six academic colleges consisting of: Business, Communication, Education, Engineering, Fine and Performing Arts, Liberal Arts and Sciences (Rowan University website, 2007).

Population and Sample Selection

The target population for this study was all veteran students enrolled for the 2007-2008 academic year. A veteran is defined as an individual who has previously been active in the United States armed forces and has gone to another country to serve the United States. The available population was all veteran students at Rowan University who were enrolled for the 2007-2008 academic year. A convenience sample was selected from all veteran students who completed the survey. There were a total of a 103

undergraduate veterans at Rowan University. The quantitative study aimed to collect responses from 75% of the population, while the qualitative study aimed to conduct 4-6 interviews with individuals.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument (Appendix A) is based on the Schlossberg et al's. survey created in 1990, adaptations made to include both traditional and nontraditional students. The instrument includes 45 items with 19 from the original *Mattering Scales for Adult Students in Higher Education* (MHE) survey. The items followed a Likert Scale with values used as follows: SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, and SA=Strongly Agree. The instrument was formatted with a disclaimer and directions. An IRB application was also completed (Appendix D) and permission was received in January 2008 to use the survey for data collection. An incentive, to provide each voluntary student who completed the survey, was to let the veterans know that any issue or problem that were brought up either in the instrument or during an interview, would be addressed with the Dean of Students.

The self-designed interview schedule (Appendix C) was completed to determine what Rowan University could do to better serve the veteran students. The interview consisted of nine questions, designed to ask the interviewee about their feelings towards returning to college, their past military service, their feelings towards the campus and the services made available, how their time on campus is divided, and what recommendations they may have to improve the campus to the needs of all undergraduate veteran students. These were reviewed and approved by Dr. Sisco, and the IRB. A follow-up list of questions was sent to the interviewees a few weeks following the first

interview, to probe further into what recommendations they have for Rowan University towards veteran students, and how they feel about the new student organization, VSO. Validity and reliability was determined for both instruments by having an advisor and an administrator review the questions to make sure they are easy to comprehend.

Data Collection Procedures

Permission was granted from the Institutional Review Board in a letter mailed in January (Appendix D) to ask veteran students to complete a survey, and/or to participate in an interview. The surveys, as well as the interview questions were administered during the spring 2008 semester. For the qualitative portion of this research, an informal letter was distributed before each interview took place, and consent was included at the bottom to be signed and returned to the researcher to demonstrate voluntary involvement in the study (Appendix B). Eight individuals were emailed and asked to be interviewed for the study; 50% responded, and four were interviewed. The interviews took place either in person, by telephone, or via email. Although no tape recording was used, quotes were recorded by the researcher. The interview instructions made it clear that all interview questions and answers were confidential and persons would not be identified.

For the quantitative portion of the research, the veteran students were sent the survey by mail, and were also emailed a version of the survey, through the Veteran Affairs Office, at the Academic Success Center. Any veteran student who entered the Academic Success Center during the months of January, February and March, were given a survey to complete. Also, new students were sent a postcard in the mail asking them to contact the researcher to participate in a short survey. All students were given over one

month to complete the survey. The survey instructions made it clear that no one would be identified, and personal identity would not be disclosed

Data Analysis

The independent variables in this study were comprised of current school status, expected graduation date, veteran status, and places the individual has served. The dependent variables were past and present college experiences, attitudes of veteran students towards their military experience, and towards school and their personal life. Variations in student attitudes with regards to Schlossberg's five focus areas of mattering in college were explored using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation for research question one.

Qualitative analysis of the interview data were analyzed using content analysis, by identifying main themes of each response (Sisco, 1981). Research questions two, three, and four were answered through the use of the qualitative data. Questions four and nine of the interview schedule focused on Mezirow's transformative theory. Mezirow claims that adult learners usually have short-term targets or goals they need to accomplish to meet the requirements for something. Question four of the interview asked how helpful the G.I. Bill is and how easy it is to receive the benefits, while question nine specifically asked what needs students have while at Rowan University.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Study findings are the result of a survey and participant interviews collected over an 8-week period to find the comfort level of undergraduate veterans on the college campus, as well as their educational needs, and recommendations they may have. Survey responses were coded and analyzed using the SPSS computer software, while content analysis was used to interpret the interviews (Sisco, 1981).

Quantitative Profile of the Sample

The participants in this study were undergraduate veteran students enrolled at Rowan University during the 2007-2008 school year. A total of 103 veterans were sent a preliminary email in November regarding the upcoming study. Fifty-one veteran students participated in the survey. The survey participants were considered a convenience sample because of their willingness to participate in the study. While selected demographic information was not collected, the university does have some information regarding the undergraduate veteran students. Table 4.1 shows that 78% are males, while 22% are females. The average age of the majority of those students ranges from 21 to 29. Table 4.2 demonstrates the number of veteran students of each age between 21 and 29. Although the university does not record what branch of military service the veterans belong to, it does contain the information about their military chapter, which helped determine their military background. Thirty-two males and 12 females are in Chapter 1606. Twenty-nine males and 5 females are in Chapter 30, 7 males and 3 females are in

Chapter 31, and 12 males and 3 females are in remaining chapters. Table 4.3 shows the percentage of veteran students in each chapter. A response rate of 50% was yielded.

Table 4.1

Gender of Veterans

	Frequency	%
Male	80	78
Female	23	22
Total	103	100

Table 4.2

Age of Veteran Students

Age	Frequency	%
21-23	23	22.3
24-26	25	24.3
27-29	19	18.4
Other	36	35
Total	103	100

Table 4.3

Number of Male and Female Veterans in Each Chapter at Rowan University

Chapter	Male or Female	Frequency	%
1606	Male	32	31.1
1606	Female	12	11.7
30	Male	29	28.2
30	Female	5	4.8
31	Male	7	6.7
31	Female	3	2.9
Other	Male	12	11.7
Other	Female	3	2.9
Total	Male and Female	103	100

Qualitative Profile of the Sample

To enhance this study, four individuals who completed the survey consented to be interviewed. The participants in this study were undergraduate veterans enrolled at

Rowan University during the 2007-2008 school year. From the list of people who responded to the first email in November 2007, a purposive sampling was chosen based on previous military experience, places stationed, and year in undergraduate study. Eight individuals were emailed and asked to participate in an interview for the study. Out of those, a 50% rate was yielded and four individuals responded and were interviewed using the questions approved by the IRB. A follow up questionnaire consisting of four questions, was sent out to the interview participants to critically think about and respond, in order to give a better idea of what veteran needs are on the Rowan University campus.

Quantitative Analysis of the Data

Fifty-one percent of the undergraduate veteran students responded to the survey sent out by mail or email, or handed out at the Academic Success Center. The survey, based on Schlossberg et al.(1990), sought to define whether undergraduate veteran students felt they mattered on a college campus.

Research Question 1: What do selected Rowan University undergraduate veterans report regarding the five focus areas of mattering on a college campus?

Schlossberg et al. identified five focus areas of mattering in college: administration, advising, faculty, multiple roles, and peers. The survey sought to define statements relevant to these elements. Administration focuses on what the student perceives of the university's policies and procedures. Table 4.4 contains the highest rated statement with regards to the administration focus area, "I don't have time to complete the administrative tasks this institution requires," where 80.3% agreed with this statement, and 11.8% disagreed. The next item reflective of collaboration, "the administration sets things up to be easy for them, not the veteran students," had a mean

value of 2.88, standard deviation value of 0.973. Five-point-nine percent strongly disagreed, 31.4% disagreed, 23.5% agreed, and 3.9% strongly agreed with this statement. Thirty-five-point-three percent neither agreed nor disagreed. In another item, “the administration seems to consider veteran students priorities as important,” the mean value was 3.49 (*SD* 1.065). Twenty-five-point-five percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed, 62.7% either agreed or strongly agreed, and 11.8% neither agreed nor disagreed. Most veteran students agree that “the administration makes efforts to accommodate veteran students,” making 66.6% agree or strongly agree with this statement, 9.8% disagree, and 23.5% neutral. When asked if “administrative offices are not open at times needed,” with a mean value of 2.47, (*SD* 0.946), 15.7% of the students agreed, while 64.7% disagreed that administrative offices are open when needed. Eleven-point-seven percent also agreed that “the university does not commit enough resources to off-campus or online courses,” while 33.3% agreed that they do. This statement had a mean value of 3.25, (*SD* 0.868). Seventy-point-five percent of students agreed that the “administrative staff is helpful in answering questions,” whose mean value was 3.65, (*SD* 0.844).

Table 4.4

Survey Items Pertaining to Schlossberg's First Focus Area on Administration

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
The administration sets things up to be easy for them, not the veteran students <i>N=51, SD=0.973</i> <i>M=2.88</i>	3	5.9	16	31.4	18	35.3	12	23.5	2	3.9
The administration seems to consider veteran student priorities as important <i>N=51, SD=1.065</i> <i>M=3.49</i>	1	2.0	12	23.5	6	11.8	25	49.0	7	13.7
The administrative rules and regulations are clear to me <i>N=51, SD=1.021</i> <i>M=3.61</i>	1	2.0	9	17.6	7	13.7	26	51.0	8	15.7
I don't have time to complete the administrative tasks this institution requires <i>N=51, SD=0.764</i> <i>M=2.24</i>	4	7.8	37	72.5	4	7.8	6	11.8	0	0
The administrative offices are not open at times I need them <i>N=51, SD=0.946</i> <i>M=2.47</i>	4	7.8	29	56.9	10	19.6	6	11.8	2	3.9
The university does not commit enough resources to off-campus/online courses <i>N=51, SD= 0.868</i> <i>M=3.25</i>	6	11.8	20	39.2	0	0	19	37.3	6	11.8
Administrative staff is helpful in answering my questions <i>N=51, SD=0.844</i> <i>M=3.65</i>	1	2.0	5	9.8	9	17.6	32	62.7	4	7.8
The administration makes every effort to accommodate veteran students <i>N=51, SD=0.868</i> <i>M=3.75</i>	0	0	5	9.8	12	23.5	25	49.0	9	17.6

The next item reflective of collaboration dealt with the second focus area, advising. Advising is defined as how well the Rowan University advisors respond to the students' questions, problems, and how well they furnish information about academics to the students. Table 4.5 shows these items in order of the highest ranked based on the negativity of the students with regards to advisors. The highest percentage of veteran students disagreed with the statement that "my academic advisor doesn't seem to remember things we have discussed before," making 23.5% strongly disagree, 27.5% disagree, 9.8% agree, 15.7% strongly agree, and 23.5% neither agree nor disagree. The statement, "there has always been an advisor available to talk to if I have a question," had 19.6% disagreeing, and a majority, 64.7% agreeing. The score mean was 3.49 (*SD* 1.102). Seventy-four-point-five percent of students agreed that their "advisor has office hours at times they are on campus," while 17.7% disagreed with this statement. Similarly, the statement, "if my advisor doesn't know the answer to my questions, he or she will seek out the answers for me," had positive responses with 33.3% agreeing, 25.5% strongly agreeing, 5.9% strongly disagreeing, 7.8% disagreeing, and 27.5% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Table 4.5

Survey Items Pertaining to Schlossberg's Second Focus Area on Advising

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
My academic advisor doesn't seem to remember things we have discussed before <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.366 <i>M</i> =2.67	12	23.5	14	27.5	12	23.5	5	9.8	8	15.7
There has always been an advisor available to talk to if I have a question <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.102 <i>M</i> =3.49	4	7.8	6	11.8	8	15.7	27	52.9	6	11.8
My advisor has office hours at times I am on campus <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.021 <i>M</i> =3.61	3	5.9	6	11.8	4	7.8	33	64.7	5	9.8
If my advisor doesn't know the answer to my questions, he or she will seek out the answers for me <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.128 <i>M</i> =3.65	3	5.9	4	7.8	14	27.5	17	33.3	13	25.5

The third focus area Schlossberg et al. (1990) focused on is faculty. The faculty area conveys how accepted the student feels with the professors and within the classroom. The survey contained 10 questions regarding the faculty and veteran students. All statistics demonstrated that most veteran students agreed faculty members were sensitive and caring. The highest statistic for the question, "I sometimes feel my professors want me to hurry up and finish speaking," yielded a mean score of 2.16 (*SD* 1.102), with 78.5% disagreeing, and 17.6% agreeing. The next highest rated item, "my professors sometimes ignore my comments or questions," with a mean score of 2.22 (*SD* 1.006), had 76.5% of veteran students disagree, and 13.7% agreeing. Seventy-two-point-six percent of students agreed that "the classroom atmosphere encouraged them to speak

out in class,” while only 23.5% disagreed. Sixty-eight-point-six percent however, felt that “their experience-based comments were accepted by their professors.” This statement was the highest rated negative statement towards faculty. Only 31.3% thought their experience-based comments were accepted by faculty. “My questions seem to put faculty members on the defensive,” yielded a mean score of 2.55 (*SD* 1.006). Table 4.6 shows that 54.9% disagreed, 7.8% strongly disagreed, 17.6% agreed, and 3.9% strongly agreed with this statement. When asked if “classes were offered at times that are good for them,” 68.6% responded that they were, but 23.5% responded that they were not. Table 4.6 also shows four other questions with regards to faculty, such as “the faculty and administrators are sensitive to my other responsibilities,” “my professors interpret assertiveness as a challenge to their authority,” “my professors seem to recognize other students but not me,” and “some of the jokes my professors tell me make me feel uncomfortable.”

Table 4.6

Survey Items Pertaining to Schlossberg's Third Focus Area on Faculty

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
My questions seem to put faculty members on the defensive <i>N=51, SD=1.006</i> <i>M=2.55</i>	4	7.8	28	54.9	8	15.7	9	17.6	2	3.9
I sometimes feel my professors want me to hurry up and finish speaking <i>N=51, SD=1.102</i> <i>M=2.16</i>	14	27.5	26	51.0	2	3.9	7	13.7	2	3.9
My professors sometimes ignore my comments or questions <i>N=51, SD=1.006</i> <i>M=2.22</i>	10	19.6	29	56.9	5	9.8	5	9.8	2	3.9
The classroom atmosphere encourages me to speak out in class <i>N=51, SD=1.097</i> <i>M=3.61</i>	2	3.9	10	19.6	2	3.9	29	56.9	8	15.7
My experience-based comments are accepted by my professors <i>N=51, SD=1.017</i> <i>M=3.75</i>	0	0	9	17.6	7	13.7	23	45.1	12	23.5
Classes are offered at times that are good for me <i>N=51, SD=1.332</i> <i>M=3.49</i>	8	15.7	4	7.8	4	7.8	25	49.0	10	19.6
The faculty and admin. are sensitive to my other responsibilities <i>N=51, SD=1.2006</i> <i>M=3.53</i>	6	11.8	4	7.8	6	11.8	27	52.9	8	15.7
My professors interpret assertiveness as a challenge to their authority <i>N=51, SD=1.175</i> <i>M=2.74</i>	6	11.8	20	39.2	9	17.6	11	21.6	4	7.8
My professors seem to recognize other students but not me <i>N=51, SD=0.737</i> <i>M=1.76</i>	20	39.2	24	47.1	6	11.8	1	2.0	0	0
Some of the jokes my professors tell me make me feel uncomfortable <i>N=51, SD=1.020</i> <i>M=1.86</i>	22	43.1	21	41.2	2	3.9	5	9.8	1	2.0

The fourth focus area of mattering in college is multiple roles. There were various statements throughout the survey that dealt with different problems or issues that students may have to deal with while attending the university. The highest ranking comment, “the university’s policy of transfer credits penalizes veteran students,” yielded a mean score of 3.27 (*SD* 1.185), and had 74.5% agree, and 29.4% disagree. “The school newspaper doesn’t discuss student issues that are relevant to me,” suggests that 43.2% agreed with this statement, 7.9% disagreed, and 49.0% were neutral. “Campus rules and regulations seem to have been made for someone who is a traditional college student,” illustrated that 35.3% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement, but 33.4% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Another high ranking statement, “the university offers alternatives to the traditional semester-length courses,” had 41.1% of students disagreeing that there were alternatives offered, and 19.6% indicating there were. Similarly, 56.9% of veteran students feel “their activity feels are not spent in a way that is meaningful to them,” while 17.7% feel that it is. The statement “I sometimes feel alone and isolated at the university,” demonstrated that 39.2% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 51.0% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement, and 9.8% were neutral. Sixty-eight-point-six percent did not think it was “hard for them to go back or enter the school environment,” while 25.5% believed it was. Another positive high ranking statement, “there has always been someone on campus that could help me when I had a question or problem,” with a mean score of 3.84 (*SD* 0.925), had 80.3% agree, and 9.8% disagree. This statement had a close tie with 49.1% of students “feeling out of place in the classroom,” and 51% disagreeing. Seventy-point-five percent of veteran

students felt “that assistance was available to help them with new technology, such as internet, or webct,” while 13.7% disagreed. All data are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

Survey Items Pertaining to Schlossberg’s Fourth Focus Area on Multiple Roles

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
The school newspaper doesn’t discuss student issues that are relevant to me <i>N=51, SD=0.777</i> <i>M=3.39</i>	1	2.0	3	5.9	25	49.0	19	37.3	3	5.9
I will have a hard time finishing my degree because of time limits completing course requirements <i>N=51, SD=0.977</i> <i>M=2.25</i>	12	23.5	21	41.2	11	21.6	7	13.7	0	0
The university’s policy of transfer credits penalizes veteran students <i>N=51, SD=1.185</i> <i>M=3.27</i>	3	5.9	12	23.5	13	25.5	14	27.5	9	17.6
It’s hard for me to go back or enter the school environment <i>N=51, SD=1.250</i> <i>M=2.27</i>	17	33.3	18	35.3	3	5.9	11	21.6	2	3.9
There has always been someone on campus that could help me when I had a question or problem <i>N=51, SD=0.925</i> <i>M=3.84</i>	2	3.9	3	5.9	5	9.8	32	62.7	9	17.6
Sometimes I feel out of place in the classroom <i>N=51, SD=1.319</i> <i>M=2.98</i>	6	11.8	20	39.2	0	0	19	37.3	6	11.8
Assistance is available to help me with new technology <i>N=51, SD=1.045</i> <i>M=3.55</i>	5	9.8	2	3.9	8	15.7	32	62.7	4	7.8
It takes too long to register or correct registration problems <i>N=51, SD=1.111</i> <i>M=2.25</i>	13	25.5	23	45.1	6	11.8	7	13.7	2	3.9

The university offers alternatives to the traditional semester-length courses <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.002 <i>M</i> =2.61	9	17.6	12	23.5	20	39.2	10	19.6	0	0
I feel my activity fees are spent in a way that is meaningful to me <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.095 <i>M</i> =2.37	13	25.5	16	31.4	13	25.5	8	15.7	1	2.0
Departmental rules sometimes make my goals difficult or impossible <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.193 <i>M</i> =2.76	7	13.7	18	35.3	10	19.6	12	23.5	4	7.8
Campus rules and regulations seem to have been made for someone who is a traditional college student <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.140 <i>M</i> =3.02	4	7.8	14	27.5	16	31.4	11	21.6	6	11.8
I sometimes feel alone and isolated at the university <i>N</i> =51, <i>SD</i> =1.451 <i>M</i> =2.88	10	19.6	16	31.4	5	9.8	10	19.6	10	19.6

The fifth focus area of mattering in college is peers. Peers assess how much the student feels they belong, or matter on campus, whether inside or outside of the classroom environment. There are eight items on the survey that pertain to peers and how veteran students feel while on the Rowan University campus. The highest ranked item, “my experience sometimes gets in the way of my interactions with other students,” had a mean of 2.88 (*SD* 1.275), and 43.1% agreed with this statement, while 53% disagreed. There was a tie in the statement “unless there is another veteran in the class, no one really understands how hard it is to be here,” where the mean was 3.18 (*SD* 1.244). Forty-one-point-two percent agreed with this statement, and 41.2% disagreed with this statement. Fifteen-point-seven percent neither agreed nor disagreed. When asked if “students get support from classmates when they need it,” 70.6% said agreed or

strongly agreed, while 13.7% disagreed. The statement, “I feel like I fit in my classes,” yielded a response of 23.5% who disagreed, and 74.5% who agreed. The mean was 3.63 (*SD* 1.148). When asked, “I have a good relationship with my classmates,” mean of 3.98 (*SD* 0.787), 76.5% said they did, while 23.5% disagreed. However, when stated, “fellow students don’t seem to listen to me when I share my experiences,” only 7.8% agreed with this statement, and 86.3% disagreed. Seventy-four-point-five percent of veteran students also felt they had “adequate opportunities to get to know fellow students,” while 15.7% did not agree. Lastly, when asked to confide whether or not they feel “welcome on campus,” 19.6% responded they do not, while 84.3% responded they did. All responses are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

Survey Items Pertaining to Schlossberg's Fifth Focus Area on Peers

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I get support from my classmates when I need it <i>N=51, SD=0.929</i> <i>M=3.76</i>	0	0	7	13.7	8	15.7	26	51.0	10	19.6
I feel like I fit in my classes <i>N=51, SD=1.148</i> <i>M=3.63</i>	3	5.9	9	17.6	1	2.0	29	56.9	9	17.6
Fellow students don't seem to listen to me when I share my experiences <i>N=51, SD=0.821</i> <i>M=1.92</i>	15	29.4	29	56.9	3	5.9	4	7.8	0	0
Unless there is another veteran in the class, no one really understands how hard it is to be here <i>N=51, SD=1.244</i> <i>M=3.18</i>	2	3.9	19	37.3	8	15.7	12	23.5	10	19.6
I have adequate opportunities to get to know fellow students <i>N=51, SD=1.006</i> <i>M=3.71</i>	2	3.9	6	11.8	5	9.8	30	58.8	8	15.7
My experience sometimes gets in the way of my interactions with other students <i>N=51, SD=1.275</i> <i>M=2.88</i>	6	11.8	21	41.2	2	3.9	17	33.3	5	9.8
I feel welcome on campus <i>N=51, SD=1.041</i> <i>M=3.73</i>	4	7.8	2	3.9	6	11.8	31	60.8	8	15.7
I have a good relationship with my classmates <i>N=51, SD=0.787</i> <i>M=3.98</i>	0	0	2	3.9	10	19.6	26	51.0	13	25.5

Qualitative Analysis of the Data

The sample consisted of four veteran students of various military experience, who volunteered to be interviewed for the purpose of this study. They were contacted via

email and remained in contact until the interview process had been completed. The interview process was analyzed using a content analysis procedure. Student A was a female, who served in Operation Iraq Freedom but was actually stationed in Jordan, 90 miles from the Iraqi border. She is a senior and hopes to graduate in May. She was a medical technician in the US Air Force and was also a certified telemetry technician. She later went to Jordan to set up an e-meds team, and a hospital in the middle of the desert. It was her job, as well as others, to stabilize injured military coming from Iraq and going to Germany. She was on duty for 67 days and then went home, spending the rest of her enlistment in the Internal Medicine Clinic, where she was supervisor of the Physical Health Assessment program and took vitals as well as made sure lower ranking Airmen did their job. Then she came back to New Jersey and began school.

Student B was deployed in Egypt, Israel and the New Orleans Hurricane Relief. He is a male and currently a sophomore, first starting at Atlantic Cape Community College, was then deployed, and then transferred to Rowan University. He was in the army National Guard and participated in different military schools, such as combat life savior course, airborne school, air assault school, Expert Infantry School, Force Skills competition, and the primary leadership development course.

Student C was a female who felt she was fortunate to work with the military police as a camp service guard. She was responsible for the policing of the base, escorting marines to and from the Brig, and setting monthly achievement plans to help marines achieve their position back after receiving Non-Judicial Punishment. She provided shelter for more than 200 military personnel, and participated in field operations. She achieved the status of Sergeant and was responsible for the welfare and

the readiness of physical training along with supervising and inspected marines' uniforms, quarters and any other required structure in preparing for tactical missions.

Student D was a male and it was his third time returning to school. He was deployed twice since the September 11th attacks, both to Afghanistan and to Iraq. He was in the army from 1991 to 1995, earned the GI Bill, finished his term then from 1995 to present, joined the National Guard, Air Force. He had previously received his Associate's Degree from Camden County College and worked in computers. Currently he is finishing a double major at Rowan.

Table 4.9 demonstrates past military experience of the individuals interviewed. The main theme that emerged was working for the Air Force; however, as previously mentioned one student worked for the Military Police, and one for the Army National Guard. Table 4.10 shows that half the students interviewed felt that being in the military does not differentiate them from other students, and the other half felt that it does. Comments by one student said that "I guess you could say that I have a greater appreciation for things," while another student stated that "I am a better student than younger ones I have talked to. I am older and have gone through and gotten over my partying stage. I am focused and determined to get done...I really value my education more. The military taught me to respect those in charge, something I see missing in a lot of the other students. I also know how to handle freedom and responsibility. I can manage my time better."

Table 4.9

Results of Content Analysis for “Can you describe to me your past military experience, i.e. what branch of the military?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Air Force	2	50	1
Military Police	1	25	2
Army National Guard	1	25	3
Total	4	100	

Table 4.10

Results of Content Analysis for “Do you find that having been in the military differentiates you from other college students?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Yes	2	50	1
No	2	50	2
Total	4	100	

Research Question 2: What are the educational needs of returning veterans?

The first interview question that dealt with the research question, “what recommendations do you have for Rowan University, i.e. provisions in services, to help your time on campus be more veteran-friendly,” had four different themes. Table 4.11 displays the services the interviewees believed they needed in order to be better accommodated on campus.

Table 4.11

Results of Content Analysis for “What recommendations do you have for Rowan University, i.e. provisions in services, to help your time on campus be more veteran friendly?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Parking	1	20	1
Increase in Night Classes	1	20	2
Another Veteran Affairs Rep.	1	20	3
Nothing to do here, I go home	1	20	4
Total	5	100	

Table 4.12 dealt with the interview question, “what are your educational and social needs,” in which there were five recurring themes. One individual stated two items that were necessary for academic success: having a computer, and difficulty in receiving benefits. The highest recurring theme was that the Veteran Affairs Office and the school administration did an outstanding job of supporting the veteran students, especially with leave of absence, stating “I never missed a cut off date. No professor has given me a hard time; they will sign me in, or call the registrar’s office. I came back from Iraq in March and extensions were put in for me so I did not have to pay fees...” The other individual who agreed with the supportive staff stated that “it has been no challenge to be at Rowan. I really like the support net and I am impressed by the resources they provide to assist one in achieving his or her degree.”

Table 4.12

Results of Content Analysis for “What are your educational and social needs?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Great job with Leave of Absence	2	28.6	1
Great support from staff	2	28.6	2
More respect from professors	1	14.3	3
Difficulty receiving benefits	1	14.3	4
A computer	1	14.3	5
Total	7	100	

Research Question 3: How well do the veterans report that Rowan is meeting those needs?

There were three questions in the interview process that helped determine how the veterans feel the university meets their needs. The first deals with their status on campus, “are you a traditional student, i.e. do you live on campus, are you a full time student, and maybe have a part time job only,” and it was determined that two students lived right off campus and two students lived off campus. One of the students that lives off campus

mentioned that she hates being on the campus and only comes for classes. In her interview she stated “I never wanted to live on campus. I had to live in dorms my first three years in the Air Force, so I got out of that system. I would never live on campus, ever!” Table 4.13 details on the frequency and percentage related to this question.

Table 4.13

Results of Content Analysis for “Are you a traditional student, i.e. do you live on campus, are you a full time student, and maybe have a part time job?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Lives right off campus	2	50	1
Lives completely off campus	2	50	2
Total	4	100	

The second question posed, “discussing the G.I. Bill, was it difficult for you to understand what it offered and how to access those services,” shown in Table 4.14, had a 50% rate who said that they did not know very much regarding the services. However, one individual stated that it was very user-friendly, and another mentioned that it was “quick and easy.”

Table 4.14

Results of Content Analysis for “Discussing the G.I. Bill, was it difficult for you to understand what it offered and how to access those services?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Does not know much about it	2	50	1
Very user friendly	1	25	2
Quick and easy	1	25	3
Total	4	100	

Lastly, the third question asked veteran students whether they liked the campus atmosphere, and it was found that one student completely avoided campus and felt he/she did not connect at all with the students, while the other three students found something on campus they could connect to. One student loved campus because he was involved in a

fraternity, another loved campus because his major was exciting, and the last individual loved campus because of the resources made available to the students. Results are located in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

Results of Content Analysis for “With regards to campus, how do you like the campus atmosphere? Why or why not?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Love it→Fraternity involvement	1	25	1
Love it→Major involvement	1	25	2
Love it→Great resources	1	25	3
Avoids campus as much as possible	1	25	4
Total	4	100	

Research Question 4: What recommendations do they make to help improve the university’s services to veterans?

The last two questions in the interview asked the veteran students what else they would like to be informed about and how can their needs be better met. Most of the participants identified the same feelings and thoughts listed in Table 4.13. Although, when asked if there is anything they wanted to add to the interview process, the highest recurring theme was two students mentioning they were satisfied, one student had no thought to this and nothing else to add, and one student wanted more information on tuition assistance programs. Results are located in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16

Results of Content Analysis for “How can the needs of returning war veterans be better met? And is there anything I did not ask that you would like to inform me of?”

Theme	Frequency	%	Rank Order
Satisfied with Rowan	2	50	1
No extending thoughts	1	25	2
Information on tuition assistance			
Extension	1	25	3
Total	4	100	

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

This study investigated how selected war veterans, using Schlossberg's transition theory and mattering study, and Mezirow's transformative learning theory, transitioned back into higher education after serving in any military setting. The study was also designed to better understand what veteran students on campus need in the educational or social setting. The subjects in this study were undergraduate veteran students who had or are still in the military, and for some, who had left the country for the military.

There are currently 103 veterans at Rowan University. The methodology included adapting *The Mattering Scales for Adult Students in Higher Education* (MHE) (Schlossberg et al., 1990). The adaptation was necessary because the MHE was originally developed for adult students, and this study focused on veteran students. The survey was distributed by email to all veteran students attending Rowan during the 2008 spring semester. An interview protocol, consisting of eleven questions, was used with four veterans who participated in the survey and agreed to be interviewed.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data from the completed surveys. Content analysis was used to analyze the data from the completed interviews.

Quantitative Discussion of the Findings

Based on the findings from the survey, most undergraduate veterans reported to be content with their college experience at Rowan University. Schlossberg's transition theory focuses on the 4 Ss for coping with change: Situation, Self, Support, and

Strategies (1989). Situation consists of how an individual sees a life change; self is the history of an individual; support can be financial or emotional; and strategies are ways an individual copes with the transition (Schlossberg et al., 1989). The knowledge base confirms that many adult students feel they have well-transitioned into the university setting.

Schlossberg's mattering theory (1989) identified five focused areas: administration, advising, faculty, multiple roles, and peers. The MHE generated scores in the five subscales related to the college experience. Using a Likert Scale: SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, and SA=Strongly Agree, the respondents answered the questions based on their perceptions of the Rowan University experience. A numerical value of 1=SD, 2=D, 3=N, 4=A, and 5=SA was then assigned to each answer. Overall, the veteran students surveyed reported being satisfied with these five areas of Rowan. Administration focused on how the student perceived the university's policies and procedures. Twenty seven point five percent agreed or strongly agreed that the university would rather set up policies and procedures to make it easier on themselves rather than the veteran students. The data also show that about 25.5% disagreed that the administration seemed to consider veteran students priorities as important, but more than half agreed with this statement. Lastly, the survey asked whether the administration makes efforts to accommodate veteran students; 66.6% of the subjects surveyed agreed with this statement. Fewer than 10% disagreed and surprisingly, 23.5% were neutral and did not comment. Based on the responses, more than half of the veteran student population seemed content with the way the administration handled business at the university. A total of 9.8% disagreed with this

statement. Comparing these findings to the Kettle study (2001), she found that traditional students felt significantly more valued than nontraditional students “because they perceived that campus policies and procedures were more sensitive to their concerns than nontraditional students did” (p.167).

The second focus area was advising, which related to how well the university advisors responded to the students. The survey asked whether an academic advisor remembered what was discussed in sessions, and whether they would seek out answers for the students. Again, most of the veterans were positive about this aspect, agreeing that an advisor does make the effort, remembers conversations, and is competent in answering questions. Fifty one percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that academic advisors do not remember what was previously discussed. However, 25.5% reported having a negative experience and believed that advisors do not recall previous conversations during meetings. Moreover, 13.7% strongly disagreed that their advisor will seek out answers if they cannot respond to a question asked. Yet, out of those surveyed, 58.8% thought that advisors would go above and beyond to retrieve answers to questions posed. Kettle (2001) compared the responses of traditional and nontraditional students and found that traditional students felt they mattered more than nontraditional students because they perceived advisors provided more attention to their questions and concerns.

The third focus area was faculty, which conveyed how accepted the students felt in the classroom. Based on the knowledge base, the classroom is also fundamental in making a student feel welcome and accepted on campus (Schlossberg, 1989). In this instance, most students disagreed with the negative statements such as the faculty not

being sensitive to other responsibilities, or their non-recognition of the veteran students. However, there were still a percentage of students, 19.6%, who felt faculty members were not sensitive to other responsibilities they may have. A total of 21.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their questions put faculty members on the defensive, and an even greater number of 29.4% of veteran students surveyed felt that professors interpreted their assertiveness as a challenge to their authority. Similarly, a smaller 11.8% agreed that jokes told in class by a professor made them uncomfortable. However, only 2% of the students thought their professors recognized other students but not them, which suggests that veteran students are being recognized in the classroom but a quarter of them still feel as though they are not taking part the same way other students are.

The fourth focus area was multiple roles which were defined by Schlossberg et al. (1990), as how well the campus recognizes the demanding adult student schedule. Two questions stood out from the quantitative analysis, and those were in relation to campus rules and feeling isolated or alone. Attention and importance are two out of the five foundations of Schlossberg, Lasalle, and Golec's study on mattering (1990). Attention is based on an individual feeling noticed, whether in a new setting, new classroom, or new job (Schlossberg, 1989). Importance is the belief another person cares about what the individual in question feels, wants or thinks (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). Based on the knowledge base, the number of people who disagreed that the rules and regulations of the campus were made for someone other than themselves, and those who agreed the opposite were close. Similarly, when it comes to feelings of aloneness and isolation at the university, almost 40% did not feel what Schlossberg et al. (1990) describe as attention and importance, and 50% of the veterans surveyed did. Another Schlossberg et

al. (1990) foundation dealt with appreciation, which is described as having someone in a position on campus, acknowledge and appreciate the adult student's efforts (Kettle, 2001). Much like adult students wanting to be recognized for their efforts and responsibilities, as Schlossberg et al. (1990) suggest, veteran students want to be recognized for their efforts for the country. Even the G.I. Bill's main legislation states that the veterans had to make such sacrifice that they are entitled to assistance from the federal government (GI Bill Website, 2007). A survey question asked whether the school newspaper discussed issues relevant to the veteran student, and almost 45% stated that the newspaper did not discuss issues relevant to them. In Kettle's study (2001), she found that traditional students felt they "mattered more on campus than nontraditional students because they perceived that the campus acknowledged competing demands on their time more than nontraditional students did" (p. 186).

The fifth area of focus was peers, which according to Schlossberg et al. (1990), peers assess how much the student feels they belong, or matter on campus, whether in or out-of-the classroom. Fifty one percent of students agreed to receiving support from classmates, and more than 70% felt as though they fit in the classes. However, 43.1% of students felt that unless there was another veteran in the class, no one really understands how hard it is to be there. Although more than 60% of students felt they had adequate opportunities to get to know fellow students, and 75% of veterans felt welcome on campus, there is still 41% of students who felt their experiences sometimes got in the way of their interaction with other students.

Kettle's (2001) study on nontraditional students mattering on a college campus relates to veterans in higher education. Kettle shares that nontraditional students are

distinguished from traditional students in age, residence, and work. Kettle comments that most traditional students are upwards of 22 years of age, which is similar to this student where the age range is 21 to 29. According to her study, traditional students rated the dimensions of administration, advising, multiple roles, and peers significantly higher than nontraditional students, which meant they perceived they mattered more on their campus in those areas than nontraditional students (Kettle, 2001). Her study also showed that administration dimension had the lowest mean scores of all the dimensions: “traditional students ($M 2.94, SD 0.49$) rated administration significantly higher than nontraditional students ($M 2.79, SD 0.65$)” (Kettle, 2001, p. 141). In this study, peers had the highest mean scores, ranging from 1.92 to 3.98, with most answers above 3.00, whereas the lowest mean score was given to faculty, with a 1.86. Another comparison made with Kettle’s findings was her conclusion that “although traditional students did significantly rate four of the five dimensions higher than nontraditional students, showing a difference in the two groups, the mean scores reflected less than favorable perceptions” (p.142).

Qualitative Discussion of the Findings

Research questions two, three, and four were answered based on the qualitative analysis of the data, using content analysis. Research question two asked interviewees the extent of their educational and social needs, while at Rowan. Students reported that although the university was flexible with leave of absence, the army’s difficult schedule, and the support from staff, they had difficulty receiving their benefits and felt they would fare better with more respect from their professors.

Research question three asked interviewees to report on how well Rowan is meeting their needs; the needs of the students were defined as whether the G.I. Bill was

easy to access from the campus services, whether students lived on campus or off, and whether students felt welcome in the campus atmosphere. Half of the students interviewed lived off campus, and the other half lived on campus. However only 25% of the students interviewed did not like the campus and try to avoid it as much as possible. Mezirow and Associates (2000) state that there are four steps to the learning process: elaborating existing frames of reference, learning new frames of reference, transforming points of view, and transforming habits of mind. By elaborating existing frames of reference, the student is expanding his/her personal point of view; by learning new frames of reference, individuals can stumble upon a new group; by transforming a point of view, the student now is becoming more tolerant and accepting of others, which eventually leads to transforming new habits of mind (Mezirow & Associates, 2000). In this instance, the students who enjoyed the campus atmosphere were involved in a fraternity, in their major, or enjoyed the resources offered by the university. The student who did not enjoy the campus atmosphere, according to Mezirow, had not formed her new frame of reference, which could not transform her points of view leading her to new habits of mind. When asked how she liked the campus, she stated: "I completely avoid the campus except for classes. I find the prices for food to be ridiculous, so I never eat. I think everyone is way too young to hang out with. They are at a different point in their lives; I can't connect with most students. The campus is geared toward a younger crowd, that's not me. I can't wait to get in, take my classes and leave."

Cohen (1997) mentions how negative experiences can be turned into positive experiences for the student. Transformations may occur when the student begins to complete more classwork and understand it, which in turn transforms their self-concept

(as cited in Mezirow & Associates, 2000). In this instance, if the student was to complete transformative learning, she would have to immerse herself in the school, which would transform her self-concept and not make her feel so out of place at the university. According to a research done by Kelley (2001), on adult learners and their learning characteristics, her conclusions state that the “learner’s belief that the social interactive nature of their human service educational experience contributed to their learning and understanding supports the basic characteristics associated with adult education, as well as the teaching theories of Mezirow’s transformation theory” (p.65).

Conclusions

Based on this study, it can be concluded that most veteran students on campus are satisfied with the services made available to them. There is still a percentage of students who feel they do not matter on campus and according to Schlossberg’s mattering theory, the five focus areas of administration, advising, faculty, multiple roles, and peers, must be not only focused on traditional students, but nontraditional students as well. Kettle’s study (2001) explained how her comparison of traditional and nontraditional students showed that traditional students felt they mattered more on campus and had a higher rating on all items than nontraditional students.

When select students were interviewed based on their military experience and their background, to give a diverse population, results showed that the students were content with the services provided by the university. However, a few students felt that changes needed to be made for veteran students to feel more comfortable on campus. Parking, an increase in night classes, and another representative in the Veteran Affairs Office were among recommendations given to improve life for the students. Similarly,

students expected more respect from professors, and although 75% of students surveyed love the campus atmosphere, there is still 25% that avoids campus because of not feeling welcomed. Mezirow's transformative theory (2000) suggests that students must elaborate on their frames of reference and transform their points of view. It can be concluded, based on the research that certain students have not been able to begin this learning process, making it difficult to adapt to college life after the military.

Recommendations for Practice

Based upon the findings and conclusions of the study, the following suggestions are presented:

1. Veterans should be more recognized on campus, especially by the faculty and administration. By having events to commemorate their heroism for this country, faculty, staff and administration should plan to attend and applaud their sacrifice.
2. The Veteran Student Organization (VSO) was created in October 2007, to unite veteran students on the campus. Researcher recommends that veteran students reach out to this organization for any questions or concerns they may have. This will alleviate the negative atmosphere some students felt towards the campus.
3. Based on the qualitative analysis of a veteran, the Veteran Affairs Office should be expanded to include more individuals to better aid the veteran students both on and off campus. Although AnnMarie Pustizzi is doing a fantastic job helping the veteran students, it should be noted that it is a tiring position which can take a toll on a person, and therefore she should have an assistant to help her aid the veterans better.

4. More awareness should be made to traditional students that nontraditional veteran students are on campus, and by having programs and events such as Veteran's Day, it would make the rest of the student population conscious of the growing veteran population on campus.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Further studies should be concluded with a larger population and on different campuses across the United States, to confirm the findings of this study.
2. A study should be conducted, similar to Kettle's study (2001), comparing the experiences of traditional students, and nontraditional veteran students.
3. An additional study should be conducted with only a qualitative aspect, relating the study more to personal experiences of the students both on and off-campus.
4. A study should also be conducted, with the administration's point of view of what practices are conducted on behalf of the veteran students and what else can be done to accommodate their needs.
5. Another study should be conducted on the impact of the new Veteran Student Organization, started on campus by the researcher and the Director of the Academic Success Center, and whether veteran students respond to an organization made just for their benefit.

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APPENDIX A
Survey Instrument

**VETERAN STUDENT SURVEY ON
TRANSITION INTO COLLEGE**

Based on the Mattering Survey by Schlossberg, Lassalle, and Golec (1990)

While your participation in this survey is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions herein, your cooperation and participation are important to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate, please understand that all responses are strictly confidential and no personally identifiable information is being requested. Your completion of this survey constitutes informed consent and your willingness to participate.

Directions: Please circle the response which best describes your feelings. Please select a response for each item, using the following scale:

SD=Strongly Disagree

D=Disagree

N=Neither Agree nor disagree

A=Agree

SA=Strongly Agree

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. The administration seems to consider student priorities as important | SD D N A SA |
| 2. My advisor doesn't seem to remember things we have discussed before | SD D N A SA |
| 3. I will have a hard time finishing my degree because of time limits | |
| Completing course requirements | SD D N A SA |
| 4. I get support from my classmates when I need it | SD D N A SA |
| 5. The university's policy of transfer credits penalizes students | SD D N A SA |
| 6. My questions seem to put faculty members on the defensive | SD D N A SA |
| 7. The faculty and administrators are sensitive to my other responsibilities | SD D N A SA |
| 8. I sometimes feel alone and isolated at the university | SD D N A SA |
| 9. The administrative rules and regulations are clear to me | SD D N A SA |
| 10. My professors interpret assertiveness as a challenge to their authority | SD D N A SA |
| 11. The administration sets things up to be easy for them, not the students | SD D N A SA |
| 12. It's hard for me to adjust to the school environment | SD D N A SA |
| 13. If my advisor doesn't know the answer to my questions, he or she | |

Will seek out the answers	SD D N A SA
14. The classroom atmosphere encourages me to speak out in class	SD D N A SA
15. I feel my classmates react positively to my experience and knowledge	SD D N A SA
16. My professors seem to recognize other students but not me	SD D N A SA
17. I don't have time to complete the administrative tasks this institution	
Requires	SD D N A SA
18. There has always been someone on campus that could help me when	
I had a question or problem	SD D N A SA
19. I feel like I fit in my classes	SD D N A SA
20. The administrative offices are not open at times I need them	SD D N A SA
21. The administration makes efforts to accommodate students	SD D N A SA
22. I have a good relationship with my classmates	SD D N A SA
23. Sometimes I feel out of place in the classroom	SD D N A SA
24. The university does not commit enough resources to off-campus courses	SD D N A SA
25. There has always been an advisor available to talk if I have a question	SD D N A SA
26. My classmates would help me catch up to the new technologies if I need it	SD D N A SA
27. My experience-based comments are accepted by my professors	SD D N A SA
28. It takes too long to register or correct registration problems	SD D N A SA
29. Administrative staff is helpful in answering my questions	SD D N A SA
30. Fellow students don't seem to listen to me when I share my experiences	SD D N A SA
31. Unless I have another student like me in class, no one really understands	
How hard it is to be here	SD D N A SA
32. The university offers alternatives to the traditional semester-length courses	SD D N A SA
33. I have had adequate opportunities to get to know fellow students	SD D N A SA
34. Campus rules and regulations seem to have been made for someone	
Other than me	SD D N A SA

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 35. My age sometimes gets in the way of my interactions with other students | SD D N A SA |
| 36. Some of the jokes my professors tell me make me feel uncomfortable | SD D N A SA |
| 37. Classes are offered at times that are good for me | SD D N A SA |
| 38. I feel welcome on campus | SD D N A SA |
| 39. The classroom desks are uncomfortable | SD D N A SA |
| 40. I feel my activity fees are spent in a way that is meaningful to me | SD D N A SA |
| 41. My advisor has office hours at times I am on campus | SD D N A SA |
| 42. Departmental rules sometimes make my goals difficult or impossible | SD D N A SA |
| 43. The school newspaper doesn't discuss student issues that are relevant to me | SD D N A SA |
| 44. My professors sometimes ignore my comments or questions | SD D N A SA |
| 45. I sometimes feel my professors want me to hurry up and finish speaking | SD D N A SA |

APPENDIX B

Veteran Student Consent Form

February 2008

Dear veteran student,

I am conducting interview for my thesis titled "Selected Recent Military Veteran in Higher Education: Application of Adult Development Theories to Rowan University Undergraduate Veterans." My interviews are centered on veteran students, their educational needs, how well they believe the University meets those needs, and what recommendations they make to help improve the University's service to veterans. Participation in this interview process is open to all veteran students enrolled either full time or part time in an undergraduate program at Rowan University.

This interview is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. All responses will be kept confidential and no names or other identifying information will be collected.

If you choose to participate in this interview, and this study relating to veteran students, please complete the consent form below and return it back to me, before the interview begins.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email at Dahan@rowan.edu. Thank you very much for cooperating by taking the time to have me interview you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dahan
Master's Student, Higher Education Administration

I give my consent to participate in this study on veteran students' needs in higher education.

Printed Name

Date

Signature

APPENDIX C
Interview Instrument

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR VETERAN STUDENTS

Please answer the following questions as detailed as possible and to the best of your ability.

1. How do you feel about returning to college, or going to college after being in the military?

2. Can you please describe to me your past military experience, i.e. what branch of the military, if you went out of the country?

3. Do you find that having been in the military differentiates you from other college students, why or why not?

4. Discussing the G.I. Bill, was it difficult for you to understand what it offered and how to access those services?

5. With regards to campus, how do you like the campus atmosphere? Why or why not?

6. Are you a traditional student, i.e. do you live on campus, are you a full time student, and maybe have a part-time job, or other? Please specify

7. Do you feel as though the military prepared you for college life?

8. What should Rowan University provide in services, to help your time on campus be more veteran friendly?

9. How can the needs of returning war veterans be better met?

10. Is there anything I did not ask you that you would like to inform me of? Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX D

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter



January 2, 2008

Jennifer Dahan
43 Covington Lane
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Dear Jennifer Dahan:

In accordance with the University's IRB policies and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to inform you that the Rowan University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your project:

IRB application number: 2008-088

Project Title: Selected Recent Military Veterans in Higher Education: Application of Adult Development Theories to Rowan University Undergraduate Veterans

In accordance with federal law, this approval is effective for **one calendar year** from the date of this letter. If your research project extends beyond that date or if you need to make significant modifications to your study, you must notify the IRB immediately. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Please retain copies of consent forms for this research for three years after completion of the research.

If, during your research, you encounter any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, you must report this immediately to the Associate Provost for Research (856-256-4053).

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Heiser (heiser@rowan.edu or 856-256-4167).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roberta Dihoff".

Roberta Dihoff, Ph.D.
Chair, Rowan University IRB

c: Sisco, Burton, Educational Leadership, Education Hall

Office of the Associate Provost for Research

Memorial Hall
201 Mullica Hill Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028-1701

856-256-4053
856-256-4425 fax

APPENDIX E

Rules and Procedures for Logical Analysis of Written Data

APPENDIX E: RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR LOGICAL ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN DATA

The following decisions were made regarding what was to be the unit of data analysis (Sisco, 1981):

1. A phrase or clause will be the basic unit of analysis
2. Verbiage not considered essential to the phrase or clause will be edited out- e.g., articles of speech, possessives, some adjectives, elaborate examples.
3. Where there is violation of convention syntax in the data it will be corrected.
4. Where there are compound thoughts in a phrase or clause, each unit of thought will be represented separately (unless one was an elaboration of another.)
5. Where information seems important to add to the statement in order to clarify it in a context, this information will be added to the unit by parentheses.

The following decisions were made regarding the procedures for the categorization of content units.

1. After several units are listed on a sheet of paper, they will be scanned in order to determine differences and similarities.
2. From this tentative analysis, logical categories will be derived from the units.
3. When additional units of data suggest further categories, they will be added to the classification scheme.
4. After all the units from a particular question responses are thus classified, the categories are further reduced to broader clusters (collapsing of categories.)

5. Frequencies of the units in each cluster category are determined and further analysis steps are undertaken, depending on the nature of the data-i.e., ranking of categories with verbatim quotes which represent the range of ideas or opinions (p.177).

