



University of Kentucky
UKnowledge

Theses and Dissertations--Family Sciences

Family Sciences


2019

RETIREMENT PLANNING VERSUS FAMILY SUPPORT: WHAT DRIVES PEOPLES` DECISIONS?

Radion Svnarenko

University of Kentucky, rodion.svnarenko@uky.edu

Author ORCID Identifier:

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7568-529X>

Digital Object Identifier: <https://doi.org/10.13023/etd.2019.271>

[Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.](#)

Recommended Citation

Svnarenko, Radion, "RETIREMENT PLANNING VERSUS FAMILY SUPPORT: WHAT DRIVES PEOPLES` DECISIONS?" (2019). *Theses and Dissertations--Family Sciences*. 72.

https://uknowledge.uky.edu/hes_etds/72

This Doctoral Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Family Sciences at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations--Family Sciences by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I represent that my thesis or dissertation and abstract are my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained needed written permission statement(s) from the owner(s) of each third-party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine) which will be submitted to UKnowledge as Additional File.

I hereby grant to The University of Kentucky and its agents the irrevocable, non-exclusive, and royalty-free license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available immediately for worldwide access unless an embargo applies.

I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of my work. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of my work. I understand that I am free to register the copyright to my work.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The document mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student's advisor, on behalf of the advisory committee, and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), on behalf of the program; we verify that this is the final, approved version of the student's thesis including all changes required by the advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above.

Radion Ssynarenko, Student

Dr. Jason D. Hans, Major Professor

Dr. Hyungsoo Kim, Director of Graduate Studies

RETIREMENT PLANNING VERSUS FAMILY SUPPORT:
WHAT DRIVES PEOPLES' DECISIONS?

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
at the University of Kentucky

By
Radion Ssynarenko
Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Jason D. Hans, Professor of Family Sciences
Lexington, Kentucky
2019

Copyright © Radion Ssynarenko 2019
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7568-529X>

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

RETIREMENT PLANNING VERSUS FAMILY SUPPORT: WHAT DRIVES PEOPLES' DECISIONS?

A slight majority of American households headed by 55–64-year-olds do not have any savings for retirement, and those who have retirement savings have a median of around \$109,000 saved, which is equivalent to an inflation-protected annuity of \$405 per month (i.e., well below the official poverty level). Among the main reasons cited for the lack of retirement savings among parents is a desire to provide financial support to their young adult children. Indeed, on the whole, parents spend twice as much on financial support of their adult children as they save for retirement (Merryl Lynch, 2018). Understanding the precursors and predictors of this spending behavior may provide insight into decisions that lead to a lack of self-sufficiency in retirement, and hint at opportunities for prevention and intervention efforts aimed at bolstering retirement savings. To that end, this project was designed to examine the extent to which these financial decisions vary by context and belief systems.

Specifically, three studies were developed to investigate motivation for providing support to young adult children in lieu of retirement savings. A sample of 496 respondents who were 40 years of age or older was recruited using the online Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) platform. Respondents were presented three factorial vignettes in which hypothetical parents were deciding whether to provide support to their adult child with a major expense—a car (Study 1, Chapter 2), college tuition (Study 2, Chapter 3), and a house (Study 3, Chapter 4)—and respondents were asked on a four-point Likert-type response scale whether parents should (*definitely yes*, *probably yes*, *probably no*, *definitely no*) provide financial support to their adult children in the given context, and to provide a rationale for their response. In each study, key contextual variables were randomly manipulated within the vignette across respondents (e.g., adult child's gender [female vs. male], parents' age [early 60s vs. late 40s], source of money [withdrawal from vs. under-contributing to retirement savings], college major [social sciences vs. business degree], and number of siblings [one vs. three]). Ordinal regression models were used to estimate the effects of the randomly manipulated variables on endorsement of parental provision of financial support to adult children, and content analysis was used to identify the most common rationales respondents provided for the beliefs they espoused in the closed-ended items.

Endorsement of parental use of retirement saving for financial support varied depending on whether the stated purpose of the money was for purchasing a car (67% endorsed), paying for college tuition (34% endorsed), or paying the down payment on a house (31% endorsed). Across the three studies, only older parents (in their early 60s [Study 1]) and withdrawing money from a retirement account (Studies 2 and 3) had negative effects on endorsement of parental support; responses according to the other randomly manipulated variables did not statistically vary in these data, suggesting norms that supersede the other manipulated variables. Among respondent sociodemographic characteristics—gender, socioeconomic status, clarity of retirement goals, having adult children, and helping them with large purchases similar to situations described in the vignette—only ownership of a retirement savings account or a pension plan had a

consistent negative association with endorsement of parental support across all three studies, indicating that people with retirement plans were more conservative in their attitudes about financially supporting young-adult children than were those without retirement plans. Major rationales for the provision of parental financial support included (a) responsibility for the child (i.e., a *solidarity* belief system), (b) a belief that children pay back their parents (i.e., a *reciprocity* belief system), and (c) a belief that parents should make sacrifices for their children (i.e., an *altruistic* belief system). Given that the majority of studies investigate retirement planning from an individual perspective, as if workers were making their decisions rationally in isolation from their family context, future studies may benefit from a more inclusive approach that takes into account the complexity of family relationships and also social perception of parental financial obligations toward their children.

KEYWORDS: intergeneration relationships, young adulthood, retirement.

Radion Svyrenko

(Name of Student)

06/20/2019

Date

RETIREMENT PLANNING VERSUS FAMILY SUPPORT:
WHAT DRIVES PEOPLES' DECISIONS?

By
Radion Ssynarenko

Jason Hans

Director of Dissertation

Hyungsoo Kim

Director of Graduate Studies

06/20/2019

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It takes a village to raise a child and it took a village to make this dissertation real. I want to thank my family: my amazing spouse Carrie Billett for her love and support every day of this challenge; my grandparents, whose immense curiosity to explore new countries and cultures indirectly inspired me to come to the United States; and my parents and brother for their tremendous support during all my years in school. I also want to thank my professors and graduate students in the Department of Family Sciences, including; Dr. Hyungsoo Kim, who taught me research dedication and discipline; Albert and Gabi Ksinan for being the best example of being a loving couple and role models of how to be a great doctoral student; Ilya Okhotnikov, for his support when coping with home sickness; Jakub Mikuska for teaching SPSS tricks; David Weisenhorn for being a great friend in and out of grad school. I want to thank my wonderful friends from the Graduate Appalachia Research Community (GARC): Kathryn Engle, Jasper, and Zada Komara for showing that there is life outside grad school. I also want to thank the community at Pantavasilissa Greek Orthodox Church in Lexington: especially Father Cosmin Sicoe, Ken Kiriapoulos, Leah Hanlon, Chris Eliopoulos, Joel Scott, and Thomas Finsand; these amazing people provided me moral support, love, and an unlimited supply of delicious spanakopita, baklava, and Greek cookies, to sweeten my dark days when I was struggling with my coursework. Finally, I want to thank Jason and Natalka Hans for being my Ukrainian family in the United States and each of you for being part of my village.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Taxonomy of Motives of Parental Support.....	2
1.2 Major Financial Needs in Transition to Adulthood	7
1.3 Organization of Three Empirical Studies	10
1.3.1 Sample.....	10
1.3.2 Factorial Vignette Design	11
1.3.3 Variables	11
1.3.3.1 Design Variables in Study 1	11
1.3.3.2 Design Variables in Study 2	12
1.3.3.3 Design Variables in Study 3	12
1.3.3.4 Other Independent Variables	13
1.3.4 Analytical Approach	14
CHAPTER 2. PARENTAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH PURCHASING A CAR FOR A RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATE YOUNG ADULT CHILD	17
2.1 Background Literature	18
2.1.1 Age of Parents.....	18
2.1.2 Gender of the Child.....	19
2.1.3 Motives of Parental Support	19
2.2 Method	22
2.2.1 Sample.....	22
2.2.2 Measures and Procedures.....	23
2.2.2.1 Factorial Vignette.....	23
2.2.2.2 Dispositional Motives for Providing Support.....	25
2.2.2.3 Control Variables	26
2.2.3 Analytical Approach	27
2.3 Results.....	29
2.3.1 Regression Analysis.....	29
2.3.2 Open-ended Rationales	30
2.3.2.1 Rationales Favoring Parental Assistance	30
2.3.2.2 Rationales Against Parental Assistance	31
2.4 Discussion	33
2.5 Conclusion	37
CHAPTER 3. PARENTAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH PAYING FOR COLLEGE TUITION FOR A YOUNG ADULT CHILD	42
3.1 Background Literature	43
3.1.1 Motives of Parental Support	43
3.1.2 Gender of the Child.....	45
3.1.3 College Major	46
3.1.4 Number of Children	47
3.1.5 Source of Money.....	48
3.1.6 Age of Parents.....	49
3.2 Method	50

3.2.1	Sample.....	50
3.2.2	Measures and Procedures.....	50
3.2.2.1	Factorial Vignette.....	50
3.2.2.1	Dispositional Motives for Providing Support.....	52
3.2.2.2	Control Variables.....	53
3.2.3	Analytical Approach.....	54
3.3	Results.....	55
3.3.1	Regression Analysis.....	55
3.3.2	Open-ended Rationales.....	56
3.3.2.1	Rationales Favoring Parental Assistance.....	56
3.3.2.2	Rationales Against Parental Assistance.....	58
3.4	Discussion.....	60
3.5	Conclusion.....	64
CHAPTER 4. PARENTAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH DOWN PAYMENT ON A HOME FOR A YOUNG ADULT CHILD.....		68
4.1	Background Literature.....	70
4.1.1	Gender of the Child.....	70
4.1.2	Grandchildren.....	71
4.1.3	Source of Money.....	71
4.1.4	Age of Parents.....	73
4.1.5	Motives of Parental Support.....	74
4.2	Method.....	76
4.2.1	Sample.....	76
4.2.2	Measures and Procedures.....	76
4.2.2.1	Factorial Vignette.....	76
4.2.2.2	Dispositional Motives for Providing Support.....	78
4.2.2.3	Control Variables.....	79
4.2.3	Analytical Approach.....	80
4.3	Results.....	81
4.3.1	Regression Analysis.....	82
4.3.2	Open-ended Rationales.....	83
4.3.2.1	Rationales Favoring Parental Assistance.....	83
4.3.2.2	Rationales Against Parental Assistance.....	85
4.4	Discussion.....	87
4.5	Limitations and Future Directions.....	91
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION.....		95
5.1	Overall Attitudes.....	96
5.2	Effect of Contextual Variables on Attitudes.....	97
5.3	Dispositional Motives.....	100
5.4	Respondent Characteristics.....	101
5.5	Rationales.....	102
5.6	Limitations and Future Studies.....	104
APPENDICES.....		107
APPENDIX 1. VIGNETTES.....		107
APPENDIX 2. MOTIVES OF FAMILY SUPPORT.....		109
APPENDIX 3. CLARITY OF RETIREMENT GOALS.....		110

APPENDIX 4. HISTORY OF PROVIDING SUPPORT.....	111
APPENDIX 5. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS	112
REFERENCES	113
VITA.....	123

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (N = 496).....	39
Table 2.2. Distribution of Responses Within Each Level of Independent Variables (N = 496).....	40
Table 2.3. Generalized Ordinal Logistic Regression Models Predicting Endorsement of Parental Use of Retirement Savings for Financial Assistance with Purchasing a Car for a Young Adult Child (N =496).....	41
Table 3.1. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (N = 496).....	65
Table 3.2. Distribution of Responses Within Each Level of Independent Variables (N = 496).....	66
Table 3.3. Generalized Ordinal Logistic Regression Models Predicting Endorsement of Parental Use of Retirement Savings for Financial Assistance with Paying for College Tuition (N = 496).....	67
Table 4.1. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (N = 496).....	92
Table 4.2. Distribution of Responses Within Each Level of Independent Variables (N = 496).....	93
Table 4.3. Generalized Ordinal Logistic Regression Models Predicting Endorsement of Parental Use of Retirement Savings for Financial Assistance with Paying for Down Payment (N =496).....	94
Table 5.1. Design of Three Vignettes for Studying Attitudes Toward Parental Assistance with Purchase of a Car, Paying for College Tuition, and House Down Payment	105
Table 5.2. Results Across Three Studies	106

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Taxonomy of Motives of Intergenerational Support 16

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

For well over a century life expectancy in the United States has been on an upward trajectory and continue climbing (Arias, Heron, & Xu, 2012; Kontis et al., 2017), the U.S. Census Bureau has projected that in the next thirty years the population of people 65 years of age and older will double from 43.1 million to 83.7 million (Ortman, Velkoff, & Hogan, 2014). There is a growing concern that many currently-working Americans will not have enough personal savings to cover their expenses in their advanced age and will rely on welfare as their primary source of income (Fiscetti, 2014; Gerland et al., 2014; Poterba, 2014).

Growing costs of parental financial obligations is often attributed to one of the major reasons that adults can't save for retirement (Merrill Lynch, 2015; Szinovacz, Elkerdt, Butt, Barton, & Oala, 2012). Growing cost of raising a child until age of majority and then adult children's reliance on parents for their financial support is putting additional financial strain on parental ability to save for retirement (Goldfarb, 2014; Szinovacz et al., 2012). In fact, parents of adult children spend twice as much on support of their adult children than they save for retirement (Merrill Lynch, 2018).

Desire of parents to prioritize financial needs of adult children of their own needs has been explained by socio-demographic changes that have been taking in the US over the past several decades. With increase of life expectancy and decrease of family size, aging parents now spend more time with young adult children, maintain close relationships, and are more actively involved in grand-parenting, thereby building stronger intergenerational ties. When children are experiencing financial hardships,

parents provide financial support to their adult children's sacrificing own financial needs (Szinovacz, DeViney, & Davey, 2001).

Ability of parents to prepare for own retirement has been a topic of continuous debate in the literature (Burtless, 2011; Merton, 2014). It shows that some parents have skills to save for retirement and carefully plan for it, while others do not have these skills and can't prioritize saving for retirement over their competing financial needs (Burtless, 2011; Hershey, Jacobs-Lawson, McArdle, & Hamagami, 2007; Lusardi & Mitchell, 2007). Social perception of parental usage of retirement savings for support of family members is still under-investigated in the literature (Swartz, 2008). This dissertational research aims to fill this gap in the literature by (a) developing a taxonomy of motives of intergenerational support, which reflects core beliefs about parental support of adult children; (b) examining major financial needs of young adults in their transition to adulthood; and (c) developing three empirical studies to explore how personal beliefs about parental support of children using retirement savings and also numerous relevant contexts (e.g. age of parents, source of income, or the number of children) are associated with endorsement of parental financial support of their children.

1.1 Taxonomy of Motives of Parental Support

Motives for intergenerational support of adult children include both situational and dispositional motives (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Situational motives are associated with family processes (Suitor et al., 2018). For example, several studies have shown that parents who maintain close relationships with their children tend to provide more support to their children, and that parents who have more ambivalent relationships with their children tend to provide less support to their children (Berry, 2008). In contrast,

dispositional motives are driven by stable core psychological needs and goals, and are less dependent on situational circumstances (Deci & Ryan, 2000). A review of the extant literature revealed two orthogonal dimensions of core psychological needs—desire for close relationships versus having distant relationships and obedience to family norms and rules (i.e., heteronomy) versus personal autonomy—that create four theoretical quadrants, representing distinctive types of parental support motivation (Kagitcibasi, 2005; Olson & DeFrain, 2006; Van den Broeck, Ferris, Chang, & Rosen, 2016; see Figure 1).

Desire to maintain close relationships together with high heteronomy represents a system of beliefs where parents and children maintain close relations without much deviation from family norms and rules. Intergenerational relations in these cohesive relationships are primarily driven by altruistic motives—an expectation that parents sacrifice personal needs in favor of meeting their children’s needs (Batson, 2011). This altruistic behavior of parents may be driven by either internal motivation (endogenous altruism) or by external motivation (exogenous altruism; see Jellal & Wolff, 2002). Endogenous altruism (hereafter, simply altruism) is rooted in a complex repertoire of altruistic parental behaviors intended to ensure the survival of offspring and that parental genes will pass on to future generations (Buss, 2015). As result, biological parents and children are prone to developing a strong emotional attachment (Merz, Schuengel, & Schulze, 2007), feelings of trust (Berry, 2008) and parents may derive a great deal of pleasure from investing in their children (Fingerman et al., 2015; Geary, 2000; Keller & Chasiotis, 2008). Exogenous altruism is rooted in parental desire to provide support to children because they intuit moral obligation to do so (McCarthy, Edwards, & Gillies, 2000). Family as a social institution unites individuals with a shared identity, which in

turn stimulates a feeling of obligation in family members. For example, some parents support their children because they want to feel that they are good parents who love and care about their children (Holmstrom, Karp, & Gray, 2011), or because they want to insure that children maintain the same socioeconomic status as themselves (Arnett, 2014; Rossi, 1990; Swartz, 2008). These acts of unconditional parental support become an important element of family history, further solidifying family cohesion, intergenerational connections, and solidarity in families (Bengtson, 2001); therefore, exogenous altruism is referred to as dispositional solidarity or simply a normative solidarity motive hereafter.

High heteronomy together with a desire to maintain distance in family relationships represents a potentially conflicting family model in which the expectation of sharing responsibility conflicts with the desire to maintain distanced relationships with family (Kagitcibasi, 2005). Personal needs are prioritized over providing support to other family members, both by emphasizing the importance of accumulating assets during one's working years and not letting those resources go easily once accumulated (Horioka, 2014). In the extent literature there are two opposite views on this type of relationships. On the one side, it is portrayed from a negative perspective, because there is social expectation that that "good" parents would prioritize financial needs of their children over their own needs. In contrast, parents who prioritize own needs are often seen as "greedy geezers" (Bengtson, 2001) or "selfish parents" (Horioka, 2014). On the other side, considering the increasing life expectancy (Kontis et al., 2017), growing costs of health care (Ortman et al., 2014), and the financial vulnerability of social programs aimed at helping elderly people (Schulz & Eden, 2016), there is a general understanding that

future retirees must prioritize saving for retirement over providing financial support to other family members, otherwise they have large chances of have no income in older age, in retirement (Horioka, 2014; Kemper, Komisar, & Alecxih, 2005; Poterba, 2014).

Desire to maintain close relationships together with high personal autonomy represents a family model in which the major goal of parenting is raising adult independent children, who can take care of themselves and live independently from their parents (Mitchell, 2010). Personal independence aside, however, there is an expectation that adult children reciprocate the support they received from them early in their life as their parents age (Silverstein, Conroy, Wang, Giarrusso, & Bengtson, 2002) based on a moral standard of reciprocity; that is, that relationships should have equitably proportions of give and take, even if asynchronous (Gouldner, 1960; Uehara, 1995). In these families, each instance of financial support is based on informal arrangements stipulating how the money will be returned, whether directly as a loan from the family support bank (Lending Tree, 2016) or in the form of informal caregiving (Antonucci, 1990). Despite the financial losses that come from these reciprocal arrangements, this expectation of returns stimulates family members to be more financially responsible than if they received the financial support without any obligations (Silverstein, Conroy, & Gans, 2012).

High personal autonomy together with desire to maintain distance with family members defines a family model in which independence of family members is highly encouraged. This autonomy does not mean that members of a family are not attached or do not have emotional ties, but reflects a general erosion of the traditional family norms that used to define family as a social institution and prescribed proper and narrow roles for each family member (Connidis & McMullin, 2002; Coontz, 2016; Pillemer & Suito,

2008). Today, with the deinstitutionalization of family norms, family may take multiple forms, and there is less social pressure toward fulfilling normative, traditional, or idealistic family roles (Giddens, 1992). In fact, several studies situated within the individualization framework show that it is natural for both children and their parents to have mixed or conflicting feelings toward one another. This often occurs because family relationships tend to limit one's personal autonomy and self-reliance (Lowenstein, 2007; Pillemer & Sutor, 2008). In the present context, parental financial support can have a detrimental effect on children when it comes with an expectation that children reciprocate with conformity and obedience to parental expectations, thereby removing children's power to negotiate the terms of family coexistence with their parents (Holmstrom et al., 2011; Meil, 2012). As such, parental support can limit the personal freedom of children, denying them self-reliance, personal autonomy, and freedom to make important life decisions and take responsibility for the consequences of these decisions (Chambers, 2012).

It is important to separate situational and dispositional motives as they explain parental support from different perspectives. However, they create methodological questions concerning how best to identify whether the motivation for financial support is dispositional or situational in each given context (Remle, 2011). In the present dissertation, this methodological issue is resolved by (a) adopting a strategy common in psychology, and the self-determination theoretical framework in particular (Deci & Ryan, 2000), wherein dispositional motivation is investigated by addressing goals, values, and personal beliefs using multiple choice questionnaires; and (b) by utilizing a factorial vignette design, which is a true experiment design (i.e., respondents are randomly

assigned to the conditions of the study), which allows investigation of situational motivation and the effects of contextual variables on that motivation. Then differences in situational and dispositional motives are analyzed based on the specific context of the vignette situation.

1.2 Major Financial Needs in Transition to Adulthood

Desire of parents to provide support to their adult children is often driven not only by their motivation (whether it is dispositional or situational), but also by the designation of this support (Schoeni & Ross, 2005). Many personal finance advisors agree that parental support provided to children on an everyday basis without designation is wasted: children develop a feeling that parental support is unlimited, they do not develop skills for careful money management, and feel less in control of their own life (Orman, 2010). Perhaps not surprisingly, one study found that 57% of parents stopped providing support to their children because they thought the money was not being spent wisely (Merrill Lynch, 2015). In contrast, providing money on projects that may stimulate personal independence and transition to adulthood seems to improve intergenerational connections between parents and their children because these parents feel that they are contribute to a better future for their children and that this support will serve as an investment that may provide some direct benefits to children, but long term may also benefit the family more broadly (Szinovacz, 2013).

Adulthood and personal independence has long been associated with achieving the American dream in its consumerist sense: a car that provides freedom of movement, an education that helps one obtain a competitive job and good income, and home ownership to provide security and safety for the rearing of children (Calder, 1999). The

transition to adulthood is costly, with a median cost of college tuition at \$15,000 per year, cost of a reliable car is generally between \$10,000 and \$25,000, and a down payment on a starter house generally exceeding \$20,000. All told, the minimal total cost of achieving adulthood according to these markers can be over \$100,000. The development of a public credit system was designed to help make the American dream more affordable for Americans who do not have access to sufficient savings to acquire these things themselves. The credit system has helped several generations of young adults transition into adulthood by way of financial independence from their parents. However, contemporary young adults face a more complicated reality than previous generations.

One of the most important challenges is a change in the labor market: Because the contemporary generation of young adults is the largest generation in the American labor force, there is more competition in the labor market; most well-paying jobs require that young adults have a college degree (Avery & Turner, 2012; Fry, 2018). College education is highly correlated with income level and provides numerous additional advancement opportunities (Holmstrom et al., 2011). For example, the process of obtaining a college education helps children develop social networks that can provide invaluable social capital long after college graduation. Privileged social classes are ready to pay from tens of thousands to millions of dollars to ensure that their children get admitted to prestigious universities (Lam, 2019). The cost of college has substantially outpaced inflation in recent years, at least in part due to declining support from states in the case of public taxpayer-supported institutions, as result many college students take large loans to pay for school tuition and decades after graduating for college to pay them off (Avery & Turner, 2012).

Already burned by college debt, many young adults have difficulty making large purchases (Arnett, 2014). One the most important of them is a car because it is essential element of everyday life; for most Americans, a car is necessary for grocery shopping, commuting to work, and other necessities of modern American life. Purchasing a car, however, can be very challenging for young adults. They often have debt and low credit scores, and therefore struggle to afford a good and reliable car or reasonable financing for a car. In this situation, parental support with the purchase of a car can be essential for giving children a substantial boost as they launch into young adulthood; even a few thousands of dollars from parents for the down payment on a car can dramatically decrease the cost of the credit.

Having a house is another important indicator of adulthood and is associated with permanently moving out of one's parents' home, establishing a new family, and having one's own children. However, the collapse of the American housing a market in 2008 led to stricter regulations on who can borrow and how much can be borrowed for purchasing a house, and consequently made home ownership unobtainable (at least in the short term) for many young adults (Fry, 2017). In fact, around 30% of young adults finance their house purchase using support they receive from family (National Association of Realtors, 2018).

Many young adults face a cycle of revolving economic distress: high competition in the labor market requires a college education, but the cost of college tuition raises every year, necessitating ever-increasing student loan amounts. Further, a reliable car is needed to find and maintain employment, but when coupled with student loans young adults are often compelled to accept suboptimal credit terms to obtain that car. Then,

already burdened by college and car debts, they cannot afford and therefore substantially delaying purchasing a house, which is an important long-term wealth builder. All said, parental support may be a particularly salient factor in shaping the short- and long-term financial prospects of today's young adults. Indeed, families are the most important source of support for young adults (Schoeni & Ross, 2005). Beliefs about the appropriateness of parental financial support are often determined not only by closeness in the parent-child relationship but also by the intended goals of the support (Schoeni & Ross, 2005; Swartz, 2008). Thus, the primary goal of this dissertation is to investigate dispositional beliefs about parental financial support of young adult children with the purchase of a car, paying for college tuition, and purchasing a house, as a means of supporting one's child in the transition to adulthood.

1.3 Organization of Three Empirical Studies

1.3.1 Sample

A sample of 500 respondents were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online surveying platform, which is popular among researchers because it provides relatively easy access to a large sample of anonymous adults (see Dworkin, Hessel, Gliske, & Rudi, 2016; Huff & Tingley, 2015). Four respondents did not provide their demographic characteristics and were eliminated from the final sample. The size of the sample provided enough statistical power to reliably detect statistical effects in logistic regression models with odds ratios larger than 1.27. MTurk was selected for recruiting respondents because it (a) provides convenient access to a sample of the American adult population, (b) is a relatively low cost method of data collection, and (c) it provides a more representative sample than other recruiting strategies (see Deetlefs,

Chylinski, & Ortmann, 2015; Dworkin et al., 2016; Huff & Tingley, 2015). The sample was limited to respondents of 40 years of age and older because this age range captures the peak earning years—and hence, peak retirement saving years—for most Americans, and financial decisions made at this age can have large implications for one’s financial security in retirement (Vanguard, 2018).

1.3.2 Factorial Vignette Design

Attitudes toward balancing the financial obligations of aging adults between adult children and their own financial well-being, especially in retirement, have not been thoroughly examined in the existing literature. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation was to examine how motivational, demographic, and contextual factors related to beliefs concerning aging parents who are burdened with both an adult child in financial need and retirement accounts in need of contributions. This was accomplished using factorial vignettes—short stories about hypothetical characters in which select details of the story were randomly manipulated. Three author-developed vignettes described married parents who were deciding whether to use their retirement savings to financially assist their adult child with the purchase of either a vehicle (Study 1), whether to pay the adult child’s college tuition (Study 2), and whether to purchase a house (Study 3). The vignettes are provided in Appendix A.

1.3.3 Variables

1.3.3.1 Design Variables in Study 1

The primary foci of Study 1 were (a) age of the parents and (b) sex of the adult child. Each of these variables were randomly manipulated within the vignette across respondents. Age of the parents (early middle-aged [late 40s] vs. late middle-aged [early-

60s]) was an important contextual variable given that individuals their 40s or 50s are more prone to “breach” their retirement accounts than are those in their early 60s for whom retirement savings may have a more salient and immediate purpose (Poterba, 2014). Gender of the adult child (man vs. woman) was considered due to normative expectations that female children provide care to their aging parents in exchange for financial support received from them (Silverstein et al., 2002).

1.3.3.2 Design Variables in Study 2

In addition to examining age of the parents and sex of the child, as in Study 1, the primary foci of Study 2 were the area of study (major) in college that the adult child was pursuing in college (a helping profession with low income potential [social work] vs. a more money-centric major [business]). Although college major or earning potential has not been examined in the context of parental assistance with college tuition, it was reasonable to expect that respondents are more likely to financially support emerging adult children with college majors that have high-income potential if they view such support as a form of investment into family capital (Swartz, 2008). It could also be that children with higher earning potential are more capable of reciprocating financial support when their parents age and their health deteriorates (Shuey & Hardy, 2003).

1.3.3.3 Design Variables in Study 3

In addition to focusing on the age of the parents and sex of the adult child, as in Study 1, the primary foci of Study 3 included, (c) the presence of other adult children, (d) the marital and parental status of the adult child, and (e) source of money. Age of the parents (early middle-aged [late 40s] vs. late middle-aged [early-60s]) and gender of the adult child (man vs. woman) were considered for the reasons stated previously Number

of children (one vs. three) was manipulated because parents with more children tend to be less financially prepared for retirement than those with fewer children (Szinovacz et al., 2001). Marital and parental status of the adult children (not married and without children vs. married with children) may be important given that married adult children with their own children receive more support from their parents than do single adult children without children (McGarry & Schoeni, 1995; Remle, 2011), but the extent to which that additional support comes at the expense of retirement savings remains unknown. Source of the money (early withdrawal from a personal retirement account vs. under-contributing to it) may be important because holders of personal retirement accounts tend to be more reluctant to withdraw money from their retirement account given that doing so requires payment of additional 10% early withdrawal penalty; therefore, under-contributing to a personal retirement account may be seen as a more favorable option (in this study we didn't consider the third option of taking loans against retirement plans for two major reasons: (a) only a few retirement plans provide this option, and (b) in fact, those who take loans tend to make larger contribution to their retirement plans in comparison to those who do not take loans, which may indicate that taking loans is not an activity that may hurt retirement saving in a longer run; see Internal Revenue Office, 2019; Poterba, 2014; Vanguard, 2018).

1.3.3.4 Other Independent Variables

Upon completion of the vignettes, respondents also provided information about: (a) dispositional motives for providing or not providing intergenerational support (see Appendix B); (b) clarity of retirement goals (see Appendix C); (c) the respondent's personal experience providing financial support to his or her own adult children (this

question was only be presented to respondents who had adult children; see Appendix D); and (d) demographic information, including age, education, retirement status, number of children, and income level (see Appendix E).

1.3.4 Analytical Approach

The analytic approach for this study required a statistical model not commonly used in social science research because standard ordinal regression models commonly used for ordinal dependent variables are not appropriate when the dependent variable does not meet the assumption of parallel lines. Consultations with statisticians pointed me to generalized ordinal logistic regression model. This model has been known since late 1980s (see McCullagh & Nelder, 1989), but recent advances in statistical software (i.e., the GOLOGIT module for use with Stata statistical software) have made the model much easier to estimate, stimulating its wider usage (Williams, 2006).

In its essence, this model estimates a series of cumulative logit models; that is, the original ordinal variable is collapsed into a series of two categories, with binary logistic regressions ran on each. For example, with four levels of the ordinal outcome variable, three groupings would occur: The first grouping in the present project would be Category 1 (*definitely not*) versus Categories 2, 3, and 4 combined; then Categories 1 and 2 versus Categories 3 and 4; then Categories 1, 2, and 3 versus Category 4. In each pair, the lower values are recoded to zero and the higher values are recoded to one; thus, just as with standard binary logistic regression models, a positive coefficient indicates that higher predictor variable scores are associated with higher odds of outcome variable endorsement, and a negative coefficient indicates that higher predictors variable scores are associated with lower odds of outcome variable endorsement. If the assumptions of

parallel lines are met, then all of the corresponding estimates are the same across the different logistic regressions.

The rationales respondents provided to open-ended responses were split into two groups depending on whether respondents endorsed parental assistance (indicated that the vignette parents should “probably” or “definitely” provide financial assistance to the adult child) or did not endorse it (indicated that the vignette parents should “probably” or “definitely” *not* provide financial assistance to the adult child). The open-ended data were then coded using an inductive approach (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012).

Specifically, as the primary coder I read the open-ended responses and inductively created an initial set of codes, keeping the code names as close to the original language expressed by respondents as possible. The secondary coder, a native English speaker, coded the same data deductively using the primary coder’s inductively derived codes. Any confusion or disagreement that arose concerning conceptual distinctions among codes was discussed until consensus was reached between the coders. For example, the initial codes “it is a small price to pay,” “it is only one-time payment,” “it will have small impact on retirement,” “retirement is figured out,” and “parents are young and have time to recover” were ultimately merged into a single theme labeled “small financial effect on retirement.” The unit of coding was a unique rationale and a single open-ended response with multiple rationales embedded within it was therefore coded into multiple categories.

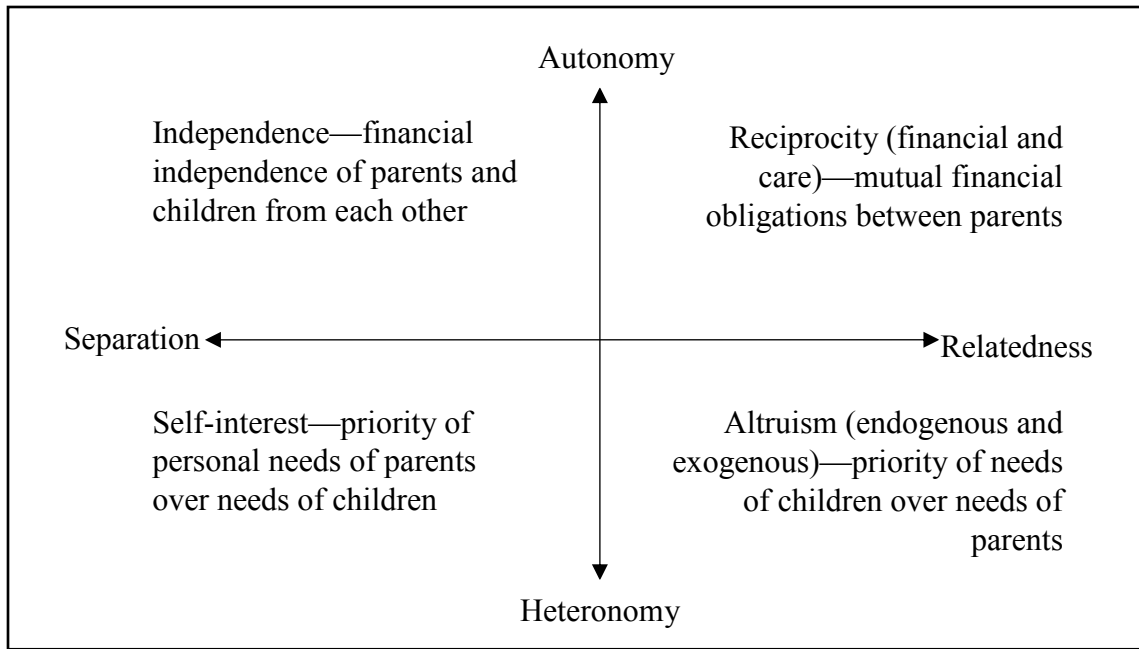


Figure 1. Taxonomy of Motives of Intergenerational Support

CHAPTER 2. PARENTAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH PURCHASING A CAR FOR A RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATE YOUNG ADULT CHILD

Having a car is vital to everyday life in the United States; in most contexts, it is essential for grocery shopping, healthcare, and commuting to school or work (Circella, Tiedeman, Handy, Alemi, & Mokhtarian, 2016). Regardless of income level, cars are expensive. Many young college graduates are financially vulnerable because they tend to be burdened with student loans while lacking stable full-time employment or enough income (Abel, Deitz, & Su, 2014). Their college degrees coupled with financial insecurity simultaneously make young college graduates appealing to a long-term lenders and in need of a long-term car loan to decrease monthly payments (Garikapati, Pendyala, Morris, Mokhtarian, & McDonald, 2016; O'Brien, 2017a).

Parents often are a major source of support for their adult children's car purchase: More than half of all parents help their adult children to purchase a car (Autotrader, 2012). Parents might help to reduce monthly payments on car loans, or make sure that their child purchases a safe and reliable car (Autotrader, 2012). Parents who provide financial assistance to their children often put their own financial future at risk: While contributing to their child's car purchase parents direct their money away from their own needs, they contribute less to their savings, delay their retirement plans, or must return to work after retirement (Merrill Lynch, 2015; Szinovacz et al., 2001). As a result, when making a decision about helping their children with the cost of purchasing a car, many parents are also making a decision about saving for retirement. The difficulty of the choice has been addressed in a number of personal finance blogs, TV shows, and by the news media, but has rarely been addressed in empirical research.

Despite the importance of understanding the core motives and reasoning behind parental support that affects retirement planning, little is known about appropriate and inappropriate contexts in which parental support for car purchases is provided. Previous studies regarding parental financial support to young adults in general have shown that three factors have primary importance for predicting whether financial assistance is provided: the age of parents, the gender of the child, and parental attitudes toward providing financial support (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013; Goldscheider, Thornton, & Yang, 2001; Wightman, Schoeni, & Robinson, 2012). Investigating these predictors in the context of a car purchase is the main goal of the present study.

2.1 Background Literature

2.1.1 Age of Parents

Parental support of adult children changes with the age of the parents: When parents are in their 40s and 50s and have several decades before retirement they tend to underestimate the amount of savings they need for their own retirement (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013; Hershey et al., 2007; Merrill Lynch, 2015). They prioritize their immediate needs over long-term retirement planning and make expensive purchases or provide support to their children that they cannot afford (Schoeni & Ross, 2005). As a result, they under-contribute to their retirement savings plans (Merrill Lynch, 2018), which forces them to delay the age when they can afford to retire (Szinovacz et al., 2012). As they age, parents typically change their attitudes toward their financial support of adult children: In their early 60s, parents tend to reduce financial support to their adult children (Schoeni & Ross, 2005) and increase the proportion of income that they save for retirement (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013).

In accordance with the bulk of empirical evidence indicating that adults in their early 60s are more focused on their financial preparation for retirement than those in their 40s (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013), I hypothesize that parents providing financial assistance to their young adult children to purchase a car is perceived as more acceptable when the parents are in their 40s than in their 60s.

2.1.2 Gender of the Child

A child's gender plays a role in determining the amount of financial support parents provide: Daughters receive more support from their parents than do sons (Goldscheider et al., 2001; Wightman et al., 2012). One explanation is that parents expect their daughters to be their caregivers when as they age (Goldscheider et al., 2001). Indeed, daughters are more likely than sons to be primary caregivers for their parents when they require assistance (Young & Newman, 2003). An alternative explanation is that most parents still share traditional gendered beliefs that daughters are less independent and should be more shielded from life's difficulties (Kane, 2012; Lips, 2012). Considering the existing literature indicating that daughters receive more support from their parents than do sons (Wightman et al., 2012), I hypothesize that social acceptance of parental financial assistance with a car purchase for young adult daughters than sons.

2.1.3 Motives of Parental Support

The general public's attitudes toward parental support are another factor that affects the support parents provide to their adult children. Five theories seem to encompass the major motives for parental support: altruism, reciprocity, normative solidarity, individualization, and self-interest (Silverstein et al., 2012).

The theory of altruism stems from the evolutionary theory of concern about the survival of offspring and the transmission of genes to future generations (Buss, 2015). From this perspective, the desire of parents to purchase a newer car can be seen as an investment in the child's safety. This may be true considering that young adults are more likely to buy older, inexpensive, and less reliable cars with fewer safety features, thereby increasing the risk of a fatal accident (Muller, 2015; Ufberg, 2015).

The normative solidarity perspective points at the social side of parental support by stressing the importance of adhering to socially prescribed roles, statuses, and expectations. It is expected that middle-class parents care for their children and help them overcome obstacles (Holmstrom et al., 2011). One of the first obstacles of adulthood is the need for transportation to and from school or work. However, considering that cars are not only a tool for transportation but also a social status symbol, providing a care to their children may also demonstrate that they, as parents, care about their family, and are willing and able to ensure that their children maintain the socioeconomic status (Elliott, 2009; Swartz, 2008).

From the reciprocity perspective, parental support is based on the expectation that children will pay their parents back, either in the form of cash by returning the money that they received from their parents or in the form of future care (e.g., driving to assist their parents with errands, sharing their home and resources when their parents get old and are not able to take care of themselves). Trading future care and support for financial resources may be especially appealing to young adults, considering they often find themselves in a disadvantaged financial position for a car purchase. For example, they often have large student loans, they often do not have enough savings—personal finance

advisors recommend a 20% down payment on a car (Consumer Reports, 2017). The cost of a car loan can be relatively high due to having low credit scores (due primarily to a lack of credit history). This confluence of circumstances leads recent college graduates to choose longer car loans with smaller monthly payments, resulting in more interest that must be paid at over time (O'Brien, 2017a). Therefore, a family loan may be considered a financially savvy way to have a car while avoiding the burden of a high-cost car loan (Burnette, 2011).

Individualization and self-interest are two theories that are associated with negative attitudes toward parental support of adult children (Chambers, 2012; Horioka, 2014; Luescher & Pillemer, 1998). From the individualization perspective, parents do not purchase a car for their children because it is an opportunity for children to develop financial independence, learn the value of money, develop new savings habits, and learn how to use financial tools available on the market (Arnett, 2014; Eisenberg, 2018). From the self-interest perspective, parents have their own financial needs that should be prioritized over the needs of their adult children. Paying monthly on a car loan may have large negative effect on their retirement savings (Rose, 2018). Both motivations stress the importance of the financial tools available on the market for young adults.

Literature indicates that altruism, normative solidarity, and reciprocity represent positive attitudes toward parental financial assistance of children, and motives of independence and self-interest represent negative attitudes toward support provision (Silverstein & Giarrusso, 2010). We hypothesized that respondents with high endorsement of altruism, solidarity, and reciprocity should be more prone to believe that parents should financially assist their adult children with a car purchase, whereas

respondents with high endorsement of independence and self-interest should be less prone to believe that such financial support should be provided.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Sample

Participants were recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) platform. MTurk is commonly used by researchers because it provides relatively easy access to a large sample of anonymous adults that is more diverse than when using traditional sampling methods (see Dworkin et al., 2016; Huff & Tingley, 2015). Participants were recruited using the best practice recommendations of Chandler and Shapiro (2016). Inclusion criteria required that participants be over 40 years of age, and had a HIT acceptance ratio of 80%, to ensure that respondents had generally completed past MTurk tasks in an acceptable manner. To ensure a more diverse sample of MTurkers, survey completion opportunities were posted at several different times of day and days of the week.

Although 500 MTurk workers successfully completed the survey—that is, they passed the screening items, answered attention check items correctly, and took a reasonable amount of time (180 seconds) to complete the survey (Vanette, 2017)—four provided inconsistent responses about their age at different points in the survey and were therefore eliminated from the sample, resulting in the final sample of 496 respondents. Respondents ranged from 40 to 75 years of age ($M = 51.1$, $SD = 8.2$). A majority were female (57.3%), attended college (90.5%), identified as non-Hispanic White (83.5%), married (63.1%), employed full- or part-time (79.4%), and reported more than \$0 in retirement savings (68.0%). Annual household income was evenly distributed across

income categories ranging from less than \$20,000 to more than \$100,000. See Table 1 for more details on the characteristics of respondents.

2.2.2 Measures and Procedures

2.2.2.1 Factorial Vignette

A factorial vignette design was used in this study to investigate attitudes toward parental assistance with purchasing a vehicle for young adult children after they graduate from college. Key benefits of the factorial vignette approach over structured interviews and surveys is that respondents can be questioned indirectly (i.e., about a hypothetical situation that does not require self-disclosure) and information contained in the vignette can be randomly manipulated to experimentally assess how contextual circumstances of interest impact responses.

The primary focus of this study was the attitude toward parental usage of retirement savings for financial assistance with purchasing a car for a young adult child who recently graduated from college. The vignette developed for this purpose presented a situation where the adult child needed a car to find and get back and forth to and from a job; however, due to a lack of savings and no credit history, the child asks his or her parents for financial assistance with the purchase of a car. Parents could only afford the purchase if they were to divert money otherwise intended for retirement savings. The main question for respondents is whether parents in this situation should or should not provide financial assistance to their child.

This vignette represents a real-life dilemma because one-in-three young adults do not have a credit score (Experian, 2016), which puts them in the position where taking a loan becomes costly and they must ask their parents to help them with car purchase

(Merrill Lynch, 2018). In turn, parents may find it appealing to provide financial assistance using retirement savings because there is a large market of inexpensive cars in the United States and a typical annual contribution to retirement savings would provide enough money to either purchase a used car or to cosign a loan and make a substantial contribution toward the down payment; based on assumption characters in the vignette had a retirement plan or any other savings plan related to their retirement saving goals and could decide how much to contribute to it; that median annual wage of \$50,024 for workers between 45 and 54 years of age, and a median annual contribution to retirement in this age group of 6.9%, which includes both voluntary and institutional contributions (U.S. Department of labor, 2019; Vanguard, 2018). In addition, based on a review of the literature, two contextual variables were manipulated in the vignette: age of the parents (early middle-aged [late 40s] vs. late middle-aged [early 60s]) and the gender of the adult child (male vs. female), resulting in four possible variations of the vignette, which were randomly presented to respondents (variables manipulated in the vignette are in bold, text that is dependent upon the bolded text is italicized):

John/Sarah recently finished college and is looking for a job to start *his/her* career, but *his/her* old car broke down and *he/she* needs to purchase another car quickly to continue *his/her* job search. However, *he/she* was unable to save money while in college and has no credit history, so *he/she* has asked *his/her* parents for help with a car loan. *John/Sarah's* parents, who are in their **late 40s/early 60s**, would like to help, and in fact want to outright purchase a car for *John/Sarah* as a show of support as *he/she* launches into adulthood and starts

his/her career. However, to purchase the car they will need to reduce the amount of money they typically save for retirement.

After reading a randomly-selected version of this vignette, respondents were asked: “Should *John/Sarah's* parents reduce the amount of money they typically save for retirement to help their *son/daughter* with the purchase of a car?” Response options included a 4-point Likert-type response format comprised of *definitely not* (1), *probably not* (2), *probably yes* (3), *definitely yes* (4). Then respondents were asked to “briefly explain why you chose that answer.”

2.2.2.2 Dispositional Motives for Providing Support

Items designed to assess motives for providing support were developed using existing questionnaires and previous studies (Kohli & Künemund, 2003), and allow assessment of the relative importance of five core motives of intergenerational support. The items included: (a) "For parents, personal luxuries should be less important than the success of their children (altruism);" "Parents have a moral obligation to financially support their adult children when in need (normative solidarity);" "Parents should support their children because children will take care of them when they get old (reciprocity of care);" "Parents should have a ‘family bank’ and provide support to adult children only in the form of a loan (reciprocity—family bank);" "Parents should not provide support to their adult children because too many young adults today are being financially supported unnecessarily by their parents (independence);" and "Parents should not provide support to their adult children because they should focus on their own financial preparation for retirement" (self-interest). Response options for each statement were *confidently disagree* (scored as 1), *lean toward disagree* (2), *lean toward agree* (3), and *confidently agree* (4).

2.2.2.3 Control Variables

Six respondent characteristics were included in the study as control variables: clarity of retirement goals, gender, history of similar experience, income level, type of retirement plan, and place of residence on a rural-urban continuum. Clarity of retirement goals was measured using items borrowed from previous surveys (Hershey, Henkens, & Van Dalen, 2010; Noone, Stephens, & Alpass, 2010). Items included: “I set specific goals for how much I need to save for retirement;” “I frequently read articles, brochures, or watch TV shows on investing and financial planning;” “I frequently discuss my retirement plans with my family;” “I have valuable tangible assets such as a house or property that I could sell to help me finance my retirement, if necessary;” “I’m able to put aside or invest a sufficient proportion of my income for retirement;” “I believe that my employer provides a good retirement plan.” Responses options for each item were *confidently disagree* (1), *lean toward disagree* (2), *lean toward agree* (3), and *confidently agree* (4). Internal consistency of the scale was good (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .83$).

The other control variables were measured more simply, with one or two items each. Gender was assessed using a single item: “With which of the following gender identities do you most closely identify?” with three response options: *male* (1), *female* (2), and *another gender* (3). Whether respondents had ever provided support similar to that depicted in the vignette was assessed with two consecutive questions: “Do you have any biological, adopted, or step-children who are currently 18 years of age or older?” and “Please identify whether you have ever provided financial support to your adult children in the form of purchasing real estate or making mortgage payments.” Type of retirement plan was measured in four categories: *I have an employer-sponsored pension plan* (1); *I*

have a personal retirement account (e.g., 401(k), 403(b), SEP IRA, Roth IRA, Solo 401(k), 457) (2); I have a different plan (3); I don't have any retirement plan (4); and an I don't know (5); none of the respondents chose Response Options 4 and 5, and they were therefore eliminated from further analysis. Annual household income was measured using six categories that included: *less than \$20,000 (1); \$20,000 to \$39,999 (2); \$40,000 to \$59,999 (3); \$60,000 to \$79,999 (4); \$80,000 to \$99,999 (5); and more than \$100,000 (6).* Place of residence was identified by an open-ended question, in which respondents provided their ZIP codes. Codes subsequent conversion to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 9-point urban- rural-rural declining continuum where categories 1 to 3 represented urban, and 4 to 9—non-urban communities (U.S. Department of agriculture, 2019).

2.2.3 Analytical Approach

Generalized Ordered Logit analysis (gologit, see Williams, 2016) was conducted to estimate association between independent design variables, beliefs about parental support, respondent characteristics, and endorsement of parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition. The appropriateness of using gologit models was confirmed by Brant's test, which showed that two variables—reciprocity-care, self-interest, clarity of retirement goals, and similar experience with providing support with car purchase—didn't meet of proportional odds assumption. For these variables, regression coefficients were computed using three levels of endorsement of the dependent variable, comprising: (a) category 1 (“definitely not”) versus categories 2, 3, and 4 (“probably not,” “probably yes,” and “definitely yes”, respectively); (b) categories 1 and 2 (“definitely not” and “probably not”) versus categories 3 and 4 (“probably yes”, and “definitely yes”); (c)

categories 1, 2, and 3 (“definitely not,” “probably not,” and “probably yes”) versus 4 (“completely agree”). In addition, due to high endorsement of the dependent variable, a complementary log-log link function was used for estimation of predictors in the model (Norusis, 2012). Multicollinearity of predictors was assessed using variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance, which showed that all predictors had a VIF below the critical value of 10 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014), thereby indicating that multicollinearity was not an issue in the analytical models.

The rationales respondents provided to open-ended responses were split into two groups depending on whether respondents endorsed parental assistance (indicated that the vignette parents “probably” or “definitely” should provide financial assistance to the child; N = 331) or did not endorse it (indicated that the vignette parents “probably ” or “definitely” should not provide financial assistance to the child; N = 165). Then they were analyzed using an inductive approach (Guest et al., 2012). Specifically, as the primary coder I read open-ended responses and inductively created an initial set of codes, keeping the code names as close to the original language expressed by respondents as possible. Then a secondary coder, a native English speaker, reviewed the primary coder’s initial codes and disagreements were discussed until consensus was reached between the coders. Finally, similar codes were combined into larger themes. For example, the initial codes “it is a small price to pay,” “it is only a one-time payment,” “it will have a small impact on retirement,” “retirement is figured out,” “parents are young and have time to recover” were coded into a single theme: “small financial effect on retirement.” The unit of coding was a unique rationale and a single open-ended response with multiple rationales embedded within it was therefore coded into multiple categories

2.3 Results

2.3.1 Regression Analysis

A full summary of descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations are presented in Table 1. Endorsement of parental support was statistically and positively correlated with three motives of support (altruism, solidarity, and reciprocity of care,) and was negatively correlated with the other two motives (independence and self-interest).

Responses concerning whether parents should provide financial assistance with purchasing a car for a child had a positively skewed distribution (see Table 2). More than two-thirds of respondents either choose “definitely yes” (15.9%) or “probably yes” (50.8%) that the vignette parents should provide financial assistance. Fewer than one-in-three respondents either choose “definitely not” (11.9%) or “probably not” (21.4%) that the vignette parents should provide financial assistance with a car purchase.

The results of gologit analysis showed that among randomly manipulated design variables, the increase of age of parents had negative effect on the likelihood of endorsing parental financial support (Table 3). Among motivational variables, solidarity and reciprocity of care were positively associated with the likelihood of endorsement of parental support, whereas the self-interest was negatively associated with it; the effects of the latter two variables was larger on the lower levels of endorsement. Financial readiness for retirement was negatively associated with likelihood of endorsement of parental financial support; however, the effect was stronger on the lower levels of endorsement and could not be assumed in the population [$p = .056$]. Experience of providing support with paying for college tuition was negatively associated with the likelihood of endorsement of support, and the effect was larger on the lowest levels of endorsement.

Having a pension or a savings plan were negatively associated with the likelihood of endorsement of parental financial support in comparison to having no retirement plan.

2.3.2 Open-ended Rationales

2.3.2.1 Rationales Favoring Parental Assistance

The primary reasons for endorsing parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition included: *obligation to support, find a compromise, it will have small effect on retirement, children will eventually pay back their parents*. These themes covered 92.8% of rationales; the other rationales, which did not fit in any of these categories, were coded as “miscellaneous” and not included in further analysis.

Obligation to support was the most common theme in endorsement of parental support (59.4% of rationales). Parents have a moral obligation to take care of own children even when they become young adults. To the extent that a car is a necessity in modern American life, paying for the car can give their emerging adult children a boost as they start their adult lives by dramatically easing this key financial burden. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: “it is the obligation of the parents to help their children in any way that they can;” “John needs a jumpstart and his parents can give it to him;” “John's parents may have to work a little longer but they will be giving the son an asset that will help him become a productive adult;” and “if she took on a car note then it would be an added burden that may take her away from focusing on her career.”

Small effect on retirement plans was the second most common theme (37.5% of rationales). Respondents assumed that helping with a car purchase would not have much effect on retirement savings and parents would have time to recoup the loss: “they have

time to make up for the contributions to retirement,” “it is a short one-time event,” “their retirement saving would not be that affected.”

Find a compromise was the third most common theme (31.3% of rationales) and was held by those who believed the parents should not sacrifice their retirement plans to help their child with purchasing a car. Instead, these respondents believed the parents should provide sufficient support for the child to purchase an inexpensive but reliable used car. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: “they can help Sarah some and still keep most of their retirement savings,” “compromise and get a used car,” “helping her with only the down payment and maybe some of the first several payments,” “as long as it doesn’t hurt their retirement I would [help to buy a car];” and “Find him a car for a reasonable price.”

Children will eventually pay back their parents was the fourth most common theme (22.0% of rationales). Parents who provide financial support to their children may expect that the children will eventually pay them back directly, or otherwise reciprocate the help in one form or another. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: “they should make a loan to their child with a contract to pay them back with interest,” “ask her to pay them back monthly after she finds a job,” and “she will be grateful and help her parents with retirement in the future.”

2.3.2.2 Rationales Against Parental Assistance

The most common themes against parental financial assistance with paying for a car included: “child’s responsibility,” “parents need money for retirement,” and “provide only partial support.” These themes covered 97.8% of rationales; the other rationales,

which didn't fit in any of the categories, were coded as "miscellaneous" and not included in further analysis.

Child's responsibility was the most common theme among rationales against parental support with paying for college (57.6% of rationales) and conveyed the sentiment that children should pay for their car to become financially independent and responsible adults. Respondents also argued that children do not need a car and that they can either use public transport or rent a car. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: "she could take a taxi to interviews," "she could use public transportation," "she could use ride-sharing services," "she could get her car repaired," "she is grown and her parents should not buy her a car," "Sarah will value and appreciate her car more if she buys it herself," and "it's better to force him to fend for himself and find his own solution rather than rely on his parents."

Parents should save money for their retirement was the second most common theme among rationales against parental support with paying for college (47.3% of rationales). These respondents focused on the fact that paying for a car would have a negative effect on retirement savings because parents will not enough time to recoup the loaned money before retirement and would lose potential growth from the money taken out of retirement savings. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: "buying her a car is too much of a burden for parents trying to save for their own retirement," "they will never replace the money they take out and they'll fall further behind in their retirement savings," "they need to shore up their retirement prior to helping their kids out," "they shouldn't touch the retirement money," and "it's more

important for Sarah's parents to continue funding their retirement since they will be sacrificing future growth to pay for a depreciating asset.”

Parents should provide only partial support was the third most common rationale against providing the support (25.5% of rationales). These respondents indicated that there are many inexpensive cars available on the market that children should be able to purchase on their own without asking parents for support. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: “they can help him get a decent used car without hampering retirement savings,” “find other ways to help her make payments or get a loan,” and “help her is one thing but paying the whole thing no way.”

2.4 Discussion

Responses concerning whether parents should provide financial assistance with purchasing a car for an adult child had a positively skewed distribution: More than two-thirds of respondents either confidently agreed or leaned toward agreeing that parents should provide financial assistance. Fewer than one-in-three respondents either confidently disagreed or leaned toward disagree that parents should provide financial assistance with a car purchase.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of contextual factors and the predictive ability of beliefs about parental financial support of adult children and respondent characteristics on attitudes toward parental financial assistance with purchasing a car for an adult child. Results indicate that attitudes were affected by parental age and were associated with beliefs consistent with normative solidarity and self-interest, as well as the type of retirement plan respondents had.

Although this study is among the first to examine the effects of contextual circumstances on attitudes toward parental financial assistance with purchasing a car for an adult child, the results are largely consistent with the existing literature regarding intergenerational transmission of wealth in families, parental financial support of adult children, and retirement planning. Findings of this study add to the existing literature about intergenerational support (Merrill Lynch, 2018; Schoeni & Ross, 2005; Swartz, Kim, Uno, Mortimer, & O'Brien, 2011) by showing that this support extends to a car purchase. Parents may find it more financially wise to provide full or partial support with purchasing a car, preventing their children from paying high costs of bank loans, which often leads to a spiral of long-term loans rolled from one car to another (Fay, 2019). At the same time, lack of endorsement of financial assistance when parents were in their early 60s may reflect healthy concern whether it is wise to provide large financial support to children before retirement.

Some of the results of this study contradict previous studies that have found parents prefer providing support to their daughters than to their sons because they expect that daughters will take care of them when they age (Goldscheider et al., 2001; Wightman et al., 2012). In contrast, gender of the child had no effect on attitudes toward parental financial assistance with purchasing a car in the present study. It might be that parents do not distinguish between sons or daughters when providing them assistance with purchasing a car given that having a car is vital for everyday life in the United States, but more research is needed to test this supposition.

This study also extends the extant literature about the motivation of parental support of adult children purchasing a car. The existing literature has been primarily

focused on the symbolic value of a car as a status symbol that signifies the socioeconomic status of the car owner (White & Sintov, 2017). However, strong association with the solidarity motive, identified in this study, may also indicate that parents internalize social pressure to ensure that their children have a car. This may have a negative effect on the mental health of parents who have limited financial resources and cannot provide assistance; feelings of parental failure due to being unable to provide a car might cause additional stress and depression (Mitchell, 2010).

This study also adds to existing literature by showing the association between the endorsement of a car purchase and the belief that parents provide support to their children expecting that they will eventually pay them back in the form of future care. To my knowledge, the extant literature has not provided a clear answer on the question about what drives the association between reciprocity of care and a car purchase, but I speculate that parents might provide support with a car purchase hoping that the car will open more prospects in the life of their children, help them find better-paying jobs, build larger social connections, and improve their career opportunities; as result, children would have more resources for the financial support of their aging parents.

Both self-interest (a belief that parents must prioritize saving for retirement over supporting adult children) and independence (a belief that parents should not support their adult children because children must be independent) were negatively associated with the endorsement of support. However, the effect of self-interest was more pronounced, whereas independence did not reach statistical significance. This combination of motives may indicate a belief that parents' own financial needs may be

more important than a desire to stimulate financial independence of adult children. To my knowledge, this finding has not been addressed in the previous literature.

Among respondent characteristics, clarity of retirement goals and previous history of providing support with a car purchase were associated with endorsement of support; and those associations were stronger at the lowest levels of endorsement of support. In other words, those who had clear vision of their needs in retirement as well as those who provided support with a car purchase had more pronounced negative attitudes toward parental use of retirement savings than those who had less clear retirement goals and those who had no adult children. The former finding parallels existing literature showing that people who plan their retirement are less likely to use their savings on non-retirement needs (Adams & Rau, 2011; Griffin, Loh, & Hesketh, 2013). This indicates that parents who provided support to their adult children with the purchase of a car developed disappointment about their own decision. This disappointment may reflect that a car is a quickly depreciating asset (Autotrader, 2012); it may quickly wear out, become unreliable, or may need constant investments to keeping it in operational condition. Children may not feel obliged to pay their parents back for the purchase of a car if it turns out to be a burden or short-term solution to their needs. Another finding of this study, was that having a retirement plan (either pension or a savings plan) was negatively associated with endorsement of support, and parallels the existing literature that indicates that people with retirement plans were more concerned about saving for retirement than those who do not have a retirement plan (Burtless, 2011).

Results of the analysis of open-ended rationales paralleled previous investigations of motivations for parental support. Two rationales favoring support (*obligation to*

support and *children will pay back their parents*) represent two well established motives of intergenerational assistance: solidarity, which stresses the importance of parental obligation to support children, and reciprocity, which stresses the importance of mutual financial exchanges in family (Silverstein et al., 2012). Two rationales of not providing support (“children’s responsibility” and “parents need money for retirement”) represent independence and self-interest, respectively; because the former stresses the importance of child’s autonomy and the latter stresses the importance of prioritizing personal financial needs above those of other family members. A large proportion of respondents were identified who believed that parents can easily recover financially after helping their child buy a car. This finding supports existing literature showing that this perspective is the primary reason why Americans do not have enough savings for retirement: Torn between the need to save for retirement and the desire to help their child, Americans tend to underestimate their personal financial needs, resulting in less-than-sufficient retirement savings (see Mitchell, 2010). But this study also adds to the literature by showing that, many people are willing to find a compromise in their support of adult children with purchasing a car. They want both to provide support to their children while also keeping their retirement savings intact.

2.5 Conclusion

The decision of whether to use retirement savings to provide support to young adult children is complicated. On the one hand, parental support with the purchase of a car may open up new opportunities to adult children. On the other hand, a car is a depreciating asset and the benefits it provides may quickly diminish while substantially depleting parental retirement savings. The current literature suggests that this problem be addressed

by improving the financial literacy of workers, encouraging them to become less prone to use their retirement saving on non-retirement needs. Despite the importance of financial literacy, it is also important to educate parents to be self-aware about their own long-term expectations so that they do not get disappointed when the negative financial effects of spending retirement on a car purchase outweigh the expected personal benefits of it.

Table 2.1. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (N = 496)

	M	SD	Range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Endorsement of support	2.71	0.88	1-4		-																
2. Age of the parents ^a	.48	0.50	0-1	-.12																	
3. Gender of the child ^b	.48	0.50	0-1	.01	.02																
4. Altruism	2.72	0.92	1-4	.19	-.02	-.02															
5. Normative solidarity	2.34	0.92	1-4	.32	-.06	-.05	.41														
6. Reciprocity–care	2.21	0.91	1-4	.30	-.02	.04	.32	.41													
7. Reciprocity–family bank	2.32	0.88	1-4	.07	-.12	.03	.17	.15	.25												
8. Independence	2.47	0.97	1-4	-.29	-.03	.04	-.23	-.33	-.38	-.07											
9. Self-interest	2.63	0.89	1-4	-.34	.07	.11	-.26	-.36	-.33	-.11	.58										
10. Clarity of retirement goals	1.34	0.76	0-3	-.10	.02	.00	.01	.05	.00	.11	.02	.03									
11. Gender ^c	0.57	0.50	0-1	-.07	.03	-.03	-.13	-.09	-.17	-.02	.07	.03	-.22								
12. Had no adult children ^d	0.38	0.49	0-1	.00	-.04	.04	-.06	-.09	.01	-.06	-.05	.00	-.17	-.09							
13. Never helped pay for car ^e	0.28	0.45	0-1	-.04	.10	.06	-.06	-.08	-.18	-.10	.12	.09	.00	.10	-.56						
14. Helped pay for car ^f	0.34	0.47	0-1	.05	-.06	-.11	.13	.18	.18	.18	-.07	-.09	.19	-.01	-.49	-.45					
15. No plan ^g	0.32	0.47	0-1	.09	.04	-.01	-.01	.01	.04	-.01	.03	-.03	-.52	.18	.03	.17	-.19				
16. Pension plan ^h	0.33	0.47	0-1	-.03	.02	-.02	.03	.02	-.03	.00	-.07	-.05	.30	-.10	-.09	-.01	.11	-.48			
17. Savings plan ⁱ	0.35	0.48	0-1	-.06	-.06	.03	-.02	-.03	-.01	.00	.04	.07	.21	-.08	.06	-.15	.08	-.50	-.51		
18. Income ^j	3.69	1.59	1-6	-.05	-.03	-.02	.00	.01	-.09	.01	.02	.01	.46	-.10	-.15	-.12	.27	-.41	.19	.22	
19. Rural-urban continuum ^k	2.0	1.65	1-4	.04	.03	-.02	-.02	.00	-.04	-.05	-.03	-.09	-.06	.17	-.13	.12	.01	.11	.00	-.11	-.11

Note. ^a0 = late 40s and 1 = early 60s. ^b0 = male and 1 = female. ^c0 = male and 1 = female. ^d0 = had one or more adult child(ren) and 1 = had no adult children. ^e0 = had no adult children and 1 = had adult child(ren) and never helped to pay for car. ^f0 = had no adult children and 1 = had adult child(ren) and helped to pay for car. ^g0 = savings plan or pension plan; 1 = no plan. ^h0 = no plan or savings plan and 1 = pension plan. ⁱ0 = no plan or pension plan and 1 = savings plan. ^j1 = less than \$20,000, 2 = \$20,000–\$39,999, 3 = \$40,000–\$59,999, 4 = \$60,000–\$79,999, 5 = \$80,000–\$99,999, 6 = more than \$100,000. ^k1 = metropolitan population of 1 million or more, 2 = a local metropolitan population between 250,000 and 1 million, 3 = a local metropolitan population of less than 250,000; 4 = non-metropolitan categories on the continuum collapsed (non-metro).
 $r > |.13|, p < .001$; $r > |.12|, p < .01$; $r > |.10|, p < .05$; $r > |.08|, p < .10$.

Table 2.2. Distribution of Responses Within Each Level of Independent Variables
(N = 496)

	Definitely not		Probably not		Probably yes		Definitely yes	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Overall	59	11.9	106	21.4	252	50.8	79	15.3
Gender of the child								
Son	35	13.5	54	20.8	126	48.5	45	17.3
Daughter	24	10.2	52	22.0	126	53.4	34	14.4
Age of parents								
Late 40s	24	9.3	52	20.2	130	50.6	51	19.8
Early 60s	35	14.6	54	22.6	122	51.1	28	11.7
Total	59	11.9	106	21.4	252	50.8	79	15.9

Table 2.3. Generalized Ordinal Logistic Regression Models Predicting Endorsement of Parental Use of Retirement Savings for Financial Assistance with Purchasing a Car for a Young Adult Child (N =496)

	DN vs. PN, PY, and DY			DN and PN vs. PY and DY			DN, PN, and PY vs. DY		
	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Vignette variables									
Early 60s ^(Late 40s)	0.74	0.08	.005						
Daughter ^(Son)	1.02	0.11	.859						
Dispositional motives:									
Altruism	1.04	0.07	.519						
Normative Solidarity	1.20	0.08	.007						
Reciprocity—care	1.88	0.32	< .001	1.36	0.15	.005	1.12	0.08	.120
Reciprocity—family bank	0.95	0.06	.455						
Independence	0.89	0.06	.106						
Self-interest	0.44	0.08	< .001	0.60	0.07	< .001	0.95	0.08	.528
Respondent characteristics:									
Clarity of retirement goals	0.69	0.13	.056	1.14	0.14	.296	1.15	0.11	.138
Female ^(Male)	0.90	0.10	.346						
History of supporting car purchase									
No ^(no adult children)	1.01	0.13	.950						
Yes ^(no adult children)	0.53	0.16	.029	0.94	0.19	.756	1.01	0.15	.961
Retirement plan									
Pension ^(No plan)	0.70	0.11	.020						
Savings ^(No plan)	0.68	0.11	.012						
Income level	1.01	0.04	.772						
Rural-urban continuum	1.02	0.04	.630						
Constant	81.63	67.94	< .001	5.97	3.35	.001	0.48	0.20	.075

Note. DN = definitely not, PN = probably not, PY = probably yes, DY = definitely yes. Variables which do not meet the proportional odds assumption have OR coefficients for each level of endorsement. Negative log-log link function was applied to all models (see Norušis, 2012); SPSS and STATA differ in names for link functions (see Williams, 2016). Results of Brant test of parallel lines for each variable are available upon request. Model fit: Pseudo-R² = .12; -2ll = -531.52; $\chi^2 = 145.52, p < .001; df = 24.$

CHAPTER 3. PARENTAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH PAYING FOR COLLEGE TUITION FOR A YOUNG ADULT CHILD

Most workers today have defined contribution retirement plans and they must take full responsibility for financial planning of their own retirement. Unfortunately, most of workers are not financially prepared for retirement. Several structural factors—a poor economy, low wages, low financial literacy, poor understanding of how the retirement system works—explain why some people do not save enough money for retirement. These structural factors have been widely covered in existing literature elsewhere. Much less attention has been paid to motivational and contextual factors, such as financial decisions concerning whether to save for retirement or invest money in the competing and more immediate needs of family members.

One of the life goals for many parents is to ensure that children reach financial independence (Mitchell, 2010; Swartz, 2008). In today's highly competitive labor market, many jobs require a postsecondary education. Accordingly, more than 70% of young adults who attend college receive financial assistance from their parents: parents variably pay for college tuition, purchasing books, and paying bills (Sassler, Ciambone, & Benway, 2008). Moreover, more than 40% of parents prioritize financial support for college over saving for their own retirement (T.RowePrice, 2017). Obtaining a college degree can be expensive; although there is substantial variation across institutions, the median cost of a four-year college degree is \$40,940 for a public college and \$50,900 for a private college (Ma, Baum, & Pender, 2017) If the money spend on adult children during these years in college were instead invested into a retirement fund, the money could double or triple by the time parents retire, which would be enough to substantially improve the financial security of most parents.

The motivations that lead parents to either save for retirement or provide financial support to adult children pursuing college degree has not been well addressed in the existing literature, and little is known about how contextual factors affect that decision. Investigation of these questions is the main goal of this study.

3.1 Background Literature

3.1.1 Motives of Parental Support

There are several taxonomies of parental motives to financially support their children, but most of them include five common motives: altruism, normative solidarity, reciprocity, independence, and self-interest (Horioka, 2014; Remle, 2011; Silverstein et al., 2012). The common definition of altruism is a form of support without ostensible benefit to the giver (Silverstein et al., 2012). In the context of family relationships, pure altruism is difficult to achieve given that financial support often brings the giver sometimes subtle non-financial benefits, including additional power in relationships, a new role status, and increased interpersonal ties (Remle, 2011). For example, parents who pay for their children's college often exercise more control over their child's studying, friendships, and how they spend their time in college; parents also might want to make sure that the college degree would help their children maintain or increase their socioeconomic status (Swartz, 2008). In other words, parents may not expect any reciprocal return from their children, but they may expect to have a more financially secure future for their family (Holmstrom et al., 2011). Therefore, this act of support may be considered a form of conditional reciprocal altruism: voluntary giving with no preconditions, but with the expectation that it will benefit the entire family in one way or another (Remle, 2011; Trivers, 1971).

Reciprocity theory shifts the focus from intergenerational family cohesion to intra-family exchanges of support (Silverstein et al., 2012). Driven by social exchange theory, reciprocity theory postulates that each instance of parental financial support is based on informal arrangements between parent and child regarding how the money will be repaid: directly, as a family loan repaid to be repaid to the family support bank, or indirectly, such as in the form of informal caregiving (Antonucci, 1990; Holmstrom et al., 2011; Merrill Lynch, 2015; Silverstein et al., 2002). Despite the financial losses that come from these reciprocal arrangements, the expectation of returns stimulates children to be more financially responsible than if they received the financial support without any obligations (Horioka, 2014; Silverstein et al., 2012).

Normative solidarity theory assumes that the family as a social institution unites individuals with a shared identity, which in turn stimulates a feeling of obligation in family members (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991). For example, some parents support their children because they want to realize their vision of what it means to be good parents who love and care about their children (Holmstrom et al., 2011). These acts of parental support become an important element of family history, further ensuring family cohesion and intergenerational connections (Bengtson, 2001).

This assumption, that it is okay and even ideal for parents to support their adult children, has been criticized by proponents of the self-interest and individualization theories (Horioka, 2014; Lüscher & Hoff, 2013). From the point of view of the individualization theory, parental financial support may result in loss of autonomy for the child, stimulating dependence of adult children on their parents, as they limit themselves to approved family norms and expectations and have less power to negotiate the terms of

family coexistence (Meil, 2012). This critical position toward parental financial support is also taken by the self-interest model, which prioritizes guarding one's financial resources over providing financial support to others, including adult children, by both emphasizing the importance of accumulating assets during one's working years and not easily letting go of those resources (Horioka, 2014). Considering recent increases in life expectancy, growing costs of health care, and the financial vulnerability of social programs aimed at helping elderly people, proponents of the self-interest theory argue that future retirees must prioritize saving for retirement over providing financial support to other family members (Kemper et al., 2005; Poterba, 2014).

Altruism, normative solidarity, and reciprocity represent positive attitudes toward parental financial assistance of children, and independence and self-interest represent negative attitudes toward support provision. Accordingly, I expect that respondents with high endorsement of altruism, solidarity, and reciprocity would be more prone to support, and respondents with high endorsement of independence and self-interest would be less prone to support parental financial assistance with their child's college expenses.

3.1.2 Gender of the Child

Gender of the child is associated with the provision of parental financial assistance with paying for college. For decades American women had limited access to higher education; there was a social expectation for them to maintain traditional gender roles in the form of domestic labor and childrearing while men pursue employment and career advancement (Goldin, Katz, & Kuziemko, 2006). Numerous social, economic, and political changes have resulted in more gender equality; however, women with the same level of education are still paid less than their male counterparts and are less likely to

advance in their careers (Blau & Kahn, 2017). There is growing awareness of and desire to change this social inequality (Holmstrom et al., 2011).

The existing literature shows mixed results on the question of whether parents who provide support to their children treat them differently. On one side, a study found that in households with only sons, parents are more willing to support their children than those parents in households with only daughters: they are more likely to have money saved for college, they prioritize saving for college over saving for their own retirement, and more frequently contribute to their child's college education (O'Brien, 2017b; T.RowePrice, 2017). These results dovetail the existing patriarchal social norms.

However, several studies have shown that parents provide more financial assistance to their daughters than to their sons (Wightman et al., 2012). This fact can be explained by evolutionary theory that says that when parents have limited resources; they are more likely to invest in their daughters than in their sons (Buss, 2015). This may be indirectly supported by recent statistics showing that female college students largely outnumber and are more studious than their male counterparts, and therefore may receive more support from their parents while in college (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014). Considering controversy in the extant literature, one of the goals of this study was to identify whether gender of children has an effect on endorsement of parental support with paying for college tuition.

3.1.3 College Major

Parents who provide financial assistance with paying for college for their children often expect college education to provide financial advantages to their children: to find a better job, to earn a living without struggling financially, and find a secure place to live

(Holmstrom et al., 2011). Parents who support their children in college generally seem to be quite open to whatever college major their child chooses provided it fits the child's interests and a sincere effort is made in their studies. That said, many parents do express concern when children choose majors that are less likely to lead to garner a financially rewarding career after graduation (Holmstrom et al., 2011).

College degrees vary in monetary value, which may be estimated as work-life earnings after receiving a college degree until retirement (roughly 25–64 years of age) compared with earnings without a degree. The highest work-life earnings are achieved in engineering fields and the lowest in education (Pew Research Center, 2011). Regardless of field students enter, after graduating from college they run a high risk of not find a job or being employed in low-wage positions that do not require a college degree (Abel et al., 2014). Considering the existing literature indicating that parents are more willing to support those children who are pursuing a degree with high income potential (Holmstrom et al., 2011), I expected that social acceptance of parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition will be higher for those parents who have a child pursuing a degree with high income potential (business) than those who have a child pursuing a degree with low-income potential (social work).

3.1.4 Number of Children

Number of children is another important predictor of parental financial assistance with paying for college: Financial assistance is negatively associated with number of children, likely because parents with more children must share their financial resources with all of their children and therefore have fewer resources to provide each individual child (Berry, 2008; Conley, 2005; Swartz, 2008, 2009). Therefore, parents who have

multiple children are more willing to encourage children to become financially independent, to look for scholarships or grants, and to explore job opportunities on campus than are those parents who have only one child. Considering the existing literature indicating that parental support is lower among those who have more children than fewer children (Wightman et al., 2012), I expected that social acceptance of parental financial assistance with paying for college would be higher for those parents who have one child than for those who have three children.

3.1.5 Source of Money

The current retirement system in the United States is based on the principle that people must take personal responsibility for their retirement savings through personal retirement accounts (PRAs; Poterba, 2014). Despite numerous benefits—people may use various financial tools available on the market and potentially manage their savings better than their employer, and have access to a portion of the savings in the event of an emergency—workers may also manage their savings poorly or use their savings for non-retirement needs, threatening their financial future. In fact, more than 40% of workers use their savings to pay bills, purchase goods, withdraw, cash-out or take loans against their PRAs, and these leakages or breaches in their retirement savings often undermine their long-term retirement security (Akbas, 2016). Another serious problem is that workers often decide for themselves how much of their income to contribute to their PRAs. Due to a lack of financial literacy, workers contribute too little (a mean of 6.9%) of their income to retirement savings (Vanguard, 2018)—whereas many personal finance experts recommend contributing 15% to 20% of income, depending on type of job, whether employer matches contributions, and age of worker (Merrill Lynch, 2015; Vanguard,

2018). In combination, these practices of withdrawing savings from one's PRA and contributing less toward retirement than experts advise may be the primary reasons why more than two thirds of American households headed by persons 55–64 years of age have either very small retirement savings or no savings at all (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2015).

In short, the bulk of empirical evidence indicates that adult workers are more likely to under-contribute rather than to withdraw money from their retirement accounts (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013). Accordingly, I hypothesize that parental financial assistance with paying for college for young adult children is more socially acceptable for parents who under-contribute to their retirement account rather than withdraw money from it.

3.1.6 Age of Parents

Parental financial support for adult children tends to decline as they age. Most studies of intergenerational parental support show that children gain more financial independence from their parents with age and therefore require less support from them (Rossi, 2010). However, less scholarship has directly addressed the possibility that parents themselves shift their priorities from supporting their adult children toward financial preparation for their own retirement, especially as they get closer to retirement (Vanguard, 2018). Given that the bulk of empirical evidences indicates that adults in their early 60s are more focused those in their 40s on financial preparation for retirement (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013), I hypothesized that parental financial assistance to adult children attending college is more socially acceptable for parents in their 40s than in their 60s.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Sample

All respondents for this study ($N = 500$) were recruited using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in February of 2018. MTurk is a popular tool for recruiting respondents for social studies (Deetlefs et al., 2015; Dworkin et al., 2016; Huff & Tingley, 2015) because it provides easy and quick access to a sufficiently diverse sample of adults. Another benefit of this sampling approach is that respondents can be selected based on inclusion criteria. In this study, inclusion criteria required that respondents were 40 years of age or older (Casey, Chandler, Levine, Proctor, & Strolovitch, 2017; Vanette, 2017). Four cases were eliminated because respondents provided inconsistent responses about their demographic characteristics at different points in the survey, resulting in the final sample of 496 respondents. Respondents' age ranged from 40 to 75 years ($M = 51.1$, $SD = 8.2$); 57.3% of respondents were female; 90.5% studied in college; 83.5% were of White, non-Hispanic ethnicity; 63.1% were married; 79.4% were employed full- or part-time; 68.0% had one or several retirement savings plans; and annual household income was evenly distributed across income categories ranging from less than \$20,000 to more than \$100,000 (see Table 1 for more details on respondent characteristics).

3.2.2 Measures and Procedures

3.2.2.1 Factorial Vignette

The primary aim of this study was to investigate attitudes toward parental usage of retirement savings for financial assistance with paying for college tuition for a young adult child. This aim was achieved by using factorial vignette design to investigate the

effects of sensitive contextual information on attitudes toward the situation described in the vignette (Ganong & Coleman, 2006).

Based on literature review, four variables were manipulated in the vignette resulting 16 possible variations of the vignette ($2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial vignette design), one of which was randomly presented to each respondent. Manipulated variables included: age of parents (late 40s vs. early 60s); number of children (one vs. three); college major (a helping profession with low income potential such as social work vs. a more money-centric major such as business); and source of money (early withdrawal vs. contributing less to retirement). Respondents who read the vignette where parents were in their late 40s and were considering withdrawing money from their retirement accounts were also informed that vignette parents would have to pay an additional 10% early withdrawal fee.

In the vignette developed for this study, fictional middle-aged parents had a young adult child who wanted to go to college and asked his or her parents for financial assistance to do so. The parents could afford paying for college tuition, but they would have to use money they were planning to save for retirement. The main question for respondents was whether parents in this situation should or should not provide financial assistance to their child. The vignette was presented as follows (content-variant variables are in italics):

Kevin and Jessica are in their *late 40s/early 60s* and they have *one/three* child(*ren*). Their *son/daughter* is in *his/her* early 20s and living independently but wants to return to college and complete an unfinished *social work/business* degree. Although Kevin and Jessica are proud of their child's educational

ambitions, they are concerned that student loans will be a financial burden after graduating college, as it is for many other millennials. Therefore, they are considering paying the college tuition themselves by *taking an early withdrawal from their retirement savings (which requires paying a 10% early-withdrawal penalty)/reducing the amount of money they typically save for retirement.*

Upon reading the vignette respondents were asked: “Do you think Kevin and Jessica *should* or *should not* use some of their retirement savings/reduce contributions to their retirement plan to pay their child’s college tuition?” Response options included *definitely should not* (scored as 1), *probably should not* (2), *probably should* (3), and *definitely should* (4). Then respondents were asked to “briefly explain why you chose that answer.”

3.2.2.1 Dispositional Motives for Providing Support

Dispositional motives for providing parental support to adult children were assessed using the following items: “For parents, personal luxuries should be less important than the success of their children” (altruism), “Parents have a moral obligation to financially support their adult children when in need” (normative solidarity), “Parents should support their children because children will take care of them when they get old” (reciprocity of care), “Parents should have a ‘family bank’ and support adult children only in the form of a loan” (reciprocity–family bank), “Parents should not support their adult children because too many young adults today are being financially supported unnecessarily by their parents” (independence), and “Parents should not support their adult children because they should focus on their own financial preparation for

retirement” (self-interest). Response options on each item were *confidently disagree* (1), *lean toward disagree* (2), *lean toward agree* (3), and *confidently agree* (4).

3.2.2.2 Control Variables

Based on previous literature about parental financial assistance of young adult children and literature on retirement planning, six respondent characteristics were included in the study as control variables: clarity of retirement goals, gender, history of similar experience, income level, and type of retirement plan. Clarity of retirement goals was measured using six items borrowed from previous surveys (Hershey et al., 2010; Noone et al., 2010): “I set specific goals for how much I need to save for retirement;” “I frequently read articles, brochures, or watch TV shows on investing and financial planning;” “I frequently discuss my retirement plans with my family;” “I have valuable tangible assets such as a house or property that I could sell to help me finance my retirement, if necessary;” “I’m able to put aside or invest a sufficient proportion of my income for retirement;” and “I believe that my employer provides a good retirement plan.” Response options for each item were *confidently disagree* (1), *lean toward disagree* (2), *lean toward agree* (3), and *confidently agree* (4). Internal consistency of the scale was good (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .83$).

The other control variables were measured more simply, with one or two items each. Gender was assessed using a single item: “With which of the following gender identities do you most closely identify?” with three response options: *male* (1), *female* (2), and *another gender* (3). Whether respondents had ever provided support similar to that depicted in the vignette was assessed with two consecutive questions: “Do you have any biological, adopted, or step-children who are currently 18 years of age or older?” and

“Please identify whether you have ever provided financial support to your adult children in the form of purchasing real estate or making mortgage payments.” Type of retirement plan was measured in four categories: *I have an employer-sponsored pension plan* (1); *I have a personal retirement account (e.g., 401(k), 403(b), SEP IRA, Roth IRA, Solo 401(k), 457)* (2); *I have a different plan* (3); *I don't have any retirement plan* (4); and *I don't know* (5); no respondents chose Response Options 4 and 5. Annual household income was measured using six categories that included: *less than \$20,000* (1); *\$20,000 to \$39,999* (2); *\$40,000 to \$59,999* (3); *\$60,000 to \$79,999* (4); *\$80,000 to \$99,999* (5); and *more than \$100,000* (6).

3.2.3 Analytical Approach

Generalized ordered logit analysis (gologit, see Williams, 2016) was conducted to estimate associations between the independent design variables, beliefs about parental support, demographic characteristics of respondents, and endorsement of parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition. The appropriateness of using gologit models was confirmed by Brant's test, which showed that two variables—reciprocity—care and gender of respondents—did not meet of proportional odds assumption, $\chi^2(2) = 3.37, p < .01$ and $\chi^2(2) = 8.82, p < .01$, respectively. For these variables, regression coefficients were computed using three levels of endorsement of the dependent variable: (a) Category 1 (*definitely not*) versus Categories 2, 3, and 4; (b) Categories 1 and 2 (*definitely not* and *probably not*) versus Categories 3 and 4; and (c) Categories 1, 2, and 3 (*definitely not*, *probably not*, and *probably yes*) versus Category 4. An interaction between the source of money and age of parents was added to the model because they are conceptually connected to each other, Due to skewed distribution of the dependent

variable, the negative log-log link function was applied for the model. Multicollinearity was assessed by variance inflation factor (VIF), which showed that none of the predictors had a VIF above the critical value of 5 and the mean value of VIF for the model was equal to 1.77, indicating that multicollinearity was not an issue in the analysis (O'Brien, 2007).

All open-ended responses were split into two groups depending on whether their authors endorsed the provision of financial assistance by the vignette parents ($n = 167$) or did not endorse financial assistance ($n = 329$). Then responses were analyzed using an inductive analytical approach—as the primary coder I read the open-ended responses and inductively created an initial set of codes, keeping the code names close to the original language expressed by respondents, then the secondary coder, a native English speaker, reviewed the primary codebook and deductively coded the open-ended responses (see Guest et al., 2012). Disagreements were discussed until consensus was reached between the coders. The unit of coding was a unique rationale and single open-ended response could have several rationales ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 1.2$). Similar codes were then combined into larger themes. For example, the initial codes “it is a small price to pay,” “it is only one-time payment,” “it will have small impact on retirement,” “retirement is figured out,” and “parents are young and have time to recover” were coded into a single theme named *small financial effect on retirement*.

3.3 Results

3.3.1 Regression Analysis

A full summary of descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations are presented in Table 1. Endorsement of parental support was statistically and positively correlated with

four motives of support (altruism, solidarity, reciprocity of care, and reciprocity–family bank), and was negatively correlated with two motives of not providing support (independence and self-interest) and two respondent characteristics (female gender and income level).

Responses concerning whether parents should provide financial assistance with paying for college tuition had a negatively skewed distribution (see Table 2). More than two thirds of respondents indicated that the vignette parents *definitely* (30.9%) or *probably* (24.8%) should not provide financial assistance. Fewer than one-in-three respondents indicated that the vignette parents *definitely* (8.9%) or *probably* (24.8%) should provide financial assistance with paying for college tuition.

Result of the gologit analysis showed that among the five design variables the source of money was the only variable that had a negative effect on likelihood of endorsement of parental financial assistance. Among six beliefs about parental support, reciprocity of care had a positive association with endorsement of parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition, and the effect was larger on the highest levels of the attitude. In contrast, independence and self-interest were negatively associated with endorsement of support (see Table2). Among demographic characteristics, only gender was negatively associated with the attitude, and the effect was the largest for the highest levels of the attitude.

3.3.2 Open-ended Rationales

3.3.2.1 Rationales Favoring Parental Assistance

Four major themes were identified in rationales that were associated with endorsement of parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition. These

themes included *obligation to support*, *find compromise*, *children will eventually pay back their parents*, and *small effect on retirement*. These themes were identified in 94.3% of rationales; the other 5.7% of rationales did not provide any additional meaningful themes therefore they were coded *miscellaneous* and not included in subsequent analyses.

Obligation to support was the most common theme in endorsement of parental support—slightly more than one in two or 54.1% of rationales conveyed the belief that parents have a moral obligation to take care of their young adult children. They should help their children to get college degree, ease their financial burden from student loans, help their children to become financially independent. It is okay for parents to sacrifice their own needs because college is more important than retirement. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: “parents have a duty to give their children the best possible start in life,” “as a parent, you want to do whatever you can to make sure your children have a better future than you do;” “it's important to help family especially your children. This will help set your child up for success,” “help their child succeed and not be burdened with debt;” “education is very must,” “help their daughter escape the pressure of debt from college loans,” “the parent should reduce their savings in order to be able to pay the tuition,” “because I know firsthand how crippling student loan debt can be.”

Find a compromise—one in seven, or 14.8% of rationales indicated that parents who want to provide financial support their children should not pay the whole bill but instead find a compromise and provide their children only partial financial support. This would save parental plans for retirement and would stimulate financial independence of their children: “it's up to the parent to decide how much assistance they want to give to

their child;” if it [support] hurts them a lot then no;” ”parents can help out a bit but not completely. It should be a team effort;” “assist her but, don't pay for it altogether. Put stipulations on school. Needs to maintain a certain GPA.”

Children will eventually pay back their parents—the third ranking theme (identified in 17.1% of rationales) emphasized that children who receive financial support from their parents would eventually pay back to their parents. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: “She should be able to help them out in exchange after she finds a good paying job after college,” “allow the child to pay back the tuition costs with interest,” “[parents should support] on the condition that it is not an aid, but rather a loan;” ”they'd be better off making some sort of agreement with their son that if they reduce their retirement funding to pay for his education, he'll help them out at a later date.”

Small effect on retirement—one in seven or 13.6% of rationales expressed a belief that parental support with paying for college tuition would have small effect on retirement or that they have time to save for retirement. For example, some respondents reported: “they are young enough to save more,” “since it’s just a short term reduction, they will probably be okay helping their daughter,” “I think the 10 percent penalty is small compared to the burden of what student loans would place on their son.”

3.3.2.2 Rationales Against Parental Assistance

The most common themes in rationales of respondents who did not endorse parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition included: “*child’s responsibility, parents need money for retirement, provide only partial support*. These

themes all together covered 96.4% of rationales, the rest didn't fit in any of the categories, were coded as *miscellaneous*, and eliminated from analysis.

Paying for college tuition is child's responsibility was the most common theme in rationales against parental support with paying for college, covered in 71.4% of rationales. Respondents argued that children must pay for their college tuition themselves, and thereby, on one side, this would teach them financial responsibility and saving skills, which are important for being an adult. On the other side there are always options with scholarships that may take most of the financial burden, and there is always option with inexpensive colleges. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: "it is important for an adult child to learn how to manage his life in a responsible manner," "teach them more about living frugally," "if a grown child wants to pursue college they can finance it themselves, get an extra job, apply for grants and/or scholarship money," "their son can go to a cheaper college," "there is no worse investment than a college degree."

Parents need money for retirement—a bit more than one in three, or 37.9% of rationales expressed a belief that because parents in the vignette have already worked hard to raise their child, it is not their responsibility to pay for college tuition. Instead, they should save for their own financial and avoid taking too much risk of losing savings and investments. Taking money from retirement to pay for college tuition is also bad financial decision when it comes with paying early withdrawal fees. Paying for college education is a bad investment because the child might never find a good job and never pay back own parents. This motivation was expressed in the following sentiments: "retirement savings comes first," "it might jeopardize their retirement," "10% penalty is a

killer, there are other to obtain the funds” if the son doesn't get a good career or can't work at all due to death or illness so can't help his parents upon retirement,” “you should always take care of yourself first when it comes to retirement savings,” “college degrees tend to be a useless investment of cash that could be put to better use.”

Provide partial support that does not affect retirement plans was the fourth most common theme, covered in 14.6% of rationales. Parents who want to support their children in college should provide only partial support that won't affect their retirement plans: for example, help their child with purchasing college books, help with some bills, or let the child to come back and live with parents: “they could help with the loan payments when that time comes,” “they should help her find another way, rather than dip into retirement funds,” “only is she will pay back,” “they can offer to buy books,” “their son can also move back home with his parents”

3.4 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate attitudes toward parental financial assistance with paying college tuition while controlling for major contextual variables, beliefs about parental support, and respondent demographic characteristics. The results demonstrated that respondents did not endorse parental financial assistance with paying for a young adult child's college tuition. This lack of endorsement was associated with negative attitudes toward money withdrawal from retirement accounts; and beliefs about altruism, reciprocity, independence, and self-interest in parental financial support of adult children.

Some of the results of this study parallel previous studies—this study showed that around 25.4% of respondents believed that parents should provide support to the

child in college even though they must withdraw money from their retirement accounts, and 43.4% who read a vignette where parents would have to contribute less to their retirement savings to pay college tuition believed the same. These numbers approximate those reported by Sallie Mae (Sallie Mae, 2017), which showed that 37% of parents were willing to pay their child's college tuition either by sacrificing their income or by taking additional loans. The present data may be more nuanced given that a variety of real-life contexts of parental support were considered.

Some results of this study further extend existing literature concerning the effects of various contexts on parental financial support of young adult children (see Berry, 2008; Fellowes & Willemin, 2013; Holmstrom et al., 2011; Sallie Mae, 2017).

Respondents in this study tended to be opposed to parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition, and this was true regardless of the adult child's gender, college major, and number of siblings, as well as age of parents who would be providing the support. Previous studies have largely ignored the well-known problem that parents use their retirement savings as a source of money to assist their young adult children. Thus, it seems that when confronted with the reality that the money to financially support an adult child in college must come from somewhere, and in this case would have come from retirement savings, social expectations to financially support adult children become less pervasive.

Previous studies have shown that parents support their children in college because they want them to maintain or improve the parents' social status, or in other words, are primarily driven by a solidarity motive (Holmstrom et al., 2011; Rauscher, 2016; Swartz et al., 2011). In contrast, the present study showed that the expectation that children

would provide care to their parents may be considered a more important motive of parental financial support with paying for college tuition. Indeed, college graduates tend to have higher income than those with only a high school diploma (Pew Research Center, 2011), and they may therefore have more financial resources to provide care to their parents as they age.

Interestingly, across respondent characteristics, only gender of respondents statistically enhanced the prediction of attitudes in this vignette. This may indicate that there are normative expectations and beliefs concerning parental financial support in this context that cut across sociodemographic characteristics, but also that women tend to have more conservative attitudes toward the use of retirement savings for non-retirement needs. This finding contradicts the extant literature, which has shown that women are less engaged than men in financial planning for retirement (see Griffin et al., 2013; Quick & Moen, 1998). Future studies are needed to address this apparent contradiction.

Another contribution of this study is that some methodological discrepancies were found between motives of support examined using multiple choice and open-ended questions. Although in multiple choice questions normative solidarity was not a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward parental financial assistance with paying for college tuition, in open-ended rationales this motive (i.e. “obligation to support”) was the dominant motive for providing support. This discrepancy may be attributed to the nature of the response required. Developing rationales is more difficult than answering multiple choice questions because it requires internalization of the problem and identification with the key characters in the vignette and therefore reflects contextual motives, whereas multiple choice questions reveal respondents’ personal

dispositional beliefs regarding intergenerational family support, and are more affected by social desirability (Van Lange, Joireman, Parks, & Van Dijk, 2013; Weber, Kopelman, & Messick, 2004). Nonetheless, analysis of open-ended responses conducted in the present study contributes to the extant literature by showing that in addition to solidarity and reciprocity, endorsement of parental use of retirement savings for the support of adult children was also driven by the expectation that parents should find a compromise, and only provide partial support with for college tuition without making large financial sacrifices. This expectation may be based on the fact that many college students have access to various financial resources, such as student loans, that are designed to ease the financial burden of attending college. Also, parental support was found to be driven by the expectation that paying for college tuition may have a small effect on retirement plans. The later finding parallels the extent literature, which shows that many people lack the financial literacy to understand the consequences of spending retirement savings on non-retirement needs (Fisher, Chaffee, & Sonnega, 2016).

This study shows that among various contextual motives for not supporting adult children in college, the dominant ones are independence (i.e., “children’s responsibility”) and self-interest (i.e., “parents should save money for retirement”); these motives have been well addressed in the extant literature (see Horioka, 2014; Remle, 2011; Silverstein & Giarrusso, 2010). The present study also adds to existing literature by showing that among those who have a negative attitude toward parental support, the third most common motive was that paying for college tuition is a bad financial investment. This attitude may reflect several well recognized social issues, one of them being that many college graduates are underemployed or are overqualified for their jobs (Abel et al.,

2014), and another being that parental funding of tuition might negatively influence how hard students work for their education (Hamilton, 2013).

3.5 Conclusion

This is the first study to my knowledge investigating the effect of contextual information on attitudes toward use of parental retirement savings to provide financial assistance with paying college tuition. Overall respondents shared negative attitudes toward parental financial assistance with paying college tuition when the money had to come from retirement savings. However, this negative attitude was more pronounced when money for support came from retirement savings and less pronounced when money came from contributing less to retirement savings. The first finding may indicate high effectiveness of policies that penalize early withdrawals from retirement accounts, as people seem to understand the negative financial consequences of it. However, the relative tolerance toward reducing contributions for retirement may indicate a need for educational programs that would teach people to prioritize saving for retirement over spending on other needs. Also, there is a need for policies that stimulate workers to contribute more to their PRAs.

Table 3.1. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (N = 496)

	M	SD	Range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Endorsement of support	2.12	0.95	1-4	1																			
2. Gender of the child ^a	0.49	0.50	0-1	-.03	-																		
3. College major ^b	0.53	0.50	0-1	.01	-.02	-																	
4. Number of children ^c	0.46	0.50	0-1	-.02	-.05	-.05	-																
5. Source of money ^d	0.54	0.50	0-1	-.20	.03	-.04	-.05	-															
6. Age of parents ^e	0.48	0.50	0-1	-.04	.06	.00	-.02	-.12	-														
7. Altruism	2.72	0.92	1-4	.24	-.08	.00	-.02	-.01	-.02	-													
8. Solidarity	2.34	0.92	1-4	.28	-.06	.01	-.02	-.01	-.01	.41	-												
9. Reciprocity–care	2.21	0.91	1-4	.39	-.02	-.04	-.02	-.12	.00	.32	.41	-											
10. Reciprocity–family bank	2.32	0.88	1-4	.13	-.08	.07	-.03	.02	.00	.17	.15	.25	-										
11. Independence	2.47	0.97	1-4	-.36	-.03	.05	-.05	.04	-.02	-.23	-.33	-.38	-.07	-									
12. Self-interest	2.63	0.89	1-4	-.38	.02	-.03	-.06	.00	-.02	-.26	-.36	-.33	-.11	.58	-								
13. Clarity of retirement goals	1.34	0.76	0-3	-.03	.01	-.09	.06	.02	.04	.01	.05	.00	.11	.02	.03	-							
14. Gender ^f	0.57	0.50	0-1	-.12	.03	.00	-.03	-.01	.04	-.13	-.09	-.17	-.02	.07	.03	-.22	-						
15. Had no adult children ^g	0.38	0.49	0-1	.00	-.04	-.01	.02	-.07	-.08	-.06	-.09	.01	-.06	-.05	.00	-.17	-.09	-					
16. Never helped to pay for college tuition ^h	0.28	0.45	0-1	-.06	.07	.07	.03	-.03	.02	-.02	-.07	-.05	.00	.07	.07	-.11	.08	-.49	-				
17. Helped to pay for college tuition ⁱ	0.34	0.47	0-1	.05	-.03	-.06	-.05	.10	.06	.08	.15	.04	.06	-.01	-.06	.27	.01	-.56	-.45	-			
18. No plan ^j	0.32	0.47	0-1	.03	-.06	.05	-.06	.01	-.09	-.01	.01	.04	-.01	.03	-.03	-.52	.18	.03	.17	-.19	-		
19. Pension plan ^k	0.33	0.47	0-1	.03	.01	.00	.05	-.06	.11	.03	.02	-.03	.00	-.07	-.05	.30	-.10	-.09	-.01	.11	-.48	-	
20. Savings plan ^l	0.35	0.48	0-1	-.06	.05	-.05	.01	.05	-.02	-.02	-.03	-.01	.00	.04	.07	.21	-.08	.06	-.15	.08	-.50	-.51	-
21. Income level ^m	3.69	1.59	1-6	-.11	.04	-.06	.04	.06	.08	.00	.01	-.09	.01	.02	.01	.46	-.10	-.15	-.12	.27	-.41	.19	.22

Note. ^a0 = male and 1 = female. ^b0 = social work 1 = business. ^c0 = one child and 1 = three children. ^d0 = under-contribute and 1 = withdraw. ^e0 = late 40s and 1 = early 60s. ^f0 = male and 1 = female. ^g0 = had one or more adult child(ren) and 1 = had no adult children. ^h0 = had no adult children and 1 = had adult child(ren) and never helped to pay for college tuition. ⁱ0 = had no adult children and 1 = had adult child(ren) and helped to pay for college tuition. ^j0 = savings plan or pension plan. 1 = no plan. ^k0 = no plan or savings plan and 1 = pension plan. ^l0 = no plan or pension plan and 1 = savings plan. ^m1 = less than \$20,000, 2 = \$20,000–\$39,999, 3 = \$40,000–\$59,999, 4 = \$60,000–\$79,999, 5 = \$80,000–\$99,999, 6 = more than \$100,000.

$r \in [-.13; > .13]$, $p < .001$; $r \in [-.12; > .12]$, $p < .01$; $r \in [-.09; > .09]$, $p < .05$; $r \in [-.08; > .08]$, $p < .10$

Table 3.2. Distribution of Responses Within Each Level of Independent Variables (N = 496)

	Definitely not		Probably not		Probably yes		Definitely yes	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total	153	30.9	176	35.5	123	24.8	44	8.9
Gender of the child								
Son	75	29.9	89	35.46	60	23.9	27	10.76
Daughter	78	31.8	87	35.51	63	25.71	17	6.94
College major								
Social Sciences	76	32.5	79	33.8	56	23.9	23	9.8
Business	77	29.4	97	37.0	67	25.6	21	8.0
Number of children								
One child	83	31.1	90	33.7	70	26.2	24	9.0
Three children	70	30.6	86	37.6	53	23.1	20	8.7
Source of money								
Under-contribute	53	23.3	76	33.3	73	32.0	26	11.4
Withdraw	100	37.3	100	37.3	50	18.7	18	6.7
Age of parents								
Late 40s	77	29.8	90	34.9	65	25.2	26	10.1
Early 60s	76	31.9	86	36.1	58	24.4	18	7.6

Table 3.3. Generalized Ordinal Logistic Regression Models Predicting Endorsement of Parental Use of Retirement Savings for Financial Assistance with Paying for College Tuition (N = 496)

	DN vs. PN, PY, and DY			DN and PN vs. PY and DY			DN, PN, and PY vs. DY		
	OR	SE	<i>p</i>	OR	SE	<i>p</i>	OR	SE	<i>p</i>
Vignette variables:									
Daughter ^(son)	0.90	0.15	.526						
Business ^(social sciences)	0.88	0.14	.423						
Three children ^(one child)	0.93	0.11	.540						
Withdraw ^(under-contribute)	0.65	0.10	.007						
Early 60s ^(late 40s)	0.94	0.15	.721						
Source of money × Age of parents	0.90	0.21	.639						
Dispositional motives:									
Altruism	1.13	0.08	.102						
Normative solidarity	1.06	0.08	.460						
Reciprocity – care	1.08	0.09	.344	1.60	0.16	<.001	1.75	0.33	.003
Reciprocity – family bank	1.09	0.07	.211						
Independence	0.84	0.07	.025						
Self-interest	0.75	0.06	<.001						
Respondent characteristics:									
Clarity of retirement goals	0.95	0.10	.590						
Female ^(male)	0.84	0.11	.180	0.83	0.14	.270	0.29	0.10	<.001
History of paying for college tuition									
No ^(no adult children)	1.02	0.15	.868						
Yes ^(no adult children)	1.15	0.16	.324						
Retirement plan									
Pension plan ^(no plan)	1.09	0.18	.591						
Savings plan ^(no plan)	0.96	0.16	.826						
Income level	0.94	0.04	.176						
Constant	3.67	1.75	.006						

Note. DN = definitely not, PN = probably not, PY = probably yes, DY = definitely yes. Variables which do not meet the proportional odds assumption have OR coefficients for each level of endorsement. Negative log-log link was applied to models (see Norušis, 2012). Results of test of parallel lines for each variable are available upon request. Model fit: Pseudo- $R^2 = .13$; $-2ll = -541.85$; $\chi^2(23) = 169.01$, $p < .001$.

CHAPTER 4. PARENTAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH DOWN PAYMENT ON A HOME FOR A YOUNG ADULT CHILD

Home ownership is seen as a major milestone of adulthood, at least in part because home ownership is believed to indicate financial independence and desire to settle and have a family (Arnett, 2014). Most young adults plan to purchase a house, but in recent years the mortgage crisis, small wages, and large student loans have hindered the ability of many young adults to purchase a house (Xu, Johnson, Bartholomae, O'Neill, & Gutter, 2015).

Young adult children's delayed independence affects parents both financially and emotionally (Goldfarb, 2014; Szinovacz et al., 2001). Parents tend to spend substantial financial resources to support their co-resident adult children, including utilities, food, loans, and everyday needs (Merrill Lynch, 2015). They may also be at heightened risk for developing depression because they feel they failed to as a parent to launch an independent child into adulthood (Gee, 1987; Mitchell, 2010). To nudge children toward independence and ensure that this transition goes smoothly and in a timely manner, parents often provide financial assistance with purchasing an adult child's first house: According to the National Association of Realtors (2018), one third of all young adults who purchased their first house in 2017 could afford it because they received a gift or loan from family relatives or friends. Helping to purchase a house comes at a high price though; many parents find themselves sacrificing their financial savings and delaying their retirement as a result of providing that financial support (Swartz et al., 2011).

Although it is not clear what motivates parents to sacrifice their own financial security in favor of providing financial support to their adult children for the purchase of a house, the academic literature identifies three major theories of support

(solidarity, altruism, and reciprocity) and two theories for not providing support (individualization and self-interest; Remle, 2011; Silverstein, Conroy, & Gans, 2012). Solidarity theory argues that parents have an obligation to support their children (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991); altruism theory argues that support is a form of parental investment in the future of the family (Berry, 2008); and reciprocity theory argues that parental support is based on the expectation that children will pay their parents back either with money or by providing care at some point in the future (Silverstein et al., 2012). In contrast, two theories argue that parents should not support their children: Individualization theory posits that adult children must be financially independent from their parents and exert control over their own lives (Connidis & McMullin, 2002), and self-interest theory posits that parents must save for their own retirement (Horioka, 2014).

Despite substantial literature demonstrating that parents experience financial hardship because of their financial assistance to their children, no known studies have examined attitudes concerning the relative importance of and motivation for providing financial support to adult children in or after college in the context of the competing need to plan and save for retirement. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of four contextual variables on attitudes toward parental financial assistance with the down payment for purchasing a house for a young adult child: (a) gender of the child, (b) presence of grandchildren, (c) source of financial support, and (d) age of parents.

4.1 Background Literature

4.1.1 Gender of the Child

Literature is scant on gender differences in parental support of sons versus daughters with regard to purchasing a house (Wightman et al., 2012). However, multiple studies have shown that women are financially disadvantaged relative to men, and this likely affects their ability to accumulate sufficient financial resources for purchasing a house (Zavisca & Gerber, 2016). Moreover, women are almost five times more likely than man to be a single caregiver for their child (Guzzo & Hayford, 2010) and are twice as likely to be the primary caregiver for their parents, thereby facing additional financial burden that comes with caregiving. Social recognition of the fact that women are more financially vulnerable than men while also having more responsibility for caregiving for family members may factor into the reasons parents tend to provide more financial support to daughters than son (Wightman et al., 2012).

An alternative explanation of parental willingness to financially support daughters more than sons comes from evolutionary theory, which stresses that parents invest in their offspring to ensure survival of their genes; and preference for investing either in daughters or in sons is determined by availability of resources (Buss, 2015; Trivers, 1971). Parents with fewer resources prefer to support their daughters because the lack of resources has less impact on their reproductive value, whereas sons in low-resource families are less likely to survive and procreate, and therefore receive less support from their parents. Taking into account the existing literature indicating that daughters receive more support from their parents than sons, I expected that social acceptance of parental financial assistance with a down payment would be higher when the adult child was presented as a daughter than as a son.

4.1.2 Grandchildren

Presence of grandchildren seems to have mixed effects on parental financial assistance with purchasing a house for young adult children. On the one hand, because parents tend to be highly involved in care for their grandchildren (Bengtson, 2001), assistance with purchasing a house is often viewed as an important investment to the extent that doing so provides numerous social and cognitive benefits to grandchildren. Minor children who live in houses owned by their parents tend to experience less stress from changing schools, can better focus on their schooling, and also have more stable social networks than those who live in families that rent their house and are thereby less likely to stay in the same place long-term (Aaronson, 2000). By assisting with purchasing a house, parents may also ensure that house will be in a safe neighborhood and close to them so they can see their grandchildren more often (Swartz et al., 2011). On the other hand, social stigma toward young adults who continue to receive support from their parents after starting their own families may make them uncomfortable asking for money from their parents (Hogan, Eggebeen, & Clogg, 1993; Sarkisian & Gerstel, 2008; Swartz et al., 2011). Nonetheless, given that the extant literature indicates that parents are more willing to support their young adult children who have their own small children than they are to support those who are single, I expected that social acceptance of parental financial assistance with a down payment on a house would be higher for those young adults who are married and have their own small children than for those who are single and without children.

4.1.3 Source of Money

The fact that Americans do not save enough for retirement is well documented: More than half of American households headed by a person between 65 to 74 years of age have no retirement savings and therefore rely on Social Security

as their primary source of income (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2015). The main reasons cited for the overall lack of retirement savings is that working Americans take loans against their retirement accounts and withdraw money from retirement savings for non-retirement purposes, such as purchases or paying bills (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013).

According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), workers may borrow up to \$50,000 (or 50% of a balance less than \$100,000) from their Personal Retirement Account (PRA; Internal Revenue Office, 2019). Around 20% of PRA owners take these loans (Aon Hewitt, 2011) and a moderately small percentage of them have outstanding loans. In fact, taking loans against retirement accounts can have a positive effect on retirement savings, as borrowers later increase their contribution to retirement savings (Vanguard, 2018). A more serious problem is that the majority of PRA holders loan money from their retirement savings indirectly by spending money and consequently contributing less than recommended toward their retirement. Specifically, one-in-three Americans put less than 4% of their income into their PRAs, whereas personal finance advisors recommend contributing between 15% and 25% of income depending on age and type of retirement plan (Merrill Lynch, 2015; Vanguard, 2018).

Most retirement plans allow withdrawals so workers can access their savings when necessary; otherwise people would be more leery about putting money into their PRAs (Poterba, 2014). However, the IRS penalizes early withdrawals (as opposed to loans) before 59.5 years of age with a 10% penalty fee. They identify two major types of withdrawals: hardship and non-hardship withdrawals (Internal Revenue Office, 2019). Hardship withdrawals are only allowed if the money is spent on medical care, purchasing a principle residence, preventing eviction, to pay tuition, repair a principal

residence, and to cover the costs of a funeral (Internal Revenue Office, 2019). Somewhere around 3% to 7% of PRA holders make this type of withdrawal. More problematic are non-hardship early withdrawals on which the 10% penalty is paid. These withdrawals create three problems: they result in loss of compound interest from not re-investing money, they are subject to the early withdrawal penalty, and also subject to income taxes. Despite that, around one-in-five workers make early withdrawals, thereby substantially threatening their financial future (Aon Hewitt, 2011; Fellowes & Willemin, 2013). In accordance with the bulk of empirical evidence indicating that adult workers are more likely to under-contribute rather than to take an early withdraw from their retirement account, I hypothesized that parental financial assistance with paying for college for young adult children would be more socially acceptable for parents who under-contribute to their retirement account than for those who take an early withdraw on money already contributed to their retirement account.

4.1.4 Age of Parents

Previous studies of intergenerational support showed that parental support declines with age (Schoeni & Ross, 2005). It declines because children become independent and need less support from their parents, and also because with age parents shift their priorities from financing their current needs to saving for future retirement (Burtless, 2011). Indeed, when workers are young and middle-aged they often need to spend their money for living expenses because they are burdened by mortgages and childrearing, including into young-adulthood by children who struggle financially to move out and begin independent life, thereby placing additional financial strain on parents during their peak earning and saving years (Goldfarb, 2014; Szinovacz et al., 2001). As a result, PRA holders in their late 40s are more likely to breach their retirement savings than are those in their early 60s (Fellowes &

Willemin, 2013). In accordance with the bulk of empirical evidence indicating that adults in their early 60s are more focused on financial preparation for retirement than those in their 40s, I hypothesized that parental financial assistance with a down payment for young-adult children would be more socially acceptable for parents in their 40s than for those in their 60s.

4.1.5 Motives of Parental Support

As described previously, the extant literature identifies five major motives of intergenerational support and non-support: altruism, reciprocity, solidarity, individualization, and self-interest (Remle, 2011; Silverstein et al., 2012). Altruistic support comes from a donor who does not receive any direct financial benefits from it (Berry, 2008). For example, parents who provide altruistic financial support to their children with purchasing a house do so because they may see it as a good financial investment that increases family wealth (Coulson & Li, 2013), because they expect that owning a house would bring family stability given that young families who own their houses are less likely to divorce than are those who rent their houses (Aaronson, 2000; Zavisca & Gerber, 2016), or because home ownership benefits small children who tend to have higher educational attainment and fewer behavioral problems than children of families who do not own their house and frequently move from one place to another (Barker & Miller, 2009; Grinstein-Weiss, Williams Shanks, & Beverly, 2014). In other words, altruistic motives are those in which others may benefit, but the parents themselves anticipate no direct benefit for the help.

From normative solidarity perspective, parents provide financial support to their children because they want to fit normative expectations of good parents, which among other things includes an obligation to financially support their own children (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991; Swartz, 2009). Deviation from social norms and parental

expectations may result in a feeling of personal failure in both children and their parents (Mitchell, 2010).

From a reciprocity perspective, in contrast to the altruistic perspective, parental support is driven by an expectation of future returns from their children (Silverstein et al., 2002). The extant literature identifies two major types of reciprocity: reciprocity of care and reciprocity of financial support (Remle, 2011). Parents who help their children purchase a house may see it as the place where they can age and die surrounded by their children and grandchildren (Swartz, 2009), whereas other parents may see their support for a house purchase as a loan from the family support bank and expect that children will eventually pay it back (Merrill Lynch, 2015).

Negative attitudes toward parental support are developed within self-interest and individualization theories. Individualization theory argues that parents do not provide financial support to their children because independence is a primary social virtue and it is beneficial for young adults to be independent (Luescher & Pillemer, 1998); moreover, a number of financial tools available on the financial market make purchasing a house more affordable for young adults (Xu et al., 2015). From the self-interest perspective, parents do not support their children because they believe they must prioritize their own retirement needs over the needs of their children (Horioka, 2014).

Considering that altruism, normative solidarity, and reciprocity represent positive, and independence and self-interest represent negative attitudes toward parental financial assistance of children, I expected that respondents with high endorsement of altruism, solidarity, and reciprocity would be more prone to support parental financial assistance with a down payment for their child's purchase of a

house, whereas respondents with high endorsement of independence and self-interest would be less prone to support the provision of that financial assistance. I also considered that measuring motives using multiple choice questions and open-ended questions may provide different results, with the latter being more nuanced and reflective of the context in which parental provision of financial support was being considered (see Frimer, Schaefer, & Oakes, 2014).

4.2 Method

4.2.1 Sample

Respondents were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) platform, which provides online access to a large scalable sample of anonymous adults (Dworkin et al., 2016). Inclusion criteria for this study required that respondents be 40 years of age or older and residing in the United States. Four MTurk workers who provided inconsistent responses about their age at different points in the survey were eliminated from the sample, resulting in the final sample of 496 respondents. Age of respondents ranged from 40 to 75 years ($M = 51.1$, $SD = 8.2$), most of whom were female (57.3%), attended college (90.5%), were non-Hispanic White (83.5%), married (63.1%), and employed (79.4%). A full summary of descriptive statistics is presented in Table 1.

4.2.2 Measures and Procedures

4.2.2.1 Factorial Vignette

Considering that retirement planning is sensitive to social contexts, the factorial vignette design can be a primary tool for investigating the effects of various contextual variables on attitudes toward a real-life situation (Ganong & Coleman, 2006). Based on the literature review, four contextual independent design variables

with two possible options were randomly manipulated in the vignette—a $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial vignette design—comprising 16 possible variations of the vignette, one of which was randomly presented to each respondent. These variables included: (a) age of the parents: late 40s vs. early 60s; (b) sex of the adult child: male vs. female; (c) presence of grandchildren: single without children vs. married with two children; and (d) source of money: early withdrawal from retirement savings vs. reduction of contributions toward retirement. The option of taking a loan from the retirement account was not considered in the vignette because previous studies have shown that taking a loan does not have a negative effect on retirement savings; in fact, those who take loans from their retirement savings tend to have higher income and contribute more to their retirement savings than those who do not take a loan (Vanguard, 2018). Respondents who read a version of the vignette in which parents were in their late 40s and were considering withdrawing money from their retirement accounts were also informed that in the given scenario the parents would have to pay an additional 10% early withdrawal fee.

For this study, a factorial vignette was developed in which a young adult had recently graduated college, started a professional career, and is purchasing a house. This young adult is asking his or her parents for financial assistance with a down payment. The parents are portrayed as wanting to help, but the respondent is informed they would have to use their retirement savings; respondents were then asked whether they think parents in this situation should provide financial assistance. The vignette about purchasing a house was presented as follows (independent variables are in bold; text that depends on the dependent variable is in italics):

Jason/Nataly recently finished college and started *his/her* career.

He/She is **not married/married and recently had twins**. *Jason/Nataly* has

asked *his/her* parents, who are in their **late 40s/early 60s**, for help with the down payment. They would like to help but by doing so they will have to **take an early withdrawal from their retirement savings (*which requires paying a 10% early-withdrawal penalty*)/reduce the amount of money they typically save for retirement.**

After being presented this vignette, respondents were asked: “Do you think *Jason/Nataly*’s parents should or should not *use their retirement savings/reduce their retirement contributions* to help their *son/daughter* with the down payment?”

Response options included *definitely should not* (scored as 1), *probably should not* (2), *probably should* (3), and *definitely should* (4). Then respondents were asked to “briefly explain why you chose that answer.”

4.2.2.2 Dispositional Motives for Providing Support

Motive questions were developed using existing questionnaires and previous studies (Kohli & Künemund, 2003), and allow assessment of dispositional motives of intergenerational support. In particular, the motives were assessed using the following items: “For parents, personal luxuries should be less important than the success of their children” (altruism), “Parents have a moral obligation to financially support their adult children when in need” (normative solidarity), “Parents should support their children because children will take care of them when they get old” (reciprocity of care), “Parents should have a ‘family bank’ and support adult children only in the form of a loan” (reciprocity–family bank), “Parents should not support their adult children because too many young adults today are being financially supported unnecessarily by their parents” (independence), and “Parents should not support their adult children because they should focus on their own financial preparation for retirement” (self-

interest). Response options on each item were *confidently disagree* (1), *lean toward disagree* (2), *lean toward agree* (3), and *confidently agree* (4).

4.2.2.3 Control Variables

Based on previous literature about parental financial assistance of young adult children and literature on retirement planning, six respondent characteristics were included in the study as control variables: clarity of retirement goals, gender, history of similar experience, income level, and type of retirement plan. Clarity of retirement goals was measured using six items borrowed from previous surveys (Hershey et al., 2010; Noone et al., 2010): “I set specific goals for how much I need to save for retirement;” “I frequently read articles, brochures, or watch TV shows on investing and financial planning;” “I frequently discuss my retirement plans with my family;” “I have valuable tangible assets such as a house or property that I could sell to help me finance my retirement, if necessary;” “I’m able to put aside or invest a sufficient proportion of my income for retirement;” and “I believe that my employer provides a good retirement plan.” Response options for each item were *confidently disagree* (1), *lean toward disagree* (2), *lean toward agree* (3), and *confidently agree* (4). Internal consistency of the scale was good (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .83$).

The other control variables were measured more simply, with one or two items each. Gender was assessed using a single item: “With which of the following gender identities do you most closely identify?” with three response options: *male* (1), *female* (2), and *another gender* (3). Whether respondents had ever provided support similar to that depicted in the vignette was assessed with two consecutive questions: “Do you have any biological, adopted, or step-children who are currently 18 years of age or older?” and “Please identify whether you have ever provided financial support to your adult children in the form of purchasing real estate or making mortgage payments.”

Type of retirement plan was measured in four categories: *I have an employer-sponsored pension plan* (1); *I have a personal retirement account (e.g., 401(k), 403(b), SEP IRA, Roth IRA, Solo 401(k), 457)* (2); *I have a different plan* (3); *I don't have any retirement plan* (4); and an *I don't know* (5) option was provided as well; no respondents chose Response Options 4 and 5. Annual household income was measured using six categories that included: *less than \$20,000* (1); *\$20,000 to \$39,999* (2); *\$40,000 to \$59,999* (3); *\$60,000 to \$79,999* (4); *\$80,000 to \$99,999* (5); and *more than \$100,000* (6).

4.2.3 Analytical Approach

A generalized ordinal logistic regression model (gologit) was developed for the question asking whether parents should provide financial assistance with the down payment for a house on behalf of their young adult child. This model was selected because three variables (reciprocity–care, gender of respondents, and experience with providing support with house purchase) did not meet the assumption of parallel lines. Gologit models estimate a series of cumulative logit models (Williams, 2016); that is, the original ordinal variable is collapsed into two categories and then a series of binary logistic regressions are run by first comparing Category 1 (*definitely not*) versus Categories 2, 3, and 4 (*probably not*, *probably yes*, and *definitely yes*, respectively); then Categories 1 and 2 (*definitely not* and *probably not*) versus Categories 3 and 4 (*probably yes* and *definitely yes*); then Categories 1, 2, and 3 (*definitely not*, *probably not*, and *probably yes*) versus Category 4 (*completely agree*). Also, because the source of money and age of parents are conceptually connected to each other, an interaction term with these two variables was added to the model. Due to a skewed distribution of dependent variables, the complementary negative log-log link function was applied in the gologit model. Variance inflation factor (VIF) and

tolerance indicated that none of the predictors had a VIF above the critical value of 5 (O'Brien, 2007), and that multicollinearity was not an issue in analysis.

The rationales respondents provided were first split into two groups depending on whether they endorsed parental assistance (i.e., selected *probably yes* or *definitely yes*; $n = 155$) or did not endorse it (i.e., selected *probably not* or *definitely not*; $n = 341$), then were coded using an analytic inductive approach (Guest et al., 2012). As the primary coder, I read the open-ended responses and inductively created an initial set of codes, keeping the code names as close to the original language expressed by respondents as possible. The unit of coding was a unique rationale, so a single open-ended response with multiple rationales embedded within it was therefore coded into multiple categories ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 1.2$). The secondary coder, a native English speaker, then reviewed my codebook and deductively coded the open-ended responses. Disagreements were discussed until consensus was reached between the primary and secondary coders for each open-ended response. Then, similar codes were combined into larger themes. For example, the initial codes “it is a small price to pay,” “it will have small impact on retirement,” and “parents are young and have time to recover” were coded into a single theme named *small financial effect on retirement*.

4.3 Results

Responses concerning whether parents should provide financial assistance to an adult child with buying a house had a negatively-skewed distribution—more than two thirds of respondents indicated that the vignette parents should not provide financial assistance. This and other descriptive results are presented in Table 1.

Bivariate correlations (see Table 2) indicated that respondents were less likely to endorse parental financial assistance if they read about the parents having to make a

withdrawal from their retirement account (relative to saving less). Similarly, two motives of not providing support (independence and self-interest), respondent's financial readiness for retirement, and two demographic characteristics of respondents (no experience of providing financial support to adult children and the income level) were also negatively correlated with endorsement of providing the financial support. Conversely, endorsement of parental financial assistance was positively correlated with four motives of parental support (altruism, normative solidarity, reciprocity–care, reciprocity–family bank) and two demographic characteristics (experience of providing financial support to adult children and having a pension plan).

4.3.1 Regression Analysis

Results of the gologit analysis, presented in Table 3, indicate that withdrawing money from a retirement account versus reducing retirement savings was the only randomly-manipulated design variable statically effected the likelihood of respondents endorsing the financial support: Compared to those who read about parents who would decrease contributions to their retirement plan, those who read about parents who would withdraw money from their retirement plan were 1.6 times less likely to endorse parental provision of financial assistance to young adult children in the scenario depicted. All six dispositional motives of parental support of adult children were statistically associated with endorsement of parental support; however, the strength of association between reciprocity of care and endorsement of support varied depending on the level of the endorsement—it was the strongest at the highest levels of endorsement. Financial readiness for retirement was negatively associated with the likelihood of endorsement of support in these data but that association cannot be assumed in population ($p = .053$). Among respondent characteristics, women were less likely than men to endorse parental support, especially at the highest levels of

endorsement. Those with a history of providing financial support to their own adult children for the purchase of a house were more likely to endorse parental support than were those who did not have adult children, and the difference was most pronounced at the highest levels of the endorsement. Respondents with savings retirement plans were less likely to endorse providing financial assistance in the vignette than were those who did not have any retirement savings.

4.3.2 Open-ended Rationales

4.3.2.1 Rationales Favoring Parental Assistance

At least one of four themes were identified in 97.3% of rationales provided by respondents who endorsed parental financial assistance with the down payment on a house. These four common themes included: *obligation to support*, *children will eventually pay back their parents*, *small effect on retirement*, and *find a compromise*.

Obligation to support was identified in nearly half (49.3%) of the respondents' rationales. This rational conveyed a belief that parents are responsible for financially supporting their children and grandchildren with the purchase of a new house. These respondents seemed to hold the perspective that having a house is very important, and it is therefore okay for parents to sacrifice own retirement savings to achieve this goal—money is less important than family needs. This motivation was expressed with sentiments such as: “Home ownership is an important step in life;” “it is not only for her but for my grand-children and I would absolutely help out for their future;” “they will be securing his, and their grandchildren's, future in many ways;” “by helping, you are giving security to your grandchildren;” “it is the right thing to do;” “the parents should feel obligated to help their son;” and “as a parent, you will make sacrifices for your children.”

Just over one fifth (20.4%) of rationales were coded with the theme *children will eventually pay back their parents*. This theme centered around a belief that parents who provide support to their children can expect that their children will eventually pay them back in monetary form or in a form of a future care. Examples of statements coded in this way include: “he [the child] would pay them back and be helpful;” “the money given by the parents could be structured as a loan (with very favorable repayment conditions);” and “the daughter would make regular payments back to her parents as she goes forward in her career.”

Slightly fewer than one fifth (19.3%) of rationales were coded with the theme *small effect on retirement*. This theme focused on the belief that parental support with purchasing a house would have only a small effect on the parents’ retirement plans and that they would be able to recoup any financial loss associated with their assistance purchasing a house. Examples of this motivation include: “[The] parents are young enough that it should not affect their retirement fund too much,” “[the] parents can spare the money for a couple of months to save up enough to help her with a down payment,” “that 10% fee can be earned by the increase in equity over the years.”

The fourth most common rationale in support of providing financial assistance with the purchase of a house was to *find a compromise*, which was coded in 7.0% of respondents’ rationales. These respondents believed that parents should find a compromise and provide only partial support to their children because their child should take responsibility for purchasing a house. Examples of this sentiment include: “They should give him a little bit, but not a significant amount. Just enough to help him get started;” and “parents should be able to sacrifice a little. But [the adult child] should be responsible for a significant part of it.”

4.3.2.2 Rationales Against Parental Assistance

At least one of four common rationales were coded in 98.5% of rationales among respondents who did not endorse parental financial support with the purchase of a house. The most common themes against parental financial assistance with the down payment on a house included *child's responsibility*, *parents need money for retirement*, and *provide only partial support*.

Child's responsibility was coded in 49.3% of rationales provided by respondents opposed parental financial support in the given context, making it the most common reason given for not providing financial support to the child. Respondents who provided rationales coded in this way believed that the child in the vignette was already an adult and must take own responsibility for purchasing a house; that purchasing a house is not a necessity (e.g., the child can stay with parents, rent a place, or find another way to live independently from parents if he or she can't afford to purchase a house); and that figuring out how to make the purchase him- or herself would teach the child to be self-sufficient and developing money management and saving skills. Examples of these responses include: "House is not a necessity;" "can wait until he can afford one on his own;" "if [child] can't afford a house on his own, then [child] needs to work and save money;" "[child] is an adult and should be paying for her own expenses;" "[child] needs to not be dependent on parents."

Parents need money for retirement (42.9%) was the second most common rationale for not providing the financial support. Responses coded in this way centered around the belief that parents had been and should continue saving for retirement because it was no longer their responsibility to financially support their child; that spending money on a house will dramatically reduce retirement saving; that the parents would not have time to recoup the money before retirement and therefore

would be risking their financial security if they were to help; and that the children may never pay their parents back, leaving them with insufficient savings for retirement. These sentiments were expressed in the following examples: “They worked long and hard for it,” “parents are not obligated to help in this particular instance,” “retirement should come first,” “they are close to retirement and need all they have,” “no one should take money out of their retirement savings,” “they should not incur a penalty for their child to afford a house,” “typically in the United States kids don't help parents but expect constant support from parents.” These respondents believed helping with the purchase of a house would be a bad choice because the money would be diverted from retirement investments, children may never pay back the money, retirement savings should never be used before retirement, and due to the cost of paying additional taxes and penalties for the early withdrawal of retirement funds. These beliefs were expressed in the following examples: “This is a larger outlay of capital and may hurt the parents in retirement; ” “I doubt their selfish daughter would be willing to shuck out cash for them;” “the money they do not save now will not be there to grow as they get older;” “by diverting funds from their retirement, they are sacrificing a lot of future growth in their retirement accounts;” “no one should take money out of their retirement savings;” “there could be tax implications;” and “dipping into their retirement account and paying a 10% penalty is not a wise use of their funds.”

Finally, some respondents (7.9%) pointed out that if the parents wanted to provide support, then they should *provide only partial support*, or it should be in a form of a family loan to the child, to minimize the impact of the support on the parents' retirement savings. Alternatively, parents could cosign on the loan but make sure that children is able to take responsibility for paying it off. Examples include:

“They can help with closing costs,” parents might want to consider helping her out,” “co-signing a loan for their daughter would be a better way to go,” “unless she has a plan in place as to how to pay them back with interest it's not a wise financial decision.”

4.4 Discussion

The goal of this study was to investigate the effects of four contextual design variables on attitudes toward parental financial assistance with the down payment on a house for a young adult child. Design variables were selected based on a review of the literature and included gender of the child (male vs. female), presence of grandchildren (two grandchildren vs. no grandchildren), source of money for retirement (withdrawal vs. under-contributing to one's retirement account), and age of parents (late 40s vs. early 60s). Results indicated that most respondents did not endorse provision of this support, most notably when the money had to be withdrawn from retirement savings. Motives of support and respondent characteristics correlated meaningfully with endorsement of parental support: four motives of support (altruism, normative solidarity, reciprocity of care, and family bank), as well as previous experience with providing support, were positively associated with endorsement of parental support, whereas independence, self-interest, clarity of retirement goals, and possession of a PRA were negatively associated with endorsement of parental support.

Results of this study demonstrated that one in three respondents (31.3%) believed it is okay for parents to use their retirement savings to support their young adult children with purchasing a house. A previous study found that one in four young adults (24%) actually receive support from their family to pay for house down

payment (National Association of Realtors, 2018). Thus, many parents provide financial assistance to their young adult children for the purchase of a house, but it is not clear how common it is among those parents to directly borrow from or reduce contributions to their retirement savings as a consequence of providing that assistance. Nonetheless, those results in conjunction with the present results suggest that many parents likely do assist their adult children in ways that are detrimental to retirement savings.

This study contributes to literature about the effects of contextual variables on motivation to provide financial assistance to children. Specifically, the characteristics of characters in the vignette—gender of the child, presence of grandchildren, the age of parents—did not affect attitudes toward parental provision of financial assistance to children. In contrast, the source of the money used to provide that support had a strong effect on attitudes toward parental provision of financial assistance to children. Respondents recognized the fact that withdrawing money for down payment on a house would substantially reduce their retirement savings and have dramatic and negative effect on their future financial security in retirement. Interestingly however, even with explicit notification that withdrawal from retirement savings by parents in their 40s would incur a 10% early withdrawal penalty on top of the amount withdrawn did not affect attitudes toward providing the requested financial assistance. It may be that purchasing a house (on top of helping a child) is the type of big ticket and life-altering purchase that makes a 10% penalty seem trivial, but previous research has also found that this policy has only a small effect on the financial behaviors of retirement plan owners (Fellowes & Willemin, 2013; Poterba, 2014). Thus, the 10% penalty policy may not be serving its intended purpose of limiting access to early withdrawals.

Respondents who had adult children and had helped them with purchasing a house had more positive attitudes toward parental support with the purchase of a house than did those who had never had adult children. This might be explained by cognitive consonance theory: Those who helped with house purchase wanted to maintain mental comfort by believing that parental support is the right thing to do (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999). It may also be that the positive feelings they had about providing that help more than offset any financial consequences they had experienced by providing that help. Indeed, it is worthwhile to consider that those who had provided support in circumstances similar to those presented in the vignette would encourage others to do the same. No doubt they are a self-selected group who may be predisposed to providing that help and believing others should too, but it would be insightful to gain a better understanding of their experiences in subsequent research.

Another important finding is that having retirement savings and relatively clear retirement goals—variables that may be considered as proxy indicators of financial literacy—were negatively associated with endorsement of parental financial assistance to children. People who have retirement plans and have a strategy for long term planning for retirement tend to be more concerned about saving their resources for retirement and less prone to spending retirement savings on non-retirement needs (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2007).

This is the first study to examine both dispositional and situational motives of parental financial assistance for the down payment on a house. The fact that only one of the randomly manipulated design variables but all dispositional motives were (either positively or negatively) associated with likelihood of endorsement of parental support may indicate that respondent worldview was more important than contextual

circumstances as respondents contemplated their options. This also is consistent with other research (e.g., Ganong & Coleman, 2005) showing that respondents tend to project their own values and beliefs when responding to vignettes.

Contextual motives that were expressed in respondent's rationales paralleled theoretical conceptualization of motives found elsewhere in the literature (see Remle, 2011; Silverstein et al., 2012). The *obligation to support* theme conveys an importance placed on parental obligation to support children, and is therefore like *normative solidarity*. However, *normative solidarity* in rationales was driven by desire to support both children and grandchildren, who, according to the rationales provided and extant studies (see Coulson & Li, 2013; Zavisca & Gerber, 2016), benefit immensely from having a stable residence in childhood. The *children will pay back their parents* theme parallels the *reciprocity* motive, because it focuses on the importance of mutual financial exchanges within families (Silverstein et al., 2012). *Children's responsibility* and *parents need money for retirement*—two rationales used for not providing support—parallel the independence and self-interest motives, respectively, because the former stresses the importance of children's autonomy and the latter stresses the importance of prioritizing personal financial needs of other family members (Remle, 2011). Two other contextual motives were also identified in this study that have not been well investigated in the literature: motivation to support driven by expectation that (a) support would not have strong effect on retirement plans and (b) parents can always find a compromise and provide partial support. These motives require more thorough investigation in the future studies.

4.5 Limitations and Future Directions

Further research is needed for investigating major predictors of parental financial assistance with the down payment on a house for an adult child. This study was based on respondents from a sample of MTurk workers who were younger and had more liberal beliefs than the general U.S. population. Although they represented a large cluster of U.S. society, there is a need to study beliefs of people from other subpopulations. Future studies would also benefit from using the multi-segment factorial vignette approach, which can investigate the dynamic side of attitudes: how they change after adding additional sensitive information into the vignette, for example whether the key characters in the vignette are pregnant, divorced, have health conditions, or belong to different ethnic minorities.

Table 4.1. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (N = 496)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Endorsement of support	2.06	0.92	1–4	1																		
2. Gender of the child ^a	0.53	0.50	0–1	-.04	-																	
3. Grandchildren ^b	0.48	0.50	0–1	.06	.00	-																
4. Source of money ^c	0.45	0.50	0–1	-.20	-.14	.06	-															
5. Age of parents ^d	0.52	0.50	0–1	-.04	-.03	.05	.05	-														
6. Altruism	2.72	0.92	1–4	.31	.01	.05	.00	-.06	-													
7. Normative solidarity	2.34	0.92	1–4	.32	-.04	-.06	-.02	-.01	.41	-												
8. Reciprocity–care	2.21	0.91	1–4	.33	-.05	.04	-.05	-.07	.32	.41	-											
9. Reciprocity–family bank	2.32	0.88	1–4	.16	-.06	.09	.03	-.05	.17	.15	.25	-										
10. Independence	2.47	0.97	1–4	-.38	.05	-.09	.08	-.02	-.23	-.33	-.38	-.07	-									
11. Self-interest	2.63	0.89	1–4	-.39	.03	-.05	.04	.01	-.26	-.36	-.33	-.11	.58	-								
12. Clarity of retirement goals	1.34	0.76	0–3	-.10	.02	-.04	-.02	-.03	.01	.05	.00	.11	.02	.03	-							
13. Gender ^e	0.57	0.50	0–1	-.04	.03	-.03	.05	.05	-.13	-.09	-.17	-.02	.07	.03	-.22	-						
14. Had no adult children ^f	0.38	0.49	0–1	.04	.00	.01	-.02	-.01	-.06	-.09	.01	-.06	-.05	.00	-.17	-.09	-					
15. Never helped to pay for house ^g	0.52	0.50	0–1	-.12	.04	.00	.02	-.02	.02	.10	-.06	-.01	.06	.04	.05	.11	-.82	-				
16. Helped to pay for house ^h	0.10	0.30	0–1	.13	-.05	.00	.00	.06	.06	-.02	.08	.11	-.03	-.07	.20	-.04	-.26	-.34	-			
17. No plan ⁱ	0.32	0.47	0–1	-.07	.01	-.01	-.04	-.07	-.01	.01	.04	-.01	.03	-.03	-.52	.18	.03	.17	-.19	-		
18. Pension plan ^j	0.33	0.47	0–1	.13	.02	.00	.01	.02	.03	.02	-.03	.00	-.07	-.05	.30	-.10	-.09	-.01	.11	-.48	-	
19. Savings plan ^k	0.35	0.48	0–1	.00	.04	.03	-.07	.00	-.02	-.03	-.01	.00	.04	.07	.21	-.08	.06	-.15	.08	-.50	-.51	-
20. Income ^l	3.69	1.59	1–6	-.12	-.06	-.03	.06	-.02	.00	.01	-.09	.01	.02	.01	.46	-.10	-.15	-.12	.27	-.41	.19	.22

Note. ^a0 = male and 1 = female. ^b0 = not married and 1 = married and recently had twins. ^c0 = under-contribute and 1 = withdraw. ^d0 = late 40s and 1 = early 60s. ^e0 = male and 1 = female. ^f0 = had one or more adult child(ren) and 1 = had no adult children. ^g0 = had no adult children and 1 = had adult child(ren) and never helped to pay for house. ^h0 = had no adult children and 1 = had adult child(ren) and helped to pay for house. ⁱ0 = savings plan or pension plan. 1 = no plan. ^j0 = no plan or savings plan and 1 = pension plan. ^k0 = no plan or pension plan and 1 = savings plan. ^l1 = less than \$20,000, 2 = \$20,000–\$39,999, 3 = \$40,000–\$59,999, 4 = \$60,000–\$79,999, 5 = \$80,000–\$99,999, 6 = more than \$100,000.

$r \in [< -.13; > .13], p < .001$. $r \in [< -.12; > .12], p < .01$, $r \in [< -.09; > .09], p < .05$. $r \in [< -.08; > .08], p < .10$.

Table 4.2. Distribution of Responses Within Each Level of Independent Variables
(N = 496)

	Definitely not		Probably not		Probably yes		Definitely yes	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Total	161	32.5	180	36.3	121	24.4	34	6.9
Gender of the child								
Son	71	30.6	84	36.2	61	26.3	16	6.9
Daughter	90	34.1	96	36.4	60	22.7	18	6.8
Grandchildren:								
Not married	87	33.6	99	38.2	59	22.8	14	5.4
Married and recently had twins	74	31.2	81	34.2	62	26.2	20	8.4
Source of money								
Under-contribute	67	24.6	102	37.5	81	29.8	22	8.1
Withdraw	94	42.0	78	34.8	40	17.9	12	5.4
Age of parents								
Late 40s	76	32.1	80	33.8	62	26.2	19	8.0
Early 60s	85	32.8	100	38.6	59	22.8	15	5.8

Table 4.3. Generalized Ordinal Logistic Regression Models Predicting Endorsement of Parental Use of Retirement Savings for Financial Assistance with Paying for Down Payment (N =496)

	DN vs. PN, PY, and DY			DN and PN vs. PY and DY			DN, PN, and PY vs. DY		
	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Vignette variables:									
Daughter ^(son)	0.95	0.15	.761						
Grandchildren: Yes ^(no)	1.15	0.20	.410						
Withdraw ^(under-contribute)	0.61	0.11	.005						
Early 60s ^(late 40s)	1.03	0.16	.824						
Type of leakage × Age of parents	0.85	0.21	.510						
Dispositional motives:									
Altruism	1.27	0.09	.001						
Normative solidarity	1.17	0.09	.039						
Reciprocity–care	0.98	0.08	.827	1.33	0.14	.005	1.55	0.31	.028
Reciprocity–family bank	1.17	0.08	.024						
Independence	0.76	0.06	< .001						
Self-interest	0.77	0.06	< .001						
Respondent characteristics:									
Clarity of retirement goals	0.82	0.08	.053						
Female ^(male)	1.23	0.16	.127	1.05	0.18	.767	0.38	0.15	.012
History of supporting house purchase:									
No ^(no adult children)	0.78	0.10	.058						
Yes ^(no adult children)	1.15	0.25	.512	1.66	0.42	.043	3.87	1.47	< .001
Retirement plan:									
Pension ^(no plan)	0.75	0.13	.089						
Savings ^(no plan)	0.65	0.11	.008						
Income level	1.05	0.04	.260						
Constant	2.08	0.96	.114	0.28	0.14	.011	0.04	0.03	< .001

Note. DN = definitely not, PN = probably not, PY = probably yes, DY = definitely yes. Variables that do not meet the proportional odds assumption have *OR* coefficients for each level of endorsement. Negative log-log link was applied to models. Results of test of parallel lines for each variable are available upon request. Model fit: Pseudo- $R^2 = .17$; $-2ll = -521.44$; $\chi^2(25) = 205.96$, $p < .001$.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

This dissertation makes several contributions to the existing literature about parental financial support for young-adult children and the use of retirement savings. It provides an exploration of answers to five questions that have not previously been adequately addressed: (a) What attitudes exist toward parental financial support of young-adult children using retirement savings? (b) How do contextual variables affect attitudes toward parental financial support of young-adult children? (c) Which dispositional motives are associated with attitudes toward parental financial support of young-adult children? (d) Which characteristics of adults are associated with attitudes toward parental financial support of young-adult children? (e) What are common rationales for providing or not providing the financial assistance of young-adult children?

Three studies were developed to answer these questions (see Table 1 for an overview). A sample of 496 respondents was recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), with inclusion criteria requiring respondents to be 40 years of age or older and residing in the United States. In each study respondents were presented a short vignette where hypothetical parents were facing a dilemma about whether to provide financial assistance to their adult child for purchasing a car (Study 1), paying for college tuition (Study 2), and providing a down payment for a house (Study 3). Six contextual variables were randomly manipulated in these three studies. Two variables (age of parents and gender of child) were manipulated in all three studies, one variable (source of money) was manipulated in Studies 1 and 2, two variables (college major and presence of siblings) were manipulated in Study 2, and one variable (presence of grandchildren) was manipulated in Study 3. Respondents were asked whether the vignette parents should or

should not provide financial support to their young-adult child; a multiple-choice question measured the attitude toward parental support, and an open-ended question was used to identify the specific rationale upon which the multiple-choice response was based.

In all three studies respondents were also presented a short questionnaire designed to measure dispositional motives for intergenerational support of young adult children (i.e., altruism, normative solidarity, reciprocity of care, reciprocity of family bank, independence, and self-interest), and a set questions to measure respondent characteristics (i.e., gender of respondents; previous experience with purchasing a car, paying for college tuition, or house down payment; income level; type of retirement plan; clarity of retirement goals; and place of residence). Relationships between the predictors (i.e., manipulated variables, dispositional attitudes, and respondent characteristics) and the ordinal dependent variable (i.e., attitude toward parental support) were assessed using generalized ordinal logistic regression models (GOLOGIT). Rationales were investigated using thematic analysis. The following text presents major findings across three studies.

5.1 Overall Attitudes

To my knowledge, these are the first studies that measure attitudes toward parental use of retirement savings to provide financial assistance for young-adult children. Results demonstrated much higher rates of support for parental financial assistance with purchasing a car (Study 1) than paying college tuition (Study 2) or providing the down payment for a house (Study 3; this result was consistent after reducing analytical samples in Study 2 and 3 to respondents who read about parents under-contributing to their retirement savings to provide support to their child—the major

condition of support in Study 1; results available upon request). The primary reason for this seems to be that having a car is vital in many parts of the United States, where public transportation is limited, because people often must depend upon a car to get to grocery shopping, to get to work, and to visit family members. In contrast, purchasing a house or paying for college are important but not vital costs that can be postponed; there are many alternatives to home ownership (e.g., renting, living with family), and both tuition assistance as well as jobs that do not require an advanced college degree are readily accessible. Cars are also much less costly than real estate or college tuition, and therefore puts less strain on the financial resources of parents who provide financial support to their children. However, it is concerning that a large proportion of respondents, more than one third (depending on context), endorsed parental use of retirement savings to support young adult children. Previous studies have found similar results (e.g., see Lusardi & Mitchell, 2007), pointing at a lack financial literacy among a large proportion of American adults, whose attitudes do not align with experts concerning the effects of breaching retirement accounts to finance non-retirement related needs. Alternatively, it may be speculated that adults who use retirement savings understand the financial consequences but value family relationships and the financial needs of children more than their own.

5.2 Effect of Contextual Variables on Attitudes

Among the contextual variables randomly manipulated in the vignettes, age of the parents and the source of the money had the most pronounced effects on attitudes. That said, despite being manipulated in all three studies, age of parents only had a statistically significant effect on the attitudes in Study 1: Respondents who read about parents in their

early 60s were less likely to endorse parental support than were those who read about parents in their late 40s. The lack of effect of age in Studies 2 and 3 may be explained by the fact that statistical models in these studies had half the statistical power to identify the effects of age than in the Study 1, because only half of the respondents in these two studies ($n = 272$ and $n = 228$, respectively) read the version of the vignette similar to Study 1—where vignette parents were under-contributing to their retirement plans. Indeed, further examination of the effects of age in Study 2 and 3 with subsamples limited to only those who read about parents under-contributing to their retirement plans show that the effect of age on attitudes was of a similar size ($OR = \sim 0.8$) and direction as in Study 1, but lacked statistical significance in these data (tables are available upon request). The negative effect of age indicates a more negative perception of the use of retirement resources to sponsor child's transition to adulthood in the years immediately before retirement (in early 60s) than when retirement is a few decades away (mid-40s).

The source of money for support also had a statistically significant effect on the endorsement of parental support in both studies where it was manipulated (Studies 1 and 2): Respondents who read about parents withdrawing money from their retirement accounts were less likely to endorse parental support than those who read about parents under-contributing to their retirement accounts. This finding may indicate that people understand the negative impact of withdrawing money from retirement accounts, especially when they are additionally charged 10% early withdrawal fees and lose the opportunity of growth on that investment, but may not be as vigilant about the importance of making ongoing contributions as they are about maintaining existing savings.

The effects of other variables—gender of the child, the presence of grandchildren, college major, and the presence of siblings—were more nuanced but did not reach statistical significance; therefore, only tentative conclusions can be drawn. The lack of a statistically significant effect of child’s gender on endorsement of support may indicate that these forms of parental support are equally available to sons and daughters. This conclusion is supported by a large amount of the extant literature (see Arnett, 2014). In contrast, when the statistical significance of coefficients is ignored and only the direction of effects is taken into account, it can be seen that parents treat daughters and sons differently, and vary the size of support based on gender. They are slightly more likely to support daughters with the relatively inexpensive purchase of a car (note that the effect was very small) and are less supportive of them when this support requires much larger financial resources, such as paying for college tuition or providing the down payment for a house. This may be a reflection of patriarchal social norms that assume subordinate roles for daughters, and therefore a full transition to independence is not necessary (Meyers, 1997).

Examination of the effect of college major and number of children in Study 2 showed that respondents were less likely to endorse parental financial assistance for a child pursuing a degree in business than one pursuing a degree in social work. Explanation of this effect was found in the rationales of several respondents (available upon request) who argued that a child who is pursuing a business degree should be financially literate and able to find resources to pay for their own schooling.

The negative effect of having other siblings parallels previous literature showing that parents who have several children are less likely to provide support to them. This

may be because they would feel compelled to share limited resources equally among all their children, and that would have a dramatic effect on their own financial security in retirement (see Szinovacz, 2013)(see Szinovacz, 2013).

Finally, the positive effect of grandchildren on support in Study 3 parallels extant literature showing that financial support of grandparents to their grandchildren has become a new social norm (Bengtson, 2001). With the increase of life expectancy in the United States over the last several decades, the bonds between grandparents and their grandchildren have become substantially stronger: They spend more time together and are more emotionally connected than a decade ago (Bengtson, 2001; Silverstein & Giarrusso, 2010). Financial support with purchasing a house often brings numerous benefits to grandchildren, and is believed to bring more safety and stability to the family (Coulson & Li, 2013; Zavisca & Gerber, 2016).

5.3 Dispositional Motives

The associations between dispositional motives and endorsement of parental support varied across the three studies in a meaningful way (see Table 2). Motives of providing support (i.e., altruism, normative solidarity, reciprocity of care, reciprocity of family bank) were associated with the endorsement of parental assistance, and motives of not providing support (independence and self-interest) were negatively associated with the endorsement of parental support. However, the most consistent and statistically significant associations were among those with reciprocity of care and self-interest motives. The former indicates the relative importance of the expectation that parental support provided to young-adult children will eventually be paid back in the form of care,

and the latter conveys the belief that parents must prioritize saving for retirement over supporting young-adult children.

Interestingly, all three dispositional motives of parental support were consistently and statistically significantly associated with the endorsement of parental support in only one study: Study 3. This may indicate the importance of a house for the child's transition to adulthood and also the importance of parental financial support in purchasing a house, which is described in depth elsewhere in the literature (see Druta & Ronald, 2017).

5.4 Respondent Characteristics

Six respondent characteristics were considered as potential predictors of parental support in the form of financial assistance to a young-adult child: gender of respondent; previous experience with purchasing a car, paying for college tuition, or house down payment; income level; type of retirement plan; clarity of retirement goals; and place of residence. Three of these variables—clarity of retirement goals, female gender of respondents, and having a retirement savings plan—had a consistently negative, but not always statistically significant association with endorsement of parental support. The fact that respondents with clear retirement goals and with a retirement savings plan were less likely to endorse support is not surprising considering that both of these characteristics can be seen as proxy indicators of financial literacy. Higher financial literacy, in turn, is associated with more active saving behavior (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2007). The fact that female respondents were less likely to endorse parental support than male respondent may reflect the gender wage gap (Blau & Kahn, 2017). Due at least in part to the wage gap, women tend to accumulate substantially less retirement savings than men and therefore must be more cautious about spending retirement savings on non-retirement

needs, such as the provision of financial support to young-adult children (Griffin et al., 2013).

The direction of associations between income and the endorsement of parental use of retirement savings to support adult child was positive in Studies 1 and 3, but was negative in Study 2. A positive association between income level and size of support has been well documented elsewhere (Remle, 2011; Szinovacz et al., 2001): People with higher income have more disposable financial resources that they can provide to their children. Thus, it is not surprising that respondents with higher income were more likely to provide support to their children with purchasing a car and a house than those of lower income. A negative association between income and attitudes toward parental support for paying college tuition contradicts the extant literature (see Holmstrom et al., 2011). It may be that low income parents see college as a gateway to success and prosperity for their children (Arnett, 2014; Goldscheider et al., 2001), and are therefore more willing to sacrifice their own financial needs to support their child's college aspirations than are parents with higher income. The latter may also be more financial literate; they may be more aware of and able to access college loans and other financial tools available on the market than parents of lower income.

5.5 Rationales

Rationales in each study were divided into two groups, depending on whether respondents endorsed parental financial assistance. Four common themes were identified in rationales favoring parental assistance in each of three studies, representing specific contextual motives of parental support: *obligation to support*—belief that parents have a moral obligation to support their children, *small effect on retirement*—belief that use of

retirement savings to support children would have small impact on retirement plans and that financial losses could be recuperated over time, *compromise*—belief that parents should find a compromise and provide only partial support to their child, and *reciprocity*—belief children will pay it back to their parents by supporting them either with either money or caregiving in the future. Two of these motives, namely, *obligation to support* (i.e., solidarity) and *reciprocity* have been extensively addressed in the extant literature (Remle, 2011; Silverstein & Giarrusso, 2010). Each was frequently cited across the individual studies: Around one in two respondents in each study shared a belief that parents have an obligation to support their children, and around one in five respondents believed that children would eventually reciprocate. In contrast, the frequency of the *small effect on retirement* and *compromise* rationales consistently declined from the Study 1 to Study 3, perhaps due to the increase in cost of parental financial support in each subsequent study. In other words, as the cost of support increased, respondents expressed more concern about effect that providing the this support might have on their retirement plans, and less confidence that the parents might find a compromise and provide partial support to their children.

Three major themes identified in the group of rationales for not endorsing parental financial assistance to a young adult child included: *children's responsibility*—belief that it is important for young-adult children to demonstrate autonomy from their parents and to take personal responsibility for own financial needs; *parents should save money for retirement*—belief that it is important for parents to prioritize personal financial needs over providing support to their young adult children; and *partial support*—the belief that parents should provide only small financial support to their children which would not

affect their retirement plans. The *children's responsibility* and *parents should save money for retirement* rationales parallel two respective motives of intergenerational support: independence and self-interest, which have been well covered in existing literature (see Remle, 2011); they also were the most often used rationales: more than one in three respondents expressed one of these two motives.

The other two primary motives for not providing support, namely that parents should provide only *partial support* and that supporting adult children in this way is a *bad investment*, have not been well addressed in the extant literature. Interestingly, the distribution in rationales varied dramatically from one study to another. Frequency of the *partial support* motive declined with the increase of the cost of support; it was the highest in Study 1 and the lowest in Study 3.

5.6 Limitations and Future Studies

This study has several limitations. One is that the sample was recruited from a sample of Amazon Mechanical Turk workers; as a result, the sample was not nationally representative of the U.S. population. Also, in all three studies the text of the vignettes assumed that parents have loving relationships with their children, whereby anecdotal experience dictates that many parents have complex and conflicted relationships with their young-adult children. Future studies may address these issues by designing vignettes with a conflict between children and one or both parents. Also, it would be interesting to look at the effects of ethnic identity on social perception of parental support.

Table 5.1. Design of Three Vignettes for Studying Attitudes Toward Parental Assistance with Purchase of a Car, Paying for College Tuition, and House Down Payment

	Study 1: Purchasing a car	Study 2: Paying for college tuition	Study 3: Paying for house down payment
Manipulated variables:			
Child's gender	Female versus male	Female versus male	Female versus male
Age	Early 60s versus late 40s	Early 60s versus late 40s	Early 60s versus late 40s
Source of money	NA	Withdrawal from retirement account versus under-contributing to it	Withdrawal from retirement account versus under-contributing to it
College major	NA	Social sciences versus business degree	NA
Number of siblings	NA	One versus three children	NA
Grandchildren	NA	NA	Married with two siblings versus single
Number of variations	4 (2×2)	32 (2×2×2×2×2)	16 (2×2×2×2)
Vignette and response options:			
Text of vignettes ^a :	<p>John/Sarah recently finished college and is looking for a job to start <i>his/her</i> career, but <i>his/her</i> old car broke down and <i>he/she</i> needs to purchase another car quickly to continue <i>his/her</i> job search. However, <i>he/she</i> was unable to save money while in college and has no credit history, so <i>he/she</i> has asked <i>his/her</i> parents for help with a car loan. <i>John/Sarah's</i> parents, who are in their late 40s/early 60s, would like to help, and in fact want to outright purchase a car for <i>John/Sarah</i> as a show of support as <i>he/she</i> launches into adulthood and starts <i>his/her</i> career. However, to purchase the car they will need to reduce the amount of money they typically save for retirement.</p>	<p>Kevin and Jessica are in their late 40s/early 60s and they have one/three child(<i>ren</i>). Their <i>son/daughter</i> is in <i>his/her</i> early 20s and living independently but wants to return to college and complete an unfinished social work/business degree. Although Kevin and Jessica are proud of their child's educational ambitions, they are concerned that student loans will be a financial burden after graduating college, as it is for many other millennials. Therefore, they are considering paying the college tuition themselves by taking an early withdrawal from their retirement savings (which requires paying a 10% early-withdrawal penalty)/reducing the amount of money they typically save for retirement.</p>	<p><i>Jason/Nataly</i> recently finished college and started <i>his/her</i> career. <i>He/She</i> is not married/married and recently had twins. <i>Jason/Nataly</i> has asked <i>his/her</i> parents, who are in their late 40s/early 60s, for help with the down payment. They would like to help but by doing so they will have to take an early withdrawal from their retirement savings (which requires paying a 10% early-withdrawal penalty)/reduce the amount of money they typically save for retirement.</p>
Measures:			
Multiple-choice:	"Do you think parents in vignette should or should not <i>use some of their retirement savings/reduce contributions to their retirement plan</i> to pay their child's college tuition?"		
Response options:	<i>Definitely not</i> (1); <i>probably not</i> (2); <i>probably yes</i> (3); <i>definitely yes</i> (4).		
Open-ended question:	Briefly explain why you chose that answer.		

Note. NA = not applicable.

^a Words that represent randomly manipulated variables are bold; words that were adjusted to fit the context of the manipulated variables are italicized.

Table 5.2. Results Across Three Studies

	Study 1: Purchasing a car	Study 2: Paying for college tuition	Study 3: Paying for house down payment
Endorsement (%)			
Overall	66.7	33.7	31.3
Only for those respondents in Study 2 and 3 who read vignette where parents were under-contributing to their retirement plans ^a		43.4	37.9
Estimates from regression analysis (OR) ^b			
Manipulated variables:			
Age: Early 60s ^(Late40s)	0.74**	0.94	1.03
Source of money: Withdrawing ^(Under-contributing)	-	0.65**	0.61**
Child's gender: Daughter ^(Son)	1.02	0.90	0.95
Having grandchildren: Yes ^(No)	-	-	1.15
Major: Business ^(Social sciences)	-	0.88	-
Number of children: Three children ^(one child)	-	0.93	-
Dispositional motives			
Altruism	1.04	1.13	1.27***
Normative solidarity	1.20**	1.06	1.17*
Reciprocity–care	1.88***	1.75**	1.55*
Reciprocity–family bank	0.95	1.09	1.17*
Independence	0.89	0.84*	0.76***
Self-interest	0.44***	0.75***	0.77***
Respondent characteristics:			
Clarity of retirement goals	0.69	0.95	0.82
Gender: Female ^(Male)	0.90	0.29 ***	0.38*
Helped with paying for car, college, or house:			
No ^(no adult children)	1.01	1.02	0.78
Yes ^(no adult children)	0.53*	1.15	1.15***
Income	1.01	0.94	1.05
Retirement plan:			
Pension ^(no plan)	0.70**	1.09	0.75
Savings ^(no plan)	0.68**	0.96	0.65**
Rural–urban continuum	1.02	-	-
Rationales			
Rationales for providing support (<i>n</i>)	331	167	155
Themes in rationales (%)			
Obligation to support	59.4	57.0	52.0
Small effect on retirement	37.5	13.6	12.2
Compromise	31.1	30.1	7.1
Reciprocity	22.0	17.1	23.1
Rationale for not providing support (<i>n</i>)	165	329	341
Themes in rationales (%)			
Children's responsibility	57.6	71.4	40.1
Parents should save money for retirement	47.3	37.9	42.9
Partial support	25.5	14.6	7.9

Note.

^aTotal sample of respondents who read vignette where parents were under-contributing to their retirement plans in Study 2 was equal to $n = 272$ and to $n = 228$ in Study 3.

^bFor variables which did not meet assumption of parallel lines their largest estimates are presented

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. VIGNETTES

Study 1: Car

Rick and Cindy are in their **late-40s/early 60s**. They have **one/three** independently-living adult child(*ren*). Their **son/daughter**, who is **not married/married and recently had twins**, just finished college and is looking for a job to start *his/her* career, but *his/her* old car broke down. Now *he/she* needs to purchase a new car quickly to continue *his/her* job search, but *he/she* was unable to save money while in college and has no credit history, so *he/she* has asked *his/her* parents for help with a car loan. Rick and Cindy would like to help, and in fact want to outright purchase a car for *him/her* as a show of support as *he/she* launches into adulthood and starts *his/her* career. However, to purchase the car they will need to **take an early withdrawal from their retirement savings (which requires paying a 10% early-withdrawal penalty)/reduce the amount of money they typically save for retirement.**

2a) Do you think Rick and Cindy *should* or *should not* use their retirement savings/reduce their retirement contributions to help their son/daughter with the purchase of a car?

2b) Please briefly explain why you chose that answer

Study 2: College Tuition

Ryan and Shannon are in their **late-40s/early 60s** and they have **one/three** child(*ren*). One of their children wants to pursue a **social work/business** degree. Although Ryan and Shannon are proud of their child's career pursuits, they are concerned that like many other millennials, student loans will be a financial burden after graduating

from college. Therefore, they are thinking about paying the college tuition for their child by **taking an early withdrawal from their retirement savings (*which requires paying a 10% early-withdrawal penalty*)/reducing the amount of money they typically save for retirement.**

3a) Do you think Ryan and Shannon *should* or *should not* use some of their retirement savings/reduce contributions to their retirement plan to pay their child's college tuition?

3b) Please briefly explain why you chose that answer.

Study 3: House

David and Ellen are in their **late 40s/early 60s**. They have **one/three** independently-living adult child(*ren*). Their **son/daughter**, who is **not married/married and recently had twins**, just finished college and started *his/her* career. *He/she* wants to purchase a house and has asked *his/her* parents for help with the down payment. David and Ellen would like to help but by doing so they will have to take an early withdrawal from their retirement savings (*which requires paying a 10% early-withdrawal penalty*)/**reduce the amount of money they typically save for retirement.**

1a) Do you think David and Ellen *should* or *should not* use their retirement savings/reduce their retirement contributions to help their son/daughter with the down payment?

1b) Please briefly explain why you chose that answer.

APPENDIX 2. MOTIVES OF FAMILY SUPPORT

Statements	Response options			
	CD	LD	LA	CA
Altruism				
1. For parents, personal luxuries should be less important than the success of their children	1	2	3	4
Solidarity				
2. Parents have a moral obligation to financially support their adult children when in need	1	2	3	4
Reciprocity				
3. Parents should support their children because children will take care of them when they get old.	1	2	3	4
4. Parents should have a “family bank” and provide financial support to adult children only in the form of a loan.	1	2	3	4
Independence				
5. Parents should not provide financial support to their adult children because too many young adults today are being financially supported unnecessarily by their parents	1	2	3	4
Self-interest				
6. Parents should not provide financial support to their adult children because they should focus on their own financial preparation for retirement.	1	2	3	4

Note. CD = confidently disagree; LD = lean toward disagree; LA = lean toward agree; CA = confidently agree

APPENDIX 3. CLARITY OF RETIREMENT GOALS

Statements	Response options			
	CD	LD	LA	CA
a. "I set specific goals for how much I need to save for retirement;"	1	2	3	4
b. "I frequently read articles, brochures, or watch TV shows on investing and financial planning;"	1	2	3	4
c. "I frequently discuss my retirement plans with my family;"	1	2	3	4
d. "I have valuable tangible assets such as a house or property that I could sell to help me finance my retirement, if necessary;"	1	2	3	4
e. "I'm able to put aside or invest a sufficient proportion of my income for retirement;"	1	2	3	4
f. "I believe that my employer provides a good retirement plan."	1	2	3	4

Note. CD = confidently disagree; LD = lean toward disagree; LA = lean toward agree; CA = confidently agree

APPENDIX 4. HISTORY OF PROVIDING SUPPORT

Please identify if you have ever provided support to your adult children or elderly parents. Also identify if as an adult you have ever received support from your own parents. Please choose all that apply.

Statements	Support provided to adult children
a. Purchased a car or made car loan payments.	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Purchased real estate or made mortgage payments.	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Payed for college tuition or student loans.	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX 5. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Please specify the year of your birth: _____.

Which gender identity listed below do you most closely identify with?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Another gender (please specify)

Do you have children under the age of 18?

- a. No children of this age
- b. One.
- c. Two.
- d. Three or more.

Do you have children older than the age of 18?

- a. No children of this age
- b. One.
- c. Two.
- d. Three or more.

Which of the following retirement plans do you have? (check all that apply)

- a. Defined benefit
- b. 401(k)
- c. 403(b)
- d. Solo 401(k)
- e. SEP IRA
- f. Roth IRA
- g. A different one, please specify _____
- h. I don't have any retirement plan (Go to question 7.a)
- i. I don't know

What is your total annual household income?

- a. Less than \$20,000
- b. \$20,000–\$39,999
- c. \$40,000–\$59,999
- d. \$60,000–\$79,999
- e. \$80,000–\$99,999
- f. More than \$100,000

REFERENCES

- Aaronson, D. (2000). A note on the benefits of homeownership. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 47, 356–369. doi:10.1006/juec.1999.2144
- Abel, J. R., Deitz, R., & Su, Y. (2014). Are recent college graduates finding good jobs? *Current Issues in Economics and Finance*, 20, 1–8.
- Adams, G. A., & Rau, B. L. (2011). Putting off tomorrow to do what you want today: Planning for retirement. *American Psychologist*, 66, 180–192. doi:10.1037/a0022131
- Akbas, M. (2016). *Plan leakage: A study on the psychology behind leakage of retirement plan assets*. Retrieved from Defined contribution institutional investment association web site: https://dciaa.memberclicks.net/assets/Publications/2016/dciaa_leakage_research_brief_final_020316.pdf
- Antonucci, T. (1990). Social supports and social relationships. In R. H. Binstock & L. K. George (Eds.), *Handbook of aging and the social sciences* (pp. 205–226). New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Aon Hewitt. (2011). *Leakage of participants' DC assets: How loans, withdrawals, and cashouts are eroding retirement income*. Retrieved from https://www.aon.com/attachments/thought-leadership/survey_asset_leakage.pdf
- Arias, E., Heron, M., & Xu, J. Q. (2012). United States life tables, 2012. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 65, 1–64.
- Arnett, J. J. (2014). *Emerging adulthood: The winding road from the late teens through the twenties*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Autotrader. (2012). *Parents more likely to purchase child's first car*. Retrieved from <http://press.autotrader.com/2012-08-30-Parents-More-Likely-To-Purchase-Childs-First-Car>
- Avery, C., & Turner, S. (2012). Student loans: Do college students borrow too much—or not enough? *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26, 165–192. doi:10.1257/jep.26.1.165
- Barker, D., & Miller, E. (2009). Homeownership and child welfare. *Real Estate Economics*, 37, 279–303. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6229.2009.00243.x
- Batson, C. D. (2011). *Altruism in humans*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Bengtson, V. L. (2001). Beyond the nuclear family: The increasing importance of multigenerational bonds. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63, 1–16.
- Bengtson, V. L., & Roberts, R. E. (1991). Intergenerational solidarity in aging families: An example of formal theory construction. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 856–870.
- Berry, B. (2008). Financial transfers from living parents to adult children: Who is helped and why? *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 67, 207–240. doi:10.1111/j.1536-7150.2008.00568.x
- Blau, F. D., & Kahn, L. M. (2017). The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, and explanations. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 55, 789–865. doi:10.3386/w21913
- Burnette, M. (2011, July 15). Seven tips for taking a car loan from family. *Bankrate*. Retrieved from <https://www.bankrate.com/loans/auto-loans/7-tips-for-taking-a-car-loan-from-family/>

- Burtless, G. (2011). Do workers prepare rationally for retirement? In A. L. Drolet, N. Schwarz, & C. Yoon (Eds.), *The aging consumer: Perspectives from psychology and economics* (pp. 125–152). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Buss, D. (2015). *Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Calder, L. G. (1999). *Financing the American dream: A cultural history of consumer credit*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Casey, L. S., Chandler, J., Levine, A. S., Proctor, A., & Strolovitch, D. Z. (2017). Intertemporal differences among MTurk workers: Time-based sample variations and implications for online data collection. *SAGE Open*, 7, 1–15. doi:10.1177/2158244017712774
- Chambers, D. (2012). *A sociology of family life: Change and diversity in intimate relations*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Chandler, J., & Shapiro, D. (2016). Conducting clinical research using crowdsourced convenience samples. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 12, 53–81. doi:10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-021815-093623
- Circella, G., Tiedeman, K., Handy, S., Alemi, F., & Mokhtarian, P. (2016). *What affects U.S. passenger travel? Current trends and future perspectives* (No. CA16-2825). Retrieved from National Center for Sustainable Transportation website: https://ncst.ucdavis.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/06-15-2016-NCST_White_Paper_US_Passenger_Travel_Final_February_2016_Caltrans3.pdf
- Conley, D. (2005). *The pecking order: A bold new look at how family and society determine who we become*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Connidis, I. A., & McMullin, J. A. (2002). Sociological ambivalence and family ties: A critical perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64, 558–567. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2002.00558.x
- Consumer Reports. (2017). *How much can you afford to spend on a car?* Retrieved from <https://www.consumerreports.org/buying-a-car/how-much-can-you-afford-to-spend-on-a-car/>
- Coontz, S. (2016). *The way we never were: American families and the nostalgia trap*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Coulson, N. E., & Li, H. (2013). Measuring the external benefits of homeownership. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 77, 57–67. doi:10.1016/j.jue.2013.03.005
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227–268. doi:10.1207/s15327965pli1104_01
- Deetlefs, J., Chylinski, M., & Ortmann, A. (2015). *MTurk ‘unscrubbed’: Exploring the good, the ‘super’, and the unreliable on Amazon’s Mechanical*. Retrieved from Social Science Research Network web site: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2654056
- Druta, O., & Ronald, R. (2017). Young adults’ pathways into homeownership and the negotiation of intra-family support: A home, the ideal gift. *Sociology*, 51, 783–799. doi:10.1177/0038038516629900
- Dworkin, J., Hessel, H., Gliske, K., & Rudi, J. H. (2016). A comparison of three online recruitment strategies for engaging parents. *Family Relations*, 65, 550–561. doi:10.1111/fare.12206
- Eisenberg, R. (2018, October 12). Parents’ Support To Adult Kids: A Stunning \$500 Billion A Year. *Forbes*. Retrieved from

- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2018/10/02/parents-support-to-adult-kids-a-stunning-500-billion-a-year/>
- Elliott, H. (2009, February 27). Ten reasons to buy a luxury car. *Forbes*. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/2009/02/27/luxury-expensive-cars-lifestyle-vehicles_luxury_cars.html#21f6268d5dec
- Experian. (2016). *State of the automotive finance market a look at loans and leases in Q2 2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.experian.com/assets/automotive/quarterly-webinars/2016-Q2-SAFM.pdf>
- Fay, B. (2019). *Upside down car loans: Trading in car with loan debt*. Retrieved from debt.org website: <https://www.debt.org/credit/loans/auto/upside-down-car/>
- Fellowes, M., & Willemin, K. (2013). *The retirement breach in defined contribution plans: Size, causes, and solutions*. Retrieved from Hellowallet website: http://info.hellowallet.com/rs/hellowallet/images/HelloWallet_TheRetirementBreachInDefinedContributionPlans.pdf
- Fingerman, K. L., Kim, K., Davis, E. M., Furstenberg, F. F., Birditt, K. S., & Zarit, S. H. (2015). "I'll give you the world": Socioeconomic differences in parental support of adult children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77, 844–865. doi:10.1111/jomf.12204
- Fiscetti, M. (2014, November 18). Ratio of workers to retirees will plummet worldwide. *Scientific American*. Retrieved from <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/ratio-of-workers-to-retirees-will-plummet-worldwide1>
- Fisher, G. G., Chaffee, D. S., & Sonnega, A. (2016). Retirement Timing: A Review and Recommendations for Future Research. *Work, Aging and Retirement*, 2, 230–261. doi:10.1093/workar/waw001
- Frimer, J. A., Schaefer, N. K., & Oakes, H. (2014). Moral actor, selfish agent. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106, 790–802. doi:10.1037/a0036040
- Fry, R. (2017). *5 facts about millennial households*. Retrieved from Pew Research Center website: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/06/5-facts-about-millennial-households/>
- Fry, R. (2018). Millennials are largest generation in the U.S. labor force. Retrieved from Pew Research Center web site: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/11/millennials-largest-generation-us-labor-force/>
- Ganong, L. H., & Coleman, M. (2006). Multiple segment factorial vignette designs. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68, 455–468. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2006.00264.x
- Garikapati, V. M., Pendyala, R. M., Morris, E. A., Mokhtarian, P. L., & McDonald, N. (2016). Activity patterns, time use, and travel of millennials: A generation in transition? *Transport Reviews*, 36, 558–584. doi:10.1080/01441647.2016.1197337
- Geary, D. C. (2000). Evolution and proximate expression of human paternal investment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126, 55–77. doi:10.1037//0033-2909.126.1.55
- Gee, E. M. (1987). Historical change in the family life course of Canadian men and Canadian women. In V. W. Marshall (Ed.), *Aging in Canada: Social perspectives* (2nd ed., pp. 265–287). Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry and Whiteside.

- Gerland, P., Raftery, A. E., Sevcikova, H., Li, N., Gu, D., Spoorenberg, T., ... Wilmoth, J. (2014). World population stabilization unlikely this century. *Science*, *346*, 234–237. doi:10.1126/science.1257469
- Giddens, A. (1992). *The transformation of intimacy: Sexuality, love, and eroticism in modern societies*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Goldfarb, S. F. (2014). Who pays for the “boomerang generation”? A legal perspective on financial support for young adults. *Harvard Journal of Law and Gender*, *37*, 44–16.
- Goldin, C., Katz, L. F., & Kuziemko, I. (2006). The homecoming of American college women: The reversal of the college gender gap. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *20*, 133–156. doi:10.1257/jep.20.4.133
- Goldscheider, F. K., Thornton, A., & Yang, L.-S. (2001). Helping out the kids: Expectations about parental support in young adulthood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *63*, 727–740. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.00727.x
- Gouldner, A. W. (1960). The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement. *American Sociological Review*, 161–178.
- Griffin, B., Loh, V., & Hesketh, B. (2013). Age, gender, and the retirement process. In M. Wang (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of retirement*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from <http://oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199746521.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199746521-e-13>
- Grinstein-Weiss, M., Williams Shanks, T. R., & Beverly, S. G. (2014). Family assets and child outcomes: Evidence and directions. *The Future of Children*, *24*, 147–170. doi:10.1353/foc.2014.0002
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (Eds.). (2014). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Essex: Pearson.
- Hamilton, L. T. (2013). More Is More or More Is Less? Parental Financial Investments during College. *American Sociological Review*, *78*, 70–95. doi:10.1177/0003122412472680
- Harmon-Jones, E. E., & Mills, J. E. (1999). *Cognitive dissonance: Progress on a pivotal theory in social psychology*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Hershey, D. A., Henkens, K., & Van Dalen, H. P. (2010). Aging and financial planning for retirement: Interdisciplinary influences viewed through a cross-cultural lens. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *70*, 1–38. doi:10.2190/AG.70.1.a
- Hershey, D. A., Jacobs-Lawson, J. M., McArdle, J. J., & Hamagami, A. (2007). Psychological foundations of financial planning for retirement. *Journal of Adult Development*, *14*, 26–36. doi:10.1007/s10804-007-9028-1
- Hogan, D. P., Eggebeen, D. J., & Clogg, C. C. (1993). The structure of intergenerational exchanges in American families. *American Journal of Sociology*, *98*, 1428–1458.
- Holmstrom, L. L., Karp, D. A., & Gray, P. S. (2011). Why parents pay for college: The good parent, perceptions of advantage, and the intergenerational transfer of opportunity. *Symbolic Interaction*, *34*, 265–289. doi:10.1525/si.2011.34.2.265
- Horioka, C. Y. (2014). *Why do people leave bequests? For love or self-interest?* (No. No. 2014-06). Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines.

- Huff, C., & Tingley, D. (2015). "Who are these people?" Evaluating the demographic characteristics and political preferences of MTurk survey respondents. *Research & Politics*, 2, 205316801560464–205316801560464. doi:10.1177/2053168015604648
- Internal Revenue Office. (2019). *Tax information for retirement plans*. Retrieved from <https://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans>
- Jellal, M., & Wolff, F.-C. (2002). Cultural evolutionary altruism: Theory and evidence. *European Journal of Political Economy*, 18, 241–262. doi:10.1016/S0176-2680(02)00079-4
- Kagitcibasi, C. (2005). Autonomy and relatedness in cultural context: Implications for self and family. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 36, 403–422. doi:10.1177/0022022105275959
- Kane, E. W. (2012). *The gender trap: Parents and the pitfalls of raising boys and girls*. New-York, NY: NYU Press.
- Keller, H., & Chasiotis, A. (2008). Maternal investment. In C. Salmon & T. K. Shackelford (Eds.), *Family relationships: An evolutionary perspective* (pp. 91–115). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Kemper, P., Komisar, H. L., & Alecxih, L. (2005). Long-term care over an uncertain future: What can current retirees expect? *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing*, 42, 335–350. doi:10.5034/inquiryjrnl_42.4.335
- Kohli, M., & Künemund, H. (2003). Intergenerational transfers in the family: What motivates giving. In V. L. Bengtson & A. Lowenstein (Eds.), *Global aging and challenges to families* (pp. 123–142). New York, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Kontis, V., Bennett, J. E., Mathers, C. D., Li, G., Foreman, K., & Ezzati, M. (2017). Future life expectancy in 35 industrialised countries: projections with a Bayesian model ensemble. *The Lancet*, 389, 1323–1335. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(16)32381-9
- Lam, K. (2019, March 25). Parent who allegedly paid \$6.5 million in college admissions scandal remains a mystery. *Fox News*. Retrieved from <https://www.foxnews.com/us/parent-who-allegedly-paid-6-5-million-in-college-admissions-scandal-remains-a-mystery>
- Lending Tree. (2016). *Familial Financing - Borrowing Between Family Members*. Retrieved from <https://www.lendingtree.com/personal/familial-financing/>
- Lips, H. M. (2012). The gender pay gap: Challenging the rationalizations. Perceived equity, discrimination, and the limits of human capital models. *Sex Roles*, 68, 169–185. doi:10.1007/s11199-012-0165-z
- Lopez, M. H., & Gonzalez-Barrera, A. (2014). *Women's college enrollment gains leave men behind*. Retrieved from Pew Research Center website: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/03/06/womens-college-enrollment-gains-leave-men-behind/>
- Lowenstein, A. (2007). Solidarity-conflict and ambivalence: testing two conceptual frameworks and their impact on quality of life for older family members. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 62, S100–S107. doi:10.1093/geronb/62.2.S100
- Luescher, K., & Pillemer, K. (1998). Intergenerational ambivalence: A new approach to the study of parent-child relations in later life. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 413. doi:10.2307/353858
- Lusardi, A., & Mitchell, O. S. (2007). *Baby boomer retirement security: The roles of planning, financial literacy, and housing wealth* (12585) (pp. 205–224).

- Retrieved from National Bureau of Economic Research web site:
<http://www.nber.org/papers/w12585>
- Lüscher, K., & Hoff, A. (2013). Intergenerational ambivalence: Beyond solidarity and conflict. In I. Albert & D. Ferring (Eds.), *Intergenerational Relations: European Perspectives on Family and Society* (pp. 39–63). Bristol, England: University of Bristol.
- Ma, J., Baum, S., & Pender, M. (2017). *Trends in college pricing, 2017*. New York, NY: The College Board.
- McCarthy, J. R., Edwards, R., & Gillies, V. (2000). Moral tales of the child and the adult: Narratives of contemporary family lives under changing circumstances. *Sociology*, *34*, 785–803.
- McCullagh, P., & Nelder, J. A. (1989). *Generalized linear models*. London: Chapman & Hall.
- McGarry, K., & Schoeni, R. F. (1995). *Transfer behavior within the family: Results from the Asset and Health Dynamics Survey*. Retrieved from National Bureau of Economic Research web site: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w5099.pdf>
- Meil, R. (2012). *Individualization and family solidarity*. Retrieved from "La Caixa" Welfare Project web site:
https://www.uam.es/personal_pdi/economicas/gmeil/ingles/publicaciones/familysolidarity.pdf
- Merrill Lynch. (2015). *Family & retirement: The elephant in the room*. Retrieved from <https://mlaem.fs.ml.com/content/dam/ML/Articles/pdf/family-and-retirement-elephant-in-the-room.pdf>
- Merrill Lynch. (2018). *The financial journey of modern parenting: Joy, complexity and sacrifice*. Retrieved from <https://www.ml.com/the-financial-journey-of-modern-parenting.html>
- Merton, R. C. (2014). The crisis in retirement planning. *Harvard Business Review*, *92*, 42–50.
- Merz, E.-M., Schuengel, C., & Schulze, H.-J. (2007). Intergenerational solidarity: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *21*, 175–186.
doi:10.1016/j.jaging.2006.07.001
- Meyers, D. T. (Ed.). (1997). *Feminists rethink the self*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Mitchell, B. A. (2010). Happiness in midlife parental roles: A contextual mixed methods analysis. *Family Relations*, *59*, 326–339. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2010.00605.x
- Muller, J. (2015, May 19). Why you really should buy your teenager a new car. *Forbes*. Retrieved from
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/joannmuller/2015/05/19/why-you-really-should-buy-your-teenager-a-new-car/>
- National Association of Realtors. (2018). *Home buyer and seller generational trends report*. Retrieved from
<https://www.nar.realtor/sites/default/files/documents/2019-home-buyer-and-seller-generational-trends-04-03-2019.pdf>
- Noone, J. H., Stephens, C., & Alpass, F. (2010). The process of Retirement Planning Scale (PREPS): Development and validation. *Psychological Assessment*, *22*, 520–531. doi:10.1037/a0019512
- Norušis, M. J. (2012). *IBM SPSS Statistics 19 advanced statistical procedures companion*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality & Quantity*, *41*, 673–690. doi:10.1007/s11135-006-9018-6

- O'Brien, S. (2017a, August 30). Millennials like buying cars after all. *CNBC. Personal Finance*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/08/30/millennials-like-buying-cars-after-all.html>
- O'Brien, S. (2017b, September 22). Parents provide more college support for sons than daughters. *CNBC. Personal Finance*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/09/22/parents-favor-boys-over-girls-when-it-comes-to-saving-for-college.html>
- Olson, D. H. L., & DeFrain, J. D. (2006). *Marriages & families: Intimacy, diversity, and strengths*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Orman, S. (2010). *Suze Orman's action plan: New rules for new times*. New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau.
- Ortman, J. M., Velkoff, V. A., & Hogan, H. (2014). *An aging nation: The older population in the United States*. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau web site: <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2014/demo/p25-1140.pdf>
- Pew Research Center. (2011). *Is college worth it? College presidents, public assess value, quality and mission of higher education*. Retrieved from <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/05/15/is-college-worth-it/>
- Pillemer, K., & Sutor, J. J. (2008). Collective ambivalence: Considering new approaches to the complexity of intergenerational relations. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 63, S394–S396. doi:10.1093/geronb/63.6.S394
- Poterba, J. M. (2014). Retirement security in an aging population. *American Economic Review*, 104, 1–30. doi:10.1257/aer.104.5.1
- Quick, H. E., & Moen, P. (1998). Gender, employment and retirement quality: A life course approach to the differential experiences of men and women. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 3, 44–64. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.3.1.44
- Rauscher, E. (2016). Passing It On: Parent-to-Adult Child Financial Transfers for School and Socioeconomic Attainment. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2, 172. doi:10.7758/rsf.2016.2.6.09
- Remle, R. C. (2011). The midlife financial squeeze: Intergenerational transfers of financial resources within aging families. In R. A. Settersten & J. L. Angel (Eds.), *Handbook of sociology of aging* (pp. 179–192). New York, NY: Springer.
- Rose, J. (2018, October 2). The #1 payment killing your wealth. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jrose/2018/10/02/the-one-monthly-payment-killing-your-wealth/>
- Rossi, P. P. H. (1990). *Of human bonding: Parent-child relations across the life course*. London: Routledge.
- Sallie Mae. (2017). *How America pays for college*. Retrieved from <https://www.salliemae.com/research/how-america-pays-for-college/>
- Sarkisian, N., & Gerstel, N. (2008). Till marriage do us part: adult children's relationships with their parents. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 360–376. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00487.x
- Sassler, S., Ciambone, D., & Benway, G. (2008). Are they really mama's boys/daddy's girls? The negotiation of adulthood upon returning to the parental home. *Sociological Forum*, 23, 670–698. doi:10.1111/j.1573-7861.2008.00090.x
- Schoeni, R. F., & Ross, K. E. (2005). Material assistance from families during the transition to adulthood. In Jr. R. A. Settersten, F. F. Furstenberg, & R. G.

- Rumbaut (Eds.), *On the frontier of adulthood: Theory, research, and public policy* (pp. 396–416). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
doi:10.7208/chicago/9780226748924.003.0012
- Schulz, R., & Eden, J. (2016). *Families caring for an aging America*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- Shuey, K., & Hardy, M. A. (2003). Assistance to aging parents and parents-in-law: Does lineage affect family allocation decisions? *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65, 418–431. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2003.00418.x
- Silverstein, Conroy, S. J., Wang, H., Giarrusso, R., & Bengtson, V. L. (2002). Reciprocity in parent-child relations over the adult life course. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 57, S3–S13. doi:10.1093/geronb/57.1.s3
- Silverstein, M., Conroy, S. J., & Gans, D. (2012). Beyond solidarity, reciprocity and altruism: moral capital as a unifying concept in intergenerational support for older people. *Ageing and Society*, 32, 1246–1262.
doi:10.1017/S0144686X1200058X
- Silverstein, M., & Giarrusso, R. (2010). Aging and family life: A decade review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 1039–1058. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00749.x
- Suitor, J. J., Gilligan, M., Pillemer, K., Fingerma, K. L., Kim, K., Silverstein, M., & Bengtson, V. L. (2018). Applying within-family differences approaches to enhance understanding of the complexity of intergenerational relations. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 73, 40–53. doi:10.1093/geronb/gbx037
- Swartz, T. T. (2008). Family capital and the invisible transfer of privilege: Intergenerational support and social class in early adulthood. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2008, 11–24. doi:10.1002/cd.206
- Swartz, T. T. (2009). Intergenerational family relations in adulthood: Patterns, variations, and implications in the contemporary united states. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35, 191–212. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.34.040507.134615
- Swartz, T. T., Kim, M., Uno, M., Mortimer, J., & O'Brien, K. B. (2011). Safety nets and scaffolds: Parental support in the transition to adulthood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 73, 414–429. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00815.x
- Szinovacz, M. E. (2013). A multilevel perspective for retirement research. In M. Wang (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of retirement* (pp. 152–173). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Szinovacz, M. E., DeViney, S., & Davey, A. (2001). Influences of family obligations and relationships on retirement: Variations by gender, race, and marital status. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 56, S20–S27. doi:10.1093/geronb/56.1.s20
- Szinovacz, M. E., Elkerdt, D. J., Butt, A., Barton, K., & Oala, C. (2012). Families and retirement. In R. Blieszner & V. H. Bedford (Eds.), *Handbook of families and aging* (pp. 461–489). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- Trivers, R. L. (1971). The evolution of reciprocal altruism. *The Quarterly Review of Biology*, 46, 35–57.
- T.RowePrice. (2017). *9th Annual parents, kids & money survey*. Retrieved from https://www.slideshare.net/TRowePrice/t-rowe-price-parents-kids-money-survey-college-related-findings?qid=9cdcbd32-3261-4828-a29a-8128bf187c85&v=&b=&from_search=2

- Uehara, E. S. (1995). Reciprocity reconsidered: Gouldner's moral norm of reciprocity and social support. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *12*, 483–502.
- Ufberg, M. (2015, January 2). Don't buy your kid a clunker. *Pacific Standard*. Retrieved from <https://psmag.com/environment/dont-buy-kid-clunker-97463>
- U.S. Department of agriculture. (2019). *Rural-urban continuum*. Retrieved from <https://www.usda.gov>
- U.S. Department of labor. (2019). *Labor force statistics from the current population survey*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/cps/earnings.htm>
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2015). *Retirement security: Most households approaching retirement have low savings* (No. 15–419). Retrieved from <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-419>
- Van den Broeck, A., Ferris, D. L., Chang, C.-H., & Rosen, C. C. (2016). A review of self-determination theory's basic psychological needs at work. *Journal of Management*, *42*, 1195–1229. doi:10.1177/0149206316632058
- Van Lange, P. A. M., Joireman, J., Parks, C. D., & Van Dijk, E. (2013). The psychology of social dilemmas: A review. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *120*, 125–141. doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2012.11.003
- Vanette, D. (2017, June 28). Using attention checks in your surveys may harm data quality. *Qualtrics*. Retrieved from <https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/using-attention-checks-in-your-surveys-may-harm-data-quality/>
- Vanguard. (2018). *How America saves: A report on vanguard 2018 defined contribution plan data*. Retrieved from <https://institutional.vanguard.com/VGApp/iip/site/institutional/researchcommentary/article/HowAmericaSaves2018>
- Weber, J. M., Kopelman, S., & Messick, D. M. (2004). A conceptual review of decision making in social dilemmas: Applying a logic of appropriateness. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *8*, 281–307. doi:10.1207/s15327957pspr0803_4
- White, L. V., & Sintov, N. D. (2017). You are what you drive: Environmentalist and social innovator symbolism drives electric vehicle adoption intentions. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, *99*, 94–113. doi:10.1016/j.tra.2017.03.008
- Wightman, P., Schoeni, R., & Robinson, K. (2012). *Familial financial assistance to young adults*. Retrieved from National Poverty Center website: <http://npc.umich.edu/publications/u/2012-10%20NPC%20Working%20Paper.pdf>
- Williams, R. (2006). Generalized ordered logit/partial proportional odds models for ordinal dependent variables. *The Stata Journal: Promoting Communications on Statistics and Stata*, *6*, 58–82. doi:10.1177/1536867x0600600104
- Williams, R. (2016). Understanding and interpreting generalized ordered logit models. *The Journal of Mathematical Sociology*, *40*, 7–20. doi:10.1080/0022250X.2015.1112384
- Xu, Y., Johnson, C., Bartholomae, S., O'Neill, B., & Gutter, M. S. (2015). Homeownership among Millennials: The deferred American dream? *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, *44*, 201–212. doi:10.1111/fcsr.12136
- Young, L., & Newman, S. (2003). *Caregiving and retirement planning: What happens to family caregivers who leave the work force*. Retrieved from Family Caregiving Alliance web site: <https://www.caregiver.org/caregiving>

Zavisca, J. R., & Gerber, T. P. (2016). The socioeconomic, demographic, and political effects of housing in comparative perspective. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 42, 347–367. doi:10.1146/annurev-soc-081715-074333

VITA

Radion Svynarenko

Education:

- Candidate of Science in Psychology, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Ukraine (2008).
- Specialist in Psychology, Odessa National I.I. Mechnikov University (2004).
- B.S. in Psychology, Odessa National I.I. Mechnikov University (2003).

Awards, Honors, and Fellowships

- “Lyman T. Johnson Diversity Award,” University of Kentucky, 2013-2016, \$18,000
- "Excellence in Psychology Award," Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, 2004.
- “Mykola Lange Academic Excellence Award,” Odessa National University, 2004.
- “Best Presentation Award,” 7th Conferences of Young Scientists, Kiev National University, 2004.

Professional Positions Held

- Graduate Project Manager of Survey Data Collection and Analysis, University of Kentucky—Lexington, KY, 08/2016–08/2018
- Research Assistant, University of Kentucky—Lexington, KY, 08/2013–08/2016.
- Associate Professor, Odessa Mechnikov University—Odessa, Ukraine, 11/2008–08/2013.

Professional Publications

Journal articles

Svynarenko, R., Zhang, Q., Kim, H. (2018). Financial burden of cancer: Financial ratio analysis. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*. Advance online publication doi:10.1007/s10834-018-9587-2

Kim H., Zhang, Q., **Svynarenko R.** (2017). Personality traits and health literacy. *Journal of Family Medicine & Community Health*, 4, 1–7.

Svynarenko R., Zhang, Q., Kim H. (2015). Personality, health literacy, and health outcomes. *The Gerontologist*, 55, 127, doi: 10.1093/geront/gnv509.08.

Svynarenko R. (2008). Individual time representations and philosophical concepts of time. *International Journal of Psychology, Abstracts of the XXIX International Congress of Psychology*, 43, 610.

Conference Presentations

Svynarenko, R., Zhang, Q., Kim, H. (2018, November). *Financial Ratio Analysis of Financial Burden of Cancer*. Poster presented at the meeting of National Council of Family Relations, Baltimore, MD.

- Svynarenko, R.** (2018, March) *Social Beliefs about Family Obligations Vis-à-vis Retirement Planning*. Paper presented at the Ukrainian branch of Fulbright, Kiev, Ukraine.
- Svynarenko, R., & Rudska, A.** (2016, March). "*Hillbillization*" of the eastern Ukrainians and revolutionary events in Ukraine. Paper presented at the meeting of Appalachian Studies Association, Shepherdstown, WV. Retrieved from http://mds.marshall.edu/asa_conference/2016/accepted_proposals/220
- Svynarenko, R.** (2016, May). "*Everyone I know goes away in the end...*": Looking for life legacies in Cash's "*Hurt*" music video. Paper presented at Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana Champaign, IL.
- Svynarenko, R., Zhang, Q. Kim, H.** (2015, November). *Personality, health literacy and health outcomes*. Poster presented at the meeting of Gerontological Society of America, Orlando, FL.
- Podshyvalkina, V., & **Svynarenko, R.** (2015, May). *On Praxeological Grounds of Qualitative Studies in Psychology*. Paper presented at Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. Urbana Champaign, IL.
- Svynarenko, R.** (2015, April). *Appalachia and Ukraine: A Lesson to Learn*. Paper presented at meeting of Graduate Appalachian Research Community, Lexington, KY.
- Svynarenko, R.** (2014, November). *Challenges of globalization and mate selection of Ukrainian women*. Poster presented at the meeting of National Council of Family Relations, Baltimore, MD.
- Svynarenko, R., & Podshyvalkina V.** (2014, May). *Informants' Subjectness and Qualitative Research Politics*. Paper presented at Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. Urbana Champaign. IL.
- Podshyvalkina, V., & **Svynarenko, R.** (2015, July). *Technologies in the Work of Psychologists and their Clients: Will their Horizons Converge?* Paper presented at the European Congress of Psychology, Milan.
- Svynarenko, R.** (2012) *Using Simulation Games to Increase Student Engagement in Development of their own Professional Skills*. Paper presented at the European Psychology Learning and Teaching (EUROPLAT) conference, Vilnius.