

A narrative exploration of
changing personal values of Gen
Z students on undergraduate
programmes in an English
university

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Abstract

Narrative inquiry conducted with Gen Z undergraduate students from an English university (studying between 2020 and 2023) indicates that personal values change from the year before starting their degree until their final year, and often as a result of critical incidents or turning points. In this study, personal values were elicited by listening to the voices of Gen Z students through narrative short stories. These include: Rose's mental health journey, Florence speaking out about her sexuality, James' consciousness about education and student voice, Joy's double-life as a commuter student, Teagan's adventures at a Japanese university and Ann's terrifying experience of an intruder.

This research into the undergraduate student experience was explored through three lenses, with areas identified as original contributions to knowledge. Firstly, a contribution is made to the field of knowledge about Gen Z through a generational lens, providing stories of their changing values between the year before university and their final year. Uniquely, for these Gen Z students, COVID-19 national lockdowns impacted their values of security, sense of belonging, benevolence and hedonism. These findings from short story narrative interviews can be used to better understand the experience of Gen Z students and inform policy and practice, through the development of pedagogical, pastoral and student support approaches.

Secondly, a contribution to the development of methodology is made through a narrative lens, via the creation of a bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach. This novel approach to data analysis enabled layered engagement with the data. Noting the importance of reflexivity, working with a peer debriefer supported credibility throughout the data processing, and contributed to the creation of rich, authentic restoryings.

Thirdly, a contribution to theory is made through a values lens, using Schwartz's well-established theory of ten universal personal values (1987,1990). The terms used to expand upon the various meaning of each value (Schwartz, 2006) are presented as part of the restoryings. The study revealed that Schwartz's theory is applicable within an interpretive paradigm. The research shows that, for Gen Z, the lexicon of Schwartz's model needs modifying. This is because the restoryings showed that the value of mental health is important for Gen Z students, especially those from the LGBT+ community. Therefore, the value of mental health needs to be a priority in universities.

In summary, wide-ranging responses in the narrative data illustrate that personal values of Gen Z students are individual and not homogenous.

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Chapter 1. Introduction.

This research analyses the lived experience of Generation Z or Gen Z students from the year before they started their undergraduate degree when they applied to 'Johnster University' (pseudonym) until their final year (between 2019 and 2022). It considers any change in their values (value change) by applying Schwartz's value theory (1987, 1990, 1992) to the stories they tell of their lived experience (note the term Gen Z will be used throughout this study). Gen Z students are the focus of this study because they represent the vast majority of undergraduate students. They are future employees and have the potential to influence society and the success of Higher Education (HE). Therefore, the focus of analysis is about what matters to Gen Z, and specifically what their personal values are and how this changes over time, during their three-year undergraduate journey.

Values are what matters to us, what roots us to our behaviours. They are complex and influenced by experiences and events (Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi, 2015). In this study, personal values were elicited by listening to Gen Z student voices through narrative short story interviews. This was deemed the most effective method and contrasts with the more typically survey-based culture of HE and the plethora of quantitative studies available on student values. This corpus includes some studies from the United States of America (USA) that explored the experiences of Gen Z students in particular, through survey data, and these have partially informed the research design for this study. Listening to Gen Z students' stories and gathering rich and thick data from them provides insight into the changing values of the students HE staff are working with today.

The central argument of this thesis is that HE needs to understand and respond to the values of Gen Z students, and this means exploring their lived experience to discover an authentic understanding of what matters to them. As Wisker (2008, p. 72) explains 'exploratory research is commonly used when new knowledge is sought'. The study is conceptualised in the following diagram (see Figure 1, below), showing the intersection of lenses used. The diagram illustrates the three interconnected aspects of the research study.

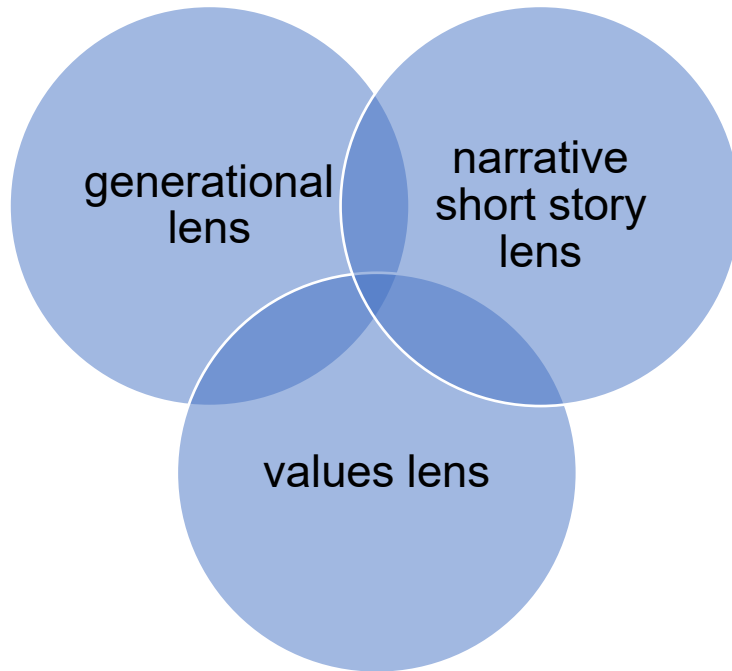


Figure 1: Conceptual Lenses.

This chapter outlines the context of the research landscape, using a generational lens to consider the sample population: Gen Z. It then introduces the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was a pertinent factor in the student experience for these participants due to the timing of their undergraduate journeys (starting their first year in September 2020). There follows a discussion of the research problem and the gap in knowledge, and the subsequent aim, objectives and research questions. Then, the theoretical framework is introduced, using a values lens; and the rationale for methodological choices sheds light through a narrative lens. Next, consideration of the limitations of the study leads to the contribution to knowledge. Finally, the thesis structure is outlined.

1.1 Who are Gen Z? - the generational lens

Identifying oneself as being part of a generation is commonplace. In the seminal essay by Mannheim (1952), he asserts that differences and experiences in common are a key feature of a generation, but his ideas have been both contested and added to by scholars in the field (e.g. Strauss and Howe, 1991; McCourt, 2012; Almog and Almog, 2019) who provide a full critique of the concept of generations beyond the boundaries of this study. More recently, research has begun to explore current adolescents and

young adults in society, known as Generation Z or Gen Z (Seemiller and Grace, 2019; Duffy, 2021; Katz *et al.*, 2021). Their birth years are some time from the mid-1990s to 2010 (Seemiller and Grace, 2016; Twenge, 2017; Selingo, 2018; Dimock, 2019; Duffy, 2021; Katz *et al.*, 2021). Wang and Peng (2015) observed that Gen Z students will be in their undergraduate university years between 2016 and 2032. As a population for this study, Gen Z is viewed as even more diverse than Millennials, who were born between 1981 and the mid 90s (Selingo, 2018; Dimock, 2019), as more of them are first-generation students or from lower-income families compared to previous generations (Johnson and Sveen, 2020).

There is a steadily growing literature in relation to Gen Z, with an authoritative voice coming from Duffy (2021, p. 58), who moves away from Arnett's (2000) theory of emerging adulthood to Duffy's theory of 'delayed adulthood'. Drawing upon his analysis of hundreds of studies, Duffy (2021, p. 127) highlights that this generation is 'more "mild than wild", reflected in their lower smoking, drinking, criminal behaviour and ... sexual activity'. He also reports that Gen Z see work as more than just about money, acknowledging that this directly contradicts Twenge (2017), whose research of high school students in the USA showed that making a living was a key driver for them as they look toward future work. Twenge's focus on the technological world of Gen Z is also reported by Cole, Napier and Marcum (2015), Seemiller and Grace (2016) and UCAS Media (2021). For research for their first publication, entitled *Generation Z Goes to College*, Seemiller and Grace (2016) sent a survey link to 15 institutions in the USA. From the approximately 700 responses, the authors concluded that Gen Z lived in 'a world completely shaped by the Internet' (Seemiller and Grace, 2016, p. 6), which in turn enables access to world news, but also reduces physical activity levels, increasing sedentary lifestyles.

It is evident from the literature that there are stereotypes about the characteristics of Gen Z, including that they are never without an electronic device and therefore lazy or distracted, and that they are over-protected and entitled (Camfield, Moore and Allen, 2020). This view, from others' perspectives, is then complicated by what Camfield, Moore and Allen (2020, p. 123) term 'Gen Z's hidden narratives', which include perfectionism and a feeling of being unsafe, both because of reports of school gun violence and the experience of COVID-19. In addition, Katz *et al.* (2021) note that Gen Z are concerned about mental health, having a work/life balance and self-care. Of interest, Mahesh, Bhat and Suresh (2021) contend that universities need to keep up

with Gen Z's changing values. In their study, they used questionnaires to research 23 HE students in India to evaluate a framework for HE, using a participant group defined as 'a very bright student cohort in a prestigious university' (Mahesh, Bhat and Suresh, 2021, p. 106). The results led the authors to conclude with a large claim that education at their university will, in future, be shaped by student values (Mahesh Bhat and Suresh (2021). Arguably, the use of questionnaires with a particular cohort by Mahesh, Bhat and Suresh (2021) does not provide insight into the lives of the students sought in the current study. It also does not relate to the widening participation agenda of many UK universities, which aims to create a more inclusive university sector for students from a more diverse range of backgrounds (Wainwright, Chappell and McHugh, 2020).

In a research paper examining Gen Z from their own perspective, Stahl and Literat (2022) explored the social media app TikTok, looking at almost 2000 videos with the hashtag Gen Z. From this analysis they claim to capture the voice of Gen Z, predominantly from the USA. Interestingly, Stahl and Literat (2022) found that the data demonstrated a strong shared generational identity and shared experiences. These included, for example, valuing social justice, being open to conversations about mental health, understanding technology, and having a sense of agency, with the authors reporting: 'Gen Zers see themselves as capable, resourceful, informed, action-oriented, and fearless' (Stahl and Literat, 2022, p.10). While these studies begin to identify values of Gen Z, specific experiences of students and value change during this time have not been reported. Significantly, the timeframe of their study incorporated a global pandemic: COVID-19.

1.2 The context - COVID-19

On 26 March 2020, the Prime Minister announced the first lockdown in the UK (Institute for Government, 2022). In September 2020, first-year students began their undergraduate university degrees, with Johnster University following public health advice on campus for everyone to wear face coverings and keep a distance between each other. Hewitt (2021) explored over 1000 undergraduates students' views on their HE student experience and the impact of COVID-19. Results showed that 63% of respondents said that their mental health was worse due to the pandemic, with 24% saying that they were unhappy with the level of mental health support available on university campuses. For the student participants in this study, the year before they

joined Johnster University was when COVID-19 first began. Their experience of applying to university and attending for open days and applicant days was during this unprecedented time. After this, their first year was influenced by the context of the global pandemic and the consequences of being in national lockdowns. This unique time then impacted their student experience as undergraduates as recovery and return to normality took place.

Arguably, in a crisis, our values are tested. Daniel *et al.* (2022) surveyed 2321 Australians about value change from April to November 2020 and noted a destabilising of values. Daniel *et al.* (2022, p. 573) suggest that this was expected as 'systematic population-wide value change has been reported after major existential threats'. Furthermore, Daniel *et al.* (2022) commented that the restrictions imposed by lockdowns, and therefore associated limits on social relationships during COVID-19, influenced the changing of values at this time, alongside the impact on the economy and the effect this had on individuals. Daniel *et al.* (2022) note that longer impacts on values are yet to be ascertained and suggest alternative research methods to surveys might be relevant to study value change during this time.

1.3 The research problem or gap in knowledge

Gen Z students starting university in 2020 have encountered a unique student experience during 'pandemic times' (Daniel *et al.*, 2022, p. 572). There is agreement that the student experience is about the whole person (Tinto, 2017; Tight, 2019) with Tight explaining:

We need a much better understanding of what it is like to be a student today, not just, for example, how well they are engaging with their studies and institution, and how likely they might be to discontinue or finish successfully. Contemporary student lives spread out much further than their course and institution, involving family, friends, social and leisure activities and employment. (Tight, 2019, p. 9)

While many quantitative studies use students as participants to explore personal values, a systematic literature review on value change by Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer (2019) shows knowledge gaps in the field. The authors propose that:

Studies on the development of values through life transitions remain inconclusive. This might at least partially be remedied by study designs that capture value change and its underlying processes on the individual level. (Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer, 2019, p. 23)

The focus on study design is endorsed by Tight (2019) who proposes a spotlight on qualitative studies, including forms of narrative research, and by Sakdiyakorn, Golubovskaya and Solnet (2021, p. 9) who suggest that 'matched longitudinal studies could help monitor the stability and vulnerability of Gen Z's worldview and their human values'. Thus, the research problem and gap in knowledge is that there are very few qualitative studies of Gen Z student values and Schwartz's values theory has been tested, albeit widely, quantitatively through large scale surveys. Rich and thick data (which is described by Geertz (1973) as listening to, interpreting and reporting stories in the real world that are in-depth, and reveal thick description) has yet to be gathered that explores the lived experience of Gen Z students and their changing values from before starting at an English university and then at the end of the undergraduate degree.

1.4 Aim, objectives and research questions

The title of this research is: A narrative exploration of changing personal values of Gen Z students on undergraduate programmes in an English university. The aim of the study is to explore what matters to Gen Z undergraduate students and how the student experience impacts their changing values. The objectives are as follows:

- to evaluate Schwartz's values research in order to contextualise the following research;
- to use narrative interviews to explore changing student values;
- to use narrative analysis to interpret each student's values; and
- to understand the experiences that have impacted students' values change.

The research questions (RQ) addressed in this study are:

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that impacted their values before coming to university?

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

RQ3: What do the students' stories reveal about their changing values?

RQ4: What is identified from the student stories that impacts on values change at university?

The research questions above were developed to further frame and provide structure to the research objectives to address the research problem and gap. The whole study's purpose was to understand the student experience, through individual student narratives of their time in the year before university and during their undergraduate degree. Through this exploration an understanding of value change was interpreted using Schwartz's values research and the experiences that impacted on their changing values were reported. The stories gathered provide rich and thick data of the lived experience of Gen Z students and their values.

1.5 Theoretical framework - the values lens

Seeking to understanding student values has been central in my 30 year teaching career and professional life in primary schools, as a former headteacher and as a current academic in the HE sector. Anecdotes from the lives of students has led to a fascination, for me, with the motivations behind what matters to students. Using a values lens meant finding a structure for research that was robust. To this end, Schwartz's model of personal values was adopted as it is widely used, for example as the preferred model in the European Social Survey (ESS). This therefore formed a starting point for applying the values lens to the short stories elicited through the bespoke narrative analysis approach developed for and used in this study.

Schwartz's original theory presents 10 values that each have sub-sets of value words. His research, and the testing of the model, is entirely quantitative, using surveys and tools designed to capture large sets of data. Synthesising Schwartz's model with narrative research data has been a rewarding and successful approach. Exploring value change involves considering the stories told and responding to the research questions to ascertain value change, value development and the reasons for this. This study, within the context of COVID-19, adds another dimension to the wide range of research that uses Schwartz's model.

1.6 Methodological choices - a narrative lens

The overarching purpose of this study is to listen to Gen Z students' stories about their values before and during their university experience. This can be best answered through the interpretivist paradigm, using a narrative approach. As the corpus of research already conducted in this field is quantitative, this was an opportunity to adopt

an alternative approach and use narrative inquiry, which is reflexive, relational and nuanced. This addresses the research gap.

1.6.1 Narrative interviewing

The data were collected by remote video interviews using MS Teams (initially due to COVID-19 restrictions). Interviews took place at the beginning of the Gen Z students' first year in 2020, reflecting on the year before university and then in the final year of their undergraduate degree in 2022, reflecting on their student experience at university. Short story narrative interviews are unstructured. The participants were sent four guiding questions the day before, enabling them to talk about their experiences as short stories, with occasional prompts. This nondirective method allows for deeper insights into their values.

1.6.2 Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis is introduced as well-established in qualitative research (Holstein, 2017). However, in order to address the research questions, a bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach was developed using the work of three authors: firstly Leggo (2008), secondly Phoenix (2013) and thirdly Loseke (2009, 2012). Schwartz's theory of values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987, 1990; Schwartz, 1992) was then applied to the analysed text and a restorying created that tells the journey for each Gen Z student participant. Reflexive tools such as a research diary, member checking and a peer debriefer sought to enable rigour and authenticity to be prioritised.

1.7 Proposed contribution to knowledge

This study proposes to contribute to knowledge in three ways:

A contribution to the field of knowledge about Gen Z - through a generational lens, the study seeks to provide stories of Gen Z students, enabling understanding of the voices and student experience, their values and value change. These findings can then be used to understand the experience of Gen Z students and, if required, adapt pedagogical, pastoral and student support approaches at universities to improve the Gen Z student experience.

A contribution to the development of methodology is anticipated - through a narrative lens, the creation of a bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach is novel and will enable layered engagement with the data and the creation of authentic restorings. In addition, working with a peer debriefer seeks to promote reflexivity that enables greater credibility during the data processing.

A possible contribution to theory - through a values lens, the study will explore the appropriateness of using Schwartz's theory of values within a narrative study, and whether any adaptations are suggested.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is organised into seven chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 explores a range of literature through a values lens. In the first half of Chapter 2, personal values are defined, then it focuses to look at studies about generations and students, relating specifically to the sample for this study. In the second half of Chapter 2, the prolific work of Schwartz is presented and reviewed, including an overview of Schwartz's theory of universals in basic human values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987, 1990; Schwartz, 1992). The model is used as a theoretical backbone throughout this thesis. The chapter concludes with a focus on studies of value change and then discusses the most recent studies of values during COVID-19.

Chapter 3 adopts a narrative lens, presenting the case for narrative inquiry as the most appropriate methodology to answer the research questions, and address the research aim and objectives. Ontological and epistemological challenges are discussed.

Because of the in-depth approach to data collection, Chapter 4 is focused through a narrative lens again, explaining and illustrating the interview approach used and how adaptations were made as a result of COVID-19 to use remote video interviewing. In this chapter the bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach is explained, and the treatment of the data is demonstrated. In the last section of Chapter 4 the strategy of restorying is introduced and explored as a way of presenting the students' narratives chronologically with Schwartz's Value Theory applied.

The restorings are presented in Chapter 5. It was important to retain the individual voice and lived experience of each Gen Z student, and therefore the six sets of interpreted and restoried findings (Florence, Ann, James, Teagan, Joy and Rose) are presented separately, each interwoven with the theoretical values. Thus, they appear in

sections of the chapter with a restorying from the year before each student started university and one from their university undergraduate years. A commentary after each set of restoryings considers the changing values that have been revealed through the interviews.

In Chapter 6, the research questions are discussed in response to the findings and prior material found in the literature. The discussion initially summarises each Gen Z student individually, in response to the research questions, using a narrative lens to retain the individual and unique stories told. There follows five overarching discussion themes drawn from the data and literature, peering through a generational lens to discover what matters to these Gen Z students. The five themes are: the application of Schwartz's theoretical model to explore Gen Z student values; value change in the student restoryings during the university undergraduate years; the impact of critical incidents in relation to personal values; the influence of COVID-19 on the personal values of the Gen Z students; and mental health for Gen Z.

The main discussion occurs in Chapter 6, with the final chapter (Chapter 7) presenting shorter conclusions relating to the research questions presented earlier in the Introduction Chapter. The final chapter then shows the bigger picture related to the research aim and objectives. A summary of what has been found is presented, alongside recognition of the value and contribution of the study to the field both in terms of knowledge and methodology, and associated limitations. Finally, applications for practice and opportunities for future research are proposed.

Chapter 2. Literature review.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the scope of the existing values literature. It is presented in six sections. The first section is the introduction to the chapter, describing the organisation of the chapter and the literature review approach. The second section is in three sub-sections and will introduce the field; define personal values and the terms often used as pseudonyms for values; and connect studies about age or generation with values. In the third section, specific attention is given to the considerable body of work by Shalom Schwartz, presented in five sub-sections, including how the Schwartz literature was selected; studies that use Schwartz's model; introduction to his work; critical review of the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS); and critical review of the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). These tools are used widely in large-scale surveys to measure values, including the European Social Survey (ESS), as reported here; then follows an overview of Schwartz's theory, and subsequently particular reference is made to adolescent studies, and those using students as participants, as these refer to younger generations including Gen Z. Following this, value change and development are explored to reveal the complexity of the concept.

The penultimate fifth section considers recent studies of COVID-19 and personal values and is followed by a summary of the sections. The review will show that while Schwartz's values theory is reinforced as a theoretical model through the decades since its conception in 1987, the methodology and methods employed are potentially limiting as they use large data sets and report quantitative results only. While Schwartz's approach is undertaken within one paradigm and has not been applied to Gen Z, it is returned to and discussed alongside this study's findings in Chapters Five and Six. Finally, this chapter concludes with section six, illustrating the significance of key studies, evaluating the field, and establishing the gap in the research literature that this study seeks to address.

2.1 Literature review approach

The approach used for this literature review is narrative, as defined by Oys and Frels (2016). Specifically, in selecting the most salient areas relating to the research question from the body of literature available, I chose the critical themes that appeared within the topic of personal values. An initial scoping review of the literature revealed the prominence of the theory of universal values by Schwartz. Managing the varied terms

for personal values (such as beliefs or goals) and considering the literature regarding changing values, was also a feature of the scoping review, and so was deemed critical to explore further. The first part of the review is broadly conceptual (defining what values are and what they are not, and reporting on articles that consider and discuss value change) and the second part is theoretical (reviewing the work of Schwartz). Accordingly, the review of the literature provides a rationale for this study in identifying a research gap.

Through undertaking this review, the goal was to seek to understand and focus on the relevant work in the field of personal values as they relate to this study. Ravitch and Riggan (2012) state that literature reviewing should happen 'as an active process of sense-making that helps the researcher synthesize [sic] and integrate within and across various existing theories and bodies of scholarship' (p. 25). This active approach to reviewing the literature about personal values helped expand knowledge through a critical engagement with others' scholarship, particularly when the scholarship was methodologically different to the narrative research of this study.

2.2 Personal values

As Rohan states, 'The status of values theory and research suffers because the word values is open to abuse and overuse by non-psychologists and psychologists alike' (Rohan, 2000, p. 255). In addition to the usage problems with the term, a range of synonyms for values is used in the literature. These will be explored, so that the term values can be defined and applied in this study accordingly. According to Borg (2019) there are three reasons why values have not been studied widely before the 2000s. First, that values are influenced by social interactions. Second, that expressing ones' values requires some cognitive control and third, that the measurement of values is divisive.

However, the 2000s were a time of development in values research, with Parry and Urwin (2011) and Giacomino, Brown and Akers (2011) reporting many values studies of business students, for example, during the decade. Further, Marcus, MacDonald and Sulsky (2015) conducted a study of personal values in Canada with HE students. Each study is reported more fully later. The critique of the use of students as a research population was addressed by Arthaud-Day, Rode and Turnley (2012), who concluded that for their research purposes they were an appropriate sample. This is reinforced by

the above-mentioned studies and further studies on values using students as participants.

Undergraduate students in their first year (excluding mature students) are moving from adolescence towards adulthood. Hitlin and Piliavin (2004) contend that values can be difficult to articulate and can be stable or changing at this time. It could be argued that defining an individual's values is, then, a direct question to ask developing adults and their values could be elicited through other questions that enable them to share their experiences and stories from which their values can be drawn. Therefore, defining one's own personal values compounds the difficulty of measuring them by a survey (which is the method used in most values literature reported here). This literature review will consider how methodologically, the current set of literature on values of developing adults is potentially flawed due to its survey method of data collection.

A definition of personal values and comparative terms is presented below to illustrate the problematic terminology and its use and to establish parameters for this study.

2.2.1 What are personal values?

Personal values are important for people in their lives (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Goodwin, Polek and Bardi, 2012; Bardi *et al.*, 2014). Rokeach (1973) considers personal values to be a person believing in something or someone, with various authors arguing that our personal or individual values are influenced by society and the environment (Feather, 1975; Lietz and Matthews, 2010; Schermer *et al.*, 2011). However, Roccas *et al.* (2002) link values to our personality from birth. Kluckhohn (1951, p. 395) describes personal values as 'a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable, which influences the selection of available modes, means and ends action'. This definition is supported by Schermer *et al.* (2011), who state that values are critical when one is considering one's actions and opinions. This in turn illustrates Allport's (1961) view that values are an aspect of a person we find fascinating.

A key point is made by Schermer *et al.* (2011) and Borg (2019) that values are what we believe we should do - we learn them. This suggests that values can be a way to express our moral positioning, as one behaves according to one's values, presented by Giacomino, Brown and Akers (2011) in their study of 78 Generation Y (Millennial) business students using the Rokeach Values Survey. Rokeach (1973) reports that

values influence and impact upon an individual's behaviour. These are referred to as 'principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as points of reference in decision-making or the evaluation of beliefs or action' by Halstead (1996, p.5). Our values are arguably a representation of us. Bardi *et al.* (2014) and Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi (2015) add to the definitions, describing personal values as stable life goals. Furthermore, values relate to adversity (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004) whereby when critical incidents occur, personal values respond because they are cognitive and respond to events and experiences (Feather, 1975; Rohan, 2000; Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi, 2015).

The definition of values as cognitive and affective, in that they influence how we think, and also how we feel, can be viewed in early life in families and schools, when experiences and socialisation enable the individual to endorse values (Oyserman, 2015). Rokeach (1973) states that institutions are critical in the transmission of values through teaching and learning experiences and the environment. Hence, by the time a young person begins university, experiences have enabled them to establish what values are important to them. The following section will consider values in relation to attitudes and identity, worldviews, ideologies and traits.

Rohan (2000) cites examples of different terms by Kluckhohn, anthropologist and theorist and author of the 1951 text, in which Kluckhohn defines and classifies terms synonymous with values such as 'attitudes, motivations, objects, measurable quantities, substantive areas of behavior, affect-laden customs or traditions' (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 390 in Rohan, 2000, p. 255). In addition, numerous authors (e.g. Rohan, 2000; Hitlin, 2003; Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Arthaud-Day, Rode, and Turnley, 2012; Borg, 2019) have documented, in relation to values, the use of the terms attitudes and identity. These are also linked to values, with identities recognised as ordered or hierarchical like values. Hitlin (2003) suggests, like Kluckhohn, that the term attitude is linked to values and values can lead to experiences related to identity. However, later work by Hitlin and Piliavin (2004) and Borg (2019) argues that values are not attitudes. Values, it is suggested by Bardi *et al.* (2014), are more important than attitudes to a person; are more durable than attitudes; and attitudes may change more over time than values. Borg (2019) expands upon these distinctions, stating that attitudes can be distinguished from values because they are related to a particular person or event.

The relationship between values, worldviews (individual's beliefs about the nature of the world) and ideologies (a set of opinions or beliefs) is discussed by Rohan (2000, p. 269) and ideologies are reported as 'remarkably slippery', while values and worldviews are interlinked as one's view of the world is connected to one's values. Arthaud-Day, Rode, and Turnley (2012, p. 4) consider the difference between values and traits, proposing that: 'personality traits create patterns in people's thoughts feelings and actions'. The distinction between traits and values is disputed, with some researchers delineating and some blending the two (e.g. Hitlin, 2003; Goodwin, Polek and Bardi, 2012; Arthaud-Day, Rode, and Turnley, 2012, Bardi *et al.*, 2014; Marcus, MacDonald and Sulsky, 2015; Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi, 2015). Indeed, Roccas *et al.*, (2002) show links between traits and values, but according to Hitlin and Piliavin (2004) values are not traits, while Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi (2015) argue that traits are descriptive and biological, but values are motivational and environmental. Traits can be positive or negative (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004). In addition, Goodwin, Polek and Bardi (2012) suggest that values are a more complex mixture of individual's needs, traits and temperament. The range of definitions show that there is a complex mix of incompletely defined and inconsistently applied terms.

2.3 Age, generation and student values

The interaction between personal values and different generations shows that each generation holds a different set of values, or generational values (Parry and Urwin, 2011). Generations are shaped by shared experiences or events and that continues as the generation ages. Adolescence (when a child develops into an adult) is a time of value change and consolidation (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011; Daniel and Benish-Weisman, 2019). So, although values are mostly established by 18, the generation can still be influenced (Rohan, 2000). This section will consider values in relation to age or generation, and studies of student values.

Drawing on data from the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2012, Borg, Hertel and Hermann (2017) reported that younger people (3,660 of those surveyed were under 21) have different values compared to older people (9973 of those surveyed were over 65), and certain values become less important as one ages but are still important for younger adults, such as learning, achievement and autonomy. Indeed, this difference between younger and older adults is explored by Gouveia *et al.* (2015), who,

unsurprisingly, present the values of hedonism and stimulation as more important for younger adults compared to older adults in their longitudinal study over 12 years of 36,845 participants in Brazil aged 12-65. Gouveia *et al.* (2015) differ in their findings from previous studies that state that values are stable by early adulthood, as they show they are developing and changing up to the age of 30 when change slows. Whether values and value change are due to age or other factors needs to be deciphered and has been an ongoing debate for decades (Berge and Berge, 2019). Several researchers have considered this in their studies, presented below.

Preliminary work was carried out in the early 1990s by Darmody (1991), who studied 448 secondary school pupils in year 11 (age 16) in Australia to determine their value preferences. Using the Rokeach values survey (1973) participants were asked to rank their value preferences. This was related to their formal reasoning ability (the ability to logically reason), which develops through adolescence according to the theory of Piaget (Darmody, 1991). The report concluded that values are linked with cognition development; in other words, they change with age. More recently the idea that values change because cognitive abilities change has been added to in a study by Bardi *et al.*, (2009), using four longitudinal studies to show that as values change, it is as a response to specific events.

Mizera and Tulviste (2012) advance the idea of age affecting values, or critical events affecting values, by conducting values-preference questionnaires with 210 high schoolers (mean age 18.2) in 2000 and 2009. They found that at a time of societal change in Estonia (which joined the EU in 2004) the research participants' values remained quite stable. It was noted, however, that there was an impact of mass media from the West on societal values, even by 2000. This draws attention to the impact of cultural and societal issues on personal values. In the literature there are further examples examining age and generational value change. For example, three studies by Garvanova and Papazova (2019) were undertaken in Bulgaria in 1995, 2005 and 2015. Students (from age 19-29 and noted as emerging adults - see Arnett (2000)) were surveyed three times 10 years apart using the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS). Garvanova and Papazova (2019) acknowledge that the study ran alongside the democratisation of Bulgaria, and comment that younger generations are not carrying the scars of the political and economic situation after 1989. Instead, they are enlightened through the technological developments and access to information of contemporary society. The consequent value change showed increasing individualism

and collectivism, with 'new social values' relating to wellbeing for themselves and their close circles, for younger generations of students, in part due to them living in a time of uncertainty (Garvanova and Papazova, 2019, p. 650). These data illustrate that technology influenced personal values because of access to information online that previously would have been unavailable.

In a study based in China, Lan *et al.* (2009) compared the personal values of accounting students with accounting practitioners. Using the Schwartz Values Questionnaire (SVQ) with 454 practitioners and 126 graduate students, they found that there were differences between the two groups, with the younger graduate students valuing self-direction more than the older practitioners. In summary, there were more similar personal values than differing ones. The authors conclude that the political and cultural identity of China influenced the personal values reported, and interestingly comment on the impact of critical events such as bird flu and SARS, which, they note, raised the priority of the value of health for all participants.

According to Gouveia *et al.* (2015), who undertook research in Brazil to examine value change through a large survey of 36,845 participants aged from 12 to 65, a surprising outcome of their study was to find that the value of achievement decreased after age 18. This is an example of how a study highlighted a significant change in values across ages and generations, while acknowledging that age itself was a small factor in value change. Their conclusion was that values are viewed differently at different life stages. In contrast, Daniel *et al.* (2022) concluded that values were quite stable when they conducted a longitudinal study over 3.5 years, with three data collection points (one before the pandemic and two during it). This study was conducted in Australia, with 2321 Australian adults (age 18-75), using Schwartz's values best-worst survey (SVBWS), in which participants select from 21 sets of values, from their most to least important. It may be that worry over the pandemic impacted personal values, as results showed a change, specifically in self-enhancement/ self-transcendence values. This is evidence, argue the authors, that values change as a person adjusts to threats, in this case the pandemic. It is notable that this research was conducted in Australia, where they experienced lower levels of COVID-19 during this time compared to England.

Another example of research considering personal values and generations, is a Dutch longitudinal study which ran from 2008-2020, in which Leijen, van Herk and Bardi (2022) researched 1599 participants aged 16-84 to show value importance for four generations (Silent Generation, Baby boomers, Generation X and Millennials).

Millennials presented the greatest change in values, measured by the LISS (Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences) panel using seven waves of responses to the 36 survey questions about values, and showed more change over time than other generations. Interestingly, benevolence was the most important value overall for all generations in the study (less for men), with only Millennials giving it lower priority.

As has been examined in the quantitative studies above, participants can be invited because they are part of a specific generation and compared with others who share one variable (e.g., profession). But studies show that it is the life experiences they are exposed to, rather than age that influences personal values, with Gouveia *et al.* (2015, p. 1278) concluding that 'the economic and educational resources available at crucial times in the development of an individual seem to shape the value priorities of whole generations'. In fact, treating a generation, such as Gen Z, as homogenous, can be misleading - as gender, ethnicity and regional differences will impact upon personal values (Parry and Urwin, 2011). Whether this explains Daniel and Benish-Weisman's findings (2019) remains uncertain. Their longitudinal study of value importance studied 520 Jewish and Arab Israeli adolescents and found that values change during adolescence but start to stabilise. Daniel and Benish-Weisman (2019) also found that values are different for individuals and can differ across cultures, as a response to different challenges. This endorses the findings from Gouveia *et al.* (2015), adding nuance to the conclusions and illustrating that values can be different for different groups and different individuals within a generation.

In addition to the studies presented with age and generation as factors, many other studies, examples of which are explored here, have been undertaken in the field of personal values that use students as the participant group. These span a range of countries and employ a variety of quantitative tools to test relationships between variables. For example, Alleyne, Cadogan-McClean and Harper (2013) undertook a study of accounting students, looking at their personal values and ethical decision making. In contrast to the SVS, the researchers in this study used the 'relatively unused personal values scale (PVS) by Scott (1965)' (p. 49) as both Rokeach and Schwartz's instruments were deemed subjective. They surveyed 400 final year students (of which 231 questionnaires were analysed) studying social sciences in a Caribbean university, in lectures, using Likert scales of 17 items. Comparing students by gender and course, Alleyne, Cadogan-McClean and Harper (2013) found that

female participants valued honesty and religion more than males, and were more ethical, while men valued self-direction more. The authors concluded that qualitative analysis would be useful for future research.

Differences appear within the values studies reviewed, including those that combine tools, such as Öcal, Kyburiene and Yiğittir's (2012) research with 1020 pre-service trainee teachers from Lithuania and Turkey. The students were aged 16-29, with 43% aged 16-20. A combination of Rokeach and Schwartz's values scales were used to create a 78-item Likert scale questionnaire. The authors report that different values were held according to nationality and age, specifically endorsing that the importance of values to an individual increases with age.

Fischer (2006, p. 1421) explains the link between personal values and shared goals: 'Meaning in life is provided largely through social relationships, group identification, participation in the group's shared way of life, and striving toward shared goals of the group'. A decision to behave in line with one's own value priorities or the social group priorities is termed 'tribal' by Allport (1961), whereby the individual reflects the values of a particular group. Arguably, this connection between the group and the individual is reflected during significant life transitions, such as going to university, when the values of adolescents can shift as a response to change (Goodwin, Polek and Bardi, 2012; Bardi et al., 2014; Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi, 2015). This shift of values has been termed 'meaningful changes' by Goodwin, Polek and Bardi (2012) and illustrates the importance and impact of ones' values on oneself. In the next section, Schwartz's work is explored.

2.4 Schwartz's work

2.4.1 Selecting the Schwartz literature

During the scoping literature review of theory, it became apparent that Schwartz was a prolific writer and publisher of research papers in the field of personal values. He emerged as the most significant and relevant author in the field, with many others using his theory and model in their own studies on values. He has written widely about his theory and the instruments he created to measure values, with studies dominating the field since the late 1980s (e.g. Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990; Schwartz, 1994, 2012a). It was evident, therefore, that the work of Schwartz was dominant in the literature. To this end Ponizovskiy *et al.*, (2020, p. 885) state: 'The

surge of empirical research on values in the past two decades is easily attributable to the theory of basic human values by Shalom H. Schwartz (1992)'.

Therefore, in order to adequately report Schwartz's findings, a more systematised approach to reviewing Schwartz's body of work was undertaken and is represented in a variety of search tables (see Appendix A). A range of online databases were used to search for literature by Schwartz that would advise and advance the work of this study. Databases were chosen for their relationship with the subject of higher education or values. A citation search was then undertaken using Scopus to provide an initial screening for papers authored or co-authored by Schwartz. It was ascertained that Schwartz had written or co-written over 160 papers over the last five decades. A second stage of searching was undertaken using the databases Web of Science and PsycINFO to broaden the search to ensure that published work was not overlooked.

The format and terms of the searches conducted can be seen in Appendix A where five tables are presented. Search terms and Boolean operators are provided for the search process. After initial filtering, the search criteria used was, in brief:

Table i- initial search using two databases - Web of Science and APA PsycINFO (returning 161 articles authored by Shalom Schwartz)

Table ii- search for theory in the title or abstract via Web of Science. This was chosen to identify key texts explaining Schwartz's theoretical model of values and its development (30 relevant for full abstract assessment)

Table iii- search for personal values and cohort age via Web of Science (five relevant for full abstract assessment)

Table iv- search for theory in the title or abstract via APA PsycINFO. This was chosen to identify key texts explaining Schwartz's theoretical model of values and its development (22 after duplications)

Table v- search for personal values and cohort age via APA PsycINFO (10 relevant for full abstract assessment after duplications)

Studies identified for inclusion, of which there were read in full, synthesised and used as appropriate for this review.

2.4.2 Studies that use Schwartz's model of values

Relationships between personal values and research have been typically discussed within the framework of Schwartz's model of universal values (Rohan, 2000; Hitlin, 2003; Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Schermer *et al.*, 2011; Simmons, Shafer and Snell, 2013). Further, Schwartz's theory is endorsed as the most-well developed, influential and prevalent in the field (Goodwin, Polek and Bardi, 2012; Simmons, Shafer and Snell, 2013; Bardi *et al.*, 2014; Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi, 2015; Sverdlik and Oreg, 2015; Borg, 2019; Daniel and Benish-Weisman, 2019) with researchers using versions of Schwartz's instruments in their studies (Hitlin, 2003; Schermer *et al.*, 2011; Borg, Hertel and Hermann, 2017). Additionally, according to scholars Arthaud-Day, Rode and Turnley (2012) and Borg, Hertel and Hermann (2017), Schwartz's theory is universal and validated and is a meaningful, theoretical way to explore the relationship between age and values.

There are, however, critiques of Schwartz's theory. Hitlin and Piliavin (2004), for instance, critique Schwartz as mainly conducting studies in developed countries. Such geographically limiting choices question the universality of the theory. Extending the critique to the methodological approach for data gathering, Daniel and Benish-Weisman (2019) consider the measurement tool itself flawed, and critique it as having limitations of self-reporting, not allowing for deeper or richer responses.

In the following sections, Schwartz's model of human values will be introduced to establish the precedence of his work in the field, presenting an overview of the theory and data collection tools used, with specific evaluation of studies related to the age of participants and studies using students.

2.4.3 Introduction to the work of Schwartz

The aim of this section is to provide, through selective reference and synthesis of the literature published since 1987, an evaluation and critique of Schwartz's interest in values, his philosophy, theory, evidence and practice. Schwartz posits that values 'are formed through a combination of genetic heritage and the impact of exposure to multiple social environments, such as the family, education system, community and society at large' (Sagiv *et al.*, 2017, p. 633). This definition takes into account the experiences that influence values and will form part of this review.

Schwartz (2011, p. 309) states that the reason he first became interested in values was to address the question 'do values make a difference? That is, do values affect what people do, what they believe, what and whom they like?' This review seeks to consider this question using the literature on personal values. The prominence of Schwartz's work is evidenced in the use of the Schwartz values theory within the ESS (Davidov, Schmidt and Schwartz, 2008). This is a survey conducted, since 2001, across 30 European countries every two years. It measures attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour patterns (European Social Survey, 2023). This highlights the importance of Schwartz's values theory in the field and in Europe and acknowledges the rationale for the focus on his work and his definition of personal values within this section of this values literature review.

2.4.4 Overview of Schwartz's values theory

Schwartz's theory of universals in basic human values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987, 1990; Schwartz, 1992) is the most prominent values theory in the literature (Sagiv and Schwartz, 2022). Schwartz's value theory was established by considering domains of values, or groups of terms associated with values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). In this theory, Schwartz considers values as part of a model in which opposing values or groups of values are represented (significant examples include Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990; Schwartz, 1994; Davidov, Schmidt and Schwartz, 2008). The use of a circular structure for the model (see Figure 2 below) illustrates where each value is placed opposite its competing value, contrasting the two sides of someone's individual expression of values. Consequently, values are understood as compatible or conflicting (e.g. Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz, 2012b). This approach is explained in depth in Schwartz's studies (e.g., Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz, 1994; Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss, 1999; and Schwartz and Boehnke, 2004) allowing for greater understanding of the positioning of values in the circle.

The values in the figure have been confirmed as the most important through a range of research in many countries (e.g., Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987, 1990; Schwartz, 1990, 1994; and Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). These 10 values are separated into four sections with hedonism fitting into two parts of the circle. Each wedge is intentionally placed to be opposite another, based on empirical data creating a matrix, with conformity and tradition placed in the same wedge but still distinct from each other (Schwartz, 1992). Values have motivational goals assigned to them, for example self-

direction refers to independent thought and action (Schwartz, 2006). The 10 values that are represented are: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism. Across countries, benevolence is the most important value, and power the least important (Bardi, 2022).

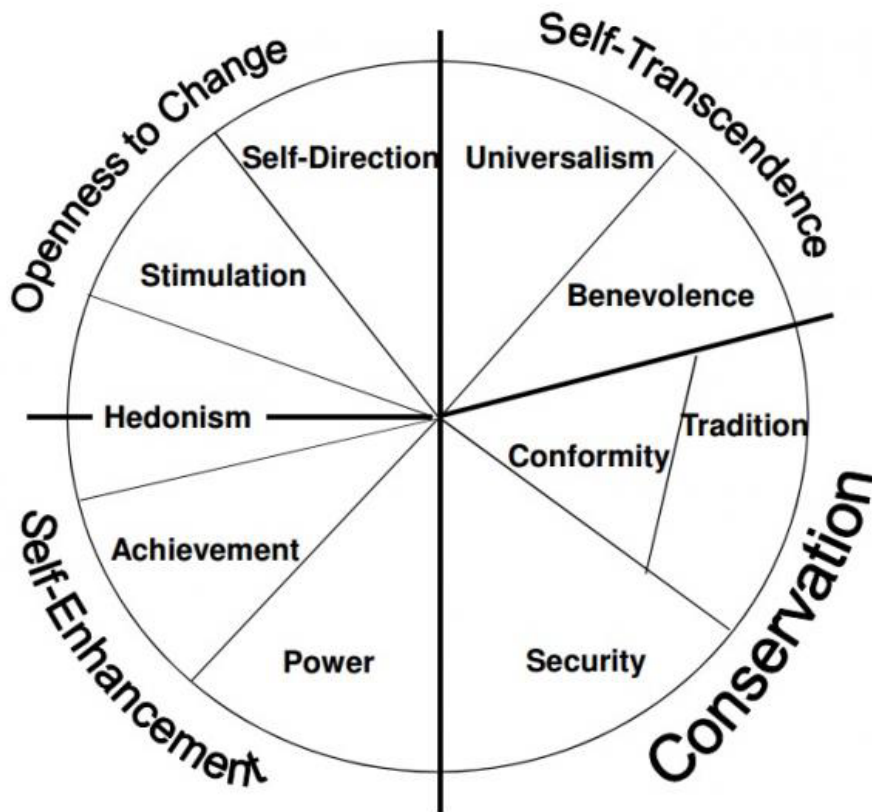


Figure 2: Schwartz's theoretical model of relations among 10 motivational types of value (Schwartz, 1994, p. 24)

Each of the four sections has a sub-set of values that are researched through the use of a survey, with the early testing of the theory undertaken using an adaptation of Rokeach's 1973 values survey (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987, 1990). In the early 1990s, however, Schwartz (1992, 1994); and Schwartz and Sagiv (1995) presented a further development: the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS). Developing this approach in a 1990 study of Helsinki university students' values (Schwartz, 1990) (n=182), Schwartz refined his theory, and based on this, presented the new values self-reporting instrument. Developments to the theory included the exclusion of spirituality as a

universal value, and some changing of the names of other values in response to empirical findings. These developments sought to clarify the theory and make each value more explicit.

2.4.5 Schwartz's definition of values

Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p. 551) first conceptualised values as originating from the three universal requirements: 'cognitive representations of three types of universal human requirements: biologically based needs of the organism, social interactional requirements for interpersonal coordination, and social institutional demands for group welfare and survival'. This model is consistently restated as the grounding of Schwartz's definition of values (e.g., Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990; Schwartz, Struch and Bilsky, 1990; Schwartz, 1994; Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss, 1999; Davidov, Schmidt and Schwartz, 2008; Fischer and Schwartz, 2011; Schwartz, 2012).

Developing this trio of universal human requirements, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p. 551) stated that values are: '(a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviours, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance'. These features are revisited in many sources, including Schwartz and Bilsky (1990); Schwartz (1994); Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss (1999) and Schwartz (2012b). These three critical components of values, and five main features of values, underpin the theoretical framework and subsequent testing of the theory established by Schwartz. This approach of repeating the definition of values is a recurrent theme in Schwartz's self-authored literature. Further examples are given below.

The importance of values as a construct is reiterated and defended from his first study, with Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p. 550) claiming '[virtually] all people refer at one time or another to their own values or to values that characterise other people or groups'. This claim is revisited in subsequent studies (Schwartz, 2006; Schwartz, 2007; Fischer and Schwartz, 2011). In these sources, values are defined as ubiquitous and ever-present in humans, albeit not at the forefront of awareness and conversation at all times (Schwartz, 2006; Schwartz, 2007; Fischer and Schwartz, 2011). In addition, a central tenant of the theory is that values have personal motivational goals assigned to them (Schwartz, 1992). Further elaboration of the definition of values evolves as Schwartz's theory develops, outlined below, via an explanation of the two main

instruments used – the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS) and the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ).

2.4.6 The Schwartz Values Survey (SVS)

In defence of his theory and its prominence in the field, Schwartz *et al.* (2001, p. 519) wrote: 'Only in the past decade, ... is a systematic theory of the content and organisation of the value systems of individuals being proposed and empirically validated'. The empirically validated SVS asked respondents to rate 56 single values and state if they were supremely important or not important on a 9-point scale (Schwartz and Sagie, 2000; Roccas *et al.*, 2002; Schwartz and Boehnke, 2004; Borg *et al.*, 2011). As a result, while respondents using the SVS report similar values, they report different levels of importance assigned to the values.

As the instrument was used and developed, Schwartz surveyed Western and non-Western groups resulting in the understanding that values are not universal across cultures, but that there are common values that pertain to and are held by different groups (Schwartz, 2001). Research results (Schwartz and Sagie, 2000; Fischer and Schwartz, 2011) show that the importance of specific values varies between individuals in a democratic society, whereas in societies where there is more control over the media and politics, value consensus (the sharing of values by members of society) is more likely to be evident.

It should be noted that the revised SVS instrument was tested during the first 11 years of his work and this extensive research carried out gives confidence in the theory (Schwartz, 1990; Schwartz, 1992; Bardi and Schwartz, 1994; Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss, 1999 and Schwartz *et al.*, 2001). During these years, a feature of most sample populations for Schwartz's studies is that they were teachers or students, with undergraduate students a popular sample group (see Schwartz and Bardi, 2001) because of their accessibility (see Schwartz, 1992 and Schwartz *et al.*, 2001) and because they returned higher survey response rates (see Schwartz *et al.*, 2001).

Across a range of studies, students reported values relating to benevolence, self-direction and universalism as most important (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz and Bardi, 2001; Fischer and Schwartz, 2011). As Schwartz and Bardi (2001, p. 276) observe: 'the advanced academic studies that students are currently pursuing encourage openness to and tolerance of new and different ideas'. As these values are about

oneself and one's own ideas, the freedom and independence of being a student in HE arguably resonates. Based on this notion of HE as a space for growth and choice, Schwartz *et al.* (2012, p. 679) recognised that 'valuing cultivation of one's own ideas and abilities is more likely to motivate pursuit of higher education to be enhanced by it valuing freedom to determine one's own actions'. This is particularly notable, as substantial agreement among students about the importance of the 10 value types was prevalent across all nations (except in the continent of Africa where research has not been widely undertaken). Based on this geographical difference, Schwartz and Bilsky (1990) suggest that other groups from different countries might return variation in values importance. This is reinforced in further studies, with the 10 overarching values tested across many nations, for example Venezuela, Greece and China, Singapore and the United States, South Africa, Italy and Uganda (Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Schwartz and Bardi, 2001; Sagiv and Schwartz, 2022). It was discovered, however, in these studies, that samples tested in less-developed countries such as part of sub-Saharan Africa do not conform to the 10 values model, explained as due to certain living conditions (for example large families with different needs and requirements due to poverty and lack of privacy) (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001).

In 2001 Schwartz *et al.* stated that although people differ in how they report the importance of particular values, values are commonly structured (amongst Western populations). Based on this premise, in the same year Schwartz and Bardi (2001) researched values priorities of different groups within a society, considering similarities rather than differences. The wide-ranging samples across 13 nations intentionally attempted to reflect participants from different heritage backgrounds. Following this, the SVS was employed to explore the values of different groups. For example, Schwartz and Rubel-Lifschitz (2006) wanted to research a difference between the values held by male and female participants. The findings showed that the values of power, stimulation, hedonism, achievement and self-direction are more important to men, with universalism and benevolence less important to men. It must be noted that the 127-person sample from 70 countries was undertaken in the early 2000s study. The findings could arguably be related to increased equality for women and a lack of subordination that may have been predicted if the survey had been used earlier in history. In addition, in a study of 3493 South Africans, 2000 of whom were black, the data from the SVS did not confirm Schwartz's thesis of universal values (Schwartz *et al.*, 2001).

2.4.7 The Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ)

In 1994 Schwartz and his colleagues wanted to examine the values of different groups including children and non-Western nations and believed the SVS would not be effective due to the limitations identified above, so an alternative instrument was created: the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). The reason for the creation of the PVQ is explored below.

The PVQ uses 29 verbal portraits which describe what is important to a person (Knafo and Schwartz, 2008). The same 10 values from the Schwartz's theoretical model of relations among 10 motivational types of value (1992) are included, but in a less abstract and more concrete way, with the intention to enable populations that are not Western educated to respond. For each portrait (built from the SVS but using more concrete phrases), the respondent answers from a choice of six replies how like the portrait they are (Schwartz *et al.*, 2001). The PVQ was deemed easy to complete, less intangible and not challenging like the SVS (Schwartz *et al.*, 2001). In contrast to the SVS, values were measured indirectly. No attempt is made to discuss the contrasting approach (from direct and intellectually difficult questions to indirect and relatable questions) to researching values in Schwartz's 2001 paper. Arguably, the paper by Schwartz *et al.*, (2001) would have been more convincing if the authors had acknowledged the potential lack of parity with the two instruments, or critiqued the original SVS and recognised that the PVQ was more useful as it asked about values indirectly through pictures. Nevertheless, the PVQ was deemed appropriate to be used in the European data collection survey: the European Social Survey (ESS).

Following two decades of research to confirm the validation of the Schwartz value theory, Saris, Knoppen and Schwartz (2013, p. 29) state: 'The comprehensiveness and widespread validation of the Schwartz theory of human values led to its inclusion in the European Social Survey (ESS)'. Based on a reduced PVQ (explored above) a 21-item human values scale was created (Schwartz, 2001; European Social Survey, 2023). Consequently, a shortened version of the PVQ was used in a section of the ESS, established in 2001 and now incorporated into the main body of the questionnaire (see European Social Survey, 2023). Data are collected every two-years, with the purpose of the ESS explained here:

Academically driven but designed to feed into key European policy debates, the ESS aims to measure and explain how people's social values, cultural norms

and behaviour patterns are distributed, the way in which they differ within and between nations, and the direction and speed at which they are changing'. (European Social Survey, 2023)

2.4.8 The refined theory of 19 values

In 2012, Schwartz *et al.* (2012) proposed a refined theory of individual values. Following the 1987 10-value theory, hundreds of studies (some examples of which have been explored above) have been undertaken using the SVS and PVQ (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). The refined 19-value theory used the format of the PVQ but was limited to one sentence for each portrait shown. The authors state that this was an important reason for the refined theory because the boundaries between values were blurred in the original model of 10 values (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). The refined theory separates out some of the original 10 values, for example including humility within tradition and dependability within benevolence (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). It could be argued that this development of the theory was an opportunity to use more contemporary terms.

When concluding the explanation of the refined theory, a rationale for finding a new instrument was provided by Schwartz *et al.* (2012), who stated that they believed extending the number of values would enable greater distinction between values and allow for a more accurate depiction of a person's values to be recorded (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). He asserted: 'The narrower definitions of each value make it possible to select more homogeneous value items for each. This, in turn, should increase internal reliability and discriminability' (Schwartz, 2012, p. 5). Similarly to the previous 10 values theory, this refined 19 values theory was presented as a circular motivational continuum. The diagram below presents this (Figure 3). The top half of the outermost circle expresses growth and self-expansion, while the values shown in the innermost circle in the lower half are about protecting oneself against anxiety and threat. On the right of the innermost circle the values relate to personal focus, while on the left is social focus (see Figure 3, Schwartz *et al.*, 2012).

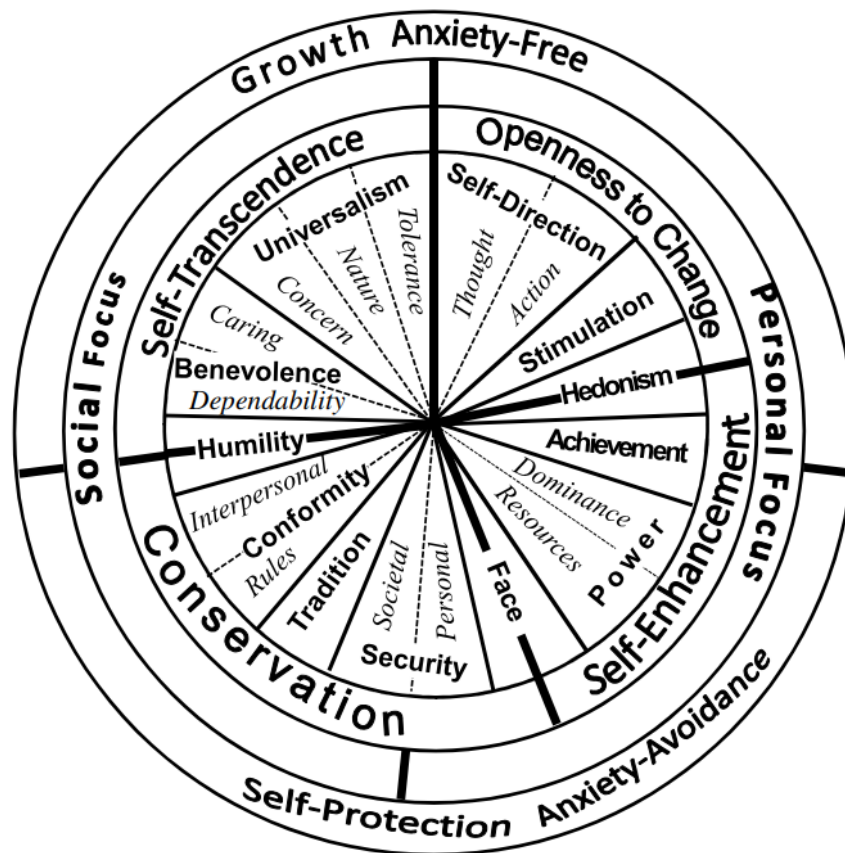


Figure 3: Schwartz's refined theory of 19 values (Schwartz et al., 2012)

More recent literature has tested the revised theory (Schwartz and Butenko, 2014; Schwartz and Cieciuch, 2022) with the 2022 paper by Schwartz and Cieciuch (2022, p. 4) revealing that, 'The PVQ method measures values indirectly, without mentioning the word values. This indirect method fits the assumption that people may not have articulated values'. This understanding is an important movement from previous studies by Schwartz reported in this review using the SVS which survey participants and ask for the direct reporting of their values.

2.5 Student studies

During childhood and adolescence, values develop and data show that by age 15 adolescents can understand the 10 values (Döring, Daniel and Knafo-Noam, 2016; Uzefovsky, Döring and Knafo-Noam, 2016). For example, using data from the first

three rounds of the ESS (2002-3, 2004-5, 2006-7), Schwartz (2012) analysed the response from 11,902 adolescents, determining that by age 15 adolescents can understand the 10 values, and replicate adult responses to questions about them.

Schwartz and his teams continued to explore the values of adolescents and children with the PVQ (see Tamir *et al.*, 2016) as it was more appropriate for a younger audience because it was less abstract. In 2010, a new instrument specifically for children was introduced called the PBVS-C (pictured based values survey - children) which enabled researchers to show that values typical of adults were also presented by children and these values adhered to Schwartz's 10-value model (Döring *et al.*, 2015). One reason suggested for this is that before the university years, the family are critical and parenting style is important when values are being formed (Knafo and Schwartz, 2003, 2012; Williams and Ciarrochi, 2020). For those who, once at university, still live with their parents, the transmission of values is easier (Knafo and Schwartz, 2012). However, only small changes in personal values are reported in the pre-university years (Schwartz, 2012b). That these small changes in personal values occur in childhood and adolescence relating to parental influence, but not so much in adulthood, has been evaluated in many studies (e.g. Döring *et al.*, 2015; Ciecuch, Davidov and Algesheimer, 2016; Döring, Daniel and Knafo-Noam, 2016; Uzefovsky, Döring and Knafo-Noam, 2016; Strhan and Shillitoe, 2019; Daniel *et al.*, 2020).

The use of students as the participant group permeates Schwartz's studies. He shows his recognition of the connection between student experience and students' ability to acknowledge their values while engaged in higher education (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). When comparing studies with students as participants, it is evident that value consensus or hierarchy is not fixed and depends on the background of the person, experiences, or life-changing events, as well as the people that are important to them during their emerging adulthood, a term introduced by Arnett (2000). Arnett (2000) recognises the phase of life from the end of adolescence through the next decade of life to be a time of movement into responsibility and independence.

An example of research in this field comes from Matthews *et al.* (2007) who used the PVQ to measure the values of 175 undergraduate students at Bremen University, Germany, and found that student variables can influence change in values. Meanwhile Bardi *et al.* (2014) undertook a longitudinal study to investigate whether a person makes a decision based on their values (for example a change of career or going to university) or changes their values following a life-transition. In their 2014 paper, Bardi

et al. administered the SVS at the beginning of each university year with 131 psychology students and 319 business students in an English university (recognising that students in Britain choose their university degree before they enter HE and therefore do not have any experience to draw upon). Considering this, Bardi *et al.* (2014, p. 39) 'found value-fit to the new life setting even before the transition started'. This was also found by Arieli, Sagiv and Cohen-Shalem, (2016) who researched 100 business and social work students in an Israeli university, using the PVQ, to see if their values were different based on the discipline they had chosen. For Fatoki (2014), the SVS and PVQ were used with 122 final year undergraduates studying business management in a South African university. The results confirmed that values influence behaviour, but also show that the context can influence values, for example in this circumstance conformity is a strong value. The authors believe this may be due to the political environment. In another paper reviewing research on personal values, the authors (Sagiv *et al.*, 2017) summarise that values are influenced by both ones' genetics and experiences of different environments, including the education system (i.e. the persons experience of schooling).

While young adulthood could be a time for value change, particularly for those who move from one sector of the education system to another for example through the transition from high school to university, there will be differences in individual value stability. This was reported by Tamir *et al.* (2016), who assert that changing values are needed during normal, age-related experiences such as going to university, acknowledging that, 'This is a particularly dynamic and challenging stage of life, when people encounter major life transitions and significant new social roles' (Tamir *et al.*, 2016, p. 111). In a 2016 longitudinal study, Vecchione *et al.* (2016, p. 120) specifically evaluated conservation values (security, tradition, and conformity) and self-transcendence values (universalism, benevolence) to respond to the 'challenges requiring adaptation' of moving into adulthood. With 270 respondents surveyed at age 20, then at age 24, and then at age 28, they concluded that these values became more important over time while achievement became less important.

Foad, Maio and Hanel (2020) claim that there has been limited literature reporting changing values, or the development of values over a time period, but there is a small amount in psychology (e.g. Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Bardi *et al.*, 2009; Pöge, 2019). Additionally, Quoidbach, Gilbert and Wilson (2013) researched the field of value change, recruiting 2717 adults aged 18 to 68 years (82% women) through a website

and asking them to rate, based on importance, the 10 Schwartz values and report how important each was to them now and in ten years' time. The results showed that the participants predicted less change of values in their future, but older participants then reported more value change than is predicted. Arguably, our values change more than people think they will, but at the point of being asked people think values are established and unlikely to change. In investigating perceptions of value change, Foad, Maio and Hanel (2020) undertook four studies in which participants were asked about why their values mattered at different times. This paper is important in relation to my study because the participants were undergraduate students (n=124) with a mean age of 21, from a British university, while most studies in this literature review use non-British samples. Participants were asked to ascribe importance to the set of 10 values using the SVS, using Schwartz's 1992 theory. They were asked to report from -1 to 7 (with -1 being *opposed to my values* and 7 meaning *of supreme importance*). But resulting from Foad, Maio and Hanel's (2020) British-based study, student participants reported that, over time, most values (with the exception of conservation values) became more important, and that 'the four studies provided consistent evidence that people perceive their values as changing' (p. 701).

That value consensus or hierarchy, within societies, are not fixed may depend on the level of democracy and socio-economic development (Schwartz and Sagie, 2000). Besides, considering the University as a place of socio-economic development, certain values are given more importance than others in the environment, illustrated by Schwartz and Sagie (2000, p. 472) who exemplify such values (of the University) as 'values that emphasise independent thought, innovation and change, and a belief in equality'. Furthermore, Schwartz and Sagie's (2000) research with 7856 teachers from 42 countries used Schwartz's ten-value anonymous questionnaires to discover that socio-economic development relates to increases in value consensus (the agreement of value priorities), while the opposite happens for democratised societies. The research also suggests that having similar values creates a sense of belonging and identity. One of the key points here is that whatever is occurring in society, and the impact of this in one's environment (for example, university) is critically impactful upon one's values. This seems to be the case regardless of background, with the authors finding that values of those from different backgrounds start to align when in the same environment (Schwartz and Sagie, 2000).

Schwartz's research reports a change in individual values over time as an indication of societal change, for example as a response to government policies or structural developments (Davidov, Schmidt and Schwartz, 2008). The change in individual values is developed by Vecchione *et al.* (2015) who find that personal values may provide the reasons to become politically engaged. While much of the research in this area is USA based, Marcus, Ceylan and Ergin (2017) undertook a study in Turkey that showed a similar shift in values, finding that economic, political, historical and cultural events impact on behaviour and values. Their research considered changes in values as a feature of generations, with shared experiences developing generational identity, within a shared contextual place (Marcus, Ceylan and Ergin, 2017). In the next section, the concept of value change is explored further.

2.6 Value change or the development of personal values

Researchers have suggested that values change primarily as a result of life changes (Rokeach, 1973; Bardi *et al.*, 2009; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011; Lee *et al.*, 2021). In their useful study of students changing values from the beginning to the end of their university course, Myyry, Juujärvi and Pessa (2013) measured 132 students from Helsinki with Schwartz's values measure. The results showed that security and universalism values increased while achievement values decreased. The increase in the importance of security values was linked to critical incidents that had happened in Finland during this time (Myyry, Juujärvi and Pessa, 2013). In other fields such as sociology and education there are more studies (e.g. Bardi *et al.*, 2009) which will be explored below. While change and development of personal values is seen during childhood, an influential time in life for values to shift and change is during the transition to adulthood. This is the period between adolescence and full adulthood, with adolescents living in an adult world where priorities change, which in turn influences values (Rohan, 2000; Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004). Internal or external factors can influence value change, with different reasons such as the motivation to fit in with others, the desire to change one's life, different contexts, maturing or times of transition (Gouveia *et al.*, 2015; Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer, 2019; Foad, Maio and Hanel, 2020).

A range of researchers including Rohan (2000); Hitlin and Piliavin (2004); Bardi and Goodwin (2011); and Giacomino, Brown and Akers (2011) refer to an event provoking

value change. This can be because of social and political factors or environments changing. With developing adults, this event could be starting at university. In a study with British students in year one, two and three of their undergraduate psychology or business degree, results showed that an accumulation of life transitions (such as starting university, moving home or being an international student in a new setting) affected personal values (Bardi *et al.*, 2014). As a result of this study, however, Bardi *et al.* (2014) argue that values do not usually change easily but can be influenced by the career decisions at the end of a degree. In contrast, Lovell (2016) found that medical students' values change significantly during training. Evaluating the personal values of 24 medical students in semi-structured interviews, Lovell acknowledges that medical education has protocols that promote students working with empathy and compassion, with 'the presumption being that learning will be accompanied by a corresponding development in the humane values that are prerequisite for a medical career' (Lovell, 2016, p. 438). Lovell's (2016) study is worth highlighting because it is a qualitative study, asking participants to respond to questions related to the values of doctors. Similarly in a study with psychology students, Sheldon (2004), focused on values and their change over the college years. Measuring values of 109 graduating psychology seniors from a population of 239, at the University of Missouri, he assessed six values over 30 questionnaire items, and participants rated them from one to five based on their importance. The change towards more positive values such as more emotional and wellbeing values and away from more materialistic values was evidenced in the responses. This study would have been more relevant if Sheldon (2004) had not focused on personality as well as values, because this created some breadth in the results which dealt with other concepts.

While this may be the expectation from college (US) and university (UK), it builds upon Arnett's (2000) theory of emerging adulthood and Duffy's (2021) term of delayed adulthood. In summary, as young people mature and experience new contexts and life experiences, they re-evaluate their values which change gradually and remain quite stable, and the importance of different values changes too (Daniel and Benish-Weisman, 2018). This develops Erikson's (1959, 1994) work, in which he describes early to middle adulthood as a time of finding work, getting married and having children. As a critique of this outdated conceptualisation of young adulthood, Arnett's (2000) presentation of emerging adulthood for young people (Gouveia *et al.*, 2015; Garvanova and Papazova, 2019) is furthered by Duffy (2021) via the term 'delayed adulthood'. By this he means the years between the late teens and the late twenties.

This arguably leads to value change during delayed adulthood, as an area for further research.

For young adults, life events and the magnitude of them (Pöge, 2019) are meaningful and therefore change one's values (Pöge, 2019; Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer, 2019). This reinforces Bardi and Goodwin's (2011) findings that adaptation to life events impacts values more than age. For example, undertaking a year abroad and becoming an international student is synonymous with openness to change values of self-direction and stimulation (Bardi, 2022).

This fundamental argument is explored in a seven-wave (t1 - 2002 to t7 - 2008) study by Pöge (2019), conducted in Germany with 2957 males and females aged 13-19. The author used data from an annually collected set, collecting items related to three values dimensions. The three dimensions were tested for validity using a confirmatory factor analysis. The results showed a stable three values structure ('duty', 'hedonism and materialism' and 'public commitment') in which values were seen to stabilise after age 14. However, towards the end of the age span that Pöge (2019) worked with, destabilisation of values was occurring, particularly when an event occurred such as changing one's educational environment. That values stabilise in adolescence but destabilise as one enters emerging adulthood is the key finding from Pöge's (2019) work. Highlighting the need for further research, Pöge (2019, p. 275) summarises: 'It seems plausible that a general trend of value stabilization in youth and young adulthood and the subsequent stability over the rest of one's life span occur repeatedly and intermittently with periods of instability'. This explains that values are not stable throughout one's life but can change when life events occur.

The impact on values of life events was explored by Bardi *et al.* (2009, Study 2), through four longitudinal studies, one of which used the SVS with 129 students, of whom 110 were female, from an English university. Students were surveyed at the beginning of their first year, then their second year of university. Bardi *et al.* (2009, Study 2) found that benevolence decreased in importance, while power increased in importance. The authors undertook another relevant study of value change (Bardi *et al.*, 2009, Study 3) with 119 (of whom 98 were women) English university students with a different time gap. Participants responded to the SVS online at the beginning of year one of their degree and then three months later, showing a change in importance of universalism and power. Bardi *et al.* (2009, p. 925) summarised that while values are relatively stable by the end of adolescence, 'the particular values that change are

probably a function of the nature of the life event, the adaptation required in terms of values, and the individual's interpretation of the life-changing event'. These studies by Bardi *et al.* (2009) intended to see if values changed more due to life-changing events and they concluded affirmatively.

For example, if one constantly mixes with others with very different values, it may change one's worldview, and thus be reflected in a change in ones' values. Hitlin (2003, p. 121) explains that 'values develop in social contexts, (and) draw on culturally significant symbolic material.' A social context or new environment could be joining and being part of the University.

Many aspects have to come together for change in values to take place, because they are generally stable by the age of 18 (Bardi *et al.*, 2014). Gouveia, Vione, and Milfont (2015) also acknowledge such age-related changes when individuals move into a different environment, for example when starting at university. This is not differentiated by generations, although Parry and Urwin (2011) reported a mixed outcome from their meta-analysis of literature and empirical studies of work values across generations, with challenges in the definitions of generations versus cohorts. Indeed, Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer (2019), in a systematic literature review on value change, found that it is individual to each person.

The studies above examine the idea of change of personal values. Most of these studies focus on adolescence as the key period for developing values. Established by the time a young person begins university, values may change (Gouveia, Vione and Milfont, 2015; Milfont, Milojev and Sibley, 2016; Pöge, 2019) but this is not found to be the case by Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer (2019) in their systematic literature review which summarise five studies that show no significant value change in college students, thus questioning the role of college per se as a vehicle of changing values. My examination of the literature in the field of personal values has shown that there is a lack of clarity around value change during the years of emerging or delayed adulthood.

2.7 Recent studies of COVID-19 and values

Turning now to recent studies conducted during the COVID-19 outbreak, five address values and the pandemic. Firstly, Bojanowska *et al.* (2021) and Daniel *et al.* (2022) write about value change during COVID-19. Secondly, Azimi, Andonova and Schewe (2021) and Harari, Sela and Bareket-Bojmel (2022) compare the values of two

generations during the pandemic, and thirdly Bonetto *et al.* (2021) write about values during the pandemic.

In Poland, Bojanowska *et al.* (2021) examined value change of 215 adults aged 22-79, as part of a longitudinal study started before the pandemic. Using Schwartz's PVQ, Bojanowska *et al.* (2021) found considerable change in some values reported, in a comparison between nine months before the pandemic and two weeks and four weeks into the lockdown. Key findings from the study show that hedonistic values decreased while personal values such as conformity, self-direction, security and universalism increased. Once again, the theory of value change due to life-changing events was illustrated with this early-pandemic data.

The other study of value change reviewed here was carried out by Daniel *et al.* (2022). The priorities of 2321 Australians (mean age of 56) were quantitatively surveyed three years before the pandemic, then when it started, and then during the first year (n=1442). Change that occurred related to environmental conditions and worry (because of being in a pandemic) which impacted personal values. This supported the theory of value stability (from the data before the pandemic), alongside the understanding of value change due to life-changing events (in the subsequent data collected).

While both of these studies of value change during COVID-19 (Bojanowska *et al.*, 2021; Daniel *et al.*, 2022) reinforce the impact of critical incidents on personal values, the data were collected through quantitative surveys and therefore do not provide rich or thick data from individuals. Regarding timing, in both studies, data were collected from before the pandemic began and then in the very early part of the first lockdowns, not allowing for reflection on values over the whole pandemic, and arguably not giving enough time to evaluate value change as a result of the pandemic.

Reporting on differences in values for generations specifically, Azimi, Andonova and Schewe (2021) compared the values of American groups of Gen Z and Y at the start of COVID-19. They used Schwartz's theory, adapting the PVQ as a survey, asking open questions and using context analysis of articles. The authors refer to the 'oldest group of Generation Z (as).. especially interesting since it has recently entered early adulthood, a period when values are still being shaped and will be imprinted forever' (Azimi, Andonova and Schewe, 2021, p. 9). The purpose of Azimi, Andonova and Schewe's (2021) work was to find out the differences between the two generations researched. Their research found that universalism and benevolence were important

values for both generations, with achievement, hedonism and stimulation more important to Gen Z. As a result of COVID-19, health and financial security were a priority for Gen Z and Generation Y.

In another study of generational values during COVID-19, Harari, Sela and Bareket-Bojmel (2022) compared the different values, resilience and attitudes of Gen Z and Gen X using the Short Schwartz Value Survey. They studied 508 Gen Z participants and 205 from Generation X. Gen Z values included openness to change, and self-enhancement, with self-transcendence values of universalism and benevolence the most important. The Gen Z participants in the study also reported that conservation was a less important value (Harari, Sela and Bareket-Bojmel, 2022). Their values remained mostly the same in spite of the pandemic. Considering the theory that values change in times of critical incidents (Sortheix *et al.*, 2019), the authors were surprised to find that the Gen Z participants were still valuing self-enhancement (Harari, Sela and Bareket-Bojmel, 2022).

Maintaining a quantitative methodology, Bonetto *et al.* (2021) used an online questionnaire to examine values during the first lockdown of COVID-19 in France, surveying 1025 participants whose mean age was 35 to 47, and of whom 32% were students. The authors used Schwartz's short PVQ (PVQ-21). They found that COVID-19 impacted values, showing that conservation values increased while self-enhancement and openness-to-change values decreased. Their results endorsed previous studies reported above, that show values change after critical incidents, summarising: 'These results support the idea according to which Schwartz values can change in response to external circumstances and important context changes' (Bonetto *et al.*, 2021, p. 10).

The results from the COVID studies above cannot be generalised across different age groups, generations, or countries. Data presented are from Poland, Australia, America, France and Israel. However, in the studies reviewed here, the approach to gather data has been quantitative only, providing a broad view of values using Schwartz's model and instruments, which have been tested widely for universal application. In contrast, the data presented in Chapter Five presents a more nuanced and rich understanding of personal values of Gen Z students in an English University.

2.8 Conclusion to the review of literature

In this chapter, the academic research literature reviewed has addressed the concept of personal values and the theoretical models (10 and 19) of Schwartz's values. After an overview of the organisation and approach to the review, it began broadly, considering definitions of personal values from the viewpoint of seminal authors such as Kluckhohn (1951), Rokeach (1973) and Feather (1975). Thereafter more recent definitions of the concept of personal values were provided including Rohan (2000), Inglehart (2008) and Bardi *et al.* (2014).

Then the review moved to an examination of what values are not, followed by the conceptual understanding of personal values through adolescence and different ages and generations, illustrated with literature by Parry and Urwin (2011), for example, who reported that each generation shows a different set of values. Using the changing notion of adulthood from the 20th century to Arnett's (2000) emerging adulthood and Duffy's (2021) delayed adulthood, coupled with a plethora of studies in the 2000s on personal values, the review continued exploring value change after adolescence. This period of the lifespan (directly post-adolescence) was seen to represent a stabilising of values. That is, unless a critical incident or transition occurs, for example, going to university or living through a global pandemic (e.g. Gouveia *et al.*, 2015; Garvanova and Papazova, 2019; Daniel *et al.*, 2022). From here the review developed the complex idea of value change (Bardi *et al.*, 2009; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), noting that adaption to life changes can incur value change, if only temporarily.

The second part of this review considered the work of Schwartz from his original theory of universals in basic human values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987) to the instruments used to test the theory (Schwartz *et al.*, 2001). During this period of extensive investigation of his theory, the ESS began to use Schwartz's 10-value model (Davidov, Schmidt and Schwartz, 2008) which is now incorporated into the main body of the survey. Schwartz used students as participants and made links to Higher Education in his findings (e.g., Schwartz and Bardi, 2001), noting that context or discipline can influence values, but also reporting that student's values start to align when they join university.

Schwartz presents the view that 'values are representations of the socially desirable goals people seek' (Schwartz, 2017, p. 17). His persistent approach to finding out whether his model is universal bore fruits with most groups and nations surveyed

electing the same or similar outcomes. Many studies were surveyed looking at changing values after adolescence (e.g. Döring *et al.*, 2015; Sagiv *et al.*, 2017) and the conclusion drawn that individual value change can and does occur during the transition to adulthood, but especially as a result of life-changing events.

2.9 Summary

Writing this literature review, it became clear that qualitative, narrative data were scant, as all the studies found and reviewed in this review used a quantitative methodology and survey data collection methods generating large data sets, except for Lovell's (2016) study of the values of medical students. The studies were across countries in different parts of Europe and the world. This gap in the research potentially presents student experience and value development as a positive, universal experience without understanding the individual nature and importance of each student's journey.

As a result of this methodological gap in the literature there is the potential for HE Institutes, parents, wider society, and the government to focus erroneously on factors that may not matter to Gen Z undergraduate students. Therefore, this study aims to address the gap in exploring changing personal values of Gen Z students through a narrative lens, using narrative inquiry. The justification for this methodology as appropriate to answer the research questions is presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. The case for narrative inquiry

In establishing the case for using narrative inquiry for this study, Hill, Gossman and Woolley (2023, p. 8) provide a rationale: 'the narrative interview is a distinctive space for listening to [the] experiences'. Hence, narrative inquiry was a particularly appropriate methodological position to address the research questions of this study, which are restated here:

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that have impacted their values before coming to university?

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

RQ3: What do the student stories reveal about their changing values?

RQ4: What is identified from the student stories that impacts on values change at university?

This chapter explores the philosophical stance and methodological decisions applied to this study. It begins with establishing the ontological and epistemological stance. This chapter then discusses the development of narrative research and offers definitions from the literature to justify the methodology. Within this discussion what this methodology has to offer the researcher is demonstrated. Different terms are used within the existing literature to explore narrative methodology but for this research the term narrative inquiry is used throughout. Each term is related and based on listening to, interpreting and reporting stories in the real world that are in-depth, and reveal thick description, a phrase popularised by Clifford Geertz in 1973. A full review of definitions of narrative inquiry (and associated alternative terminology) is provided later in the chapter.

The chapter then considers relational ethics and the role of reflexivity between the researcher and participant, which are of key significance in this study and its research design. Figure 4 below seeks to illustrate this and explain the research design for this study. It is based on the research 'onion', created by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019). In the original 2007 diagram, the centre of the onion was the data collection

and data analysis approach. This centre was surrounded by 'important outer layers of the onion that you need to understand and explain rather than just peel and throw away!' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019, p. 122). For this study, the layers have been adapted (see Figure 4). There is an alternative layer of the onion added, highlighting the importance of relational ethics and reflexivity in this project, included to illustrate their importance to the rigour, credibility, and trustworthiness of this study.

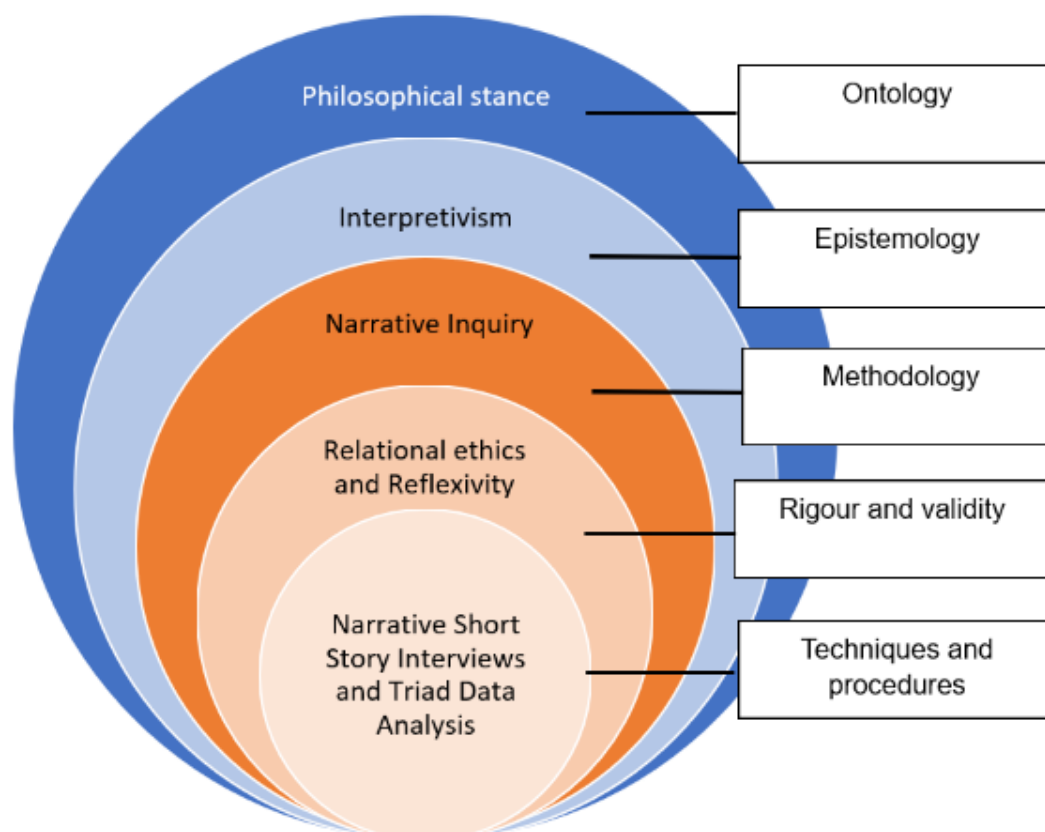


Figure 4: Adapted version of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill's 'research onion' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019)

3.1 Ontological and epistemological stance

Ontology is explained as the nature of reality (Cresswell and Poth, 2018; Gaudet and Robert, 2018). It is one's way of seeing the world, or one's worldview (Ma, 2016). The definition by Savin-Baden and Howell Major (2013, p. 57) summarises the term effectively here: 'ontology addresses ideas about the relationships between people, society and the world'. Examining the nature of knowledge is epistemology (Muis *et al.*, 2006). This is also referred to as assumptions about knowledge (Baxter Magolda *et al.*, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019) or the knowledge of the world (Cresswell

and Poth, 2018). Within this world of knowledge, one's axiology is how one acts and finds knowledge through an appropriate methodology (Aliyu *et al.*, 2015).

The philosophical underpinnings presented in the following section show my beliefs or worldview and drive towards construction of new knowledge. Throughout the process, the influence of values (axiology) is woven in, both my values as researcher and those of the participants whose stories I have been privileged to listen to. I agree with Aliyu *et al.* (2015, p. 2) who contend that: 'holding a particular worldview influences your personal behaviour, your professional practice, and ultimately the position you take with regard to the subject of your research'.

In exploring my own philosophical stance for this research, I have developed an understanding of myself as an interpretivist researcher. Figure 4, above, shows how the layers relate to each other. A critical aspect of interpretivism (epistemology) is taking an empathetic position and trying to understand the participant's context and perspective (Cresswell, 2013; Mertens, 2019; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Crotty (1998) and Gray (2013) express this as an understanding of one's own way of being. In doing so, there is acknowledgement of the subjectivity of the philosophy, whereby knowledge becomes known through the exploration of individual experiences, and knowledge is created through a constructivist ontology (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013; Gray, 2013; Kim, 2015; Chase, 2017; Gaudet and Robert, 2018). My intention was to explore the complexities of participants' lives, through an interpretive lens. This involved making sense and meaning about what others say about their life, and interpreting it (Gray, 2013). This is a paradigm shift from the vast number of positivist, quantitative studies presented to date by Schwartz and colleagues. In contrast to positivism, and the quantitative surveying of large numbers, I sought to explore in depth narratives within the naturalist or interpretivist paradigm. What is clear from the literature is that this 'provides a better degree of fit... in the areas of social/behavioural research' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 66).

In narrative inquiry, the methodology for this study, the ontology is relational (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin, Caine and Lessard, 2018). This is explained further by Caine, Clandinin and Lessard (2022, p. 187) who write: 'narrative inquiry is the study of experience, and experience is a matter of people in relation contextually and temporally'. Thus, the relationship between the researcher and the participant as storyteller is of utmost importance. Reflecting on my worldview, this commitment rests well with my own axiology, and the desired potential for change as a result,

summarised by Mertens (2019, p. 37) who states: 'The final written report... includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action'. This complexity and richness comes from the social construction of culture and language, whereby multiple meanings and interpretations are elicited (Gray, 2013; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). This construction and subsequent meaning-making occurs within narrative inquiry as the researcher wonders, waits, listens and wonders some more, while participants tell and recount the stories of their experiences (Bruner, 1990; Etherington, 2004).

In this study, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and disruption to the usual university patterns, some discontinuity occurred for students. This is an example of what has been called mis-educative experience (Dewey, 1997; Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022) and is worthy of being heard and interpreted. Recalling these experiences over time allowed student-participants to reflect on themselves and who they were becoming. In order to prompt curiosity about their experiences, narrative inquiry was the perfect methodology as it involves relational ethics of care (see the Relational Ethics section for an explanation of this term, later in this chapter), advocated by Noddings (1984, 2016), whose work was influenced by Dewey. Furthermore, Caine, Clandinin and Lessard (2022) clarify that:

Narrative inquiry works from a relational ontology; that is, experience itself is viewed narratively and necessitates considerations of relational knowing and being. And narrative inquiry proceeds from an ontological position, a curiosity about how people are living and the constituents of their experience. A narrative ontology implies that experiences are continuously interactive, resulting in changes in both people and the contexts in which they interact. (Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022, p. 193)

My research into Schwartz's extensive surveying of people's values across different cultures noted that the findings focused on aggregated results and not specific individuals. In the approach used, individual subjective responses are not sought. In narrative inquiry the individual stories are the essence of the knowledge construction, thus leaving a place where this study can contribute. Epistemologically, my pursuit of knowledge was to understand what my research participants considered their values on entry to university and exit, as they shared their experiences. John Dewey, American pragmatist philosopher, believed that experience is being part of something, involving continuity and interaction. In his 1938 essay on experience and education, he proffered: 'No experience lives and dies to itself. Wholly independent of desire or intent

every experience lives on in further experience' (Dewey, 1997, p. 27). Caine, Clandinin and Lessard (2022) develop this central thesis about experience, noting the significance of experience as knowledge for an individual related to their context, time and place, claiming 'experiential knowledge lives over time and place, is shaped by new conditions for knowledge and is expressed in new contexts' (Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022, p. 33). Dewey goes on to say that 'experience doesn't occur in a vacuum' (Dewey, 1997, p. 40), referring, in the case of this study, to the surroundings of an educational setting, both social and physical. Thus, the space of Higher Education, in this study, is integral to the experiences the participants have, both for themselves and across their relationships. There is still life outside the institution of the University (Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022) and Dewey's philosophy views education as life experiences (Dewey, 1997), noting that care must be given to the present experiences to ensure they are worthwhile.

This ontological position aligns with my worldview and approach to research, following Dewey (2005). The temporality of this study aligns with Dewey's understanding of lives over time and the philosophical roots that Caine, Clandinin and Lessard (2022) unpick where they further Dewey's idea:

In narrative inquiry, this sense of temporality that stretches backward and forward helps us understand that people, places, events, communities and artifacts all come from somewhere. They are always on their way. The experiences of each individual cannot be understood without what they are emerging out of, what they are still nested within. We cannot look at a moment in time as separate from all of the other moments that come before. (Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022, p. 95)

Consistent with my epistemic foundations, similarly to Carter and Little (2007), I was looking for rich and detailed data. This meant that I was interested in individuals and their experiences, in this instance at the beginning and end of their degree. My goal was to listen to their life experiences and interpret and recompose, together with them, the stories of their values, their lives lived (Caine, Estefan and Clandinin, 2013). For narrative inquirers, experience is central and engagement promotes the construction of knowledge (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Leggo, 2008; Kim, 2015; Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022). For the participants, narratives of their undergraduate journey are temporal, as are the university years. The moments they experience are connected and these connections are where narrative thinking takes place (Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022). Equally important to temporality is the role of place and how individuals are shaped by places they live in, for example in

this study, the movement to university from home or back to home from university (for example during national lockdowns). Consequently, to understand individual participant's experiences of the university years, individual accounts of their experiences are necessary, and thus justify the use of narrative inquiry as methodology (Clandinin, 2013; Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022).

To think narratively as a researcher means being curious and aware of who we and our participants are, even when uncertain (Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022). This meant that I had a sense of awe and wonder about the stories participants told to me, which was a privilege and aligned well with my ontological and epistemological stance. Arguably, in listening to experiences told through stories, we are learning to understand the world we live in.

3.2 Being a narrative researcher

Narrative researchers use the terms story and narrative in their writing, with 'narrative as the more formal, broader concept holding all discourses (written, spoken, evoked by image) and stories as smaller expressions contained with(in) narratives' (Bruce *et al.*, 2016, p. 3). The terms are interchangeably used within the methodology (e.g. Bruner, 1990; Reissman, 2008; Clandinin, 2020). Furthermore, Connelly and Clandinin (2006) provide clarity about the terms used:

People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which his or her experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomena studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006, p. 132)

Narrative researchers situate individual stories within each participant's personal experiences, such as their jobs, homes and places of education (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Webster and Mertova, 2007). The purpose of a narrative study is to explore experiences of a phenomena, the stories of ordinary people (here, students) willing to talk about the issue explored (here, values) (Clandinin, 2006; Cresswell and Poth, 2018). This illustrates the importance of the person's context, the milieu (Clandinin and Connelly, 1998) which creates a different narrative identity for a person, whether that is cultural or institutional. O' Grady, Clandinin and O' Toole (2018, p. 153) refer to this as 'construing the self as discursively structured'. A person advances their

story or narrative through the telling and retelling of it (Caine, Estefan and Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin, 2013).

Personal narratives are ubiquitous and stories are everywhere, whether big or small (Phoenix, 2013). Narrative research allows exploration of people's stories with the assumption that reality is in part constructed by how people understand their world (Holley and Harris, 2019). Consequently, the stories gathered from research participants are 'constructed, creatively authored, rhetorical, replete with assumptions, and interpretive' (Reissman, 1993, p. 5). The idea of self-constructed, self-interpreted stories is considered in the work of Czarniawska (2004) who emphasises that people put their own and others' lives into narratives so that they can understand them better. We live in a narrative world with narrative beings 'composed of multiple story lines' (Clandinin and Connelly, 1998, p. 152). It is these story lines of personal narratives around values that this study sought to explore.

Narrative researchers aim to sit alongside the participants, the storytellers, and listen, 'negotiating narrative unities with our participants' (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 173). In doing so, the storyteller (or narrator) interprets their memories and recounts them to the researcher, who collects stories about significant issues related to the individual's life, and then develops them into a connected chronology (Cresswell and Poth, 2018). Developing their position, Cresswell and Poth (2018), state that narrative researchers tell parts or aspects of the story in a literary way. This echoes Bruner (2004) who explains that the reflexive act of telling the story of moments in one's life requires selection, and interpretation. This has been explained by Morse (2018, p. 806) as 'perceived reality is experienced reality'. Being a narrative researcher meant that using narrative inquiry was the perfect fit to answer the research questions for this study. Its origins and definition will be explored in the next section.

3.2.1 Origins of narrative inquiry

Although narrative inquiry is a relatively modern approach to research, the overarching term narratology has been used since the late 1960s (Reissman, 1993; Clandinin, 2006). Narratology is about narratives, where stories are used as a 'beginning point to understand, analyse, evaluate, and theorise the human and social phenomena' (Kim, 2015). Squire *et al.* (2014) refer back to Russian linguistic approaches to stories, for instance, Propp's (1895- 1970) analysis of folktales. Propp's work led to the

ethnographic exploration narrative by Strauss (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013). In addition, the importance of recording the narrative account has been documented since the early 20th century, when anthropologists recorded accounts of their travels (Armstrong, 2012), illustrating the long-standing appeal of stories and narratives.

The use of narrative is a well-established approach in social science, illustrated through philosophical discussion by social scientists such as Bruner and Dewey (Bruner, 2004; Armstrong, 2012; Kim, 2015). Bruner (2004) wrote that the telling of stories began in the Middle Ages and is certainly not a new idea. Indeed, as Kim (2015, p. 6) explains, myths (Greek, Native American or Biblical for example) are the first narratives, stating that 'the most common and oldest form of narrative is known to be myth (*mythos* in Greek means "story")'. Furthermore, Bruner noted, the writing of autobiographies could be assigned to modern times, because the stories we tell of our lives are our autobiography and change with us (Bruner, 2004). The prevalence of narratives is a feature of the society we live in and have been, and will continue to be, told about. Chase (2018) notes that the narrative field is maturing, including visual narratives such as the stories behind artwork or artistic impressions. Chase (2018) has acknowledged that this movement may have contributed to the growth of narrative inquiry in recent years. In narrative inquiry there is an acknowledged and subjective studying of people (Bruce *et al.*, 2016), a central purpose of this study.

3.2.2 Defining narrative inquiry

The definition of narrative inquiry embodies a multitude of concepts which are considered both 'phenomena under study and method of study' (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 4; Leggo, 2008; Clandinin, 2013). This is exemplified by Clandinin and Huber (2002, p. 162), who note 'we have come to understand experience as narratively constructed and narratively lived'. This bifurcation was useful when undertaking this project because participants were considered 'as embodiments of live stories' (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 43), with narrative inquirers 'explor(ing) the stories people live and tell' (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007, p. 41). Essentially, narrative inquiry was employed to study people's experiences - their own history - and to value these experiences as important and worthy of knowing (Reissman, 1993; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007).

Narrative inquiry is a relational methodology, with researchers hearing about ordinary lived experience and privileging it as unique and worth listening to for itself (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007). Relationships permeate the whole practice of narrative inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Thus, the relationships between the researcher and researched were central to this study (Cresswell and Poth, 2018) and the 'stories lived and told educate(d) the self and others' (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. xxvi). This resonated strongly with me and is summarised by Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 189), who write '... relationship is at the heart of thinking narratively. Relationship is key to what it is that narrative inquirers do'.

The methodological path undertaken in this study of student values enabled appreciation of the small pieces and events in everyday lives and the larger meaning that derives from them (Daiute and Lightfoot, 2004). For this study I chose to explore the meaning of experience of values development in a life course stage (Cresswell and Poth, 2018). Life course stage links to the Clandinin and Connelly (2000) term chronicles. The authors explain chronicles as sequences of events and provide the example of the high school years (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

. In this study, the life course stages of the participants at university led to writing the individual narratives. In the first data collection for this study, the chronicle, or life course stage of the year directly prior to commencing a university course was explored, and then in the second phase of data collection the life course stage of the participants' Higher Education (HE) university years was explored. Leggo (2008, p. 15) illustrates the importance of stages of time by stating 'narrative inquiry is an ongoing process of understanding how we invest space and chronology with significance'.

The use of life course stages is further understood through Clandinin and Connelly's research framework, the metaphorical three-dimensional inquiry space (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). The framework explores people's experiences through their narratives: 'inward, outward, backward, forward and situated within place' (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 49). The three dimensions within the framework are: personal and social (interaction); past, present, and future (continuity); combined with the notion of place (p. 50). Understanding this framework informed how questions about values were asked during the data collection.

The form of representation of experiences told as stories, how the participant wanted to present (and re-present) their experiences, became the verbal narratives. The participant narrated their setting, characters and plot and interpreted it as they told their

stories (Bruner, 1990; Loseke, 2012). During this process, they were encouraged to expand and give more detail until the narrative was co-constructed through language and interaction. Interestingly, Reissman (1993, p. 11) describes this activity as a personal quest that the narrator is considering as they tell their story and, whether consciously or unconsciously, they are thinking: 'Like all social actors, I seek to persuade myself and others that I am a good person'.

3.2.3 Questions about narrative inquiry

When comparing narrative inquiry to other research methods, it is important to consider that the core intention of narrative inquiry is meaning making, and essentially the significance of new meaning within a chosen field (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). This can be viewed, however, as tentative representation of experience and not a place where epistemic clarity is sought (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007). The first question posed in this review of narrative inquiry is how the researcher can enhance the telling of those experiences in a truthful way (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007), as the storyteller shares events they have remembered and experienced in the past (Moen, 2006). However, as Moen (2006, p. 60) says, 'a dilemma can occur if the researcher and the research subjects interpret specific events in different ways' and this can lead to concern about possible misrepresentation. To mitigate this, Moen (2006) recommends the use of member checking to ensure both the researcher and participant voices are heard (see Reflexivity section in this chapter for a full discussion about member checking).

The second question posed is about the claim that narratives enable voices to be heard, with authors suggesting this is a challenge for narrative researchers as some voices can be privileged above others, and potentially hold opposite views to the researcher (Gottlieb and Lasser, 2001; Squire *et al.*, 2014). Whether voice is developed or understood better by the use of narrative inquiry is evaluated by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), who explore the ability for narrative inquirers to retain some impartiality by standing back from the research context. In particular, Gottlieb and Lasser (2001) are concerned about the bias of a researcher when selecting participants, in that they must be aware of hearing all voices. This recognises the importance of acknowledging the boundaries of a small participant group, as used in narrative inquiry.

Thirdly, an intriguing question arises about the construction of narratives as related to the cultural experience of TV and film and the narratives from these medium that people are familiar with. This shared understanding is noted by both interviewer and interviewee (Czarniawska, 2004) but should not, she argues, undermine the creation of restoried text that tells the story from the participants' perspectives. Similarly, Coulter and Smith (2009) critique narrative research by considering its fictional and literary elements. The authors here question the validity of reconstructions made by the writer, who they distinguish from the role of researcher. In making this distinction, Coulter and Smith (2009) somewhat overlook the centrality of the ontological commitment of experience, seeming to bypass this essential aspect of the methodology, as proffered by Clandinin and Murphy (2009) in their comment response.

The final question for narrative researchers is whether using the methodology changes anything, with Clandinin, Caine and Lessard (2018) questioning whether the research question addresses relevant social issues adequately. In this research study, the intention was to hear the experiences of undergraduate student stories and explore their changing values.

As a narrative researcher, the challenges above have been considered and addressed within the research design, when selecting narrative inquiry for this research.

3.3 Relational ethics

At the heart of narrative inquiry are relational ethics (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Josselson, 2007a; Clandinin, Caine and Lessard, 2018; Caine *et al.*, 2020).

Researching with relational ethics means to care about the participants and their stories, and to be respectful with the stories told to us (Clandinin, Caine and Lessard, 2018). When a researcher learns about a person through the stories listened to, there is a need to be respectful of how these stories are heard and the impact on the researcher of the encounters, and so relational ethics were central to the research design and of immense importance. Both professionally and personally relationships are of paramount significance to me, and thus the definition of relational ethics by Clandinin, Caine and Lessard, (2018) resonates:

Relational ethics is most visible in the living of lives, in the doing of narrative inquiry, in what we are asked to do as narrative inquirers. Relational ethics call us to live, calls us to take action with ourselves and with participants. (Clandinin, Caine and Lessard, 2018, p. 8)

I concur with Clandinin and Josselson (2007, p. 537) who state that 'every aspect of the work [of narrative inquiry] is touched by the ethics of the research relationship'. I cared about the students who were participants and was curious to hear their stories, therefore adopting an ethical attitude to my narrative research, which can be defined as:

A stance that involves thinking through these matters and deciding how best to honor [sic] and protect those who participate in one's studies while still maintaining standards for responsible scholarship.' (Josselson, 2007, p. 538)

Clandinin and Josselson (2007) also state that an ethical attitude to narrative research requires the researcher to be respectful and recognise our position, avoiding exploitation and treating the participant as the other. Thinking through one's possible stereotyping and prejudices is also key and it is important to being aware of these during the research journey.

Relational ethics, according to Caine *et al.* (2020), draw on Noddings (1984) ethics of care. Noddings explains her concept of an ethics of care: 'I'm assuming that to behave ethically is to behave under the guidance of an acceptable and justifiable account of what it means to be moral' (Noddings, 1984, p. 27). Noddings is not referring to research ethics in particular, but Caine *et al.* (2020) take up the concept in their narrative inquiry work. This ethical approach to narrative research resonated with me, as I sought to conduct the research with an understanding of the centrality of the research transaction between the student-participant and myself. I wanted to behave with an ethical attitude and an ethics of care as a caring and sensitive listener within the research relationship (Squire *et al.*, 2014). By drawing on Noddings (1984) ethics of care I was more aware of relational ethics. As Caine, Estefan and Clandinin (2013) write: 'narrative inquiry is first and foremost a relational research methodology, and, while it is research, it is also a transaction between people, which makes ethical issues and concerns about living well with others central to the inquiry'.

My relational responsibility as a researcher was two-fold: awareness of the attendant power-relationship with student-participants and my desire to not take advantage of my professional role. This meant that the participants needed to be aware of the right to withdraw without prejudice, for example, in other relationships with me (such as student/ lecturer) (Costley, Elliott and Gibbs, 2010). As an aspect of ethical attitude, Noddings (1984) refers to the moral dialogue that one has with oneself to help maintain a caring relationship (Noddings, 1984). This ethical attitude to research came from reflection on my own life and journey through the process of the research project. This

was combined with learning to listen carefully to student stories for this study, and aligns with Clandinin, Caine and Lessard's (2018, p. 11) understanding that 'coming alongside slowly with attention to the life making of participants and researchers is an important dimension in the relational ethics of narrative inquiry'. Relational ethics are therefore essential in answering the research question (Josselson, 2007).

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the University Research Ethics Panel for the College of Arts, Humanities and Education (reference CAHE20210003-R). Beyond this procedural activity, it was necessary to consider research ethics throughout the process, from its conception to its conclusion (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007) and to consider the ethics of the researcher in the role - from the research design and making sure the questions asked were ethical, to having an ethical strategy for sampling, to conducting an interview in an ethical way, to transcribing and reporting ethically (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Dhillon and Thomas, 2019). These ethical actions and attitudes echo Etherington (2004, p. 22), who stresses that research ethics are ongoing: 'If we accept that we *are* powerful when we write about other people's lives, we can constantly monitor the ethical issues that emerge as the research unfolds'.

There was an ethical responsibility to recognise the impact of my position on the participants, as a teacher at the institution the potential research participants were attending. This was important because the status of the researcher in this kind of dual role may leave the participant feeling that the researcher is in a position of power over them (Squire *et al.*, 2014; Gaudet and Robert, 2018). This power imbalance has been called asymmetrical (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Brinkmann, 2018), because the interviewer has already pre-planned their questions. In this study this was mitigated by sending the questions to the participants the night before their interview. The moral and ethical process of research ethics was continually questioned through reflexive processes (see Reflexivity section of this chapter) and effort made not to 'other' the subjects of the research in any way (Cannella and Lincoln, 2017). To this end, as a professional in the institution, prior knowledge, and experience of working with students mitigated in-part for 'othering', as I knew the population well having worked in HE for over a decade. Having a prior understanding of the participant group (not as researcher but in my role as lecturer) enabled me to understand and care for them sensitively. Being a member of staff was an additional consideration in this project and could have brought ethical issues and dilemmas (Dhillon and Thomas, 2019). Consequently, data collection points were planned to ensure direct teaching of the participants was not

taking place in order to lessen the potential duality of roles such as marking students work or tutoring them. Conversations with Polly who took on the reflexivity role of Peer Debriefers (see Reflexivity section of this chapter) enabled reflection on this dichotomy of being an insider yet outsider. These conversations also maintained an awareness of the potential for othering and treating them in a biased way because they are different to me, as I was also a student alongside them.

3.3.1 Research ethics practicalities: recruitment, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity

When recruiting students, the invitation to participate came from the Course Administrators, on my behalf, so as to avoid any coercion due to a teacher/ student power relationship and to emphasise that I was undertaking the research as a student and not as a lecturer at the University. This invitation provided an opt-in to the research. This was undertaken in line with the University's ethical guidance in respect of recruiting and researching participants from the student population.

Goodson *et al.*, (2010) state that researchers should be clear that participants understand what the research is about, and this was stated in a straightforward way in the initial recruitment email and reiterated in subsequent email correspondence during the recruitment phase. I did not want to force experiences from the participants but wanted them to be able to talk freely and confidently, trusting that I would take onboard the rich detail they provided and report it. I believed that my ethical responsibility was to listen to the experiences told to me first before I probed further or allowed my own background and experience to start making connections (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007). I periodically reviewed this process via my research diary and in conversation with Polly. Josselson (2007, p. 540) calls this the 'scholarly good', whereby the study enabled the lived experiences to be heard through a positive relationship between researcher and participant during the interview.

As the data were collected by remote video interviews on Microsoft Teams, informed consent was requested and received via email. The participants were sent the consent form and Participant Information Sheet. Verbal confirmation was then asked for again and recorded at the beginning of the interview. However, as Smythe and Murray (2000) have identified, during the narrative interview when participants share personal experiences there are greater risks for them, as painful accounts may emerge (Mishler,

1986; Elliott, 2005). While this opportunity to be heard may be therapeutic (Elliott, 2005) it can expose emotional stories. For example, during the pilot exercise a participant told a story that was distressing for her and caused her to cry. At this point I checked they were okay and offered to stop the interview. My experience as a lecturer and personal tutor helped in this circumstance. Subsequently, as a reflexive researcher, it was discussed at a meeting with my supervisors, where we devised a response for future interviews and potential interviewee distress should it be needed. This example of reflexivity increased my recognition that there is personal investment from the perspective of the interviewee as they share accounts of their lives and highlighted the need to treat the participant and their stories carefully and respectfully (Noddings, 1984).

Sensitivity and anonymity were important, and participants chose their own pseudonym for anonymity (Goodson *et al.*, 2010) and also to be able to recognise themselves in the stories in the research publications. However, as a researcher who also works in the university in which the participants study, I also recognised that anonymising the institution was challenging (Floyd and Arthur, 2012) and this meant that the University could be identified. This furthered my intent to take 'relational responsibility' (Floyd and Arthur, 2012, p. 176) and conduct the research with an ethics of care for the participants and their stories throughout the study.

3.3.2 Research ethics practicalities: data analysis

The analysis process was undertaken in three parts, which I devised from the work of three authors so that rigorous analysis could be undertaken. It was called the bespoke triad analysis approach (see Data Analysis section, this chapter). This approach reduced the 'interviewer's monopoly of interpretation' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 589). This meant that through a thorough process of narrative analysis including restorying, I aimed to produce findings that were credible for the reader (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In addition, and to develop the trusting relationship between researcher and participant, member checking of the restoried narratives took place, a method that Cresswell and Poth (2018) argue promotes research credibility and ultimately trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) are very clear that operationalising the trustworthiness criteria is challenging, and arguably not a panacea or guarantee of ethical research. What the three-part analysis process enabled was an analysis of the data in three distinct stages. The three-stage analysis process also promoted an ever-

present ethical attitude to my project through the thoroughness of the layered approach, and a commitment to relational ethics as central. Arguably, the moral and ethical barometer is set high in social science research, and particular care is needed in narrative research, because of the complexities involved, as outlined above. In order to conduct research with an ethical attitude and to be responsive to the dilemmas faced in the field, this research needed to be ethically reflexive (Gewirtz and Cribb, 2006). This is discussed in the following section.

3.4 Reflexivity

As a narrative researcher I want to understand the experiences of students in respect of their values. The topic, methodology and methods for this study are influenced by personal interest and narratives of experience and my own beliefs and values (as suggested by Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Squire *et al.*, 2014; Ma, 2016; Cresswell and Poth, 2018). I use positional reflexivity, which Armstrong defines as when:

researchers [to] attend to their personal experiences - past and present - and describe how their own personal characteristics (power, gender, ethnicity and other intangibles) played a part in their interactions with and understandings of participants. (Armstrong 2012, p. 882)

Armstrong's definition of reflexivity means to critically analyse ones own assumptions and history and how this may have impacted on the methodology chosen.

Being reflexive allowed consideration of my own biography, and any influence this may have had on the relationship with participants, and how the findings are interpreted and reported, particularly when researching within one's own workplace (Elliott, 2005; Tracy, 2010). There have been times when I have reflected on my own (undergraduate) university experience after an interview. For example, I recorded in my research diary during each phase of data collection responses to reflective questions posed by Ravitch and Riggan (2017, p. 208), specifically 'How does my identity and positionality influence the research process (psychological social and institutional)? And how can I address the aspects of this that need to be attended to?' This enabled my reflection about the role of researcher that I was taking and allowed me to acknowledge and move away from the role of lecturer during the data collection phases.

The reflexive process used is detailed below. It illustrates the temporal nature of narrative inquiry, emphasising Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) notion of narratives

moving inwards and outwards and backwards and forwards. As a researcher one's knowledge of the world is combined with the journey told by the research participant in a collaborative and trusting way (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). This temporal and relational aspect of narrative inquiry is also noted within Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) concept of space and place, whereby memories are evoked when participants are telling their stories from a specific time and place.

As a member of a university and having established place there for over a decade, I have informally listened to students' stories about the changes to their values they experience by the time they reach their final year, in a module I teach called *Values in Education*. This in part piqued my interest in undertaking this research. However, the research interview space is different to the seminar room, and it was important that strategies were employed to ensure that my position as a researcher, rather than lecturer in relation to the student participants, was transparent and authentic. To this end, I very deliberately spent time after the interviews considering the two reflection questions posed by Ravitch and Riggan (2017). This involved ongoing reflexivity and concern for bias (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013; Kim, 2015). However, these roles also enabled me to understand some of the complexities of the student situations and have some insight into what they experience. There is acknowledgement that this research is subjective, but the checks and balances described below are incorporated in the study to support credibility and authenticity.

In order to be a reflexive, interpretivist researcher I adopted three tools, all recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985): one, using a reflexive journal or research diary to reflect on interpretations; two, member checking (returning transcripts to participants for accuracy checks and returning the restored narrative to participants) and three, meetings with a peer debriefer. These three tools are referred to under the umbrella title of three lenses of researcher, participant and reader/reviewer by Cresswell and Poth (2018). The three lenses are explained and expanded upon below with an extract from my research diary presented to exemplify each reflexive process.

3.4.1 Researcher's lens (using a research diary)

My intentions were to complete a research diary, with planned entries after every interview to promote reflexivity while memories were fresh (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Goldstein, 2017). The research diary was created in an online space (MS

OneNote) and used to note my experience of being the interviewer and any issues or thoughts that arose, or ways it could have gone differently. I used my research diary to write down and then reflect upon particular thoughts and feelings and I continued to use it to reflect after both phases of interviewing and subsequent analysis and throughout the writing stages, with Goldstein (2017, p. 156) referring to these annotations as ‘unplanned reflections’. An example is included below (Table 1).

Table 1: Research diary extract with definition and personal reflexivity as example of researcher’s lens (Research Diary).

Definition	Personal reflexivity	Tool to support the lens: Research Diary
<p><i>‘Clarifying researcher bias or engaging in reflexivity. The researcher discloses their understandings about the biases, values, and experiences that he or she brings to a qualitative research study from the outset of the study so that the reader understands the position from which the researcher undertakes the inquiry’</i></p> <p>Cresswell and Poth (2018, p. 261).</p>	<p>At the beginning of the PhD journey I questioned my professional experience and wondered about my ability to undertake this huge task. My self-awareness of the academic challenge of doctoral study embodies my empathy for students as they travel through their undergraduate degree. I am doing this alongside them. The interconnection of our journeys makes this feel precious and worthwhile. My personal growth as a researcher and professional feels immense.</p>	<p>Research diary extract (19th February 2020): I'm really enjoying studying although I feel that there is an awful lot to do. Benefits to my learning and thus professional job are immense. To the extent, I wonder how I was effectively supervising undergraduates and MA students without being a researcher myself. Or without being a scholar myself. Learning how to read articles and elicit important material has been difficult but rewarding. I have got into the pattern of having a task from supervision which means I need to write something before we meet again. I have now done this three times and the torture of feedback is becoming less uncomfortable. The problem is that I don't have the time to make all the amendments set for me. I am really hoping to use summer for this. Currently I am writing my methodology and getting my head around epistemology, ontology, naturalistic approaches, narrative inquiry, trustworthiness and all that jazz.</p>

The example above illustrates the reflexive approach to the research journey. There was a need within me to understand my positionality and the research diary helped me

process the transition from my role before I began PhD study. Recording thoughts in a research diary was both cathartic and challenging.

3.4.2 Participant's lens (using member checks)

In this study member checking was used, which involved sending back the transcribed interviews to participants so they could determine they had been understood correctly, and to correct any factual errors as part of the process of checking trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Flynn and Black, 2013; Morse, 2018). Hill (2006, p. 946), in his study with students as participants, refers to being 'able to negotiate the writing process *with* the student'. However, there is debate amongst authors about member checking. Cresswell (2007), Anderson and Kirkpatrick (2016) and Cresswell and Poth (2018) view them as good practice, while Braun and Clarke (2013) state there are many critiques of the approach due to the time difference between the interpretation by the researcher and when participants are asked to check what has been written, thus asking them to remember the point at which they told their stories.

In this study the entire restoried narrative was also returned to participants as a second stage of member checking as a natural stage of the restorying process. Their comments were requested, via email, with the following invitation:

Please can you read and see whether you feel that the restorying demonstrates you have been understood and that it relates to what you told me in the interview.

This restorying check enabled the participants to ask themselves if this is them in the story, which responds to one of the challenges posed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), who wonder who owns the story and who negotiates the wording. These authors acknowledge that it is the researcher's job to write the restorying without compromising a participant's experiences, so that they recognise the memories they have shared (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

Participants in this study returned the email and their restorying with comments such as:

I have read the document and it all sounds really great and accurate to me. It was interesting to read in a storytelling format like that.

I've had a look at the document and given it some thought. It's really reflective of my time at high school leading up to university and I can't think of any changes that could be made.

One participant responded requesting a factual change which was made and returned to them to check and confirm, which they subsequently did.

Table 2: Research diary extract with definition and personal reflexivity as example of participant’s lens (Member Checking).

Definition	Personal reflexivity	Tool to support the lens: Member Checking
<p>Participants’ views on the findings and the restorings are taken into account and changed or adapted as needed (Cresswell and Poth, 2018).</p> <p>Member checks are the ‘process of continuous, informal testing of information by soliciting reactions of respondents to the investigator’s reconstruction of what he or she has been told’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1986, p. 77).</p>	<p>My intention is that using member checks means it is transparent to the participant what I have done with the things they have said.</p> <p>All transcripts and restorings were returned to participants for member checking. I was initially nervous about their response to reading the restorings because I had tried hard to write them with the voice of the participant at the forefront. It was encouraging, therefore, that they responded positively in every instance.</p>	<p>Research diary extract (30th April 2021): Yesterday two of my participants responded to the restoring sent to them and they were both positive, with one saying "it was interesting to read in a storytelling format like that. " The other commented: "it's really reflective of my time at high school leading up to university!" So, I'm waiting in anticipation for the other three responses and I'm going to discuss them with Polly next week.</p> <p>Analysing the data has made me realise that each participant is so unique and narrative inquiry is the best approach I could use for answering this research question because it is their lived experience that is of interest and illustrates their values. I actually can't wait until data collection point two and I feel really privileged that I have planned it this way, so that I can go back and find out some more and see where my participants are by that point in the university journey.</p>

The example above captures the moment of sharing the restoring. I was anxious about the response from the participants but also proud of the outcome. Member checking, while a tool to check the writing, is about the participants really feeling that their voice is represented in the research output. Therefore, getting the participant feedback was a good moment and reinforced the importance of the work.

3.4.3 Reader’s or reviewer's lens (peer debriefer)

In this study a peer debriefer was used as a reflexivity sounding board for promoting consideration of rigour, credibility and trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 308)

define the role of the peer debriefer as 'a process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for purposes of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind'. I asked a trusted colleague to undertake this role, and after explaining it to them, they agreed to do it, referring to themselves as 'Polly'. Using a different name ensured that the role was different to our existing relationship. Thus began an important and ongoing - throughout the whole project - process within the research with Polly acting as critical friend and the 'external check of the research process' (Cresswell, 2007, p. 208), a role that enabled and facilitated reflexivity. Polly's involvement resonated with my philosophical stance, in that my natural instinct is to be student-focused and for students to have a positive university experience. Using the peer debriefer enabled me to consider that position. This afforded an opportunity for discussion of bias, acknowledging the researcher perspective while knowing that no research is neutral or value-free (Kim, 2015).

In order to avoid bias a key strategy was to use open-ended questions, as suggested by Shah (2019). There can also be bias when writing up the findings and Crossley (2000) notes that while the author's lens is critical, it should not over influence the restorying. Therefore, sharing the restoried texts with Polly allowed for consideration of reflexive questions (in addition to the research diary prompt questions previously mentioned) posed by Ravitch and Riggan (2017, p. 208), specifically 'what biases might I have in relation to meaning making and knowledge?' Utilising this reflexive questioning meant that I could explore my own and each participant's subjectivity. It was important to acknowledge that this research was undertaken within my workplace, which Kim (2015) discusses as 'backyard research'. Kim (2015) states that such backyard research is legitimate in narrative work as long as one recognises the dual role of researcher and, in my case, lecturer.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Cresswell and Poth (2018) refer to the peer debriefer relationship as working with a disinterested peer. In this work, Polly was interested in the project, but detached and independent in her role, reflecting back my thoughts and interactions with participants and prompting my own reflexivity. This process of using a peer debriefer is about keeping the researcher honest, in that the debriefer asks questions to ensure the researcher is as aware as possible of their positionality and the process they are undertaking (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Cresswell and Poth, 2018). This was certainly the role undertaken outside on one wintery day early in the research

(see Table 3 below). The peer debriefer in this example was used 'to enhance the accuracy of the account' (Cresswell and Cresswell, 2018, p. 201). Working with Polly in this reflexive way counteracted what Armstrong (2012) and Goldstein (2017) have termed the subjectivity of the language used in the restorings. Polly and I met at the start of the research design, during the pilot stage and during each subsequent phase of the data collection. Her role was to ask rigorous questions that 'assist(s) the researcher to probe her biases, to explore alternate meanings, and to clarify possible biased interpretation' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 308). Cresswell and Poth (2018) explain probing bias as asking how the researcher has avoided making their own voice the prevalent one in the restorings. The meetings with Polly both challenged and validated interpretations made. Working with Polly was a very effective strategy.

Arguably, this relationship was also a source of contact and sharing during the pandemic, as this type of research can be isolating, doubly so under the exceptional prevailing circumstances of COVID-19. Regular meetings, whether on Microsoft Teams, walking, or a socially distanced café peer debriefing session, were an opportunity for cathartic moments, and also for questions to check various forms of potential researcher bias, and open honest reflection (Lincoln and Guba, 1986; Smythe and Murray, 2000).

The importance of this work is illustrated here: 'in this type of analysis, the subjectivity of the researcher is also present, not only because it is they who transcribe the works into text for subsequent organisation and reconstruction of the university life history, but also because their subjective perspective on the story itself is incorporated into the analysis carried out' (Moriña, 2020, p. 775).

Of the three approaches used for reflexivity and credibility, the peer debriefer sessions were the most impactful, and provided a space for polishing the work (Morse, 2018).

Table 3: Research diary extract with definition and personal reflexivity as example of reviewer’s lens (Polly - Peer Debriefeer).

Definition	Personal reflexivity	Tool to support the lens: Peer Debriefeer
<p>The peer debriefer is ‘an individual who keeps the researcher honest; asks hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations; and provides the researcher with the opportunity for catharsis by sympathetic listening to the researcher’s feelings’ (Cresswell and Poth, 2018, p. 263)</p>	<p>I recall sitting on a cold bench in town with my ‘phone recording a conversation between Polly and myself. I wanted Polly to read the restorying to check my judgment and methodology. Polly was questioning the language I had used in the pilot restorying. She wanted to understand my use of a particular word, because it did not fit with the participant voice. I argued that the word summarised the experience told to me, giving a fuller picture to Polly so she could see the reason for the word choice.</p> <p>At another meeting with Polly, this time in her garden (following COVID-19 guidance), we explored my predilection for positive representation of the participant stories, and Polly checked my bias through probing questions.</p> <p>A discussion around researcher bias took</p>	<p>Research diary extract (19th March 2021):</p> <p>I talked about the data analysis of participant two and how she presented herself as a younger person, calling herself brutal. She then goes on to reject her hedonistic values of her younger self, but later she reflects on being mean to her nephews and how it has then surprised her mum because she is doing an early childhood degree. In my restorying I have emphasised how she is now, rather than in her earlier years. Am I just trying to see the good in her? But I worry that if she sees it (which she will do through member checking) she may think it is horrible how I have presented her, even though it is what she said.</p> <p>Polly said I need to think about my role as researcher, not pastoral tutor - so the researcher in me should be seeking out the truth, exposing the truth. I must not be doing anything that causes any harm but looking at the data as it is, because I need to tell the</p>

Definition	Personal reflexivity	Tool to support the lens: Peer Debriefing
	<p>place. Polly asked me to consider my roles, as an insider-researcher. As an educator there is power and as a personal tutor there is an understanding of the students, and potential bias. I value the positive in the student and I seek diversity. I needed to be aware of this bias in the second data collection phase, so I did not try to extract positive stories only, minimising negative experiences shared. I am not personal tutor to any of the participants and have not marked their work. With 30 years of teaching experience I have been privy to personal information about pupils and students. I have QTS and a moral compass. I am an experienced professional with good ethical practice.</p>	<p>truth of the real stories. I may be softer in my final report, but I must tell the truth. I stated that I am emphasising the year before she came to university, during which time she tells me she had a change of values because she's realised that the world is not fair, and she wants to be part of making that a better place. She is 22 now and is reflecting back on being 15.</p> <p>Polly thinks this is okay. The restorying can have empathy and be sensitive but maybe I should include a section below it with some key points. I could recognise the participant's egocentricity rather than portraying her as nasty. The discussion highlighted the importance of being objective and critical.</p>

The example above reports on the peer debriefing meetings and shows how they were important as a sound board and a checkpoint. I was able to reflect on my position again and be an ethical researcher through reflexivity.

3.5 Summary

Reflexivity was very important to the study, as I sought to retain the participant voice and not distort or overpower it (Chase, 2018). The representation of participant voice as a restoried piece was constructed by me, as researcher, as I held 'much of the

burden of representation' (Hill, 2006, p. 947). However, as Ratner (2002) posits, the researcher can mitigate for this responsibility through the clear use of 'meaning units', which are standalone word/s in the data that are distinct from another idea. In this study, the reduced meaning units (for example, 'we were very caged up' or 'I almost feel like age isn't a factor') were used in the data analysis process, thus removing the distortion of impressionism by the researcher as the original voice was retained. The bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach developed was a refined strategy that meant the participant voice was reported authentically and honestly. Ongoing use of the research diary, member checking and peer debriefer meetings allowed for credibility and trustworthiness and gave me confidence that the restoryings created were representative of the participants' experiences.

Returning to the diagram of the adapted research onion presented at the beginning of this chapter (Figure 4), the case for narrative inquiry as an appropriate methodological choice for this study has been made. I have presented my ontological and epistemological stance, my understanding of narrative inquiry, provided a reflection on the challenges of the methodology, and explored the importance of relational ethics and the role of reflexivity.

Chapter 4. Data collection, data analysis and restorying

This chapter builds on from the previous chapter that demonstrated that narrative inquiry was a particularly appropriate methodological position to address the research questions identified in Chapter 3. Here I present the process of data collection, including who the participants are, the method of narrative interviewing and the bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach and associated restorying.

4.1 Whose story is this anyway?

Narrative interviews typically use small samples for in-depth investigations (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019) in order that thick description can be achieved to ensure the trustworthiness and potential transferability of the research findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, 1986; Armstrong, 2012; Flynn and Black, 2013). In this study, seven participants were recruited using convenience sampling. The participants were undergraduate students in their first year of study, undertaking a course in Academic Studies in Education, the term used by HESA (HESA, 2020). As Higher Education (HE) students, they are a rapidly growing participant group for qualitative research, but research about their lived experience has been less common (Holton and Riley, 2014), and still is today.

In this study, the choice of sample is directly controlled by one aspect of lived experience, namely generation. A range of participants from the population was sought, resonating with King, Horrocks and Brooks (2019) who suggest that a varied set of participants 'throw light on meaningful differences in experience' (p. 57) and 'hear different voices' (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 58). Of the six participants, three expressed that they were lesbian women, one was a man, and two others were cis-gendered women. These individuals, when telling their stories, were doing so as part of a specific generation, and 'members of a generation have been exposed to the same historical events at the same time in their life courses' (Andrews, 2002, p. 76). Therefore, while an individual narrative is scripted by its author, it is relevant to consider what we know of the world Gen Z live in, and to note that some of these stories may be scripted according to narratives that others tell through forms such as social media (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

4.2 Narrative interviewing

The use of interviews is a well-established approach in narrative research (e.g. Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Czarniawska, 2004; Clandinin, 2006; Goodson *et al.*, 2010; Kim, 2015; Cresswell and Poth, 2018; O' Grady, 2018). Elliott (2005) places the start of narrative research as a way of understanding stories by individuals in the early 1980s. Arguably, this moved research away from the scientific application of methods to more social science approaches such as the narrative interview.

The method of narrative interviewing focuses on what the interviewee's experience has been, acknowledging that the interviewee is on a journey (Brinkmann, 2018). Talking about experiences in narrative interviewing is nondirective, which means the interviews are unstructured (Gaudet and Robert, 2018). Expanding upon this idea, Gaudet and Robert (2018) propose that interviews are not treated as factual accounts of experience, but as intertwining of the human response and memory from parts of life or complete life stories. Arguably, the narrative interview is a distinctive space for listening to the experiences of the interviewees, compared to semi-structured, structured and in-depth interviews (Elliott, 2005), because the participant is encouraged to speak without interruption, from their perspective.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) identify that there are three types of narrative interview: the short story, the life story and oral history. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) define narrative short story interviews (NSSI) as being about specific episodes of time, with the life story asking for the perspective of the interviewee on their life, and the oral history considering the community history beyond the individual. The short story narrative interview was chosen for this study to capture the complexities of the research question, considering specific episodes of time. In addition to the above three interview forms, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Clandinin (2013) use the terms annals and chronicles, which are considered a way to order and shape narratives. In this annal/chronicle approach participants construct timelines beginning at a significant date. Annals are memories and dates from within the timeline, and chronicles are then what happens around that timeframe as a series of events (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). In this study, students as participants were asked to share their experiences about the period before starting university, and then at a second point to reflect on the time spent undertaking their university degree. In doing so, the participants told stories that used timelines, annals and chronicles.

A major advantage of narrative interviews is that they 'place the people being interviewed at the heart of a research study' (Anderson and Kirkpatrick, 2016, p. 631). This means that narrative interviews help understanding and seek answers about others' behaviours and experiences, wanting to know about a participant's life (Josselson, 2007). The interview can focus on certain topics, events or experiences (Elliott, 2005) and the research design has a nondirective approach. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019) explain this interview subtlety as starting with a general, opening question, followed by prompts. Within the boundaries of the short story narrative time frame, described above, the interviewer then asks for the participant to tell their story, in annals and chronicles, telling their memories of a certain time. Prompts are not pre-prepared, but are improvised (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The participant tells the interviewer about their life, without being asked direct questions about the phenomena (Josselson, 2007). In this study the research design does not ask the students to directly talk about their values. They are asked what matters to them, what drew them to university at this point, inviting them to tell their stories. This study therefore uses short story narrative interviews because it is an appropriately nondirective method to elicit deeper insights into students' values at specified times during their undergraduate degree.

Individual interviews are the best method when drawing out short stories, where the interviewer is trying to understand the participant's story and their experiences (Cresswell and Poth, 2018; Gaudet and Robert, 2018). Because narrative interviews provide a means of listening to participants, the skill of the interviewer is to elicit stories, told as annals and chronicles, and bring out the richness in what is being said (King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2019). Arguably, what we do as humans is share narratives and tell stories so that our lived experience is better understood (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990).

Narratives provide 'rich descriptive accounts ... invaluable in understanding what motivates people, giving insight into personality and identity' (Elliott, 2005, p. 297). Elliott (2005) explains that the interview then enables exploration of the research topic for the participant. This is reinforced by Webster and Mertova (2007) who explain that as experiences are shared between the interviewer and participant, the stories of those experiences are linked to a memorable event. The events drawn from memory change over time as one's perspective shifts (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2012). We remember things how we remember them - the memory is self-serving (Kim, 2015), but

the participants keep going back to the parts of their story that are tellable (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013). Adopting a short story approach to narrative interviewing in this research involves considering life episodes or stages, in this case an account of the university experience at two different points (Gaudet and Robert, 2018). This is explored by Braun and Clarke (2013), who point out that the interview needs to be contextualised within the time frame and location, acknowledging the political climate and the historical happenings.

Narrative interviews seek to understand individual experience (Gaudet and Robert, 2018) and the aim of this study was to go beyond participant self-presentation, so that the interviewer made connections that examine students' values expressed in stories (King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2019). When a participant told an aspect of the story, spontaneously, it could turn out to be of interest to the interviewer (Czarniawska, 2004). These insights into the world of the participant make interviewing exciting for the interviewer (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Several authors have used narrative interviews to explore the lived experience of students (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Goodson *et al.*, 2010; Holton and Riley, 2014). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) investigated detailed life stories as a way to explore student experience in a middle school; Goodson *et al.* (2010) used the narrative interview approach of life history to gain an understanding of lifelong learning in HE; and Holton and Riley (2014) considered the lived experiences of HE students in their understanding of the cities they lived in, using walking interviews. All these studies mirror my intentions through investigating rich narratives of the topic investigated.

4.2.1 Conducting narrative short story interviews online

Due to the exceptional circumstances of Covid-19, although I had initially planned to conduct interviews face-to-face, it was judged to be safer to do it online to ensure participation was safe and accessible to a range of individuals. Indeed, National Government social distancing rules (NHS, 2020) and internal university requirements meant that gathering data from participants had to take place online, as usual research activities were prohibited (Taylor and Wisker, 2023). The online environment was maintained for the second round of interviews so that there was no potential distortion between the two. This section explores the varied definitions of online interviewing, and the limitations, considerations and benefits of narrative short story interviews (NSSI)

conducted remotely. It concludes with a description of the structure of the method used.

The literature offers a variety of terms to define online interviewing (Braun and Clarke, 2013; Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016; Salmons, 2016; King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2019; Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020). Iacono, Symonds and Brown (2016) and Salmons (2016) use the term Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to mean gathering data online, described by Ravanbakhsh, Mohammadi and Nikooghadam (2019) as the transference of data via the Internet. In a 2016 study by Iacono, Symonds and Brown (2016), the authors explain that this interview approach is synchronous, so interviewer and participants speak and see each other using the Internet with a real-time connection. Drawing on the criteria for Narrative Short Story Interviews (NSSI) presented earlier, a critical commonality with NSSI is that VoIP facilitates this synchronously. Salmons (2016) reports that the video conferencing tools that are commonly used for online meetings and conferences can be used to elicit data in a research interview. A range of these conferencing and communication tools are compared in a study by Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman (2020) in which the term video-based online methods is used. The authors compared characteristics such as recording and privacy features of eight video-conferencing platforms and found that while platforms have different advantages and disadvantages, they served the purpose of enabling continuing data collection through online interviewing while maintaining social distancing. A similar term is used by King, Horrocks and Brooks (2019), who refer to remote video techniques, and use the term online interviews. It is necessary to clarify the term adopted for the present study. Remote video interviews (RVI) is used as it recognises the use of video technology in a synchronous interview between a research participant and the researcher in separate physical spaces, being visible to each other as opposed to just using sound. This variety of terms reflects the relative newness of this method of qualitative interviewing. It is likely that more researchers will use these tools in the future, and therefore the terminology will develop.

RVI as a research data collection method presented some considerations and limitations in this study during the planning process. These are presented here, beginning with four considerations. First, it was important to consider ethics. Negotiating informed consent was more challenging than might be usual as a physical participant information sheet could not be distributed (Braun and Clarke, 2013). I asked for verbal consent, after pre-sending an information sheet about the research. Second,

it was necessary to consider that participants needed a safe location with minimal distractions so they would not be interrupted or overheard, explained to participants in the information sheet and asked about at the beginning of the interview (Salmons, 2016; Archibald *et al.*, 2019). Third, a consideration of being in a different geographical space to those being interviewed was that student participants often live in shared accommodation or in the family home, and distractions of everyday life could mean they potentially lost their thread or over-disclosed (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Fourth, it was a critical consideration that the interviewer made it clear to the participant that they had begun recording (Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016) and that the recording was accessible to the researcher only. However, it was important to acknowledge that 'the nature of the Internet means that you can never promise absolute confidentiality and anonymity to participants' (King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2019, p. 142). Potential risks were mitigated by the use of Microsoft Teams, as it met the University's data storage requirements in terms of security.

There were potential limitations of the use of RVI, which are explored here. First, there may be issues related to a participant's capability to use Microsoft Teams software. Braun and Clarke (2013) acknowledge that RVIs rely on the competence of the participants to use the technology. In the current study, the student participants were experienced users of software such as Microsoft Teams as they have engaged in online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant that they were able to use the technology confidently and engage in the RVIs without the technology overly intruding on the data collection process. A study by Archibald *et al.* (2019) illustrates the challenge of technological fluency, with the participants involved suggesting that this was due to their age and that they were not familiar with the technology. This is contrary to the participants in the current study who are Gen Z, and familiar with using technology for personal communication and university work (Selingo, 2018; Berge and Berge, 2019; Johnson and Sveen, 2020). Of course, participation required access to an appropriate device with a suitable resolution web camera and adequate sound quality (King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2019; Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020). It was also important to check with the participant that they had technical capability. This should not be assumed because of the age range of the participant population.

A second potential limitation was bandwidth issues, which could be a source of frustration during RVI (Archibald *et al.*, 2019). However, due to the experience the

student participants have had with the software, they were able to manage technological challenges.

Further, a third limitation could be establishing trust and creating rapport, which are of central importance when undertaking narrative research interviews (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Elliott, 2005). During the conversation before the interview started, it was therefore important to explain the rationale for the topic and why it was important, in order to help the participant feel at ease (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Iacono, Symonds and Brown (2016) highlight that when using online methods such as RVI it will be harder to establish a good level of rapport. This was not necessarily the case because relational skills have been developed over many years of teaching and have recently been translated to online teaching effectively, although I was not known to all the participants. Archibald *et al.* (2019) found no difficulty in creating rapport during their research with 16 nurse participants aged 45-54, interviewed for between one and one and a half hours each on their experience of using Zoom for an online interview. In fact, Archibald *et al.* (2019) argue that when technical issues arose, rapport developed further through the shared experience.

Bold (2012) summarises the issues or challenges of RVI: 'Online interviewing is not the same as face-to-face interviewing because you cannot share the same physical space' (p. 117). While it is not the same, there are benefits of RVI and the following discussion expounds these. In the context of social distancing, using RVI offers potential participants a greater opportunity to take part in the research, recognised as appropriate for our digital society (Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020). A goal of qualitative research is to collect rich data and this is done through conversations, which should be relaxed, natural and engaging using RVI (Salmons, 2016; Archibald *et al.*, 2019). In addition, for those who lack confidence talking face-to-face, the method was an opportunity to open up when behind the screen, while managing over-disclosure as discussed above (Braun and Clarke, 2013; Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016). This reflects my experience at university during one-to-one online tutorials with students. Conversely, using RVI could create a barrier due to only part of the person being visible on the screen, which undermines the communication that body language can provide during an interview (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Bailenson, 2021). However, Lin (2016) proposes that nodding, as an aspect of the researcher's body language, can be appropriate, and as this is visible it needs to be considered whether using RVI or conducting a face-to-face interview.

The RVI method was attractive to the participants as it was convenient and time efficient (Braun and Clarke, 2013; Archibald *et al.*, 2019). In addition, for participants with mobility or physical issues, the method enabled accessibility (Braun and Clarke, 2013) and meant that there were fewer barriers to participation. It is interesting that researchers such as Iacono, Symonds and Brown (2016), who conducted six interviews using Skype, found that participants tended to talk for longer because they were less worried about time as they were already at home and interviews could be conducted at convenient times. In their study of 16 nurse participants using Zoom interviews, Archibald *et al.* (2019) found that many preferred using Zoom than the telephone and found it convenient and time effective. This flexibility with time was also replicated regarding location (Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020). Where student participants were on-campus less than usual, their location could be geographically dispersed (if they are commuting students coming from family homes or they had moved back to family homes temporarily during the national lockdown and subsequent university closure). This is reported in a range of studies (Braun and Clarke, 2013; Archibald *et al.*, 2019; Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020).

The structure of RVI, including the pre-interview phase, will be explained in the following section. Prior to the interview, a short initial online conversation took place, introducing myself and discussing why the study was important, as recommended by Salmons (2016). This sought to develop rapport (Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016; King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2019). It also served as a means of organising a practice session before the actual research interview, to test functionality and go over documents, utilised to good effect by Archibald *et al.* (2019) and Morgan (2020) who provide advice on remote interviewing during COVID-19. This built confidence in the technology (Archibald *et al.*, 2019). Following this, a checklist was provided to participants via email to outline how to make the most of using RVI. This included checking the use of web cameras; checking audio levels; closing down other sites open on their device; and silencing mobile telephones to minimise distractions (Archibald *et al.*, 2019; Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020; Morgan, 2020). Furthermore, Morgan (2020) suggests RVI works better with a headset, as the quality of sound is improved. This can mitigate distractions, a challenge of using RVI, as discussed above. For both researcher and participant, practising on-screen positioning so that facial expressions can be seen was also worthwhile (Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016; King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2019), and selecting an appropriate location to be in during the interview was important for privacy (Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016).

It was crucial to listen even more carefully when using RVI compared to an in-person, face-to-face interview to allay the challenge of only seeing each other's head and shoulders and not always noting expressions as easily in the online space (Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016). The expressive moves the whole body makes are not seen due to the screen projecting only head and shoulder, but Iacono, Symonds and Brown (2016) argue that through deep listening and considering one's own facial expressions, this limitation can be overcome. Morgan (2020) also highlighted that it was advisable to plan for and offer frequent breaks, paying attention to fatigue from a long RVI. This fitted well with my research design as planning a break allowed for researcher reflection to collect ideas for further probing.

It was best practice to build in time at the end of the interview for a few minutes to debrief and reflect, just as would take place with an in-person narrative interview in the same physical space (Morgan, 2020). This enabled rapport and trust to develop further and allowed me to explain what the next stages of the process would be. It also enabled me to check that the participant was okay with the process.

This section explored RVI. The imperative to conduct RVI to elicit NSSI was a result of the context of COVID-19 and the requirement for social distancing. The challenges of RVI have been discussed and strengths of the approach presented.

4.3 The pilot exercise

The pilot exercise was essential for this study for a range of reasons. First, to establish an interview schedule that would act as the most effective stimulus for storytelling (Kim, 2011). Second, to trial interview technique, learning to interview by practising (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002; Kilanowski, 2006; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Kim, 2011). Third, to allow preliminary data analysis to be undertaken to discover whether the data produced addressed the research aims.

Before the first round of interviews, the pilot exercise was undertaken, involving undergraduate students in their second year of study, similar to the population for the actual study, as recommended by Jacob and Furgerson (2012). Five participants were invited to voluntarily take part, with two responding. In order to test the adequacy of the research tool (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002) and to identify a preferred strategy for interviewing, the participants were sent different emails the night before their interview.

The first participant was sent the following prompting questions:

I would like to ask you about the year before you started at university. I am excited to hear you tell me your story. The sort of things I would like you to tell me about are:

What is the beginning of your story of that time (when you decided you were coming to university)?

What reasons helped you decide to come to university?

Who was significant in your decision and why?

Did anything change during the time before you came to university and how did that make you feel?

Just before you began university, what were the things that mattered to you about being a student?

The second participant was sent the overarching question:

If you look back to the year before you came to university, can you tell me what mattered to you and how you felt during that time? Begin wherever and however you want and tell me whatever was important to you in your life. Consider the story as chapters or stages as you recount it if that is helpful.

At the end of their interviews, each participant was asked how the emailed question/s helped them to tell their stories. The first participant stated that the prompt questions were very useful; she had written notes on them, which enabled her to talk easily. The second participant said the overarching question sent was complicated and hard to hold in his mind during the interview. He stated that he would have liked it broken down for clarity. This feedback informed the subsequent adaptation of the research design.

The pilot interviews took place using Microsoft Teams and were recorded.

Transcriptions were written up within ten days of the interviews while the data were fresh in the mind using the transcription tool in Microsoft Teams as a starting point.

During this process familiarisation with the material was facilitated within the structure of Leggo's RITES for interpreting narratives (Leggo, 2008), with the first step of the RITES acronym (R) being to read through the whole transcript. Reissman (1993) recommends undertaking several close listenings of the interview text. This repeated listening to and reading of transcripts enables oneself to imagine they are in the shoes of the narrator, in truly reflexive moments (Elliott, 2005). Transcriptions were returned to participants for checking for accuracy via email with a requested return date of a week. All participants responded quickly and returned the transcripts without changes.

Following this member checking (where participants confirmed they were happy with the data written in the transcript (Lincoln and Guba, 1986), early analysis was

undertaken of the transcripts, using the bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach planned (explained below). A restoried paper for each pilot participant was written and prepared for returning to the participant for member checking (Clandinin and Josselson, 2012; Flynn and Black, 2013), with the following to be asked:

Please can you read and see whether you feel that this demonstrates you have been understood and that the reconstruction (restorying) relates to what you told me in the interview.

This question was based on best practice identified from the literature (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Lincoln and Guba, 1986). Further, Hill (2006, p. 946) acknowledges that the work of writing up the analysis is largely for the researcher and that the transcription analyst acknowledges that their interpretation is from their own perspective (Cresswell and Poth, 2018), rather than as an undergraduate first year student. Indeed, the purpose is to write as an educator (Josselson, 2007) and therefore the intent is not to mirror the conversation verbatim. The restorying is, therefore, a co-construction between the participant and the researcher, as authorship moves from one to the other in response to member checking.

As a result of the bifurcated approach to the pilot exercise, it was determined that the use of prompt questions elicited better stories. In addition, the three-layered (triad) analysis approach (explained and explored further below), plus member checks and a meeting with Polly (peer debriefer) whose role is to ask questions, listen and 'keep the researcher honest' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Cresswell and Poth, 2018, p. 263), ensured that thorough procedures had been followed to provide credibility to the outcomes. Skills were also developed during the pilot exercise in relation to the interview approach.

The pilot exercise led to some actions for the first data collection phase. Three main issues were identified. The participants needed to have the prompt questions the day before their interview so that they could think through the stories and experiences they want to tell. I needed to allow for silence and resist asking supplementary questions too early. Sharing the transcript and restorying as soon as possible after the interview (member checking) allowed for ethical and appropriate co-construction of the restorying.

In spite of knowledge of the topic through the review of literature and professional background, which is recommended by Kim (2011), and experience of semi-structured interviewing, I had no experience of narrative interviewing before the pilot exercise.

Therefore, I was concerned that the thick and rich data sought to address the research questions might be scant. This was not the case, as the two pilot participants shared interesting stories that demonstrated their personal values. In addition, the verbatim pilot interview transcriptions provided an ideal opportunity for trialling the proposed analysis approach. This proved effective and allowed connections to be made. This connection-making involved approaching the analysis in different ways. The analysis results were represented in a table, followed by a paper exercise where the analysis was visually represented and then connected together. Coming at it using a multi-faceted approach meant that the richness could be extracted from the data (Nasheeda *et al.*, 2019).

As the pilot interview/analysis process progressed, thought processes developed and I became more confident and familiar with the material. The interrogation of the transcript became more reflexive as I imagined myself as the narrator and heard their voice again (Elliott, 2005). Returning to the transcript two weeks later so that I came back to the data fresh, I undertook a repeat analysis which reinforced the original values elicited. I noted that there was the addition of power for one pilot participant, relating to discussions around finance.

A one-hour peer debriefer meeting with Polly took place on Microsoft Teams after the pilot exercise was completed and was recorded. This added to the rigour of the project. We discussed the use of words in the restorying and their appropriateness. It became apparent that I needed to reflect on my own values as they were evident in the conscious and unconscious choices I made in the writing of the stories (Hill, 2006). This resulted in an entry in my research diary, used as a reflexive tool to allow focus on the experience of being a researcher (Nadin and Cassell, 2006; Browne, 2013). I noted that it was important to consider my values of self-direction (independent, choosing own goals) and how this aligned with Tanya's narrative. Following this meeting, pilot participant Tanya was sent the restoried paper with a request to respond within seven days. She returned the email the same day saying that it all was fine.

4.4 The interview process

As the intention of the study was to hear stories about participants' lived experience and gather rich, qualitative data, a small number of participants were sought. Due to COVID-19, England was in its third lockdown, with universities mandated to teach

online, except where courses required specialist input (such as some medical courses). Therefore, an email invitation to participate was sent via Course Administrators to students in their first year of undergraduate study across four courses in the field of Academic Studies in Education. This was to avoid any possible consideration of power as I am a lecturer at the university. From this call for participants, initial responses came from 10 students. Subsequently, three of the students were recognised as outside of the Gen Z age range (although this was not discovered for one of the participants until after an interview took place). Two further requests for participants, again via the Course Administrators, did not result in further offers to take part. Given this recruitment activity, the final seven participants met the criteria and were scheduled for the first of two online interviews using Microsoft Teams.

Following the successful pilot exercise, communication via email was undertaken with each participant to establish rapport and break the ice prior to the interview day, acknowledging that building relationships is critical in narrative research (Josselson, 2007). This approach initiated the start of relationship building, echoing the relational approach used in narrative inquiry and the concept of space and place (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000) that is usually the common ground of the campus, but in this instance was a shared understanding of the challenges of being in the virtual space while being uniquely connected through the joint experience of the lockdown. The welcoming communication email (Appendix B) was followed by an email the day before the interview, asking the participant to think about the short stories they might want to tell in response to the introductory questions (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) which were:

What is the beginning of your story of that time (when you decided you were coming to university)?

What reasons helped you decide to come to university?

Who was significant in your decision and why?

Did anything change during the time before you came to university and how did that make you feel?

Just before you began university, what were the things that mattered to you about being a student?

4.4.1 The interview

In a qualitative interview, new knowledge is created as research data through the social interaction of the interviewer and participant (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). In a narrative interview, social interaction is a critical aspect (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). In this study, because the data collection takes place over two phases (in the participant's first and third years of university), developing rapport was imperative, in order to encourage continuing participation (Elliott, 2005). As an experienced lecturer making connections with students is an essential part of my work, and the previous semester's blended learning approach meant that skills and experience in online relationship building had been developed. Additionally, I was aware of 'Zoom Fatigue' (Bailenson, 2021), and specifically the 'excessive amounts of close up eye gaze' (Bailenson, 2021, p. 1). Bailenson (2021, p. 1) also describes the challenge of continually seeing oneself on screen as 'increased self-evaluation', and I mitigated this by blocking my thumbnail image with the volume display to reduce distraction, enable focus and remain in the moment with the participant. This strategy was added to the checklist for the participants.

It was important to listen and respond carefully during the narrative interviews. A podcast series on deep listening (Trimboli, 2021) refreshed my skillset and emphasised the importance of being focused and interested. Josselson (2007) contends that it is possible that some stories may be emotional as the participant shares and explores, and therefore, an appropriate response was rehearsed to illustrate understanding and empathy in the online space (Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016).

After welcoming each participant on Microsoft Teams at the agreed time there were a few moments of conversation to build the relationship. As I have a standing desk and teach this way online, I stood for the interviews. I chose to wear my LGBT+Q+ Allies lanyard to demonstrate my inclusive-self and I wore a plain t-shirt to try and denote a less formal approach to my position as lecturer. The intention was to diminish the power imbalance and develop social interaction, a challenge of interviews (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Cresswell and Poth, 2018). The rationale and purpose of the research were reiterated. Each participant was told that the recording devices were going to be started (Microsoft Teams recording and a secondary audio recording on my phone, which is password protected, called *Recorder*. This was used as a back-up and to enable a first listen of the interviews away from the screen). Prior written consent via email was confirmed

with recorded verbal consent, including permission to record the interview. Each participant was asked to choose a pseudonym. They each reported that they had received and considered the questions sent the night before. I reiterated to the participants that my role was to listen to their stories. In addition, a notebook for fieldnotes was used so that I could record biographical and contextual data and ongoing points of interest (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Webster and Mertova, 2007; Phillippi and Lauderdale, 2018), so that my focus on the participant could be used to develop rapport and put the participant at ease.

The participants took themselves back to the year before they had begun university, locating themselves in that time (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Daiute and Lightfoot, 2004) as they narrated their short stories. All the participants referred to the questions sent to them and guided themselves through the interview. Occasionally, they required gentle prompting to move to the next question. Once they had finished narrating, a short break was taken as the interview can be quite intense for the participant, particularly during a pandemic when a lot of interactions were online (Morgan, 2020).

This break allowed for an immediate interpretation of notes taken that highlighted areas to seek further elaboration about from episodes within the short stories shared. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) assert that the interviewer interprets meaning during the listening phase and then uses 'ongoing ... on-the-line interpretation' (p. 195). Bold (2012, pp. 122–123) reiterates this, acknowledging that 'interpretation begins in the researcher's mind during the interview' (pp. 122-123). Additionally, subject knowledge expertise as a result of the literature review and theoretical reading, meant that second questions elicited follow ups from the participants (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). For all participants this was always a shorter part of the interview, and more conversational. Narrative interviews need time for the participant to share their stories, and they can range from half an hour to several hours (Anderson and Kirkpatrick, 2016). Follow-on prompts or secondary questions enabled the participant to develop the characters spoken about in their stories and expand on the episodes shared (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Goodson, 2013). As such, the stories told moved inwards and outwards and backwards and forwards (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000), as participants reflected back on the year before they came to university. The second questions used after the break were tailored prompts such as: Can you tell me more about...? Can we circle back to when you told me about...? Do I understand that x value is important to you when you talked about...?

As the interview ended, the interviewees were thanked for their generosity of time and the openness of the stories told. The next steps were explained as we returned to a more informal space and the recording stopped (Josselson, 2007). The interviews ranged in duration from thirty to fifty minutes, with most at around 45 minutes. This excluded the preamble and any conversation after the interview. The intention for me as researcher was to create an entry in my research diary directly after every interview, to reflect on the process. I agree with Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) who state, 'the personal contact and the continually new insights into the subjects' lived world make interviewing an exciting and enriching experience' (p. 123). Diary entries were undertaken in a timely manner, and they reflected the enjoyment of the experience and how the research questions were being answered.

As the interviews had taken place online, a transcription was created by Microsoft Teams, that provided a starting point for developing an accurate, verbatim transcription (Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman, 2020). After several careful listenings as a process of familiarisation, initially on headphones, and then followed up with viewings of the interviews on Microsoft Teams, corrections were made to the provided transcripts. The transcriptions were written without all the repeated words, 'rendering them in a more fluent written style' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 187). This process of omitting some repetition or incoherence is respectful to the participant (Czarniawska, 2004) and improved the clarity of the meaning. This was necessary because in this study I was focusing upon the content rather than focusing on the particularity of the language used. Without these amendments, when transcripts were returned to participants and they were asked to check for any errors of fact and understanding, they might have felt the need to correct it (Czarniawska, 2004). In fact, all participants were happy with the transcripts and requested no changes. The next section moves from gathering data to considering the form of analysis.

4.5 Analysis of the data

Narrative analysis is shaped by questions of meaning and social significance (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Narrative analysis investigates the story in different ways. Reissman (2008) explores, with the use of exemplars, four analytical methods including visual, thematic, dialogic/performance and structural. Through these different approaches, we look at how a story is told and what it contains.

Reissman (1993) and Bruce *et al.* (2016) describe narrative analysis as considering storylines rather than themes because they reflect better the words of the participants, weaving in and out of time, shifting and involving multiple patterns. In addition, Gaudet and Robert (2018) talk of analysing interviews and what they contain as individual narratives, and from these revealing values from the stories told. This echoes the work of Feldman and Almquist (2015), who analyse the implicit in stories and emphasise that through the narratives values can be conveyed. Holstein (2017, p. 402) states that 'narrative analysis is now a well-established mode of qualitative inquiry and is rapidly maturing as an analytic strategy and discipline'. Reissman (2008) outlines narrative analysis as important and relevant through her encouragement for researchers to construct dialogues from their analyses that are credible and authentic.

In the light of these discussions about narrative analysis, the use of narrative analysis as an approach was deemed the most appropriate way to approach the research data. The distinction of narrative analysis is that each interview is individually analysed for the lived experience, in all its layered and textured self, rather than seeking themes or broad concepts across the data set (Etherington, 2004; Reissman, 2008; Chase, 2018). This means that each interview is analysed separately. The way data were analysed, and the inductive process means that patterns emerge from this, consistencies are seen, and meanings uncovered (Gray, 2013). Numerous authors have documented their narrative analysis approaches (Crossley, 2000; Leggo, 2008; Reissman, 2008; Loseke, 2012). Additionally, Reissman (2008); Bold (2012); and Cresswell and Poth (2018) comment on the many different approaches that can be employed. For this study, a single narrative analysis approach did not meet the needs of the data or the research questions as an iterative approach was needed. Because I was analysing for values without asking the participants to state them directly, values were carefully inferred through the stories they told (Hill, Gossman and Woolley, 2023). To enable this, the work of three different authors (Leggo, 2008; Loseke, 2009; Phoenix, 2013) was drawn upon to create a rigorous and synergistic analysis tool.

I developed the three approaches into the diagram below (Figure 5) to illustrate the phases of analysis, from the first layer using Leggo's RITES (Leggo, 2008) for an initial sift of the data; going deeper with the second layer of analysis, focusing on precision (Phoenix, 2013; SAGE Research Methods, 2017); and finishing with the third layer of analysis - unpacking (Loseke, 2009, 2012) symbolic and emotion codes, considering

the more abstract meaning in the data. Although presented here as a finished model, I developed it iteratively in order to refine for rigour.

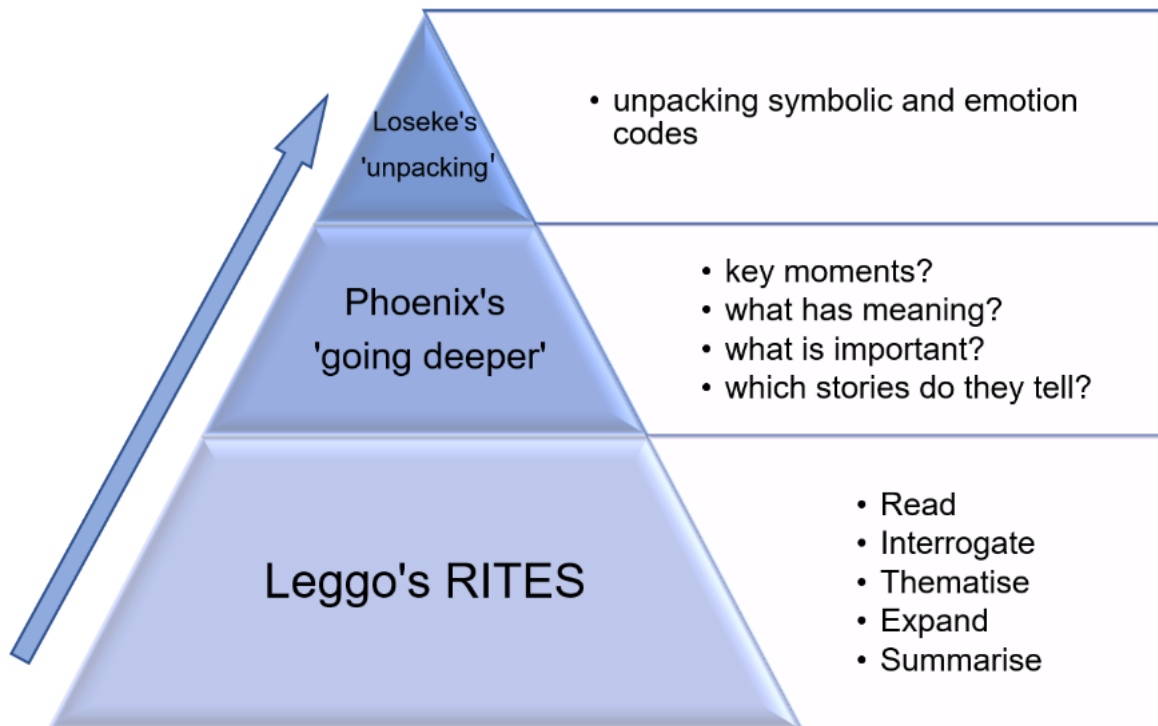


Figure 5: Triad of narrative analysis from sifting to precision, to the abstract (created from the three previous approaches by Leggo, 2008; Phoenix, 2013 and Loseke, 2009)

Reissman (1993) suggests that the analytical approach should be coherent and visible so that the movement from raw data to analysis is explicit. Thus, the triadic approach illustrated in the diagram above responded to her statement, to provide coherence, visibility, and rigour (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The diagram shows that the layers of analysis go through the three stages from the bottom of the pyramid, where the raw data are first analysed using Leggo's RITES and then through the other two stages to ensure coherence. In this study, analysis was initially by hand and on paper, subsequently presented as a table. The steps of analysis using the triad analysis are presented and discussed below.

4.5.1 First layer of analysis- Leggo's RITES.

Leggo's RITES (2008) was chosen as it is very straightforward and clear as a first sift of the data and layer of analysis. Leggo (2008) himself considers this a simplistic tool to start narrative analysis. It follows five steps:

Table 4: Leggo's RITES (Leggo, 2008, pp. 6–7).

Step one: <i>Read</i>	The researcher reads the whole narrative to gain a general sense of the story.
Step two: <i>Interrogate</i>	The researcher asks some basic questions: who? what? where? when? why? how? so what?
Step three: <i>Thematize</i>	The researcher reads the narrative again with a focus on a theme and spells out the parts of the story which relate to the theme.
Step four: <i>Expand</i>	The researcher expands on the theme by reflectively and imaginatively drawing connections and proposing possible meanings.
Step five: <i>Summarize</i>	The researcher summarizes [sic] the theme in a general statement or two in order to indicate clearly what is learned from the narrative.

The second step, *interrogate*, involved extracting words and phrases from the transcript in different colours that related to each of the questions (who? what? where? when? why? how? so what).

Interrogation allowed for reordering of the narrative, so that episodes recounted could be connected to other episodes in the same interview where relevant. As this was a short story interview (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) defining boundaries of the year before coming to university (September 2019 to September 2020), analysing the data for 'when' allowed a chronological re-presentation. This chronological ordering of the story allowed for clarity even where the participant had moved in and out of episodes during their narrative (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

Steps three and four, *thematise* and *expand*, involved reading the transcript while looking for the meaning that the participants had implied either overtly or through the behaviour they described in their story or episode. To aid this process, Schwartz's values theory (2006), drawn as a diagram with expanded terms showing related behaviours linked to the core values, was used to infer values from the narrative (see Appendix C). Jungian archetypes (explored fully later this chapter) were identified and recorded as well. This was undertaken by relating the characters described by each participant to a diagram of Jungian archetypes (see Appendix D). The values and archetypes were recorded in a table. This first sift of the data is demonstrated below (in Table 5):

Table 5: First layer analysis using Leggo's RITES (Leggo, 2008).

Time on recording	<u>Transcript</u>	<u>RITES- Leggo – Interrogate. Who? What? Where? When? How? So what?</u>	<u>RITES- Leggo- Expand and Summarise</u>
04:18	<p>So, before I came to Johnster I had already got my place so I didn't have to do any applications within the year from 2019 to 2020. Because I decided, "Just don't apply straight away", but then I had my form tutor to help me write the application, I had some help from a nurse at the hospital and they helped me as well and the application was done. I had it confirmed as soon as I got my grades in my Level 3 childcare, which is really good. And then from the September 2019 I had started working in a nursery- Redfields nursery in Showley on Marsh. After getting my Level 3, who I trained with as well for the placement part of my course, and I was working in the baby room with the little children, which was really nice. And that helped me a lot with becoming a lot more grown up, I guess a bit more mature and I didn't fuss over things as much as I did when I was a younger. I've noticed that change from coming to university, how being actually older, things that maybe matter to the 18-year-olds don't really phase me as much. I notice that gap, which is quite interesting to see.</p>	<p>Form tutor</p> <p>Nurse at hospital</p> <p>Writing application for university</p> <p>Working in a nursery</p> <p>At college/ hospital school</p> <p>A nursery</p> <p>As soon as I got my L3 Childcare grades</p> <p>Year before</p> <p>Helped by others</p> <p>Becoming more grown up</p>	<p><u>Expand relating to Jung Archetypes and Schwartz values:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the value of <i>self-direction</i> as independence is sought through the application to university and starting work.

4.5.2 Second layer of analysis- Phoenix's Going Deeper.

The second stage of narrative analysis used the work of Ann Phoenix, an experienced narrative researcher in the field of 'psychosocial, including motherhood, social identities, young people, racialisation and gender' (Phoenix, 2021). Phoenix (2013, SAGE Research Methods, 2017) recommends asking deeper questions of the narrative, which became subheadings on the analytical page: what are the key moments? what has meaning or what has importance? and which stories are told? These questions were drawn from Phoenix's work and when the process of analysis began, it was clear that the questions about meaning and importance were connected. Therefore, in this study, they became one question. The third subheading - *which stories are told?* - began to organise the narrative into clear episodes. Phoenix's questions gave clarity for the structure of the restorying.

This was first recorded on paper (Figure 6). On the example shown the three key questions are underlined and then bullet points give responses to the questions under each:

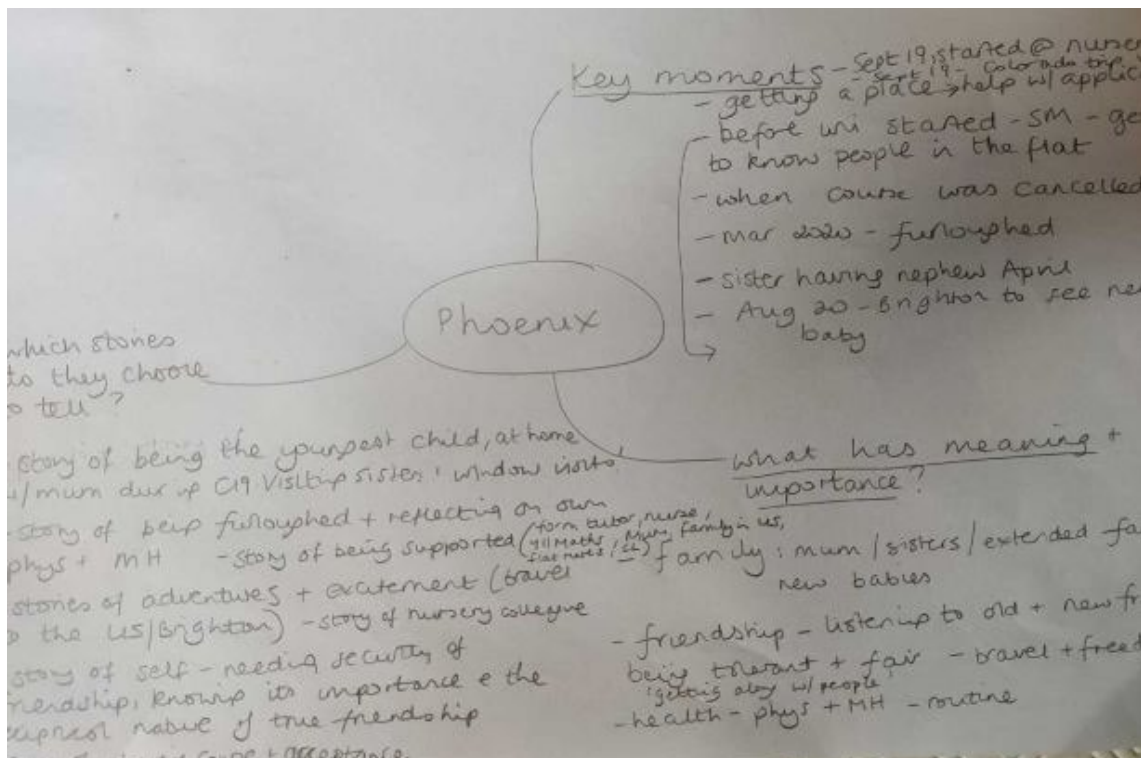


Figure 6: Paper analysis using the second layer of the triad (Phoenix)

These were then transferred onto the next column of the analysis table.

Table 6: Second layer analysis using Phoenix's questions (Phoenix, 2013; SAGE Research Methods, 2017)

Time on recording	Transcript	RITES- Leggo – Interrogate. Who? What? Where? When? How? So what?	RITES- Leggo- Expand and Summarise	Phoenix- Q1. What are the key moments? 2. What has meaning? 3. What is important to them? 4. What stories do they choose to tell?
04:18	<p>So, before I came to Johnster I had already got my place so I didn't have to do any applications within the year from 2019 to 2020. Because I decided, "Just don't apply straight away", but then I had my form tutor to help me write the application, I had some help from a nurse at the hospital and they helped me as well and the application was done. I had it confirmed as soon as I got my grades in my Level 3 childcare, which is really good. And then from the September 2019 I had started working in a nursery- Redfields nursery in Showley on Marsh. After getting my Level 3, who I trained with as well for the placement part of my course, and I was working in the baby room with the little children, which was really nice. And that helped me a lot with becoming a lot more grown up, I guess a bit more mature and I didn't fuss over things as much as I did when I was a younger. I've noticed that change from coming to University, how being actually older, things that maybe matter to the 18-year-olds don't really phase me as much. I notice that gap, which is quite interesting to see.</p>	<p>Form tutor</p> <p>Nurse at hospital</p> <p>Writing application for university</p> <p>Working in a nursery</p> <p>At college/ hospital school</p> <p>A nursery</p> <p>As soon as I got my L3 Childcare grades</p> <p>Year before</p> <p>Helped by others</p>	<p>Expand relating to Jung Archetypes and Schwartz values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates the value of <i>self-direction</i> as independence is sought through the application to university and starting work. 	<p>Q1. Finishing sixth form without university or a job - a toxic place.</p> <p>Homophobic treatment at the nursery - a toxic place.</p> <p>Finishing the two-month training at college.</p> <p>Leaving the nursery.</p> <p>Q2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fitting in and being accepted. having good mental health working with children getting a job/ apprenticeship

Phoenix's questions related to the aim of this study and allowed for extraction of themes relevant to the research questions. Phoenix was appropriate for the second layer of analysis because of the precision of her questioning and the clarity of her approach.

4.5.3 Third layer of analysis- Loseke's unpacking.

Further interpretation of the raw data came through the final stage of analysis, which involved a specific focus on certain words and phrases used by the participant. Donileen Loseke has undertaken narrative analysis of the choices made with language (Loseke, 2007, 2009, 2012; Loseke and Kusenbach, 2008; Kusenbach, Loseke and Director, 2013), specifically symbolic language choice and emotional language choice. She refers to these as symbolic codes and emotion codes. Symbolic codes are the commonly held and understood expressions used in narratives of identity, recognised in stories as well-known terms such as the good/bad mother (Loseke, 2017). Emotion codes relate to how one feels when reading a text, referred to as 'cultural ways of feeling' by Loseke (2009, P. 498). Both symbolic and emotion codes were appropriate

to use to support the technique of restorying the participant's narratives, so that meaning and voices could be unpacked from the narrative. Emotion codes 'are sets of socially circulating ideas about which emotions are appropriate to feel when, where, and toward whom or what, as well as how emotions should be outwardly expressed' (Loseke, 2009, p. 497). In my interpretation, emotion codes are about using the external to understand the internal. Symbolic codes occur in all stories individuals narrate and are connected to emotion codes (Loseke, 2012). Distinctively, I established that symbolic codes can be used to connect Jungian archetypes in the analysis as they signify systems of ideas or meanings. Meanwhile, emotional codes inform values and appropriate behaviours (Loseke, 2009). As Loseke explains: 'The contents of symbolic and emotion codes are not fixed or agreed upon' (2009, p. 501) and therefore they are interpretive and semiotic, whereby signs and symbols used in stories denote meaning. In practice, this involved further re-reading the transcript for words and phrases that could be identified as emotional, or symbolic. This involved interpretation of more abstract words and phrases from the data. These were written on paper (see Figure 7), and then typed into the final column of the table (see Table 7). Key phrases and vocabulary elicited from the transcripts are listed under the two headings of symbolic and emotion codes.

P4) Florence Loseke Interview 1 Feb 2022

Symbolic Codes

- workup in the nursery helped me grow up + mature
- difference between 18 + 19 y.o. (August babies)
- 'education is more important'
- always wanted to get the ^{fuller} stu. exp
(massive trip to stay in halls)
- leaving home to work + wash for urself.
- degrees help w/ jobs - look after the world - otherwise it won't be as good for our future ch.
- at uni you just need to get along w/ everyone for that one yr.
- sister Covid Police - In not really that spiritual but like asking qs.
- got to get out of the village
- Humans have their theories ^{there's a massive world to see.}
- exercise helped with MH - so to wake up to actually do.

Emotional Codes

not being able to see them, hold them (3 nephews born in lockdown)
we can't see him. we couldn't touch him.

nun v. apprehensive about f. going to uni: 'you can come home even w/ weekend'

praise for the nurses + drs
excited to start uni.

Matters most to have confidence

- relieved to be furloughed at 1st,
- then bored. Just hard.
- stressful - changing course

Figure 7: Paper analysis using the third layer of the triad (Loseke)

Table 7: Third layer analysis using Loseke’s symbolic and emotion codes (Loseke, 2009).

Time on recording	Transcript	RITES- Leggo – Interrogate. Who? What? Where? When? How? So what?	RITES- Leggo- Expand and Summarise	Phoenix- Q1. What are the key moments? 2. What has meaning? 3. What is important to them? 4. What stories do they choose to tell?	Loseke- symbolic and emotional codes:
04:18	<p>So, before I came to Johnster I had already got my place so I didn't have to do any applications within the year from 2019 to 2020. Because I decided, "Just don't apply straight away", but then I had my form tutor to help me write the application, I had some help from a nurse at the hospital and they helped me as well and the application was done. I had it confirmed as soon as I got my grades in my Level 3 childcare, which is really good. And then from the September 2019 I had started working in a nursery- Redfields nursery in Sowley on Marsh. After getting my Level 3, who I trained with as well for the placement part of my course, and I was working in the baby room with the little children, which was really nice. And that helped me a lot with becoming a lot more grown up, I guess a bit more mature and I didn't fuss over things as much as I did when I was a younger. I've noticed that change from coming to University, how being actually older, things that maybe matter to the 18-year-olds don't really phase me as much. I notice that gap, which is quite interesting to see.</p>	<p>Form tutor</p> <p>Nurse at hospital</p> <p>Writing application for university</p> <p>Working in a nursery</p> <p>At college/ hospital school</p> <p>A nursery</p> <p>As soon as I got my L3 Childcare grades</p> <p>Year before</p> <p>Helped by others</p>	<p><u>Expand relating to Jung Archetypes and Schwartz values:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates the value of <i>self-direction</i> as independence is sought through the application to university and starting work. 	<p>Q1. Finishing sixth form without university or a job - a toxic place.</p> <p>Homophobic treatment at the nursery - a toxic place.</p> <p>Finishing the two-month training at college.</p> <p>Leaving the nursery.</p> <p>Q2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fitting in and being accepted. having good mental health working with children getting a job/ apprenticeship 	<p>The sixth formers who didn't talk to Teagan. (SC)</p> <p>Unsupported, unpopular, mental health up and down. (EC)</p> <p>The only one not to go to uni. (SC)</p> <p>Toxic places (SC)</p> <p>"I feel like I'm crying." (EC)</p>

Loseke (2012) reiterates the point, noted above by Reissman (1993) and Cresswell and Poth (2018), that analysing narratives can be a challenging and contested field, and she recommends using a range of strategies. Hence the development of the triad approach detailed. This three-layered approach enabled holistic analysis (Elliott, 2005) and this fitted appropriately with the aims of the evaluation undertaken. The analysis of each individual participant’s story involved a lengthy and systematic approach that was rigorous and responsive to the research aims. The bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach enabled meaning-making appropriate to the study. Ultimately, this resulted in efficacious data tables for each participant, including all important data. This was complemented with the inclusion of Carl Jung’s theory of the archetypes, discussed below.

4.6 Implications for narrative analysis of Carl Jung (1875-1961)

Jung studied the human mind, and his most important concepts were the collective unconscious, the contents of which are the archetypes (Jung, 1991; Carter, 2011). Jung (1991, p. 42) defines archetypes as 'definite forms in the psyche which seem to be present always and everywhere'. The narrative analysis strategy proposed for this study has some resonance with Jung's conceptualisation of the archetypes and the collective unconscious. Linking to the participant group for this study, Gen Z, archetypes are also referred to by Strauss and Howe in their generational theory (Strauss and Howe, 1991, 1997), explained below.

The collective unconscious has a universality common amongst people, potentially showing commonality within a generational group, with Carter (2011) reflecting that Jung's view was that the unconscious is a vast sea of the human mind for all people to flow in and out of. Likewise, Rickes (2016) refers to 'generations in flux' in her article of the same name. In it, she considers Gen Z as exhibiting different values than previous generations, while also noting that we cannot typify a whole generation. Rickes (2016, p. 26) reviews the generational theory of Strauss and Howe (1991), specifically 'the cyclical nature of generational archetypes' and positions Gen Z as 'another Adaptive archetype and the analogue to the Silent Generation'. As a consequence of Generation X parenting and teachers who have instilled their values, Gen Z will emulate the Adaptive archetype of the Silent Generation through their social conscience and associated behaviour as reformers (see Introduction for a fuller explanation of Gen Z). In accordance with the cyclical pattern of Strauss and Howe's updated (1997) generational theory, they categorised Gen Z as the archetype of 'The Artist' (Strauss and Howe, 1997). This refers to growing up in a time of crisis, a definition that has moved beyond the impact of the 2008 financial crisis and the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11, 2001, to a generation impacted by COVID-19. However, Jung (1991) describes archetypes as being within us and very personal, noting that individual behaviours can be associated with different archetypes. This contradiction between generic events and individual responses is reflected, once again, in the question of generalising a generation. Accordingly, this can be countered through listening to individual accounts of what it is to be a Gen Z young person.

Jung refers to literature when explaining about the archetypes (Jung, 1991), making the connection with narratives, fairy tales and storytelling. In this narrative research project, participants have told their personal stories and illustrate these with examples

of their behaviours. This storytelling activity is, therefore, an opportunity for presenting characters or archetypes. For example, we know what is meant in stories by characters such as the wicked stepmother, ugly sister, beauty/beast, fairy godmother and use these characters in our own storytelling. Whether through nature or nurture we implicitly know what these mean as these archetypes are a form of cultural shorthand. In support of Jung's theory, Flynn and Black (2013) assert that an archetype is a human universal, and an unconscious idea, stating that humans act based on these archetypes. The authors include the trickster, the lover, the divine child, the shadow, the magical animal, the nurturing mother, the witch, the law-giving father, the devil, mandalas, trinities, judgement, heaven, hell and atonement as archetypes (Flynn and Black, 2013). This is explained by Jung: 'The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its colour from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear' (Jung, 1991, p. 5). During the narrative interview, thoughts and memories are consciously retrieved, while the interviewer/future analyser recognises that these are viewpoints from personal perspectives. In this study, the analysis process exposed certain Gen Z archetypes from the recent generational literature (Seemiller and Grace, 2016; Seemiller and Clayton, 2019; Duffy, 2021; Katz *et al.*, 2021).

The archetypes are not simple and rational, but they transcend through dialogue and expression of experience. Forms of archetypes were revealed by the participants as they narrated their stories and spoke about characters that are important to them. The challenge is that the research is of individual stories and therefore individual people, whereas Jung's thesis is that there is a universal consciousness that is inherited and exists. Despite this contradiction, behaviour patterns have a generic nature to them. This connects with the idea of Schwartz's universal values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz, 2007), discussed in Chapter Two, considering that while a person's values are personal to them, there is a selection of universal values from which ones' personal values aligns. Jung's concept presents a selection of archetypes from which a person can refer to when telling short stories from periods of their life.

An example of research using Jungian archetypes is a study focusing on how Gen Z consumers interact with brands by Woodside and Sood (2016). Gen Z are prolific consumers of content published on the Internet and via social media (Trevino, 2018), and in the context of COVID-19, online use increased (Global Web Index, 2020). In Woodside and Sood's (2016) research, they collected stories about different consumer

brands from the internet, written as blogs, and interrogated via content analysis, then linguistic analysis. They found archetypal thinking reported as being common among consumers. Therefore, it was potentially a way that participants in this study would represent themselves and the characters in the stories they tell during the narrative interviews, and so it was important to be aware of during the analysis stage.

To illustrate this, in Flynn and Black's (2013) study, layers of analysis were used, which is similar to the analysis approach developed and used for this study. Their analysis revealed emergent archetypes, which they shared with participants through member checking (Flynn and Black, 2013). This was undertaken with relation to the theory by Jung that 'unconscious structures underlie human behaviour and experiences and can be represented by various archetypes' (Flynn and Black, 2013, p. 58). These representations are fluid and this was demonstrated in Flynn and Black's (2013) study even within an interview. Therefore, recognition of this fluidity in an individual interview is recommended.

4.7 Restorying

Restorying the transcripts can be used with a narrative approach as the analysis process continues (Crossley, 2000; Cresswell and Poth, 2018). When used, these restoryings pay homage to the experiences told by the participants, and the questions the researcher has repeatedly asked of the data (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; and Caine, 2012). In their 1990 paper, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) refer to restorying and giving voice to the participants. They say that restorying happens when the voices of both the participant and the interviewer are heard, and new meaning is made:

Narrative inquiry is, however, a process of collaboration involving mutual storytelling and restorying as the research proceeds. In the process of beginning to live the shared story of narrative inquiry, the researcher needs to be aware of constructing a relationship in which both voices are heard. (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p. 4)

The intention in this study is to understand the perspective of the participant and the experiences they have had, allowing their voice to be heard at the forefront, as explored in studies by Clandinin and Connelly (2000); Goodson *et al.* (2010) and Holton and Riley (2014).

Ollerenshaw and Creswell explain how to represent meaning and sequence the narrative using a restorying approach:

Restorying is the process of gathering stories, analyzing [sic] them for key elements of the story (e.g., time, place, plot, and scene), and then rewriting the story to place it within a chronological sequence. Often when individuals tell a story, this sequence may be missing or not logically developed, and by restorying, the researcher provides a causal link among ideas. In the restorying of the participant's story and the telling of the themes, the narrative researcher includes rich detail about the setting or context of the participants experiences. (Ollerenshaw and Creswell, 2002, p. 332)

Arguably, this approach enabled me as the narrative researcher to bring the story to life and create an interesting and understandable text for the reader to engage with. The process undertaken to move from data analysis to restorying is explained below.

After the analysis and interpretation using the triadic approach, the next stage involved creating a coherent restorying (Crossley, 2000). The restorying is told by the researcher about the experiences of the participant and has a beginning, middle and end (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Ollerenshaw and Creswell, 2002). Although the interview of each Gen Z student had focused on the year before coming to university, some participants felt it was relevant to refer to times before this to provide a context for their story and therefore the starting point was sometimes before September 2019. The middle of their stories related to springtime 2020 and the COVID-19 outbreak, and the end was in their final year in 2022. Cresswell and Poth (2018) and Nasheeda *et al.* (2019) explain the restorying process as involving the researcher taking the transcript and imposing chronological sequence (akin to chapters) to the transcript by fitting it into a framework that makes sense. Therefore, the restorying framework enabled movement of the transcripts into a story with a beginning, middle and end, referring to Connelly and Clandinin's (1990) concept of time, place and scene. To this end, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) refer to the researcher as a crafter who is analysing logically.

A key aspect of the restorying process is the researcher deciding upon what form of framework to use. Crossley (2000) speaks of the author's lens influencing the restorying, while Connelly and Clandinin (1990) write of three ways of restorying narratives: broadening or generalising; burrowing by concentrating on the events and associated feelings; and exploring the meaning of the story. In this study, a combination of burrowing and exploring the meaning was used so that focus could be on the lived experience of events told and what the values were within them. Each individual restorying began with a very short biography of the participant to provide

context. This approach is used by Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p. 11), who suggest a 'narrative sketch' at the beginning of the restorying to provide context and overview for the reader. Cresswell and Poth (2018) note that narrative research is fluid and changing, and there is not one approach to restorying. The approach selected for restorying in this study echoes the style used by Biesta and Tedder (2007) who represent the data in their study by commencing with a short biography and then summarising the stories told chronologically with the use of illustrative quotes from interviews. Biesta and Tedder (2007) examine the life course of their participants and analyse the data for context and temporality. A narrative researcher looks to examples of writing that they like (Cresswell and Poth, 2018), and these restoried accounts resonated with me as readable and believable. The retold story is chronological and regularly revisits the research question or theme and is therefore most suitable (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012).

The restoried accounts were sent to participants as part of the collaborative approach for the second stage of member checking (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Goodson, 2013). In response to the second stage member checking advocated above (Clandinin and Josselson, 2012; Flynn and Black, 2013), one participant asked for a factual change and all other feedback was very positive of the process and the outcome. Connelly and Clandinin explain the role of the researcher as they use the restorying approach:

People by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience. (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p. 2)

This relates to decisions made about the data analysis procedure before collecting the data, creating a focus so that the stories told could be organised chronologically (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) advocate that restorying occurs in the head, during the interview itself. In this study, I was listening and taking some notes during the first part of the interview, and then I undertook some initial interpretation during the planned break (as previously mentioned), before prompting the participant during the second part of the interview to expand on stories they had told in the first part.

Significantly, restoryings are a distinctly different approach used in narrative analysis and the technique is particularly appropriate to address the research questions. The approach is summarised by Reissman: 'The investigator works with a single interview at a time, isolating and ordering relevant episodes into a chronological biographical

account' (2008, p. 57). Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p. 7) note that this individualised approach is a 'challenging task', but 'when done properly, one does not feel lost in minutia but always has a sense of the whole'. Inevitably this means that the individual and unique voices are reified through the restorying technique (Mishler, 1986; Reissman, 1993; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Czarniawska, 2004; Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2018). Arguably then, it is this synergy of the authorial voice of the narrative researcher and the authentic voice of the student participant that results in a readable text that works to address the study research questions.

Having explored restorying in the previous section, it is important to recognise some of the limitations or considerations of this approach. Male (2016) stressed that it is important to recognise ones' own bias as the researcher during interpretation.

Analysing and representing data as a restoried piece which only echoes the author's position would show bias. Thus, as well as member checks for credibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, 1986), Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to *plausibility* and write: 'A plausible account is one that tends to ring true. It is an account of which one might say "I can see that happening"' (2000, p. 8). Here the researcher, the participant and the reader should read the restorying as true or sincere.

In addition, when reading the restorying as part of member checking, participants may feel that they have been misrepresented in the re-writing of their narrative (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012, p. 326). The restorying is the 'creation of further meaning' (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p. 9) but this can be difficult, as stories can be retold and they can develop in different ways. In consideration of the transformational possibilities of restorying, the reader takes on an important role (Crossley, 2000; Nasheeda *et al.*, 2019). The analyst aims to represent the voices of the participants through the restorying (Reissman, 1993) with the intention that it 'resonate(s) with their intended audiences' (Cresswell, 2013, p. 206). This was how they were written for this study, inviting readers into the collaboration, 'in other words, let readers contribute to making meaning out of the stories' (Leggo, 2008, p. 6).

4.8 Summary

In this chapter the process of gathering, analysing and representing student stories has been discussed and evaluated as the best way to garner data to answer the research questions. In doing so, I have explored who owns the stories I have been grateful to listen to. A rationale for the participant sample and data collection has been provided -

Gen Z students who shared their insights through online narrative interviews. These student stories were gathered at a unique time during a global pandemic. In light of the specific limitations of the national lockdowns, the first round of data collection had to be online. This method was reviewed thoroughly. The chapter then considered the pilot exercise which clarified the questions used in the subsequent data collection phases. The research questions and the application of methods, particularly at the analysis stage, thus enabled restorings to be constructed. Putting the student participants at the heart of the study allowed me to explore their values at both the beginning and the end of their undergraduate journey and ascertain any changing values. The chapter then explained and justified the bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach, using the work of Leggo (2008), Phoenix (2013) and Loseke (2012). The analysis process also included consideration of Jung's archetypes, a framework that added richness and storylike quality to the techniques employed. Converging these analysed data into a restored piece was the finale to the analysis stage and this technique has been outlined.

Chapter 5. Student stories

This chapter presents the data from the narrative short story interviews, analysed and interpreted into restoryings, and supported with verbatim quotes carefully selected to illustrate the values that the Gen Z students spoke about. The names used are pseudonyms chosen by the participants. All other names of people and places are also changed. Following each pair of restoryings from the two points, there is a commentary for each Gen Z student, that expands the interpretation of their stories.

The chapter is in six sections, one for each participant. Within each section, the restorying from the year before they came to university is followed by the restorying of their undergraduate years. The last part of each section presents a commentary on changing values between the two restoryings (and therefore between the two time points), addressing the research questions. To maintain the chronology of the stories, a time stamp from each interview is given in brackets after each quote, to identify the point in the interview when the narrative has been drawn upon to illustrate values. The date of each interview is given in the opening paragraphs for each participant. Further response to the research questions is also presented in Chapter 6 where the data, literature and research questions are discussed.

5.1 Florence

5.1.1 Florence - the year before university

The first remote video interview was conducted with Florence on 12th February 2021. At the time she is a first-year undergraduate student undertaking a full-time single honours degree in Education Studies. Florence has older siblings. She is 19 years old and gained her Level 3 Childcare qualification, working in a nursery before she began university in September 2020.

Florence had already secured a place at university with help from her form tutor, and hospital teachers and a nurse in the hospital school she attended for some treatment when she was still at college. The hospital staff are seen as 'the Caregiver' (Jungian archetype) and are highly praised by Florence as significant in getting her into university:

I was very lucky to be on a phenomenal ward. I cannot praise the nurses and doctors anymore. They deserve all the credit they get, they're amazing and there's a hospital school and hospital school helped a lot with my application,

helping me apply and they knew what the right words were to use (Interview 1, 36:26).

Demonstrating the drive for independence and the value of self-direction, Florence wrote her application with support and gained a place. When the original course was cancelled, after a little cry, she realised that the new course had more opportunities and breadth. Florence is unsure of her future career, and values stimulation and a varied life, commenting that *'there's a lot more job opportunities and different routes to go down'* (Interview 1, 10:29).

Florence showed determination to attend university, and an enthusiasm for having *'that fuller student experience'* (Interview 1, 08:26). This strong self-direction was endorsed by friends and her sister, who had also attended the same university. However, due to being in a relationship, her sister commuted. Conversely, the goal for Florence to become more independent was key. Florence was very keen to stay in halls and have the security of friends around her:

I guess having that experience of going into halls; you're more likely to make new friends. You've got people in the flat. You've got the people above and below you and the friends that your flatmates make so that made me a lot more sociable and more independent (Interview 1, 09:08).

Friendship is a common thread in Florence's story of the year before university. She shows benevolence through her quest for true friendship and loyalty. She expresses how critical it is to the university experience, commenting that if you do not make friends *'you're not gonna get the most out of your degree or your social life'* (Interview 1, 15:38). Reflecting on her expectations of the year ahead, Florence stressed how important it was to her to get along with others in the flat, including friends of friends. She felt that this was key to her even if this was just for the first year, until choosing who you want to live with or if you want to commute from home. She reflects on her mum's advice to tolerate others, even if you do not get along.

Florence's relationship with her mum is revisited throughout her story and her role as 'the Sage' (Jungian archetype) is evident when the family cannot attend Great Auntie's 100th birthday party in the United States of America:

So, it was my auntie - great auntie's - 100th birthday while I was doing my exams in the May, so unfortunately, we couldn't actually go over for the party because my mother said the education was more important. So, I had, so I did my exams (Interview 1, 05:50).

The value of conformity is displayed, honouring elders and being obedient to her mother's viewpoint. Mum is very apprehensive about Florence going to university and

offers security and safety when she says to Florence, “You may struggle, you can come home every weekend if you want” (Interview 1, 11:36). Mum as ‘Sage’ reappears in the story when she offers advice to Florence:

So, when I came to uni, my mum gave me two rules like ‘always ask for help.’ And ‘get enough sleep.’ So I feel like one of the main things that mattered to me was always asking for help (Interview 1, 14:20).

These areas are both described in episodes from Florence’s stories. She recalled a bad maths teacher that she did not get along with. Fortunately, the next maths tutor was with her all through year 11 and Florence managed to achieve in the end. This developed her confidence and self-respect so that she could direct her own pathway to success, through having the confidence to ask for help when it is needed.

Unfortunately, sleep was an issue in the spring and summer before university. Florence had been working at a nursery since September 2019 in the baby room. She is self-reflective about this time, noticing herself growing up and maturing and being less fussy about things. This sense of confidence was important because there was some perception of being a target at the nursery, because she was young and learning. Some criticism was made about how Florence worked, and it had an impact, with Florence expressing, ‘*At times they were not very nice to me and I had times coming home - I was quite upset*’ (Interview 1, 19:49). Self-respect (the value of self-direction) was sought in this environment but was affected by the behaviour of more experienced staff. So, when the first COVID-19 lockdown occurred in March 2020, and Florence was furloughed, there was an initial sense of relief:

So, to begin with, I know when Boris first made the announcement it was gonna be like I think like six weeks, he said. Obviously, we all knew it was coming and I was quite relieved, I guess, is the word, to get the break (Interview 1, 18:58).

However, the lack of routine and boredom meant that Florence contradicted her values of self-discipline and self-respect and her schedule was irregular:

So one day I may skip breakfast, one day have breakfast at 11 or I may go to my sleep schedule was all over the place as well. I... I was getting... I guess... I got... I got over-tired some days and then I got emotional. I guess that was lack of sleep. I worked from eight originally, I worked eight ‘til five. So I was getting up about 6:30 and I was going to bed at like 10:30 ‘cause I was so tired and that changed. I guess it was between midnight and 2:30 (Interview 1, 21:28).

Florence also shares her experiences to illustrate the importance of good health - both physical and mental. Sitting under the core value of security, Florence begins to run

during her period of furlough and also starts a four-week online exercise class, having a positive impact:

It made me fitter, more healthy and gave me something to get up to do. And I did running as well, which was really good, I'm not fast or anything. But it was nice to get out of the house and I guess that helped me with my mental health just getting out, running, walking, doing this exercise video. Sometimes I would do it outside when it was nice, I would do it inside, and I guess it just made me more positive. As a person, if I hadn't done this exercise, I guess maybe lockdown would have been very different. But I feel like exercise helped a lot with that (Interview 1, 34:54).

The impact of COVID-19 restrictions on mental health are also illustrated when Florence tells the story of her nephews. Three new babies were born to Florence's siblings during this time. Florence and her mum missed out on being with them and '*not being able to see them, hold them*' (Interview 1, 08:09) due to the strict restrictions at the time. The first nephew was born in April and is the first 'Innocent' of the time for the family (Jungian archetype). Importance is placed on the value of security - both in protecting each other's health and keeping the family secure during this challenging time. Florence's sister was also anxious, '*She was Covid police as you call it. Yeah, like she was on edge the whole time*' (Interview 1, 22:34). When they were allowed to do window visits, they even brought deck chairs so they could sit, but Florence's niece did not understand what was happening and became upset. This also affected Florence and her mum, so they stopped visiting for a while. This illustrates how Florence showed responsibility and loyalty towards her family, exemplifying the value of benevolence.

When Florence and her mum had the opportunity to visit her older sister, she turned again to her value of health and security:

We went down to... that was one of the few times we managed to get out of the village over lockdown, we went to Southsea and visited my older sister who has a little boy as well. So we got to see him, hold him, 'cause I guess we had a break in lockdown. It was good for my mental health. I got to get out of the village. I got to see the beach and the beach makes everything better. So that raised spirits, and I was a lot happier (Interview 1, 24:03).

The value of stimulation is evident here, with Florence acknowledging the importance of a varied and exciting life and her love of travelling and nature. This was also apparent when she spoke of her trip to the United States in September 2020. Showing herself as 'the Explorer' (Jungian archetype), Florence tells the story of finally visiting her great aunt in Colorado:

They, they took us and we went to um... Colorado up the mountains, and then they were such amazing hosts and they took us for a few days in New Mexico as well. So we got to experience the Spanish culture (Interview 1, 06:19).

These adventures give an insight to values of hedonism and enjoying life, deepened by the opportunities experienced. Florence continues expressing a curiosity for travel and excitement. Recalling a break in the lockdown, she states, *'But, when I got the chance to go down to Southsea, I was like "Right I'm off. Just go,"* (Interview 1, 41:19).

Florence concluded her story talking about the environment and changes and the importance of us looking after the world for future generations, showing the value of universalism.

Through this reflection on the year before university, Florence has displayed many values - with security the most prevalent. This ranges from her own health (both physical and mental) and the health and safety of her family (including the wellbeing of her niece, sister, mum and the babies), to having a sense of belonging among university flatmates and within her extended family. Florence respects her mother and listens to her advice. Sparkles of desire for a varied and exciting life, and experiencing new friendships and cultures through travel, colour Florence's story of this time. It is however, tempered by COVID-19 restrictions and limitations of movement. Florence's self-direction value is strongly tethered in spite of this, as she chooses her goals for her university experience and leaves open doors for future possibilities.

5.1.2 Florence - the undergraduate years

The second remote video interview took place on Microsoft Teams on 6th October 2022. Florence is now in her third and final year as an undergraduate student undertaking a full-time degree in Education Studies. Florence stayed in her university flat during her first year, going from seven of them, to four, to just two, as people left to go home due to COVID-19. In year two she moved into a university house in a group of five.

Florence tells the story of her first semester at university, and how excited she was to meet everyone, because this was a main part of the university experience. But for Florence, there was no proper Fresher's week, or opportunity to mix and get to know people. The restrictions of COVID-19 meant that freedom was controlled, and Florence could not go out to drink or dance or get to know people. When they went out, it was a

10 o'clock curfew and home. You couldn't even go upstairs or downstairs in your flat. In fact, socialising meant you were breaking COVID rules:

We were very caged up. Like we could try and socialise, but then you are A breaking COVID and B you've got that risk of getting fined. Like, I know people who racked up thousands which isn't... one of my friends, she had a girlfriend at the time, and she was going in and out of each other's flats and then racking up the money, which isn't ideal, but it was just... the security within the halls of residence. There's security and if security heard noise, they would just come straight in, march into your flat. They would fine you, or they'd tell you off, like we had... At the very, very start of Fresher's we literally went in to say hello to the flat opposite us and security ran straight up and were like, "Out". Luckily, it was a warning for us, but if we had done that multiple times, I think we would have easily racked up fines and it was very difficult socially (Interview 2, 12:10).

As indicated previously, Florence values enjoying life and meeting friends, but due to COVID-19 people moved out of the flat to do their course online from home, leaving only Florence and one other girl from the January. Florence valued her independence, but recognised that she needed self-discipline with online learning:

I could have easily stayed at home because I wasn't an essential course like paramedics or physios... It was easier for me to be at uni 'cause I get distracted quite easily... They were trying to get us to engage and 70% of us would have been in bed in our pyjamas, just not, not focusing (Interview 2, 08:49).

Despite having a group chat, Florence found it nearly impossible to get to know her course mates and feel a sense of belonging in the group, and they wouldn't turn their mic on because they didn't know each other. She felt that they were:

Just kicked to the side and had to hope for the best and meet everyone in second year (Interview 2, 16:16).

Florence and her flatmate supported each other and went out walking or into town. But sometimes her flatmate wanted her to 'go away for a bit' (Interview 2, 17:06) and Florence got upset because friendship and a sense of belonging were so important to her. To help with this, she joined the Drama Society. But connecting online with strangers was hard:

It is hard to connect online with people you don't know, but it's easy to speak to your friends online, like FaceTime them for hours and hours. You know them. But either you don't know, you can't like connect, or like get to know them properly (Interview 2, 18:41).

During this time, Florence experienced a fall out amongst her big group of friends from home over text. Her value of benevolence, shown through the importance she placed on friendship and loyalty, was tested. She decided to not get involved and stayed

friends with two of them. At the same time, she was spending time with her family and facetimeing her sister a lot, indicating that family security mattered to her.

Reflecting on experiences of sexuality shows a particular significance for Florence. This is explained when, during the second semester of her first year, she was challenged by her mental health:

Second semester. I kind of did the opposite second semester - I distanced myself from a lot of people. I had a... I went through like... I, I think I was... I feel like I was really like ... I think like ... first year, just going back on that. Obviously, I said I was really sociable. I... I did a lot of stuff. In second semester of year one I kind of distanced myself from everyone. I was very... I was really like struggling with who I was as a person. And what I wanted, I... I was struggling with like sexuality and I feel like I pushed every single person away from me and it was when I figured that out at the end of second semester. That was when I was like I went up again (gestures with hand). Like I was on a high first semester. And second semester went down. And then I went up. By the end, I was like up again (Interview 2, 24:18).

During this search for inner harmony, Florence valued privacy and sought a sense of belonging. She decided to tell her closest friend and speak honestly about her sexuality. The value of security is shown through Florence's focus on health and sense of belonging as she comes out to a friend. Self-direction is valued, through wanting privacy as she struggled with her sexuality and self-respect as she confides in a close friend. Universalism shows in her search for inner harmony, and benevolence is valued in the shape of friendship and honesty.

Florence described how, during the summer after her first year at university, she was in a relationship, having met online. At the same time, Florence worked at a COVID vaccination site, also spending a lot of time with family and friends from home. Security is evident as a value here, including family health and health due to the pandemic:

That was the first like one of the first proper holidays we'd had since COVID. That was really weird, like getting on a plane and everything, and I think we had to wear masks actually, so. It was. It was really lovely. Like just to chill, have some downtime (Interview 2, 23:32).

Again, freedom and pleasure were valued. Florence summarised her first year, showing wisdom as she stated:

I hope anyway you would never get another first year like we all had (Interview 2, 36:28).

Moving into year two of her degree, all the restrictions were lifted, and Florence reflected on the hedonistic effect:

We were let out our cages (Interview 2, 10:21).

She felt that they were more like year ones, and they enjoyed Fresher's week, experiencing it all as if they were first years. The values of hedonism and stimulation were at the forefront at this time. This was coupled with meeting everyone on the course:

We can meet our course, like we could actually, socialise with everyone and it was just... it was so good just to be back. Yeah, it was amazing to be... be able to like, socialise and learn to be in the environment where we could actually sit at a table and have a discussion. Without putting us in breakout rooms (Interview 2, 30:11).

Florence's value of a sense of belonging is supported as cliques are formed in year two and friendships were made.

However, the amazing start to the year changed because:

I got - to put it bluntly - dumped. So... so then like I slipped (Interview 2, 37:10).

The interplay between the hedonism and stimulation of Fresher's week and her mental health explains how security - through positive health, and benevolence - via friendships, helped Florence present her manifesto below:

I think sometimes in uni you let your emotions get the best of you. In and as any student, I feel like sometimes we're expected to in a certain way, like, manage our feelings but there's lots going on with assignments. Personal stuff like health, like, sometimes I think we do let our emotions get the best of us and we don't... and we kind of push them away. And I think we need to speak more openly about how we're feeling (Interview 2, 37:30).

Friendships were a key part of Florence's university experience and very important to her. She made some of her closest friends in year two, on her course and with two friends who she formed a little group with:

We spent all our time in one of the girl's houses like, like a little dream trio. They are the type of people you'd go to for anything and they, whether they laugh or they cry with you. It's a good team and we did a lot together over the summer as well, which was really good. We went to Falmouth, we went to Brighton (Interview 2, 40:17).

Recalling stories of her second year prompted Florence to show the value of achievement, as she recognised the difference between first and second year and her grades sliding. Her mum, the wise 'Sage' (Jungian Archetype) offered advice. Florence reflects on the impact of socialising and meeting new people and spending time on her assignments. She also values her health and thinks about focusing more on it:

I would like to get back into it. I keep saying I'll get back into fitness. I'll get another gym membership, but that's the thing. It's just a case of once you've done it once, you'll be there every day. But it's the actually going to actually do it (Interview 2, 42:14).

The transition into third year allowed for Florence to express her values of social justice and equality, by telling the story of experiences on her course:

In the course that I do, we talk about a lot of controversial topics like our gender, sexuality, and race, for example, disability. I don't like when you're in a position like that. It's very... you almost feel scared to say your opinion. I, like I say, like we have some very outspoken people. There are some very outspoken people within my class. So if someone disagrees with me, I'm just, or if I... if I feel like I disagree on this point, I'm like, it's hard to say it. My... my hands shake, I'm not gonna... I feel, you feel almost scared. But it is also very important to express your values, otherwise we're not gonna learn. If we don't talk about your points, you do have that back-and-forth chat with someone, whether it's a lecturer or one of your peers. We're not actually going to improve as students and extend our learning at all (Interview 2, 43:39).

These issues are important to Florence, and she pushes herself and is curious and independent, showing self-direction. This is linked to her focus on achievement, expressed in episodes she shares from her third year, and how she feels that 'even though it sucks' she has expressed her values in a lecture. She presents stories showing that self-direction matters, as she is choosing her future and finding it challenging:

It's now like it's time to actually knuckle down, get the grades and get a job. And it's like, it's scary. It's terrifying (Interview 2, 47:31).

Still her friends' matter, and friendships help her learn and succeed, showing benevolence, hedonism and stimulation are still important as Florence joins the Football Society and has great fun on socials. The narrative circles back to the importance of health as she again speaks of the need for managing one's own mental health by taking a break from learning and giving your mind a break.

As Florence reflects on the last episode of her journey, she makes peace with COVID-19, accepting her portion in life and being forgiving, expressing:

Everything does happen for a reason. Like if we'd all been in like normal (uses air quotes for emphasis) halls, we would have made, we would have been let loose. I, I could have made a completely different group of friends or, I may have lived with different people, which means I wouldn't have gone on a night out with certain people and met other friends that I'm now close with, so I don't... none of it... it would have been... I don't know if my group, I don't know whether even my group of friends outside of my cohort. Like my housemates, the football lot. I don't know whether I would have been... I would have known them. I definitely would have seen them outside. I could have been best friends

with them without the COVID experience as well. But you don't know. You know, no one knows, like, so many things could have happened if that wasn't a thing. It's hard to think about (Interview 2, 54:10).

Here we see that friendships are a cornerstone of the student experience for Florence, as she is forgiving about the tumultuous start of her university experience and considers the positives it has brought into her life by way of the people she has met and befriended. Benevolence, in true friendship, is at her core.

5.1.3 Commentary on Florence's restoryings with response to the research questions

The following commentary addresses the research questions (RQ) using the restoryings from Florence.

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that have impacted their values before coming to university?

Having support from her form tutor and hospital teachers enabled Florence to be independent and choose her goal to start university. When her chosen course was cancelled this allowed her to show stronger self-direction and independence. Significantly, her sister was influential in Florence's choice of living in at university rather than commuting. This was linked to how strong she valued friendship and influenced her wanting to live in halls. Alongside these benevolent values, her mother's advice impacted her commitment to making friends and being willing to ask for help.

The story of unfair treatment at the nursery had an impact on Florence and encouraged her to focus on self-respect. Unfortunately, the irregular schedule caused by being furloughed impacted her health. It then became a focus for Florence, who began to look after her physical and mental health. Meanwhile, the conflicting challenge and joy of visiting her new nephews during COVID impacted on Florence's values of health and security. Finally, being able to visit Southsea and travel to Colorado had a positive impact on her mental health and was stimulating, supporting her values of curiosity and a varied life.

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

The COVID-19 restrictions were impactful on Florence's values because she wanted to enjoy an exciting, varied time and socialise and meet others. Instead, restrictions

affected her freedom. At the start of her degree, online learning meant that Florence's desire to meet her course mates and feel a sense of belonging had to wait until she was in year two. She then had many experiences that enabled her to make several friends and have great fun, demonstrating her hedonistic values, including feeling like a Fresher at the beginning of year two. She particularly recalled experiencing the struggle of her sexuality, and this impacted her mental health, and meant she distanced herself for a time from friends. But ultimately, speaking honestly about her sexuality brought her a sense of security and self-respect.

Breaking up with her partner impacted her health, but meeting new friends who became very close impacted her sense of belonging and reiterated how important true friendship is to her. In her third year, newer values of social justice and equality are expressed following experiences of open discussions during lectures.

RQ3: What do the student stories reveal about their changing values?

In Florence's first restorying, the value most mentioned is self-direction. This is exemplified when she shows independence and self-respect in the year before starting at Johnster University when she recognises that the nursery is not treating her right. In her second restorying, independence and self-respect are still values that Florence speaks of, but they are supplemented with freedom due to the unique restrictions of COVID-19.

Certain values appear in Florence's stories more in the second restorying (during her university years). Firstly, security, when before she started university, Florence focuses on her health and family, whereas during her university years this is supplemented with the quest for a sense of belonging. Due to the circumstances of the pandemic, this is exacerbated by the delay in making friends and spending time with course mates and others. Secondly, the value of benevolence is a storyline that appears in a number of episodes. This is evidenced in both the first and second restorying, when friendship is important to Florence. There are a few mentions that show she values friendship when she tells the stories of the year before university, but this has developed considerably during her university years when friendships come into her stories very many times. One can conclude that this is a major value for Florence. Thirdly, universalism seems to be a value that has changed during her university years. While unity with nature is mentioned in the year before Florence started at Johnster University, for example when she talks about visiting the beach, it is not until the third year that she expands upon her enjoyment of unity with nature and talks about equality and social justice issues.

There are many times when Florence spoke of her hedonistic desire to enjoy her time at university, both when anticipating the experience and during the university years. There is also a very small focus on achievement. To conclude, there is an interesting change when talking about conformity, expressed when listening to her mum before she comes to university, but not mentioned again during her university years.

5.2 Ann

Ann - the year before university

The first remote video interview was conducted with Ann on 17th February 2021. She is a first-year undergraduate student undertaking a full-time joint honours degree in Education Studies and Sociology. Ann wanted to study Sociology, but on an Open Day visit was introduced to the idea of Education Studies. She was excited by the degree choice. Her brother - who is 18 months older than her - is already at a different university studying journalism. At the time of the interview she is 18 years old (turning 19 the following month) and works on Saturdays at a private foster company, with children with severe behaviour problems.

Ann always knew she wanted to work with children, but she was not sure whether she wanted to go to university. However, apart from work in nurseries, she felt that few apprenticeships were available in this field. Reflecting back to her school and her experience in year 11, Ann described being taken to lots of different career fairs by her school. She recalled walking around them and getting an idea of what she wanted to do when she left school. She shared her thoughts about this, acknowledging that enjoying life was really important to her:

So I always start with the advice of 'just do what you enjoy and then see where that leads you' (Interview 1, 05:34).

This quote illustrates the importance to Ann of the values of hedonism and stimulation, as motivators in her life. These are further informed by her brother and his positive experiences at university. He is presented as a role model, the Jungian archetypal 'Hero'. Ann's connection to him shows the importance of family to her, recognising the value of security in her life. When Ann visited him at his university, she heard about all the things he was doing and the different people he had met:

It's kind of starting a new chapter and he made lots of different friends and people that you wouldn't usually have in part of your circle. For example, people that are a lot older than you, or different people from different countries. Just loads of new opportunities, all different clubs, but also the academic work as well. He's doing journalism, so it's very interesting. All of the things that he studies and the interviews he does and reading his articles. I just thought I definitely want to go into some higher education as well (Interview 1, 20:50).

Ann's story identifies the new chapter in her brother's student experience and reinforces to her the excitement and direction she wants to emulate. Whereas the examples above show her desire for a varied and stimulating life at university, self-direction is also evident, as Ann chooses her own goals and pursues her own journey into undergraduate student life. Additionally, she is focused on meeting new and different people - making friends - and this shows benevolence as a value. Seemingly, observing her brother's experience is impactful. Ann is clear about her own ambition, as well. This manifests as a focus on achievement, with recognition of the importance of the high qualification of a degree to further her career prospects:

Being able to go to university really opens up lots of different career paths and different opportunities that I wouldn't otherwise be able to get if I didn't have it. It's like for my job, working with the foster children. The reason that they let me work for them is 'cause they knew that I'm doing my degree in Education Studies and Sociology. So as I progress, I can kind of like progress with them, which was, which is really good as well (Interview 1, 06:46).

Ann attended Open Days and taster lessons at Johnster University and her chosen pathway 'really jumped out at me' (Interview 1, 03:35), which led her to the position, 'So I thought, "definitely that's what I want to do"' (Interview 1, 03:53). During these days at the University, completed in the January of 2020 - just before COVID-19 hit - Ann was able to confirm that she knew which course she wanted to do. After her undergraduate three years, this would then lead to a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). Prioritising achievement and self-direction, Ann did not want to delay her studies at university in spite of the complexities that COVID-19 potentially presented. There were few options available to her and her friends if they waited a year, as coffee shops and similar opportunities were not open to obtain jobs in. Fortunately, Ann was committed to the course she had chosen. But it did play on her mind:

Luckily, we'd managed to do all of the open days and the taster lessons before. I think that the last ones were like the January before coronavirus became a massive problem, and that definitely did make me think, kind of, How's this gonna work? (Interview 1, 06:03).

A welcome distraction from COVID-19 is Ann's Saturday job at the private foster company. It is exhausting, but very busy and Ann reflects:

It's kind of like an escape from Corona or anything else, 'cause there's so much going on you're just so focused in the day when you're there as well (Interview 1, 24:46).

Clearly, her work there is motivated by her values of benevolence, shown through the emphasis on helping children and being responsible for them. Ann recalled a particular experience with an eight-year-old girl who was fine one moment and enjoying her activities but screaming and trying to hit and punch the next. Ann found that dealing with such situations was difficult, but she acknowledges how fulfilling it was to calm the girl down and break her out of the state she was in. She feels it is really lovely to see the child's progress and teach them things despite the challenges of working with children who have experienced trauma:

Every time you go, they just progress a little bit more and they just become more comfortable with you and just... you're just teaching them things to do that they haven't been taught at home, which just, kind of, gives you that sense of helping them and it's just, like, a nice feeling just watching them progress (Interview 1, 08:15).

Making a difference through her work is a key goal for Ann. She wants a varied and exciting life, highlighting the value of stimulation, and has found inner harmony (denoting the value of universalism) working at the foster company. She reflects on these two values here:

Everyone says, if you do what you enjoy, then it doesn't feel like you're working. And I really enjoy doing that sort of thing, and I'd like to be able to progress up there and do home visits and to just help the children even more. That's what I'd really like to do (Interview 1, 12:05).

This is an example of Ann's ambition in her employment and demonstrates the value of achievement. When asked about her motivation for the future she demonstrated benevolence over financial gain. She explained that gaining a degree would mean that she could take on extra responsibilities at her work such as home visits.

With her employment, there is a great deal of interaction with different people. As quite a sociable person, Ann identified that being around lots of different people was important to her too. She had seen this happen for her brother at university and commented that it was very important to her. This demonstrates the value of stimulation once again, with the drive to be with people impacting upon her having an enjoyable working life. Ann is someone who does not like to be on her own and wants

to be near her family and the security they bring. She likes being at home and values this.

Reflecting on the year before she came to university, Ann focused part of her story on her work in the foster company. This enabled her to be helpful and responsible for children who have experienced childhood trauma and consequently have severe behavioural problems. This benevolent value allows Ann to gain satisfaction and enjoyment from her work. Coupled with finding the right university degree that will enable her to progress and achieve in her future career, Ann's focus on achievement is another expressed value. This blend of achievement and benevolence is also layered with hedonism and stimulation. Ann's story returns regularly to the importance of enjoying life, meeting a variety of people, and having exciting opportunities. In spite of the interruption of COVID-19, Ann is committed to university and her career goals, demonstrating the value of self-direction. The security of her family enables her to move forward, striving for her goals.

5.2.1 Ann - the undergraduate years

The second remote video interview took place on Microsoft Teams in November 2022. Ann is now in her third year as an undergraduate student undertaking a full-time joint honours degree in Education Studies and Sociology. After returning to live at home during the national lockdown in her first year, she now lives in her university city with friends.

Unfortunately, Ann's first year was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and she felt she missed out on a lot because of it. For example, she did not have the ability to go to the campus coffee shop with people and socialising was not like normal. Ann was keen to develop a sense of belonging but at the same time health and family security were prioritised:

It was almost a surreal experience, and I would say it was almost quite lonely... I, I almost felt bad socialising with people because I felt guilty thinking, "Oh, what if I've got COVID or what... what if I'm taking COVID back to my parents?" Because I think everybody was petrified at that time (Interview 2, 20:03).

Ann evokes the memory of the first semester, acknowledging that while she enjoyed lectures and meeting new people, the threat of COVID-19 hindered her experience:

Having to sit so far apart from everybody and everybody being masked was quite a difficult time (Interview 2, 20:35).

Ann really wanted to enjoy life during Fresher's Week, and there is a strong value of true friendship that Ann returns to throughout her stories of that time. Ann recalls how she wanted to meet and talk to people, but that the experience was very different:

I went to a few Fresher's events and they were, they were in clubs. But you had to sit down at tables and if you were to move and to talk to anybody else that you didn't come with, you were kicked out. So even if you went out to be sociable, you could only sit with the people that you went with. So that wasn't a sociable experience either (Interview 2, 22:53).

One way in which Ann made friends was in halls for the first two months of university, and she also made true friends with people in the halls opposite her through Snapchat. Being curious about them and using social media meant that the friendship could fully establish:

We're in the halls here [uses hand gesture] and their halls faced like that [uses other hand to gesture a space]. And so we were looking at... we were in different buildings but we were looking at each other and we... we wrote on our window our Snapchats because we were, we were so bored and we just called them and then we just established a friendship where we just met up after that. And we thought, "Actually, do you know what? We'll... we'll live together second year." And I'm still living with them now (Interview 2, 35:01).

Ann's decision to move back home came after being in isolation twice in the first six weeks of year one. She chose to go home as that she had access to a garden and more space. This expresses the value of unity with nature and reinforces that health and family security were important. It was while reflecting on that time that Ann felt she had missed out, and she expressed that she would have loved to live in halls.

Meanwhile, during her undergraduate degree, Ann worked with children in foster care. But during the first semester of year one, she was aware of the limits upon her in the workplace due to COVID restrictions. This meant that her values of benevolence and universalism - knowing having a relationship with the child was of key importance - were stymied by the restrictions:

Any interaction I had with the child, I had to have gloves and apron and a visor on. So I think that was a physical, an actual physical barrier between me and the children, connecting relationships and everything and a lot of times it didn't work because they found it really funny and they'd peer underneath my visor anyway (Interview 2, 08:14).

That Ann was ambitious and curious to learn more in the workplace is evident from her stories, but this was hampered by being furloughed. When revisiting the episode, she acknowledged that she needed practical experience in addition to studying, showing

responsibility and wisdom. Adding to the challenges of being furloughed, the COVID-19 lockdown in semester two of year one resulted in online higher education. Interestingly, Ann accepted her position in life at this time:

After Christmas, everything went completely online, didn't it? We had no in-person lectures. And I... I think I didn't realise at the time how much I was missing out on the whole uni experience because it just kind of... it didn't really feel any different from college to me because I had some college lessons online during the pandemic (Interview 2, 07:25)

The transition into second year involved a change in Ann's story of her time at university when, in the November of her second year, an intruder entered her shared house. Security is therefore at the forefront of Ann's experience at this time. She recalled the episode:

My friend went to, she went to go to the library and I think the man must have been outside watching because we didn't have - my landlord hadn't put curtains up or anything. So in between my other friend coming down to lock the door and her leaving, he ran in and hid under this, in the cupboard underneath the stairs. And we then went out... And then my friend went to make breakfast the next morning. And there was just a man downstairs, and she ran. She ran back up and we, we just completely panicked. You know, "What do we do? What do we do?" And because we lived with a boy then, he went downstairs, and in that time the man had left. But he left his knife and it was all, it was all like, "What could have happened in a different sit...?" It's just not worth thinking about it. But I definitely... the night that, that night after we all slept in the same bedroom because we were just petrified (Interview 2, 30:06).

In spite of the impact of the intruder, whereby she could not always sleep, she was capable and wanted to achieve well. Ann focussed on being in the library and finding meaning in life as she realised her future career goals showing ambition and self-direction. Ann still had a lot of fun in second year, which she enjoyed and during it met new people. For example, Ann described how she made friends with a boy next door, who was in his third year, and learned a lot about what would happen in her third year from him. Moreover, at work, she undertook a lot of training and that helped her make choices for her future:

And so that made me decide that, "Oh, I do want to be a primary school teacher." Whereas I think when we spoke in my first year, I was saying I would... I'd like to work in an alternative provision school and because that's connected to it. But I think that has changed, as much as I love working with the children there, I think, not that I'd ever rule it out, but I think for being a newly qualified teacher, I would like to go into a mainstream classroom first (Interview 2, 13:10).

Frustrated by a member of staff at work, Ann recognises that her experience with children from different backgrounds has informed her desire to help children. She shows benevolence and independence when she supports a little boy's sensory needs, although the member of staff did not want her to:

He was struggling to sit by himself and he will try and hit the other children. And I, I, I thought, "Okay, I'm going to hold him for deep pressure to regulate him." Not in like a...not so he couldn't move but just to give him the deep pressure that he needed for his sensory needs (Interview 2, 15:40).

Ann adds to her recollection:

I was trying to stop a situation from happening because I could see that he was struggling. I knew if I left that situation that other children might be at risk of being hit and everything. So I... so I... so my values, I didn't want the other children to get hurt, but also, I didn't want to watch him struggle. I wanted to support his needs (Interview 2, 16:43).

The little boy represents the Jungian Archetype 'the Innocent' in this scenario.

At first sight, the pandemic presented many challenges but, more positively, due to commuting because of it, she made a true friendship on her joint honours course when she and her fellow student walked to the train together after lectures. Ann's curiosity about others is illustrated here:

I almost feel like age isn't a factor. I've had this conversation with that person that we're all just students, and we're just getting along and working to the same point... But I think in university it doesn't matter anymore. It's everyone's just friends together. I think that does set you up for work because you're not just with your own academic year at work. You're with all different ages and everything (Interview 2, 25:10).

As Ann moves through her third year, she voiced that balancing social life and work matters to her. In this, she is valuing hedonism and stimulation, alongside her ongoing value of true friendship. Her close relationships are important, including with her housemates. Of significance is her goal to work hard at university, and in her job, so that she can realise her ambition and aspiration to be a primary school teacher. To this end, she is very organised, and she presents as capable and independent with her studies. At this stage of her university experience, mentors such as a member of staff, who she loves working with, are important to her. Here, Ann is ambitious to learn from the more qualified member of staff who is helpful and shares her wisdom. Describing her teacher as capable and successful, she is a role model for Ann and can be viewed as the Jungian Archetype the knowledgeable 'Sage':

And she explains everything to me. I think that's extremely helpful. So, she's definitely significant because I'm not just learning through trial and error of that work with that child that day. I'm learning from her, almost the science behind why she does things (Interview 2, 14:43).

Ann finishes the interview looking forward, while focusing on her goals and ambitions:

I'm just looking forward to all of the memories that I'm gonna make and just all of the good times we're going to have, but also focused on my work and getting my degree, that's what I really want (Interview 2, 36:59).

5.2.2 Commentary on Ann's restorings with response to the research questions

The following commentary addresses the research questions (RQ) using the restorings from Ann.

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that have impacted their values before coming to university?

Ann's stories of the year before she came to university show that she was indecisive about pursuing higher education but was inspired by her older brother and his positive experiences. This illustrates how important family - and the security this brings - is to Ann. Her experiences of meeting different people and doing interesting things impact her values of hedonism and stimulation as Ann wants to enjoy her life and have variety in it. Additionally, her decision to go to university is motivated by the recognition that it will open different career paths and opportunities, showing that achievement, including ambition, is an important value to her. Ultimately, attending Open Days cemented her decision to start her undergraduate degree, in spite of COVID-19, and this reinforces the value of self-direction, specifically choosing her own goals.

During the year, Ann was working on Saturdays at a private foster company which was varied experience (the value of stimulation) and allowed her to show her values of benevolence as she helped children that she was responsible for. The episodes from her work that she shares from this time show that she is capable (linked to the value of achievement), but also that her work enables her to have an exciting life, highlighting the value of stimulation.

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

There are several experiences during Ann's time at university that impacted her values. To begin with, the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic meant that her value of security was at the forefront. This was talked about in terms of the quest for a sense of belonging, which it was difficult to find in her first semester due to restrictions such as masks and sitting apart. This was then exacerbated by universities moving to online teaching in semester two of her first year. Furthermore, her concerns about catching COVID and taking it home to her parents show a heightened value of family security and health during this extraordinary time.

In the meantime, several experiences show Ann's strong value of true friendship (benevolence) and her desire to enjoy her life as a Fresher. An example of this is how Ann's value of curiosity encouraged her to reach out through social media to make long lasting friendships. This is an illustration of how, throughout her university years, friendship was incredibly important to Ann. Her relationships with course mates, neighbours and housemates are examples of experiences where the value of true friendship mattered.

When reflecting on her job in the foster company, Ann drew upon some experiences that impacted her values of benevolence and universalism. She spoke of caring for the children but being hindered by COVID restrictions and also by being furloughed.

A significant story that Ann shared identified a critical incident which impacted her values in her second year, elevating security once again. She experienced an intruder breaking into her home. Although affecting her sleep for some time, Ann was undeterred and remained committed to her work and the training offered. This embedded her values of self-direction as she formulated career goals and remained curious and independent about her future plans to be a primary school teacher. This is a demonstration of the importance of the value of achievement to Ann.

Spoken of several times in her story are the values of stimulation and hedonism, as Ann sought to experience good times, make memories and enjoy her life as a student.

RQ3: What do the student stories reveal about their changing values?

In Ann's first restorying of the year before she came to university, her stories show that she valued stimulation and was hoping for a varied and exciting life at university. She talked about her brother's varied and fun experiences and how he met a range of people. In her first restorying Ann's brother was important in her decision-making to come into higher education. In her second restorying, she mentions hedonism and

stimulation, in her first year talking about how these values were stilted by COVID-19, to talking about having a balance of social experiences and work in her third year.

Where Ann shows a change of values is in the area of self-direction and achievement. Within her first restorying she chooses her own goals when she decides to come to university after being indecisive, and this shows ambition. However, during her university years, Ann provided examples of times when she had shown independence, curiosity, and a focus on goals. This is coupled with many examples of her showing ambition and capability which are all part of the value of achievement.

It is debatable whether the episodes from Ann's university years, which illustrate the importance of the value of security, reveal that these values have developed. The critical incidents of the global pandemic and having an intruder with a knife break into her student house, could be relevant to that point. In fact, it seems to be the case, because Ann focused on friendship and choosing her own goals to enable her to progress towards a good university degree and achieving her future career.

Of significance is the apparent development of benevolence and universalism. Ann's stories capture examples that illustrate these values very many times during her university experience, often related to friendships and her part time job, while in her first restorying, there were only a small number of stories related to these values. Therefore, they seem to have changed during her time at university.

5.3 James

5.3.1 James - the year before university

The first remote video interview was conducted with James on 14th February 2021. He is a first-year undergraduate student undertaking a full-time degree in Education Studies and Sociology. He is 23 years old and attended a public school where university was seen not as an option, but an expectation. After considering that university may not be the right route, James took a year out and then went to the University of Benstall when he was about 19. James left the University of Benstall because he '*didn't get on with the vibe*' (Interview 1, 03:55) and re-joined the workplace. James subsequently applied for a place at Johnster University where he began in the first year in September 2020.

James' stories about the year before he began on his current course at university reveal his personal values and conviction about what matters to him.

The values of conformity and tradition are illustrated through the acceptance of the expectations from public school to go to university- James acknowledges his privilege. While the first experience at university had not worked out for James, his love of learning and knowledge-creation drew him back to try university again. He stresses the importance of the value of security and a sense of belonging when choosing a university this time:

I know Johnster is a place and I know it's quite small and a campus and a family member of mine used to run the Johnster News which is just down from St David's campus. But umm, I think what really drew me in is as soon as I sent that first email, just a, "Hello. Can you tell me a bit more?" The overwhelming help, support and friendliness I got straight away, and I think actually from that moment, that was probably about November of the year prior to starting, so the year November 2019, I thought from that moment, I knew that I wanted to go to Johnster (Interview 1, 03:20).

The welcome, guidance and passion showed by the staff James communicated with have great meaning for him and emphasise that he was prioritising his sense of belonging and his subsequent feelings. Being hooked in by a passion for children's learning demonstrated by the Course Leader, shows the value of benevolence through development of a goal that has meaning in life. James had found a place where he knew himself:

I can learn here. It's not chaotic (Interview 1, 06:40).

There is a strong emphasis on communication with academics leading up to starting at university. Their role is 'Hero' (relating to Jungian archetypes), and the personal contact and guiding questions helped James' decision about the course to take. Meanwhile, James recognises that at his public school, there was no barrier to university. There was no memorable teacher who encouraged him to apply, it was a given. He stresses that this gave him a confidence that he could achieve as a university student, despite stepping away from higher education at 19 at his original choice of university.

The story illustrates the specific challenges of the spring and summer of 2020, when the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic meant that lockdowns and restrictions were in place. The University is viewed as the 'Caregiver' (relating to Jungian archetypes) during the Covid Crisis and the resulting A Level scandal. In the time running up to

joining in the September, James was seeking reassurance from the university that the course would proceed:

I think with the whole Covid crisis it was very anxiety ridden for everyone. We didn't know what university would look like. We didn't know what the academic staff would be like. You know? "Were any of them poorly? Did the University change?" So I think the reassurance I got from the constant updates on Covid, the uni website was very good that it just gave us an FAQ every other week, but equally as well, to me, if I had a question, what was important me was that responses were so quick from the staff that I emailed even when, because obviously, not only do we have Covid, we had the A level scandal where lots of people were mis-graded and I remember trying to telephone and the telephone lines weren't working with people working from home and I just thought, "Nothing's going, nothing is going to work." And actually, the responses to emails were so good and reassuring and as well that moment, I think once I got my timetable in my mind, I'm now a student. It is all very real. I think that's what I was looking for. That was the most important thing to me, was that confirmation (Interview 1, 08:46).

While this critical time is intensified by the uniqueness of the pandemic, the value of self-direction is demonstrated through the desire to be a student. James notes that online communication (emails, online timetable, FAQs on the website) is a saviour when 'phone lines were not working because people were working from home. The need to know what was going to happen was critical and ultimately provided a grounding:

I think university just returned a bit of glimmer of normality that in Covid and in the crisis leading up to before we all started actually did provide that opportunity for - it will all look better, if that makes sense. Bit of normality in the routine and structure (Interview 1, 32:33).

James undertook employment with a local charity for a whole year prior to going to Johnster University. The charity provides outdoor opportunities to disadvantaged children. Universalism appears here, with the desire to educate, stemmed from working with disadvantaged children. The recognition of equality of opportunity further highlights the importance of the value of universalism, with a 360 degree turn from his own experience of schooling and recognising that:

Perhaps there was a chip on my shoulder or something like that, but I never really understood the difficulties of disadvantaged young people and how much impact just quality time could take. So I can remember going there and thinking, "Oh they're just going to be naughty kids and we're just going to let them run around." That sounds awful, but it's how I felt, and actually from day one when I saw how happy they were, how engaged - you could have told them anything and they were just sort of lapping up this knowledge. I thought, "this has a real impact. There is something here." It's that Eureka moment (Interview 1, 15:27).

James' acknowledgement of the privilege he had experienced was emphasised when talking to a work friend one day about school days. When they spoke of school trips (James had enjoyed skiing and backpacking for example at the public school he attended), the friend mentioned being '*lucky to go to Cadbury World*' (Interview 1, 17:54). This underlined the lack of equality of experience and opportunity for a young child in the '*circle of poverty*' (Interview 1, 17:40). James expressed that people of privilege should '*get off the high horse*' (Interview 1, 18:18) and help break the circle. This growing value of universalism was channelled at work, as James recalled an important conversation with the manager at the local charity that made him consider choosing his future goals:

I remember being sat down with the chap that runs it and he just said, "What do you want to do... with direction?" And he sparked my want to educate, but the whole 'it can be reformed. It doesn't have to be pen and paper in a classroom.' So I think, on reflection, he was probably more significant than I realised. I think at the time I just thought, "is he trying to just move me on?" But actually, I think he got that cog working (Interview 1, 11:30).

This was complemented with a conversation with his mother, which was a significant moment of acceptance about James studying a different area at university. Although the public-school peers were already in successful careers, she understood his passion for teaching and education and offered her full support. The security that came from family support was considerable for James.

The sense of belonging that enabled a secure feeling about re-entering higher education was enhanced through following social media accounts of current students. It seemed that here was a welcoming, inclusive place where James could be himself:

I very quickly discovered with Johnster that it's not, it's about the individual, not about who you identify as or what you identify as, and I think that was nice leading up to it that I followed a lot of the sort of social media accounts to see what the pupils were saying. They've got every, they've got all the acknowledgments of different people. They, it's this very open and inclusive and I thought that's quite nice leading up to it. It was nice to see that actually I could be welcomed as a bit of an older person or as someone that had a different background to other people (Interview 1, 18:50).

Through reflection on the year before coming to university, James illustrated the value of universalism, recognising social justice and equality and considering the need for a world at peace. He acknowledges his personal drive to campaign for the underdog and keep asking searching questions. This is presented within his story alongside the values of security and self-direction, with his public-school legacy unveiling achievement, conformity and tradition in some episodes of the narrative shared.

5.3.2 James - the undergraduate years

This second remote video interview took place on Microsoft Teams on 14th November 2022. James is now in his third and final year as an undergraduate student undertaking a full-time degree in the joint honours' subjects of Education Studies and Sociology. After commuting from the family home and studying online for part of his first year, James decided to move to Johnster in the November at the beginning of his second year, where he resides at the time of the interview.

James tells the story of starting at university during COVID-19. Alongside the challenges of starting during a pandemic, he quickly realised that the learning environment of one subject he had chosen was not working for him. He explained this when he talked about the learning environment in Education:

We would chat and debate and we would be quite friendly and jovial (Interview 2, 03:38).

This then contrasted with the other subject he had chosen where he reflected that it was not working for him:

Probably because of the technical nature - quite a lot of headphones in, sort of islands rather than sort of a continent type of thing (Interview 2, 03:50).

James' quest to be on a course where he felt he belonged demonstrates the importance of security to him, and this is coupled with a curiosity about others, connected to the value of self-direction.

Further, there is a strong emphasis on the desire for a sense of belonging, in that James recounts his experience of semester one of his first year when he wanted to focus on making true friendships, but this was hampered by COVID-19 restrictions:

We were sort of in person, but not the normal experience because we were masked up. Every other seat was sort of closed off and there wasn't a great time to make the connections with other people that perhaps you had in later years (Interview 2, 04:29).

This lack of security and belonging was also summarised when he reflected on his first year:

Because of COVID, we weren't necessarily part of the community anyway of the Uni (Interview 2, 04:59).

This re-expression of the importance of a sense of belonging and friendship acknowledges the importance of these values to James. The restrictions of COVID-19 created challenges, including the lockdown during semester two and the consequent loss of people from the course, specifically many of the males.

Moving into second year, the value of true friendship was still very important, with James commenting, *'We were all really keen, then, to build up a social network'* (Interview 2, 06:46). James enjoyed meeting *'parallel course'* mates and expanding upon the *'echo chamber of Education voices'* (Interview 2, 06:55). This striving for the development of true friendship and being curious about others illustrates the value of self-direction. The importance of friendship is an ongoing theme across the years of James' university experience.

While James' values are revisited during his second year, and the story of friendship persists, meeting and befriending students from another course supported his educational growth as well, because they were:

Bringing a wealth of knowledge, but also trying to work out both their internal dynamics, our internal... and then how we can work together, while because we did quite a lot of modules with the other course together, definitely on a weekly basis, but I think that really helped because I... I personally, I can say that I've got so much more knowledge of how the real world works from these people, whereas you can read a policy, but it really helps knowing someone who says, "Actually I work in that environment, it doesn't quite work like that, or this is how we interpret it". So I think it was really beneficial (Interview 2, 07:09).

It mattered to James to meet people with different views and to be able to build relationships. An increased understanding of social justice and equality is drawn from these new friendships, indicating the importance of the value of universalism. James shows he is broad-minded and curious as he meets new friends, and once he thought it was time to move to Johnster rather than commute, he focused on meeting new people with different perspectives:

So I thought, "Let's bite the bullet, move". And then I obviously had a whole group of friends then who I then started living with from other courses, so it was always interesting to hear their perspectives of things, but also I could get more involved in the society aspect of uni. So I, um, I joined the debate society and then you know this year I'm chair of it. So it sort of, I became very involved and... and yeah, I think it was just the second year was very interesting because we had so much choice which was great. But also it was the first chance that we had to really sit down and think, "What's the implication and consequence of that choice?" (Interview 2, 08:10).

As he became more involved in university life in his second year, James realised that student voice was particularly important to him, and he reflected back to his first year:

That's quite important to me that voice is heard and actioned. I don't feel our student voice was always heard (Interview 2, 09:11).

Once again, James showed that social justice and equality was important to him, and these values are reiterated when he began the role of Course Representative in year 2, enabling him to focus on student voice:

That championing of the voice. I think it's... it's the justice side of me. I think, although that sounds like a grand term, I never want to think of anyone on our course or any course actually suffering an injustice. And I think it was. It's been huge for me to be able to get people's feedback and really see what the issues are because we can't say there's no issues at uni when there's... where there's people, there will always be issues, but actually being able to really empower or... or help change for the next year... (Interview 2, 10:00).

James shows benevolence as he speaks of feeling responsible as Course Representative to feedback to the Course Leader and 'have a voice in that conversation' (Interview 2, 24:18) showing determination to choose his own goals and self-direction as he verbalises that he and his fellow course mates are 'not just a wannabe teacher's group' (Interview 2, 24:18).

There is the glimpse of the value of power and social recognition when James shares that he was nominated as representative of the year. This is revisited when, during the second year, the students were invited to a conference, where James appreciated the equal position he was put in as a delegate alongside his lecturers:

We could sit there with people that were perhaps far more esteemed than us in the world of academia, but we could... they still valued what we had to say. And even though at times we may not have phrased it the best, it was definitely taken on board. And I always remember at the break, another lecturer just coming to sit with us for a bit and just asking us our views and I think it was quite nice to see that sort of dissolving of the perceived hierarchy of... of things (Interview 2, 13:11).

James' course mates are curious, and he likes to unpick ideas with them. Of particular significance, during his second year, is the relationship with Lisa, who is presented as a Jungian 'Hero'. Lisa imparts great understanding and knowledge and her wisdom engenders a broad-minded response from James, showing universalism. Lisa said to James that they, in his words:

Should never be friends on paper with (our) very different viewpoints (Interview 2, 15:35).

While James notes that Lisa is capable and influential, aligning with achievement values, he is respectful of her as he illustrates:

Very much the second year, I think, was quite pivotal for everyone, because I think we really worked out who the sort of subject matter experts were. But also we learned that while Lisa could throw out a comment and opinion, she was very receptive to feedback and to disagreement (Interview 2, 13:11).

Thus, true friendship is once again very important and certain friends such as Lisa give him meaning in life.

New learning occurred during the second year through James' involvement in the Debating Society. For example, recognising the social power of the Student Union was a new experience:

It's almost that validation, I think that comfort blanket as well, that actually you're prepared to take more risk and more opportunities because you know, you've got that protection as long as it's nothing, you know, untoward or dangerous (Interview 2, 13:11).

To deal with the challenges of university life, James and his friend adopted a benevolent position of forgiveness with the creation of a saying:

If it's not permanent, persistent or personal, it doesn't affect you (Interview 2, 13:11).

The story moves into James' third year at university and commences with an opportunity for him to pursue his value of responsibility through becoming College Representative. Previously he had been the Course Representative. This also gave him power, social power and recognition and enabled him to *'try and pioneer people's voices'* (Interview 2, 10:03). This year, relationships become more embedded, with James professing an excellent rapport with his personal academic tutor and course mates such as Ann, with whom he shares his joint-honours studies. He also spoke of Joy, from whom he has learned about himself as she has sought support from him. Once again, true friendship and meaning in life are very important in his story.

Learning from seeing others struggle helps clarify James' values. Operating as the Jungian archetype 'Caregiver,' James wants to use his abilities to support fellow students through his Representative role:

I think I'm very aware, especially coming here, that there are some people that really are struggling unnecessarily. And my thought is, "if I can talk, I think I'm very good at articulating things and it helps them. Why not do that? You've got that gift. Just do it, you know, we've got people who worry". I'm like, "Why are you worrying?" (Interview 2, 27:10).

With this attitude, James shows that he values social justice and being helpful. He is keen to represent all and shows an appreciation of equality:

You know sort of... sort of trying to give that perspective of an average undergrad student who perhaps, you know, cost of living and well-being and things like that. Maybe just giving it that voice that we're not... sort of feel we're not all in the same boat (Interview 2, 29:05).

James recalls how he has spoken to a few people about his generation and how he values social justice and broad mindedness, commenting that his generation are 'written off so quickly and easily' (Interview 2, 30:56), when actually they have a lot to say:

I think it's almost standing up to society or to people and saying, you know, "We have a really important voice. We've got really unique, you know, we've got," if I can use an example. I was chatting to a relative the other day. He said, "Well, you're not, you just sit on the M5 and glue yourself to the road." And I just said, "Why? Why is the perspective that we are all these protesting people who don't necessarily want to drive change?" I've got.... we've got people on the course who know exactly what they want to do and really want to push for that change, but for the better and the right way. And that's what means something to me. It's really getting people to understand our voices are really powerful ones, but it's also a voice that isn't necessarily going away (Interview 2, 31:01).

In the final episode of his story, James respects the views of elders, showing conformity, and sets that in a context of a search for meaning in life through a broad-minded lens. He reflects on a conversation with his parents about their school life during the Thatcher government and beyond. This then extends to the acknowledgment of his own wisdom, and self-respect for his own capabilities, influence and achievement. Now others see him as someone with knowledge and respect him for that because he has been to university and held a representative role.

5.3.3 Commentary on James' restoryings with response to the research questions

The following commentary addresses the research questions (RQ) using the restoryings from James.

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that have impacted their values before coming to university?

James' previous educational experience impacted his values as he prepared for starting at Johnster University. This meant that he placed great importance on having a sense of belonging, having attended and left a previous university. Of significance is the COVID-19 pandemic, which exaggerated James' value of self-direction. From

James' perspective, starting at university was normalising during this extraordinary time. James also acknowledged that working with a local charity impacted his values during the year before he came to university. At the same time, family support influenced his feeling of security, while using social media to make links with students before starting enabled James to learn the values of the university environment and feel that they were appropriate for him.

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

An early impact on James' values is the course he finally took. This is because of the relationships he built there, with friends and tutors. At the same time, the challenges of studying during COVID-19 restrictions exposed what mattered to James. He particularly recalled that studying alongside students from the parallel course was impactful. An important experience was becoming a Student Representative which affected James' values, as well as his involvement in the Debating Society. By his third year James experienced others' views of him, which reflected upon his self-view and enabled greater articulation of personal values.

RQ3: What do the student stories reveal about their changing values?

From the first restorying James' dominant personal value is security. Here James tells episodes from his stories about having a sense of belonging when choosing Johnster University. This is encapsulated when he tells an episode about liaising with the staff in the lead up to starting at university during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also shown when he speaks of experiencing family support for his choice of future study and career, and through his own use of social media to follow current students prior to joining Johnster University. This meant that he knew he would be welcome.

In order to understand the change or development of personal values, James' story of his university years presents a different picture. In the year before university James' stories reflect the value of universalism. Firstly, he spoke of his experience working in a local charity with disadvantaged children, and secondly he told a story of speaking to a colleague about their different experiences of school trips. Thirdly, universalism is illustrated in the way in which James reflected on his future goals, whereby he acknowledged his desire to educate differently, in order to break the cycle of privilege.

However, there is a much greater number of times that universalism is mentioned in the second restorying. According to James, meeting new friends with different

perspectives and views enabled him to express values of social justice and equality. It is here that James mentions the importance of specific friends whose wisdom and broad mindedness resonated with him. In addition, in the second interview the value of benevolence is demonstrated as he tells stories of developing friendships, finding meaning in life and showing forgiveness, responsibility and helpfulness. The combination of motivations provides many examples during the story of James' time in university that show benevolence. In contrast, when he told his stories about the year before university, he did not refer to benevolence at all.

5.4 Teagan

5.4.1 Teagan - the year before university

The first remote video interview was conducted with Teagan on 8th February 2021. At this time she is a first-year undergraduate student undertaking a full-time degree in Education Studies. She is 19 years old and lives on campus. Teagan struggled with her mental health during her GCSE and A level years and started at Johnster University in September 2020.

Teagan's stories about the year before she began on her current course at university reveal her personal values and conviction about what matters to her.

There is an emphasis on the value of security from the beginning of this time in Teagan's life, as she recounts a series of experiences that threaten her sense of belonging. Finishing sixth form without a university place or a job organised was unusual, but university was not the right place for Teagan at that point:

So by sixth form, it [mental health] was getting better and I was seeing CAMHS, I was doing a lot better and I could actually leave the house at that point. Um and I, I finished my A levels. I did alright. Not the best, but I felt that at that point I was not ready to go to university and I was the only person out of my entire sixth form who didn't go to university. So I felt like I had absolutely zero support there and I left sixth form with no plan of what I was gonna do (Interview 1, 02:35).

There is an awareness for Teagan of the norms and expectations from sixth form, but also a recognition of herself as succeeding, in spite of her mental health challenges. To finish her A levels under the circumstances was an achievement. The quest for positive mental health was paramount in the decision to pursue an apprenticeship at a nursery, with Teagan expressing, 'So I thought, "you know this is going to be fine. It's going to

be easy. I can mentally do this” (Interview 1, 03:21). Teagan’s decision to secure work at the nursery is clearly motivated by her desire for good health, reinforcing the value of security in her life.

This episode of the story promises a positive outcome. The time commenced with a month or two at a small Birmingham college for training and this was a turning point for Teagan. She fitted in with the people at college and gained a sense of belonging that had been missing from her experience at sixth form, where she had low attendance and had few friends to talk to. Her three best friends, with whom she has a close bond, did not attend the sixth form, so Teagan had experienced not being popular there and not having someone to partner with or work together with on homework. Hence this period at the college was a meaningful time that Teagan expresses:

But with this small group at college, I felt like I really fit in and that was the first time, and I don’t know, I just really enjoyed that feeling, but I knew it was only for like a month or two and the month came, and I never saw the people at my college again. I feel like I’m crying, but I’m not (Interview 1, 03:50).

On the face of it, the nursery job seemed ideal. Teagan loved working with children and had a creative background working with Brownies - inventing games and being really good with children. Self-respect is evident here, and Teagan moved into the role by choice, demonstrating the value of self-direction. On reflection, Teagan felt that the role would be easy and manageable, expressed here: *‘I didn’t feel like I was up for anything that actually required any work’* (Interview 1, 09:47). The ‘Self’ or the ‘Ego’ (Jungian archetype) are evident at this time and support Teagan’s drive for positive mental health and wellbeing.

Unfortunately, the working environment of the nursery that Teagan recalls was one of stress, homophobia, and disloyalty. She felt that the staff hated each other. Teagan was torn between her responsibility and care for the children and the impact of the nursery on her own health:

So I’d come from this toxic place to this amazing college, right back into a toxic place, and I wasn’t happy, but I put up with it for just under a year ‘cause I loved the children. I just loved them, and I think I had about seven key children, and I was staying just for them and it got to the point where they’d all moved on to their little primary schools. We’d just been through graduation and I kind of realised that I’m not enjoying this anymore. I stayed for those children (Interview 1, 04:42).

The value of security was once again challenged by this and, exacerbated by homophobic comments such as, *“You’re going to burn and then you are going to die”*

(Interview 1, 05:25). Once again, Teagan recognised the feeling of not fitting in. Not only was she the victim of homophobia, but none of the staff did anything about it. The negative impact on her mental health was huge, and she was experiencing daily breakdowns and felt at breaking point. The 'Self' or the 'Ego' (Jungian archetype) was tested. Teagan was able to look back on this time as a period of significant stress. She told her mum how much she hated the environment she was working in. Her mum can be seen as the 'Sage' (Jungian archetype) as she encouraged Teagan to leave the toxic nursery and pursue university. Teagan recalls:

I used to cry every night to my mum about how much I hated it and she would say, "You know the solution is, you just need to leave" (Interview 1, 16:25).

At this point in Teagan's narrative, her family became drivers for her finding a resolution. Teagan's sister had had a successful university experience and that laid the foundations for her to follow. In addition, her grandad wanted to finance university study for her. The family provided some security, leaning into the importance Teagan placed on this value at this time. Initially feeling that she was not mentally ready, after a few months of encouragement, Teagan demonstrated freedom and independence, choosing her own goal to apply for an Education degree. These actions can be grouped under the umbrella of the value of self-direction, evident as Teagan made the decision to move on from the nursery. She still wanted to work with children but in a place that enabled her mental health to thrive:

It seems a big thing for me. It's like I've had it when it's at its worst and I can't even leave the bed and I know full well I never want to feel like that again. And I want to make sure those around me don't feel like that (Interview 1, 24:21).

This is not only an example of Teagan's own value of health, but her desire to help others (the value of benevolence) and be part of an embracing group of like-minded people. With this in mind, Teagan reflected on the learning from her experiences of belonging and not belonging. Of critical importance for Teagan was finding a liberal and open-minded university with '*people like me, I guess*' (Interview 1, 07:00). Universalism is demonstrated through the importance placed on Johnster University to meet these expectations. Significantly, finding a number of people on Twitter who were already students at Johnster, provided the reassurance that they (Johnster students) were really nice, and this was also when Teagan '*found out really quickly, Johnster is really like... you know, LGBT positive*' (Interview 1, 27:50). This counters the negative experiences during the year before university at the nursery. Teagan felt confident that

she would be able to be herself at Johnster university after the advice she received through direct messages (DMs) on Twitter, concluding:

I just knew like, the Uni would not tolerate anything like that if it happened (Interview 1, 28:07).

The pursuit of a sense of belonging exemplifies the value of security to Teagan. This confidence and period of positive mental health was supported by her part-time job in a supermarket. Working in the early hours of the morning in the lead up to commencing study at university, Teagan chatted with other staff who were students also about to start. Once again, she felt part of a group and had a sense of belonging:

It was really nice. It's like it was like at the college again where it was new people who didn't have any notion like, "This girl doesn't do stuff. This girl skips school", stuff like that. It was kind of: "She's another student. Let's give her advice and she'll give me advice" (Interview 1, 14:03).

The second half of Teagan's story of the year before university was during the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. Teagan applied for university before the pandemic worsened, and recalls leaving the nursery as COVID-19 featured in the media, remembering everyone saying:

"It's not gonna be a big deal," so I left with absolutely no worry about the pandemic at all (Interview 1, 23:30).

Through reflection on this time, Teagan's journey has been a search for security, wanting a sense of belonging and experiencing highs and lows of different groups. This is a strong and enduring value displayed through the year before Teagan came to university. She explains her good or poor mental health and the importance of good health and this underlines the significance of security further as a critical value to Teagan. A desire to spend her university career in a space that embraces equality and her abhorrence of the lack of friendship and teamwork at her nursery workplace indicate the value of benevolence. Finally, Teagan displays self-respect and self-direction, by leaving the nursery, and searching for a university that matched her ideals.

5.4.2 Teagan - the undergraduate years

The second remote video interview took place on 13th October 2022. Teagan is now in her third year as an undergraduate student undertaking a full-time degree in Education Studies. However, after living in Johnster during her first and second year, the

opportunity arose to study abroad. Therefore, Teagan is spending her third year at a Japanese university.

Teagan begins her story of her undergraduate years in her first year, expressing:

First year of uni was more about growing up than anything else (Interview 2, 3:01).

Growing up, for Teagan, involved understanding that she was capable and independent, related to the values of achievement and self-direction. In contrast to these values, the early part of her university journey included dealing with conflict with some of her flatmates who she did not get on with. Reflecting on growing up at home, Teagan noted that she had always enjoyed social order and it was 'a bit of an eye-opener' (Interview 2, 3:24) being with people all the time:

So my sister is a lot older than me. I didn't really have her in the house when I was a kid, so it was really weird... going into the kitchen and there'd be someone my age. Just like sat at the table, someone to talk to [in her student accommodation] whenever I wanted to talk to someone (Interview 2, 3:38).

There is an emphasis here on the values of security and achievement, and this is further illustrated when Teagan's mental health began to affect her after the first few months of her first year, when her attendance badly declined:

I'd hate for people to think that I wasn't trying because I was so like pushy when I wasn't in the classes, I was just reading 24/7 trying my best to keep up with everyone at my own pace (Interview 2, 4:14).

In the second semester of year one, the national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic meant that all university teaching took place online. Teagan tells a story of how this supported her mental health and was enjoyable for her, explaining:

I actually really enjoyed online learning because it meant I didn't have to leave my house. It meant I was in a really comfortable space (Interview 2, 7:19).

She described, however, how this meant that she did not meet others on the course. This impacted her and showed that security and feeling a sense of belonging were important, and she felt that groups had already formed without her. She felt a bit ignored by them and hoped that online learning would carry on. In spite of this, learning from previous therapy enabled Teagan to cope well during COVID-19. She recognised that her mental health and emotional readiness was strong. At the same time, she was affected by conflict with one flatmate, who invited large numbers of friends into the shared kitchen for parties. With heightened awareness of health and safety due to the

COVID-19 restrictions, Teagan and her other flatmates did not like it. Teagan recalls how she reacted at the time:

I just stayed in my room usually, like I remember being too scared to even go in the kitchen to cook food. But I know the feeling was mutual among all the other flatmates (Interview 2, 10:45).

Although she did not like some of her flatmates, they made an effort to get on with each other, and only one went home during the COVID-19 lockdown. It was important to Teagan to socialise and enjoy life during the lockdowns - to be hedonistic and take pleasure in activities, but her stepdad was concerned and did not want her to be trapped at university so took her home. However, within a week she returned to be with her flatmates again:

I like cried so much they took me back (Interview 2, 11:04).

Furthermore, Teagan's desire for a sense of belonging is evident when she talked of her part-time and summer job in the sweet shop where she feels part of a community. She says that she loves the shop, and the customers all know her by name.

Moving into second year, Teagan is quite private and independent, showing self-direction. Hence, she found returning to in-person teaching challenging:

I remember being really, really lonely, I used to sit at the back of the classroom but looking back, I feel like people probably did reach out to me quite a lot because people would be like, "Oh come sit with us, come sit with us," and I'd be like, "No it's OK, I'll sit here." Umm so I can't really blame them because everyone really did try. But I think I was too in my own head about it and I like made-up my mind that, "OK. I don't wanna talk to these guys because they don't wanna be my friend" (Interview 2, 15:07).

She also thought that she got more done sitting on her own and:

For the most part, it's just like, "Get on with the work" (Interview 2, 15:56).

This shows that achievement is important to Teagan.

Her loneliness was exacerbated by living alone. Teagan had met a new friend, Helen, at the end of year one, and they quickly became true friends. Helen offered to live with Teagan, but Teagan chose to live alone. She recalls that she regretted the decision, realising that she needed social interaction. This illustrates, again, that a sense of belonging mattered to her. Although she had sought independence, Teagan realised she could have an exciting life with Helen, socialising and enjoying herself.

Subsequently, following her love of Japanese culture, they formed a K-Pop society together and socialised a lot.

To this end, Helen encouraged Teagan to be hedonistic and enjoy a varied life, for example by attending Cosplay events:

With Helen, she'd gotten me to go out so much more and in second year that was the year I started doing Cosplay events. So, I'd go to a convention. Cosplay is dressing up as a character. I'd like started going to the conventions, but not only that I was like making the costume. I was going on stage. I won awards for like performing on stage in these costumes and stuff, and I'd won tickets to go to the London national competitions, so that was like a big, big deal. And that was like, that's like Japanese culture and stuff (Interview 2, 21:41).

Teagan recalled taking part in a competition on stage. She remembered feeling like:

A timid little girl in this big poofy dress and I went on stage and I had this massive, like, Princess-style dress (Interview 2, 23:17).

On the face of it, the experience was exciting and daring. But when Teagan came first, she was motivated to do more competitions and enjoyed the 'ego boost' (Interview 2, 24:07). Here, success and capability, alongside creativity and independence show the values of achievement and self-direction are at the foreground of Teagan's story at this time.

Following this, an opportunity to build on her interest in Japanese culture presented a significant turning point in Teagan's story in year two:

A girl came in and she was telling us about how she'd gone to like Italy or something and I was like, "That's it. I'm... I'm going abroad." I just made the decision right then and there and just gone with it. I told my mum, like, "Mum. I'm going to Japan in a few months" (Interview 2, 16:55).

Teagan contemplated her goal of wanting to travel. She had always wanted to study somewhere else. Seeing Japan on the list was very exciting. However, due to COVID-19, she was told that Japan was closed, but Teagan had chosen her goal:

And I had it in my head like, "I'm going to Japan or I'm not going at all," so I was really, really lucky that they opened the borders. Oh my God. I remember this as well. We had to get all Cs on everything. Otherwise, we couldn't go. And I got a D on one of my assignments and that was like the worst day of my life, I was like crying. I was having mental breakdowns. I remember calling like a suicide hotline, not 'cause I was suicidal just because I needed to talk to someone about it. It was actually like, genuinely, the worst day of my life. And then I spoke to Crystal and she's like, "Oh, no. It's fine. You can still go." So, I'd like panicked so much for absolutely nothing. But I'm really glad that I did panic because it made me realise like how much I really, really wanted to come. It's made me appreciate it a lot, lot more (Interview 2, 18:12).

This shows that Teagan's self-direction values were strong, and that she was determined to choose her own goals and independently achieve her ambition to study in Japan. Reacting so strongly to receiving the grade D indicated how determined she was. This meant that Teagan was more engaged with university:

*I was like, I've gotta get to Japan.
It's all or nothing for that (Interview 2, 19:08).*

She was curious about Japan and excited about the varied life she could experience there. She recalled being told that she was going. It was in the last two weeks of second year:

"Congratulations. You've got a C plus average on all your modules." Even though I knew that I'd failed that one. I couldn't believe it. I was like, "Are you sure? You know, I failed one of my modules. Like, are you sure that this is arranged?" She was like, "Yeah, yeah, you're going to Japan." So when I got that e-mail saying like, you're going to Japan, that was the biggest relief of my life (Interview 2, 24:57).

There followed the challenge of sorting her visa and paperwork in a short space of time. Teagan was stimulated by the excitement of this, in spite of the pain of going to London and filling out loads of paperwork, which was tough.

At the start of the summer between year two and year three, Teagan travelled to Japan. She met other girls at the airport and they helped each other get on the plane. After a long day travelling, they arrived at their dormitories. Teagan described how there are 150 students at the Japanese university from different countries. She joined a few groups:

So we've got a little British Society- an unofficial British Society - where some Sundays we get together and we'll cook like a Sunday dinner together, so we'll bring some chickens and we'll bring some food and we'll just sit at the table, like talking about our families, talking about our unis or stuff we miss from home (Interview 2, 33:24).

This is an example of the need for a sense of belonging and at the same time shows the value of curiosity about others.

Additionally, Teagan told the story of being part of the LGBT society and chatting online with fellow members and going to karaoke together. During these times, people shared their stories:

I've always been really open to, like, meeting people, but I just never had the opportunity. But here there's like quite a big group and everyone is so excited to talk about themselves and talk about their experiences, so that's been really eye-opening. Everyone's talking about their home lives or how they realised

they were gay, or like trans, but it's just really exciting to hear their stories (Interview 2, 34:10).

Teagan shared the experiences of lessons in the Japanese university. In the first week there, they were taught about Japanese values, one of which is *ichigo ichie*. She explains:

It just means, like, treat every moment like it's the last and treat everyone like they're your friend because you don't know when you're gonna see them again. All the lecturers here, all the Japanese students, they are so friendly. Like, I've never met friendlier people, they're so welcoming (Interview 2, 28:35).

With these lessons, Teagan experienced a different way of thinking about her own values. She recognised that at Johnster University she was very self-conscious and jealous. She shows the value of honesty as she considers this. In her third year, Teagan is choosing her own goals, living an exciting life and making new friends:

I'm more open to making friends now. Uh, I will make friends with literally anyone I see in the hallway. We always have, like, a little chat and like people come up to me, they say like, "I like your outfit," and then you know, "I'll compliment them back and then we'll walk to class together, even though we've met a few minutes ago (Interview 2, 29:37).

Studying a module on Japanese hospitality, she was taught about being respectful.

Teagan comments that as a result she is nicer and is friendly to strangers on campus.

This shows benevolence but also respect for tradition and politeness. Nevertheless,

Teagan recognises that Japanese values are very different to those she has from her life so far, and part of a collectivist culture, but she still feels quite an individualist. She

likes to express herself through creativity in fashion, writing for the university journalism team in Japan. This excites her and allows her to choose her own goals and be curious.

Teagan summarises her story of her time at university by reflecting on her values:

I think I'm kind of still getting in touch with my values. I'm just starting to develop them now. It [Johnster University] got me started on the journey, but I don't think they were my values. I think they were the values of people around me that I'd be like, "Yeah, they sound about right," and I kind of said they were my values, but I don't think they really were. But here I feel like the values I've got at the moment, they're very authentic to me (Interview 2, 35:36).

5.4.3 Commentary on Teagan's restoryings with response to the research questions

The following commentary addresses the research questions (RQ) using the restoryings from Teagan.

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that have impacted their values before coming to university?

A key element within Teagan's stories is when she had opportunities to really fit in, impacting the value of security. Initially this was on a short college course, where she felt a real sense of belonging. Unfortunately, this was contradicted when she started work at the nursery. The toxicity of the setting impacted her, but she felt responsible for the children in her care. She did not feel safe or secure in the environment and she was concerned that her mental health would be impacted if she stayed there.

Fortunately, her family were encouraging and supportive of her quest to find a place where she could belong, providing security. This meant that she could follow her own goals and apply for university. The value of a sense of belonging was endorsed at her part time job in a supermarket, where Teagan met other staff who were about to start university and felt part of a group. This illustrates how opportunities for true friendship are a value that impacted Teagan at this time.

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

Starting university during the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Teagan. Firstly, her security was compromised by one flatmate who threw parties in spite of the rules and restrictions. Secondly, online learning - due to the national lockdown - impacted her sense of belonging, because she felt that groups on her course formed without her. More positively however, the flatmates made an effort to get on with each other and enjoyed hedonistic activities which Teagan took great pleasure in.

Of particular significance was her friendship with Helen. Not taking up the offer to live together in year 2 enabled Teagan to realise that socialising and a sense of belonging mattered to her. Through their friendship, Helen encouraged Teagan to live a varied life and enjoy exciting experiences.

Importantly, the experience of hearing a talk on studying abroad impacted on Teagan's value of choosing her own goals, as she was ambitious and excited to do this.

Spending her third year in a Japanese university has also impacted Teagan's values. She quickly found a sense of belonging through groups she became part of. Additionally, she showed curiosity about others, honesty when reflecting on her own values, benevolence, and respect for tradition. The latter are values not identified in Teagan's stories from before university.

RQ3: What do the student stories reveal about their changing values?

In the first restorying about the year before Teagan came to university, benevolence shows in her stories as she talks about the importance of friendship, for example on the short college course. In contrast, some of the short stories she tells show where her benevolence values are not met, such as in her job at the nursery. Before starting university Teagan spoke of her own self-direction and independence and illustrated this when she shared how she left the toxic nursery post and applied for university. Most apparent in the first restorying is the value of security. Here Teagan tells episodes about seeking a sense of belonging. This value was also shown through several mentions of mental health, for example, that she has undergone therapy prior to the pandemic and was therefore able to cope.

In order to explore what her story reveals about value change or development the second restorying of her undergraduate years is interpreted here. Security is still an important value to Teagan and she was still seeking and questioning her sense of belonging, finding a place for herself with her good friend Helen and in her third year in Japan. From Teagan's perspective, friendship with Helen and then with new friends in Japan really mattered to her and her newly learned Japanese value of *ichigo ichie* is a way of expressing this. The most mentioned value in her stories focuses on self-direction. Unsurprisingly, living in a different country for her third year reveals personal values of independence, curiosity and choosing own goals.

Of interest, a new set of values is revealed during Teagan's university years. She seeks stimulation and an exciting life and enjoys hedonistic activities.

5.5 Joy

5.5.1 Joy - the year before university

A remote video interview was conducted with Joy on 17th February 2021. At the time she was a first-year undergraduate student undertaking a full-time single honours

degree in Education Studies. She is 20 years old and lives at home in a rural county adjacent to her university city. Joy says that she had a kind of sixth sense about lockdown so decided to commute to university rather than live in student accommodation. Joy reports early on in her story that she has a learning disability, for which she received no support during her A levels. Her learning disability was recognised during the year before university by the headteacher of the school she was working in.

Joy had offers from two universities to take degrees in Sport. However, getting her A level results - which were not the grades that she wanted - made her realise that she wanted to wait to start university as she did not think she was ready:

“You know what? I'm not ready to go to uni yet. I don't wanna move away yet, I'm not ready. I don't really know whether this is what I want to do (Interview 1, 03:40).

For Joy at this time, deciding to wait to start university shows self-direction, and specifically the confidence and freedom to choose her own goals. She declined both offers. Subsequently, Joy was approached by her A level PE teacher, who was also the Head of Sport for the county, and he suggested that she might pursue an apprenticeship. Her curiosity led her to apply for the scheme:

He said, “Right, go for this,” he said, “if you get it, great. If you don't, great. It's up to you. If you don't want to do it, that's fine.” I was like, “You know what? Sounds alright. I'll have a go” (Interview 1, 04:15).

Joy felt inspired to pursue the apprenticeship and had seen apprentices while working in her voluntary role. The value of stimulation was important to her as she went for the interview amongst about 50 others, signifying her quest for a varied and exciting life. Joy tells the story of meeting the headteacher at the school she would then work at, and the connection that was made:

And I really clicked with the head of a really, really rural school - Friars School, you won't know it, but it's a really lovely area and I really connected with the head there and we spent hours talking. And that day I finished the interview she rang me up and she said, “I want you at my school. I want you as my apprentice” (Interview 1, 05:19).

The approach from the headteacher gave a sense of belonging to Joy, emphasising the value of security, as she was then shown the school and told what her role would be and how she was joining a team with a recently qualified teacher. Joy absolutely loved sports' teaching there and working towards her level three teaching qualification and the headteacher was delighted with her work:

I loved it. I planned all the lessons, all the PE lessons on my own and delivered them all on my own. So I had like a big class of 30 and I was just teaching them sport. It was just fab and then ... the head came to me and she said, "You're doing fantastic." And I was like, "Yeah, I love it" (Interview 1, 06:30).

The headteacher encouraged Joy to use her mornings to work in classrooms as a Teaching Assistant and ultimately Joy settled in to supporting Reception and Year One. She realised that she did not want to pursue sport, but passionately wanted to teach. This gave meaning in life to Joy, the value of benevolence. She realised that she needed to undertake a pathway that would give her satisfaction and enable her to follow her goals, but she did not have the UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) points for the course she wanted to study at Johnster University. After telephoning and asking the University to consider her, Joy had a successful interview and was offered a place. She was told:

"I'm so impressed with the work you've been doing and how you're so motivated to be a teacher" (Interview 1, 08:20).

This once again demonstrates the values of self-direction and achievement.

Joy continued her role and her training in the school knowing she had a place at Johnster University on a course that would give her a route into teaching. When the country went into lockdown in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she taught Physical Education (PE) online on Microsoft Teams. When the school reopened in July 2020, she taught PE at a distance, thinking of ways to allow the children to learn sports skills. This demonstrated the value of creativity and independence which all sit under the umbrella of self-direction, a set of values that appear throughout Joy's stories of the year before university.

During her time at the school, Joy was completing her Level 3 teaching qualification and the headteacher used to read and check her work. In doing so, she recognised that Joy had a learning disability. Joy used strategies such as lists and post-it notes to help her, but one day there was an assessor in the school and the head asked her to look at Joy's work:

And she turned round and she said to me, "I think you're probably dyslexic." And I said, "I know I've got a visual strain disorder but that's as far as it's ever gone." And she went, "Are you going to university next year?" And I said yes and she said, "Get assessed when you get there" (Interview 1, 28:17).

Joy has since been diagnosed with quite severe dyslexia and dyspraxia. The involvement of the headteacher who acts as a 'Hero' in this scenario (relating to Jungian archetypes) in her support, provides Joy with agency over her future. Self-

direction is again a key value as the diagnosis frees Joy from her previous challenges in education and gives her self-respect. She recalled her difficult two years of A levels - when she was bullied and did not have many friends; in fact she hated A levels, while her success during the apprenticeship and subsequently acquiring a place on the course she wanted to study are examples of self-direction and a focus on the value of achievement. Joy realised her dream job was to become a teacher, and she worked very hard to get to university, showing ambition and drive:

I know... that I want to be a teacher so badly that this is the quickest route to get there (Interview 1, 10:37).

Joy's father encouraged her to decide when university was right for her. Joy recalls him questioning her about whether she really wanted to go to university to study a sports degree, because he knew that she needed to find out more about what course she wanted to do. He acts as the 'Sage' (relating to Jungian archetypes) enabling Joy to clarify the decision she had probably already made.

Joy sums up her year before university:

At the start of the year I was probably more lost and I didn't know, this apprenticeship was to kind of prove or disprove whether university and the course that I wanted to do were right. But by the end of the year I'd got a plan and I knew where I wanted to be (Interview 1, 24:10).

Despite changing her initial plans, Joy was responsive to the opportunity of applying for an apprenticeship and this enabled her to confidently move forward on her chosen pathway. The school offered another year as a Teaching Assistant and Joy tussled with the offer but was determined to pursue her chosen goal to be a teacher. Joy's stories of the year before coming to university show how the values of self-direction and achievement are very important to her. She returns to the theme of choosing her goal throughout the year and in the context of the school her apprenticeship is in. By the end of the year, Joy has a sense of security so that she can achieve success and gain a place on the university course she realises is the pathway for her.

5.5.2 Joy - the undergraduate years

The second remote video interview took place on 3rd October 2022. Joy is now in her third and final year as an undergraduate student undertaking a full-time degree in Education Studies. Joy has lived at home in a small, rural town with her father and sister throughout university. She commutes into the University by car.

In the first semester of her first year, COVID-19 meant that lectures took place on campus, but with restrictions, such as face masks. Joy showed how she valued friendship, but making friends was difficult:

You could see somebody, but you'd only met them to there [puts hand to nose]. You didn't know them (Interview 2, 15:33).

Living in a small town through the pandemic meant that Joy did not go anywhere else, so all her conversations with friends were online. In a story from her first year at university, she recalled the challenges of online lectures and how much she valued friendship and was curious about her new classmates that she could not befriend:

I didn't see anybody. I couldn't see anybody. Nobody knew who I was, and it was a very strange thing because you didn't know who you knew, who they were? 'Cause you heard them [but] you've never actually put a name to the face (Interview 2, 09:58).

She went on to reflect on the impact on her health and concentration:

Because the windows were always open, I always got ill. So I was just constantly poorly throughout the winter when we were... just before we went back into that lockdown. I was just ill because it was so cold in the lecture theatres you just couldn't get warm. You didn't concentrate, 'cause all you worried about was getting warm again (Interview 2, 14:35).

Her goal, however, was to study and achieve her ambitions and be successful and she valued self-direction, choosing her own goals. Unfortunately, online learning in semester two of her first year meant that she was very lonely, missing her home friends who were in other parts of the county. She also did not achieve as well as she wanted from learning on screen, because she was very distracted by everything else.

Another consequence of online university in the second semester of year one was one of the cohort '*who caused quite a lot of drama online*' (Interview 2, 14:04) directed at one of Joy's friends. Joy showed loyalty to her friend and noted that this behaviour did not resonate with her and was childish, like being at school. She then referred to the impact on student mental health of the pandemic, stating that she thought it was 10 times worse due to being taught online.

In the summer in the first year, two friends from her course visited Joy in her hometown, which mattered significantly:

That was nice because that was like 'cause... I feel like I'm like a double agent. I have my uni life and I have my home life. When I come to uni, it's uni life. And when I go home, it's home life (Interview 2, 11:29).

This indicates how important friendship was to Joy, but also illustrates the dual sense of belonging that she felt.

In spite of the social limitations created by the unique pandemic situation, Joy was happy to achieve top marks in a module and showed she valued success and was capable of achieving well.

As she moved into her second year, Joy reflected on enjoying studying so much, and being curious about things. In her stories of that time, she acknowledged how she loved being in lectures and sitting and talking together in groups and going to the library. She remembered sitting with her two friends and others on the course joining them, and how she valued being with friends and having a sense of belonging and thinking '*we divide and conquer*' (Interview 2, 19:44). Alongside her course mates, she got to know people on the other course that runs in her department as well, particularly being influenced by Lisa, the '*mum of the group*' (Interview 2, 20:23) who can be likened to the Jungian Archetype the 'Hero', because she supported Joy if she is having a bad day.

In her second year, Joy's values of health, self-respect, inner harmony and equality were illustrated:

[In my] second year a massive thing happened in my life, actually through the Uni. I got an ADHD diagnosis (Interview 2, 21:39).

Her diagnosis was so important to Joy, and she was able to see the difference in how she worked from first to second year:

She sat down with me that first session. And she went, "We're gonna get you another diagnosis, a proper one done because I think you need more than what you let on," she said, "You've hidden it really, really well." And I went for my assessment, and in person, which she couldn't do first year. Within a week they'd given me an ADHD diagnosis (Interview 2, 22:16).

Joy felt freedom now that she understood herself better and others could understand how she felt. It was a massive change for her, recognising how she works differently:

And I... I... I never thought about it. I just went "It's the way I was," but now I know it's like an ADHD thing. You just can't, you... so I just start... you start a million things 'cause your brain's going 1,000,000 miles an hour (Interview 2, 24:11).

Consequently, Joy felt that she could explain herself to her father and her friends and it meant the world to her. She accepted herself:

I don't know how to read people and in second year I was able to get this diagnosis and go, "Look, I'm weird. I know I am." And I'm getting help for it and I can make friends and I'm a lot better. And like, Lisa, she was able to like, even now I'll say something, like I'll think it and then say it, and I don't mean it in that way at all. It just comes out that way sometimes. And they just completely get it now. They're like, "Yeah, it's just Joy" (Interview 2, 27:22).

Joy expressed that she began learning about herself again and felt a sense of belonging in her friendship group, accepting their support and help.

Valuing her independence and freedom, and self-direction meant that Joy focused on her studying in year two, spending long hours at university, and commuting home:

So I was in four days a week in Semester 2, and it's an hour's drive there and back. Umm, so I was in all day and then when I was at home I didn't go home. I went to my boyfriend's. I went to the gym. So I never actually got home 'til about 8-9 o'clock at night or I wouldn't come home at all (Interview 2, 34:24).

This showed that she valued her health and achievement.

In the evenings, Joy would be the 'stone cold sober' driver (Interview 2, 35:24) on nights out, showing responsibility and being helpful towards her friends, dropping everyone home so that they were safe.

Joy remained curious and an independent thinker, and she got a job two to three days a week at a Special School which she loves, and where she has been offered a funded PGCE. This aligns with Joy's values of equality and meaning in life, and also shows her ambition, capability, and success. She recalled stories of being responsible for children's learning and development and dealing with their safety. Joy recognises that the things she has learned about at university have helped her align her values.

By her third year, Joy has cemented some friendships. This includes a friendship with James, who comes from a similar home life and shares a sense of humour. His friendship is important to Joy, and he supports her curiosity in learning new ideas.

In summarising her experiences at university, Joy realises that she values freedom greatly, noting that:

I can't work at home now because I just feel trapped. I feel like locked down again (Interview 2, 09:30).

Her focus on achievement and self-direction is evident as she has chosen her own goals independently throughout her university years, and this is demonstrated when she talks about coming to university:

I think looking back, if I hadn't have come, I wouldn't have come. If I hadn't have done it and just thought, "It's gonna, I'm in the middle of a pandemic. I've gotta do it," as I'm not gonna go if I'd have, if I'd have left it any longer. I don't think I would have done, because now I'm in my third year, I'm itching to go now. I'm like, "I wanna career. I want a full-time job." I just... I... I... I want the routine of a nine to five kind of thing (Interview 2, 12:56).

She regrets the lost first year, when you could not have the fun and the friendly sarcasm online that she enjoys now in-person, and feels that her friends mean the world to her, but that they have massively missed out:

We'd like to have that extra year. Because we're only technically in our friendship stage of our second year now, we're not, we're just... we're just. We're still in that honeymoon phase (Interview 2, 15:51).

She reiterates the importance of her friendships again as the interview concludes and says that her values have changed during her time at university. Joy rejects hedonism and stimulation but values curiosity, freedom to speak out, wisdom and meaning in life:

I... I still believe you come to uni to study. The party life. It isn't for me. I just. I just don't do it. It's just not my thing. I tried it. I didn't like it. I'll live in my country lifestyle. That's fine. I think being a student is about being in uni and as I said, when you're sitting in that lecture theatre listening to them talk and having a good debate and there's a good debate going on between James and Izzie. Oh man. It was great. Love it (Interview 2, 44:41).

5.5.3 Commentary on Joy's restorings with response to the research questions

The following commentary addresses the research questions (RQ) using the restorings from Joy.

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that have impacted their values before coming to university?

At the beginning of Joy's first story self-direction is demonstrated in the decisions she made that year. Interviewing for an apprenticeship was exciting and stimulating and gave her a sense of security. The experience enabled her to realise she passionately wanted to teach and she showed self-direction again pursuing her application for university, and also a desire for achievement.

Having to teach online due to the pandemic meant that she had to show creativity and independence. Following a diagnosis of dyslexia, this reignited her self-direction and ambition to be a teacher. She knew what her goal was.

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted Joy's experience of her first year and her values because she really valued friendship but could not get to know others due to the restrictions. She really feels that her cohort have missed out. Health was affected because of the requirement to open windows which made it very cold. She was still focused on her goals but did not achieve as well due to the distractions from learning online. An online dispute amongst course mates highlighted how important friendship was to Joy and she acknowledged that online learning due to the pandemic had affected some peoples' mental health.

Receiving a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in her second year gave Joy freedom and a greater sense of belonging in her friendship group. She spent long hours at university, and, being a commuter student, she felt a dual sense of belonging. She valued her health and achievement and would drive friends' home after a night out. This illustrates how friendship was very important, and how it enabled her to be curious about others.

Working in a special school resulted in a funded PGCE and has given Joy meaning in life and supported her values of ambition, capability and success. She reflected that her undergraduate experience was about studying rather than hedonism. She values curiosity, freedom to speak out and wisdom.

RQ3: What do the student stories reveal about their changing values?

Joy's stories illustrate similar values before she came to university and undertaking her undergraduate years, with the exception of talking about an exciting and varied life before university, but then during university reflecting on universalist values of inner harmony, equality and wisdom. Of significance and showing value development, are the times when Joy talks about benevolence. In her first restorying Joy mentioned meaning in life, when she realised that she wanted to pursue a career in teaching, rather than sport. Interestingly, during the second restorying of her undergraduate years, she mentions times when benevolence matters to her on very many occasions. This includes talking about the importance of friendship, being helpful, being responsible and having meaning in life.

Joy's strong self-direction from her year before university is replicated throughout her university years when she continues to choose her own goals, be curious and value

freedom. Achievement becomes an even stronger value with the quest for success and ambition growing in line with her determination to be a primary school teacher.

One value Joy had not previously mentioned is in the area of universalism. She shares short stories which show that inner harmony, equality and wisdom matter to her. Her focus on goals and friendship do not include talking about stimulation as a priority during her undergraduate years. In fact, she is unequivocal in saying that partying is not for her.

5.6 Rose

5.6.1 Rose - the year before university

A remote video interview was conducted with Rose on 1st February 2021. At the time she is a first-year undergraduate student undertaking a full-time degree in Early Childhood in Society. She is 22 years old and moved to the area from Northwest England to live with her partner. Rose attended two colleges and worked in a bank before starting at Johnster University in September 2020.

Rose's stories about the year before she began on her current course at university reveal her personal values and conviction about what matters to her.

Rose's job in the bank was stagnant even though she knew she had the ability to progress. She had had an ambition to be a private nanny for many years and was motivated by the money and holidays that privileged families had. However, that meant attending a private university which seemed impossible. The incentive to apply for Johnster University was, then, inspired by a decision to '*do something a bit more with my life*' (Interview 1, 04:26). The bank job did not align with her goals, which were to work with children. The value of self-direction, illustrated by choosing own goals, is a strong thread throughout Rose's story.

Rose's mother was not keen for Rose to relocate and the timing of the move coincided with her mum having a big operation. She encouraged Rose to stick with banking, but Rose was unhappy there. Rose took a second job at a coffee shop and describes herself '*living a double life really, trying to be different, different people*' (Interview 1, 13:21). Things changed when there was a split in the family, and Rose and her partner decided they needed to be more available to help. They moved to stay with family members, to be closer and to offer and provide support. This move symbolises

benevolence, as responsibility to the family became a priority, as did the value of family security. Universalism drives Rose's motivation to support both her partner's sister with her nieces and strive for a career in family support. This goal is driven by the thought that *'they deserve a system that works'* (Interview 1, 34:11).

At the expense of finding a base for themselves, Rose and her partner valued family security, at one time living in a household of seven. Rose describes this episode as *'a roller coaster'* (Interview 1, 16:54). The interplay between her house moves and job uncertainty made this a time of significant change. It was during this time that Rose applied for university. The value of self-direction is evident again as she focuses on freedom, independence, and privacy, commenting that:

I knew that my mum would glorify this university thing and... and I understand it's very good to go to uni, I get it, but I knew she would just really like lay it on, you know what I mean? And at the time as well, I was like trying to run my own business, doing something again, completely different. And then it wasn't really going anywhere. So I found it hard and then I knew that when I did that, she didn't really, she wasn't bothered. But I knew that if I said about uni she would be bothered and that would just make me annoyed that there was different levels of support for different things. So I just thought, "I'm not going to tell anyone" (Interview 1, 18:39).

So Rose kept the application process secret, to avoid pressure, from everyone in the house and her mother.

In the April before coming to university, Rose had an awakening of universalism, and she explains this inner harmony and alignment, and her new awareness of equality during the experience she had then:

I applied to do a volunteering role for a charity called Action for Children and um, before that I'd never thought about, like, children that come from troubled backgrounds before. The nanny thing was, like, I wanted to work with people who are already sort of privileged, which then didn't align with me after a while. And then, um, yeah, I just... I spoke to this lady. I didn't know what I was getting into with the volunteering if I'm honest. And then she told me it was like family support and things and I was a bit overwhelmed, like, "Oh my goodness. OK!" And then, then it aligned with just what I was... then I looked at the uni stuff and then I saw the course I wanted to do and it all just fell into place (Interview 1, 05:43).

While Rose felt that the University and the course were right for her, she is the first in her family to go to university, a first-generation or first-in-family university student (Nguyen and Nguyen, 2018; Taylor, Yochim and Raykov, 2019) and had previously never wanted to attend university. Scared and nervous about applying, she did not tell anyone about it except her partner. The decision was made herself, with the

encouragement of her supportive partner. Self-direction enabled Rose to pursue her goal and align herself with her future career plans. She recalls, '*I didn't want anyone to tell me if I should or shouldn't*' (Interview 1, 07:11).

Rose did seek the views, about a different topic, from an online community, which deepened her value of universalism and equality:

I met a lot of people online, engaged with a lot of people online. I got into being very interested in adoption and fostering and things like that. So then I was like, You Tubing stuff, following people on Instagram and everything just became a lot more clear that the whole world is not ideal and not everyone is very privileged, if that makes sense. So then I wanted to work with the children that weren't so privileged (Interview 1, 08:47).

A sense of meaning in the world was developing alongside a realisation that inequality is prevalent. The role of 'Self' (relating to Jungian archetypes) is prioritised in Rose's stories. She reflects on her past behaviour and recognises the desire to change and '*be a bit better*' (Interview 1, 27.10). Through such reflection on her life, she has chosen the direction to go in, far from her younger self's aims:

I saw quite a lot of people around me were very, very good at empathy and, um, just like different things like that. Things I didn't have and I don't know why I didn't have them. I just thought that I think I was a very kind of a brutal kind of person and just very straight to the point and sometimes didn't take other people into consideration, and that was quite clear... (Interview 1, 27.14).

Criticising herself, she tells the story of not being very nice to her nephews when she was 15. Despite family members thinking she did not like children, Rose is determined to show them that she has changed, with a focused self-direction to pursue the degree in her chosen field. Rose is looking for self-respect by acknowledging the past, especially regarding her mum, who has told Rose, '*You could do better*' (Interview 1, 31:01). Her honest account of her younger self illustrates the value of benevolence, and her goal to prove she can be a good person who helps children, rather than the person she presented as before:

And I wanted people to also see that 'cause, especially like my mum, she's a very big influence. I thought, like, I don't think she realises what I could be doing rather than just, I don't know, I guess, going to the bank in my posh uniform and putting on makeup. It just wasn't aligning with me anymore. I just changed a lot in that moment (Interview 1, 29.12).

Rose is extremely reflective in her narrative about her past experiences and expresses how she has learned from them. Recalling her grandma telling stories of being a nanny herself, Rose berates her younger, disinterested self: '*I'm such a brat*' (Interview 1, 38:13). She wants to show to herself and her mother that now she can be challenged

and succeed. This is emphasised when Rose describes her family and how they debate ideas, and how she felt she did not have the intellectual ability to join in. Again, the value of self-respect and self-direction is evident, as Rose pushes herself to apply to university so that she can reach her potential, *'becoming educated on something that I knew I was interested in and not just talking about it for ages'* (Interview 1, 31:18). Rose acknowledges that she had not used her abilities:

I got good grades and things like that, but I just didn't use it and I was just very reluctant to use it and I think I was just rebelling against the fact that I knew that I could (Interview 1, 30:25).

Rose's story is told with the backdrop of COVID-19. She states this did not stop privileged families from still doing what they wanted and travelling, which she found unjust:

I think, especially with what's been going on at the moment. Especially when you see families that are privileged and they are still doing what they sort of want to do, that had a big impact as well. Like, I know quite a few families that are quite privileged and have nannies... still doing what they wanna do, still travelling where they want to travel and I just thought, "Well I don't know." You can't just ignore what you know, you can't ignore everyone else's life and people - those people not in such a good position as you and things like that (Interview 1, 32:36).

Despite the unsettled year Rose had prior to coming to university, she continually showed self-direction and has been determined to follow her own goals and prove to herself and others that she can enter the world of HE, as a first-in-family student. Self-reflective, she acknowledges her new-found universalist values, combined with focusing on family support and caring for others. This demonstrates the values of benevolence and security.

5.6.2 Rose - the undergraduate years

A second remote video interview was conducted with Rose on 18th October 2022. Rose is now in her third year of the Early Childhood in Society degree.

Rose's stories about her university years begin in the autumn of 2020 when she was a first-year student during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of great significance was Rose's job at the bank. Because she was deemed an essential worker, the bank did not close due to the pandemic and Rose continued working hard. It was a very busy time, with Rose juggling university on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and working at the bank on

Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Her mental health was suffering from the impact of COVID-19 and the anxiety that caused, but her employer was not sympathetic to this:

I'd go in and then, "Oh. You can't do the online chat." And then I'd have to just stand doing my usual meet and greet at the door and obviously it's COVID and I just felt like I was, like, really on the... really on the front line of it all. Like, "Why do I have to be doing this?" I... I just got quite a bit of paranoia and anxiety, especially about COVID (Interview 2, 15:10).

This became even harder to manage as her employer had promised that she could work on online chats upstairs in the office, but when she went in to work it was different. She tells another story of her experience there:

I purposely, like, didn't really put any makeup on or anything because I'm really like, when I go out, okay. A bit conscious. And then they made me stand in the banking hall and I remember there being no customers. This is really sad. And actually just like, just like crying silently and being like, "This is not for me" (Interview 2, 16:38).

The pandemic was the start of a time of challenge for Rose, with her anxiety and mental health suffering. The importance of positive mental health is related to the value of security and is a continuing part of Rose's university years as an undergraduate student. She was having to pretend to her boss about her health:

I called in sick and I pretended that I was just unwell - like sick, which I don't really... I don't do anymore because I don't think there's any point in doing that. It doesn't help anyone. But when you feel like people don't understand it's quite difficult (Interview 2, 14:19).

Ultimately, because of the unsympathetic employer, Rose left:

I quit, I remember, New Year's Eve at the bank and I didn't go back. So there was a lot of like just standing my ground and doing the things that I had to do, but maybe I didn't do them in the best way. I was... I was struggling like mentally quite a bit and my work just didn't understand that (Interview 2, 07:29).

Rose felt bad that she did not tell her mum about resigning from the bank initially which shows she honours her elders, illustrating the value of conformity. Her focus was on choosing her own goals and self-respect and these underline her value of self-direction.

At the time alongside managing work, Rose's course required her to undertake a first placement, which, for her, was in a preschool attached to a local school. This seemed ideal but was actually completely the opposite of Rose's expectations and conflicted with her values of equality and social justice that unfold in the following episode from her story:

I'm not being dramatic, but it was like a ton of bricks. So I was like "Oh." This is just not how I wanted it to be" (Interview 2, 08:33).

She goes on to recall:

There was an incident with a little boy, and he was really upset and one of the... the...well the Assistant Manager... this little boy, I don't even know what he did. I was actually there and I don't know what he did, but she made him stand in the corner, face the corner. She shouted at him and you know really, really went, really shouted at him and he cried so much that it really hurt me and she said, "Are you gonna say sorry?" And he said sorry, and then she asked him what for and he didn't know (Interview 2, 09:21).

And Rose tried to carry on, doing drawings with the other children, and the Assistant Manager said:

"Right. Well, you can stay there and I'll come back in 10 minutes when you have decided what you're sorry for" (Interview 2, 10:29).

Rose said that it went on, and the child cried, and cried, and screamed.

And I thought, "I've been here two days. But I can't sit here." So, I went over to him. I did my like usual therapeutic things that I... I really don't believe in really shouting at children. I don't see the point and you've already lost really, and so I... I just like talked him through, like kind of calmed him down. I was really scared she was gonna come back in at this moment and... and then I told him he could go (Interview 2, 10:32).

Rose takes responsibility and seeks social justice advocating for the child who is disciplined at the preschool. She is critical of the Assistant Manager who is depicted as exerting power and authority - values that Rose rejects - rather than treating the children respectfully and carefully. In Jungian archetypes, Rose is the Caregiver while the child is the Innocent. After the incident, Rose said the Assistant Manager was cross with her for comforting the child and gave her things to deal with she should not have to, which was, in her view, a punishment for intervening. Her desire also to show values of curiosity and creativity in young children were stifled because the first placement was not child-led. For example, on one occasion Rose was working with a group making diva lamps for a Diwali celebration. She was encouraging their self-direction *'and wasn't making it like perfect and I was just letting them decorate however they wanted. They were chucking loads of glitter on it...'* (Interview 2, 24:48). But the teachers wanted them to be the correct shape and came round to say that.

Subsequently she left her first placement early and needed to find her own second placement. Despite the national lockdown starting in January 2021, early years settings remained open. Rose demonstrated her value of self-direction by choosing her own placement and being independent and responsible. The second placement was set in a

converted barn on family land with a farm that the staff and children used and was secure. Rose's value of universalism was shown through her appreciation of being in nature which was experienced at the second placement nursery. She saw the children as 'Explorers' (Jungian archetype), walking on their farm each day and enjoying the freedom and curiosity encouraged in the family environment. As a contrast to the first placement, Rose describes this placement, and how they asked questions, such as:

"What do you want to do now? Do the children want to play outside? Do they not wanna play outside?" And (it was) really in the moment and... and also like really involved in, like, what do you call it? Like cooking and things like that. So they didn't have a cook or anything so we'd go and like they'd have a menu and they could choose and they could help if they wanted to. And yeah, it was just really like free and you could tell they were enjoying themselves (Interview 2, 25:41).

At the end of her first year at university, Rose started a new job working 12-hour shifts in a café bar. It was a positive summer for Rose, which included her first camping trip which she loved, and she found a sense of belonging and security at the café bar. She recalls:

So we were just all there every day. And just working and yeah, it's really nice. And I still work there now and some of those original people are still there. Some aren't and now I'm a bit like, "Oh. I miss that sort of original time." But yeah, it was really good (Interview 2, 28:02).

At the end of her story about her first year at university, Rose shared her feelings about her mental health and the challenges she had experienced, recalling, *'I felt like inside I had like all these emotions, all these feelings'* (Interview 2, 53:17). This continued into second year, when Rose was again challenged by her mental health but disguises it at university, because at this point she was valuing preserving her public image:

And then when I did have those bad days in second year, I just didn't go in. And I would just say, "Oh, um, I just slept in. And then it will take me too long to drive there, and there's no point and can someone just send me the notes?" So in second year, I actually had a lot of time off where I just didn't turn up, but it was just because I was having a bad mental health day or week or whatever and a lot of the girls would just believe that. And then I'd go back in, I'd turn up and I'd look great because I've got dressed and I've got my makeup on and I'm absolutely fine again. And I was so scared to go into uni in that bad mood because I didn't want them to think that's who I was (Interview 2, 53:17).

Prior to starting year two, Rose's tutor supports her and is very helpful. She is presented as the 'Hero' (Jungian archetype). Alongside this, a scholarship makes her question whether achievement and being successful, capable and intelligent are her values. She questions whether the scholarship is real.

Moving on, Rose's story of her second year highlights her extended placement at a therapeutic school, where she makes true friendships with the staff and connects with the children, illustrating her values of benevolence and universalism. Here, for her, there is a sense of belonging which matters to Rose, and this is shown through the placement's support for her health which is rewarded with loyalty from Rose as she starts to work for the placement. Once again, her tutor is a key figure who demonstrates authority and power enabling and developing the role for Rose.

Rose describes her experience at the placement:

And when I've had like my struggles and stuff... they've actually rang and asked if I'm okay like, uh things like that, so I don't know because I did... because I still struggle now. It's just not as much because I think I found where I, like, the people I can rely on and things like that. So yeah, when I've had struggles this year. For example, my partner had to sort of ring, and when I couldn't ring to say like I couldn't come in and they're straight away asking me, you know, saying they're worried about me and am I okay and they never say, you know like, "Well, we really... you can't really have a day off," or you know they don't, they don't do that. They treat the staff how they treat the children. Actually, like it's everyone sort of equal. They don't treat the children like they're lesser or anything like that and, yeah, they're just really genuine people (Interview 2, 36:46).

As year two progressed, Rose took a new job online picking at a supermarket. It did not last long because they did not understand her mental health.

Another highlight of year two was becoming School Representative. Rose enjoyed being the 'Caregiver' (Jungian archetype) to others and was helpful and understanding about the needs of other students on the course, expressing her values of benevolence and universalism. She gained social recognition through this role, demonstrating influence and her capabilities. Through this role, Rose's values of achievement and power are shown.

By the end of year two, health was a key value for Rose and she took responsibility for her mental health and the impact of it on her time keeping and attendance:

My lecturer was like, "Coming to sessions every week would be a really good idea." And then, "Time keeping." And I was there, like, "That's definitely aimed at me!" But not in a nasty way. Like, I just knew, I knew what she meant but again, I'd never said it was because I was struggling. I just said, "I'm, I'm always late," and I'm like, everyone would say, "Oh, you're always late. You could never get there on time. Just always 5 minutes, at least 5 minutes late. Could never just get there on time." And then so they all just used to take the mick out of me and say, "Oh. She's late again," or whatever (Interview 2, 56:58).

By third year, Rose is able to be honest about her mental health, and prioritises being in her classes, choosing her own goals, showing wisdom and self-respect. Rose rejects the value of being influential, noting that ‘a lot of the girls used to think, “Oh, Rose has got it all together”’ (Interview 2, 55:29). She experiences this also from the other side when a teacher at her part-time job who, seemingly to Rose, presents herself well, is off work because of her mental health. Health is a continuing value through Rose’s stories.

As Rose moved into year three of her undergraduate degree, she recognises herself as being in control, the ‘Ruler’ (Jungian Archetype) of her own destiny. In this short episode she illustrates that she values achievement and is choosing her own goals, while rejecting social recognition. She illustrates this growth as she shares a story about not wearing makeup to university:

Yesterday, I went to uni with no makeup on, a whole day and all day I was, “Oh my God,” but I just had to, like, just put it behind me sort of thing and um, yeah, and it sounds really silly, and I said to my friend. She was like, “Right. Look around the room. Is anyone looking at you? No one cares. Everyone’s just here to do their studying and get to the end of this year,” sort of thing. So yeah, this year is just about trying and working hard really, and just being honest (Interview 2, 58:20).

There seems to be a transformational aspect to year three. Once again Rose values her lecturers’ and tutors’ helpfulness and is humble about their support. She is helped again, by them, to secure a final year placement, as the tutors recognise her capabilities and potential for achievement and Rose takes this opportunity. She demonstrates the values of responsibility and appreciates help from her lecturer, respecting their wisdom. Rose talks of her ability to talk independently with her lecturer and have mutual respect, with honesty:

If you don’t open yourself and talk about what you wanna do, then people don’t know what you’re looking for and they can’t look out for things like that (Interview 2, 47:21).

She also appreciates the support and help from the headteacher at her placement school, who provides financially from her own bank account when Rose is panicking about money, by offering for her to do the deep cleaning at the school. The headteacher is the ‘Magician’ (Jungian archetype) who has the power to solve the crisis for Rose, who notes:

“I’m... I’m concerned, we’ve had payday and I need to pay you now,” and went on to say, “I need to make sure you’re okay” (Interview 2, 41:28).

This seems to be an epiphany or turning point in Rose's story, when she realises that at this stage in her life and student journey, professional contacts are very important to her. She values their help and loyalty and also their wisdom and capabilities. She is choosing her own goals and becoming the 'Creator' (Jungian Archetype) of her own future.

5.6.3 Commentary on Rose's restoryings with response to the research questions

The following commentary addresses the research questions (RQ) using the restoryings from Rose.

RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that have impacted their values before coming to university?

The key elements within Rose's stories that impacted her values before coming to university are moving and change (of herself and her future plans).

The stories about moving from the North West to the Midlands and then moving several times during the year before university in response to family circumstances, show the values of benevolence and family security are important to Rose. In addition, several parts of Rose's story of the year before university refer to change. For example, Rose changed her career goals, following her grandmother, whose recollections of her career had been dismissed by Rose when she was a teenager. Rose also changed her views on privilege, rejecting her previous goal to be a private nanny and choosing to become a first-in-family student. Rose reflects on her teenage years as lacking empathy but shows through her volunteering work and chosen course that she now wants to do something for others with her life.

RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?

The experience of working at the bank during COVID-19 as an essential worker impacted Rose because it made her see that her mental health was compromised there, and it was so important to her to feel safe at that time. During the same period, in her first year, the experience of a placement where the manager did not care for the children impacted Rose's values because she could not work in that environment and felt responsible and knew it was important to be seeking equality for the children.

These experiences impact on her and show her values of benevolence and universalism. In addition, Rose rejected the value of power displayed by the Assistant Manager. Rose's further experiences of placements and part-time jobs impacted her as she finally found both a workplace and a placement that supported her mental health challenges. Experiencing the kindness of the headteacher at her final placement influences Rose because she is treated well and feels understood whenever she struggles with her mental health. An encounter with a tutor at the end of her second year is also significant. Once again, Rose recognises that she must take responsibility for her health and how it has impacted her timekeeping and attendance at university.

A successful academic year gains Rose a scholarship, which she initially struggles to accept. This experience means Rose feels capable of continuing her studies, and at this point Rose begins to value achievement and realises she is intelligent and capable. This shows when Rose gains the role of School Representative and is able to make positive changes for her fellow classmates, helping them while being influential. Finally, the experience of attending university without her makeup shows that Rose is valuing achievement and self-direction. She then speaks up honestly to her friends on the course, championing their capabilities and wisdom.

RQ3: What do the student stories reveal about their changing values?

In Rose's stories of the year before university, she mostly talked about universalism. On occasions her stories referred to social justice, equality or inner harmony when supporting her family, belonging to an online community, or volunteering for a charity. At the same time, benevolence appears a few times. She shows that being helpful and honest matters to her and gives her meaning in life. Additionally, responsibility for her family is important during this episode of her life.

When considering the change and development of personal values, her stories from her university years present an interesting new direction in values. The way in which Rose tells stories from this time can be interpreted as showing that universalism and benevolence are still important. For example, the value of universalism is illustrated through stories of equality and social justice, and the wisdom of self and others. This is also shown when Rose values the outdoors at her second placement, experiencing the world of beauty and nature. From Rose's perspective, benevolence is still significant in that she speaks of honesty, responsibility, and true friendship. Her relationships with tutors and mentors at work and her experience as a Course Representative let her

value of helpfulness be demonstrated. This is both a value she illustrates in her behaviour and one she admires in others, for example, her headteacher and her tutor.

There is a repeated personal value that appears, interestingly in Rose's second story. In several of her short stories, she shows the value of self-direction. This is shown in episodes where Rose talks about the combination of choosing her own goals regarding placements and being determined to choose to attend and engage in her course by year three. Rose's stories also show her valuing curiosity, creativity, and freedom for both her and the children she works with.

The other important value that is repeatedly spoken of is security, specifically referring to Rose's mental health. She relays that agency over her own health enabled her to move into work and placements that aligned with her values and supported her mental health. Rose came to realise a sense of belonging at the café bar and her final placement that supported this value of security.

5.7 Summary

The individual restoryings presented above show the interpreted and reconstructed stories told by each Gen Z student in this study. The commentaries, following each restorying, start to consider the research questions, which will be explored further in the following chapter. This chapter also synthesises these stories to address the research questions.

Chapter 6. Discussion

The overall research aim of this study sought to understand what matters to Gen Z undergraduate students and how the student experience impacts their values development and change.

Focusing on the data presented in Chapter 5 and comparing the findings with what has been written in the literature in Chapter 2, I argue that the restorings of the six Gen Z student narratives has resulted in five areas for discussion. These are:

- the application of Schwartz's theoretical model to explore Gen Z student values;
- value change in the student restorings during their university undergraduate years;
- the impact of critical incidents in relation to personal values;
- the influence of COVID-19 on the personal values of the Gen Z students; and
- mental health for Gen Z.

Prior to discussing these areas, a brief summary of findings is presented. Note that words used are taken from Schwartz's values model and the (2006) diagram of the ten values and associated terms (Appendix C).

6.1 Summary of findings

Gen Z students have values from their past educational experiences, through values or moral education prior to attending university that they have developed (Gamage *et al.*, 2021). To add to this, the six Gen Z students who shared their stories for this study began their undergraduate experience during a global pandemic (Duffy, 2021; Freeman *et al.*, 2022; WONKHE, 2022), which clearly influenced their values and - as a life changing event or critical incident - is unrepresented in the existing literature. The concept of critical incidents or events impacting on personal values is outlined by Hitlin and Piliavin (2004); Giacomino, Brown and Akers (2011); and Myry, Juujärvi and Pessa (2013) and appears in the stories of all six of the Gen Z students in this study as their accounts from this time show. Here follows a summary of each restoring highlighting the values from Schwartz's model.

From Florence's perspective, a sense of belonging is a strong value that remains throughout her university years, and this is coupled with the importance of true friendship. The bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach identified stories that showed that during her second year, universalism grows as she learns about equality and social justice issues. Florence's values of hedonism remain consistent during her early adulthood at university.

For Ann, a sense of belonging was an important value as she anticipated university, and during her university years (Schwartz and Sagie, 2000). She directly referenced the challenges of the pandemic restrictions and how they impinged her ability to enjoy her life as a student, and how she used Snapchat to make new friends (Garvanova and Papazova, 2019; Freeman *et al.*, 2022). This illustrates that hedonism and stimulation were valued by Ann throughout her student experience. Additionally, Ann's value of achievement deepened further during her university years as she began to focus on her future as a primary school teacher. In these accounts, benevolence and universalism are identified as developing through her friendships and her part time job.

A sense of belonging is important to James, which he identified when he chose Johnster University and it remained important to him throughout the study. The value of universalism became more important to him in terms of the significant number of examples from his experience about which he told stories. It is also evident that benevolence deepens as a set of values, with James referring to episodes that illustrate developing friendships and finding meaning in life. It was apparent that James recognises his generational lens as being different to that of his parents, and thus that their values are different (Parry and Urwin, 2011).

For Teagan, a sense of belonging was strongly valued both before university and during her university experience. This is replicated in the literature, with Schwartz and Sagie (2000) finding that sharing values creates a sense of belonging and identity. Notwithstanding the challenges of the COVID pandemic restrictions, Teagan wanted to make friends and have fun, recognising that hedonism was important to her. Additionally, self-direction was illustrated through the stories she told of her university years, culminating in travelling abroad to study for her third year, which impacted on her values (Bardi, 2022).

The presentation of the experiences in Joy's stories suggest a development in benevolence values with frequent episodes showing that this matters to her during her university years. From her perspective, self-direction is a key personal value both

before she came to university and during that time and her focus is firmly on achieving her goals. To this end, Joy rejects hedonism and partying, in contrast to a study by Gouveia *et al.* (2015). It was also evident that Joy's ADHD diagnosis in year two is a significant event in her life (e.g. Rohan, 2000; Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011 and Lee *at al.*, 2021) and she values the acceptance of the diagnosis from her close friends on the course and her family. In relation to this, living at home during her undergraduate years meant that family values were transmitted more easily and she tells a story of her dad during this time (Knafo and Schwartz, 2012).

The presentation of the restorings of Rose follow her mental health journey towards acceptance of herself (Katz *et al.*, 2021; Stahl and Literat, 2022). This develops as she finds agency to work and study in places and with people who align with her values. In these restorings, the value of universalism is most important to Rose before she began university with benevolence identified during her university years. However, it is self-direction that becomes a key personal value, as she chooses her own goals, is curious and seeks freedom.

Central to the narration of these experiences, the data suggest that values change in certain areas for individuals. This is summarised by Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer, (2019) in their systematic literature review of value change. Arguably, the narrative methodology used to gather data for this study allowed each individual participant to tell their own unique story of their own values, showing what mattered to them at these points in their life. The study does not seek to generalise across Gen Z but acknowledges the individual lived experiences of those who told their stories of their values at university, while acknowledging some common value change amongst the participant group and its relation to the extant literature.

In the following section I will present how the findings help answer the research questions and how they compare or contrast with existing research and previous studies.

6.2 Synthesis

With reference to the stories told in the restorings presented, I argue that the Schwartz model of 10 universal values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990; Schwartz, 1992, 1994) can be used effectively and usefully to interpret personal values from the narrative short stories told in this study of Gen Z students in

HE, through use of the bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach presented in Chapter 4. In spite of methodological differences between the corpus of work by Schwartz and this study, the data analysis has enabled a rounded and nuanced set of data represented as restorings. Daniel and Benish-Weisman (2019) posit that tools used for measuring values (such as those used in quantitative studies reported earlier in this thesis) have flaws in that they rely on self-reporting, and do not enable rich, deep data to be collected. Arguably, the restorings presented in Chapter 5 are the result of narrative short story interviews that have enabled the gathering and co-construction of stories, which have then been analysed three times to provide rich and deep data that are reflective of each student's voice. In addition, these data capture the student experience during a unique historical time of COVID-19. This is not found in the previous literature.

Numerous studies have been undertaken with HE students in endorsement of Schwartz's theoretical values model (Matthews, Lietz and Ngurah, 2007; Öcal, Kyburiene and Yiğittir, 2012; Bardi *et al.*, 2014; Fatoki, 2014; Arieli, Sagiv and Cohen-Shalem, 2016). However, Schwartz states that his model of values applies to most people in most groups of society (Matthews *et al.*, 2007). In this section I argue that several particular values from Schwartz's 10 are identified by the students in this study and appear as more important as they reach the final year of their undergraduate degree. These are: benevolence and universalism; self-direction; and a sense of belonging. In contrast to Schwartz's model, mental health is a key priority identified by the students in this study. It could be argued that this is part of the Schwartz value of security (being healthy), but I propose it is a new value dominant in Gen Z experience and discourse. This will be explored later in this chapter as a contribution to theory.

Some of the most prevalent values in the data were Schwartz's self-transcendence values of benevolence and universalism, which were seen to feature more frequently as the Gen Z students moved through their university degrees. This reflects research by Leijen, van Herk and Bardi (2022), who show that benevolence was the most important value for all in their study of the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials. This increased importance of benevolence values was also evident in the restorings of these Gen Z students. Ann, Rose and Florence all spoke about important people in their friend and family groups and at their work and placements which showed how benevolence mattered to them, and how it increased during their undergraduate years. Two examples are given below.

Rose: *They treat the staff how they treat the children. Actually, like it's everyone sort of equal. They don't treat the children like they're lesser or anything like that and, yeah, they're just really genuine people* (Interview 2, 36:46, October 2022).

Florence: *It is hard to connect online with people you don't know, but it's easy to speak to your friends online, like FaceTime them for hours and hours. You know them* (Interview 2, 18:41, October 2022).

In the narratives of these experiences spoken of by the Gen Z students, values of benevolence were evident when they talked about wanting to be connected and to know and have an interest in others while at university. This was something that all six participants shared, showing that the value of true friendship was of great importance to them, being able to meet new and different people in a new shared experience. The value of benevolence was spoken of frequently in episodes from their stories, for example when they met friends on their course, met neighbours, made new friends on campus and sometimes new friends they were surprised that they became close with. Ann, for example, spoke of this when she talked of the friend she made on her joint-honours course, who was much older than her.

Ann: *We're all just students, and we're just getting along and working to the same point... But I think in university it doesn't matter anymore. It's everyone's just friends together. I think that does set you up for work because you're not just with your own academic year at work. You're with all different ages and everything* (Interview 2, 25:10, October 2022).

Another example was when Teagan's value of benevolence re-emerged as important when she moved to Japan to study abroad in her final year and expressed the importance of being friends with new people.

Teagan: *I've always been really open to, like, meeting people, but I just never had the opportunity. But here there's like quite a big group and everyone is so excited to talk about themselves and talk about their experiences, so that's been really eye-opening* (Interview 2, 34:10, October 2022).

As discussed earlier in the thesis (see Chapter 2), studying abroad can affect personal values (Bardi, 2022), and this was the story for Teagan, who talked about her experience of being taught about Japanese values and how this made her think about her own values and behaviour. For Teagan this was beyond the student experience she had at Johnster University, where she had begun to think about her values, but felt they were the values of people around her. This could be a result of studying abroad or because she was a final year student and had met and engaged with other students by this time.

These excerpts from the stories told by the Gen Z students in this study relate to the literature about Gen Z. As discussed earlier, a report from WONKHE (2022), based on UK student data, details that students said that friendships and connections were very important to them, echoing earlier US based research by Seemiller and Grace (2016) who found that Gen Z were motivated by relationships. In these accounts, the value of universalism emerged in the stories told and was prevalent in some narratives. This is comparable to prior research with students by Schwartz (1992), Schwartz and Bardi (2001), and Fischer and Schwartz (2011) who all found that universalism values were reported as most important, alongside benevolence and self-direction. Analyses here reveal that James had a particularly large number of occasions when he spoke about episodes within which the value of universalism is presented. He established new friendships and realised that meeting people different to himself mattered to him. This is illustrated when he talks about his friend Lisa.

James: *Should never be friends on paper with (our) very different viewpoints* (Interview 2, 15:35, November 2022).

For James, this self-awareness of his own viewpoint compared to his friend can be located and reflected in the literature as a critical time of value development (Schermer *et al.*, 2011), and an opportunity to create shared goals and identity (Fischer, 2006).

The experiences in Ann's restoryings show that universalist values were related to her continued part-time work in the foster company that she undertook throughout her university undergraduate course in Education Studies. Research by Lovell (2016) with medical students, found a link between the learning on the course and development of related human values such as universalism, which happened for Ann in her workplace while studying in the field of Education. For Florence, social justice issues became an important topic midway through her degree when she undertook modules on aspects of inclusion, not always finding these conversations comfortable.

Florence: *We talk about a lot of controversial topics like our gender, sexuality, and race, for example, disability. I don't like when you're in a position like that... But it is also very important to express your values, otherwise we're not gonna learn. If we don't talk about your points... We're not actually going to improve as students and extend our learning at all* (Interview 2, 43:39, October 2022).

In accordance with the work of Selingo (2018) and Hewitt and Neves (2021) Gen Z are a more diverse generation than those before and report valuing liberal social issues (Seemiller and Grace, 2016; Clark, Howley and Swatt, 2018; Selingo, 2018), and this is arguably represented by Florence's values. This was also evident in Rose's stories,

where she expressed universalist values before she came to university, then had an epiphany and realised that working as a private nanny did not sit alongside understanding the range of children with which she could work. She describes the moment in the following episode and its impact on her values.

Rose: I applied to do a volunteering role for a charity called Action for Children and um, before that I'd never thought about, like, children that come from troubled backgrounds before. The nanny thing was, like, I wanted to work with people who are already sort of privileged, which then didn't align with me after a while (Interview 1, 05:43, February 2021).

For Rose this was also something that appeared in her second-year placement, on a farm-based children's nursery. She valued the freedom and curiosity that the setting and approach encouraged, describing her experience and feelings below.

Rose: And [it was] really in the moment and... it was just really like free and you could tell they were enjoying themselves (Interview 2, 25:41, October 2022).

In the restorings, the value of self-direction is shown as important to Gen Z university students, an outcome reported by Sakdiyakorn *et al.* (2021). However, for some in this study, this value is presented before they start university. An example of this comes from James, who carefully chose the university and course to align with what he wanted and how he wanted to feel that he could belong. This is also seen in the research undertaken by Bardi *et al.* (2014), who found that values of the new environment can be connected before the transition takes place. Arguably, self-direction is not a surprising value to find at this stage in Gen Z's life, as they explore who they might become. Likewise for Rose, her story from before she started university showed self-direction and independence when applying for Johnster university. She was determined to start her course regardless of others' opinions, as she describes below.

Rose: I didn't want anyone to tell me if I should or shouldn't (Interview 1, 07:11, February 2021).

Florence also applied for university from her hospital school and referred to her future during her short story episode about her final year, showing self-direction. She expressed that it was challenging to think about what she should do and that she was indecisive.

Additionally, once Rose was at university, she shared many examples of self-direction, such as when she chose to leave the bank that she was working in part time, and when she left her second placement. This was because these environments did not align with

her values, which is shown as a feature of Gen Z by Malat, Vostok and Eveland (2015), who report that self-fulfilment and social impact are important to this generation. In relation to this, for Teagan, her quest to go abroad to study showed a strong value of self-direction coupled with persistence and determination, illustrated here.

Teagan: That's it. I'm... I'm going abroad. I just made the decision right then and there and just gone with it. I told my mum, like, "Mum. I'm going to Japan in a few months" (Interview 2, 16:55, October 2022).

Recent literature (Bardi, 2022) gives the example of living abroad for a year as part of one's studies impacting on values of self-direction and stimulation. Teagan's stories show a similarity in her experience. Also, for Joy, she chose her apprenticeship rather than attending university at 18, showing the value of self-direction prior to attending university, and then continuing into her university degree. It became clear to Joy that she wanted to undertake a funded PGCE offered to her by the school she works in, and the value of self-direction was once again present in her narrative.

Joy: I'm itching to go now. I'm like, "I wanna career. I want a full-time job." I just... I... I... I want the routine of a nine to five kind of thing (Interview 2, 12:56, October 2022).

Similarly, Ann showed self-direction when she came to university and when focussing on her future career, using her work experience and training to help her decide the route that she would take. For both Joy and Ann, the connection to their future careers shaped their personal values. As such, the data were consistent with Bardi *et al.* (2014), who argue that while values do not change much after adolescence, career decisions can be a factor that influences value change. Aligned with self-direction, Ann wanted to achieve well at university, and it mattered to her because she had decided on the career she aspired to.

Ann: "Oh, I do want to be a primary school teacher" (Interview 2, 13:10, October 2022).

Furthermore, other Gen Z students in this study gave examples of behaviours that showed the value of achievement mattered to them. Related to this and congruent with Sakdiyakorn *et al.* (2021), focusing on future goals and persevering was reported by Joy and Florence.

Meanwhile, Rose enjoyed and recognised her achievement through her placements and the feedback from her tutors. This recognition was critical as she needed reassurance due to her mental health challenges at this time.

Developing the theme, for Rose and two other participants in this study, the importance of positive mental health was evident in their stories, and it appears in recent Gen Z literature too (see Katz *et al.*, 2021). For example, firstly, for Teagan, the support she had preceding university enabled her to manage her mental health through the challenges of the first and second year at university, and she reported that she had learned strategies to enable her to deal with the impact of lockdown better than others. Secondly, for Rose, her university years were filled with profound episodes of challenging mental health. For example, in Rose's first year the COVID-19 rules meant that she still had to work in the bank. Subsequently, this was followed by Rose working in a supermarket. These episodes illustrate the lack of care and understanding about mental health from her employers. Rose's later stories about her final year demonstrate how she acknowledged her mental health challenges and opened up to her course mates, owning responsibility for her behaviour, and showing self-direction.

Rose: Yesterday, I went to uni with no makeup on, a whole day and all day I was, "Oh my God," but I just had to, like, just put it behind me sort of thing and um, yeah, and it sounds really silly, and I said to my friend. She was like, "Right. Look around the room. Is anyone looking at you? No one cares. Everyone's just here to do their studying and get to the end of this year" (Interview 2, October 2022, 58:20).

Mental health was also valued by Florence who shared the story of her challenges in the first year, below.

Florence: In second semester of year one I kind of distanced myself from everyone. I was very...I was really like struggling with who I was as a person. And what I wanted, I... I was struggling with like sexuality, and I feel like I pushed every single person away from me and it was when I figured that out at the end of second semester. That was when I was like I went up again (gestures with hand). Like I was on a high first semester. And second semester went down. And then I went up. By the end, I was like up again (Interview 2, 24:18, October 2022).

Lesser mentioned and by fewer participants was the value of a sense of belonging. The literature on student experience (Tinto, 2017; Sellinger, 2021) recognises a sense of belonging as important to undergraduates and that universities have a role and a responsibility in developing this value, for example through the curriculum and activities (Tinto, 2017; Sellinger, 2021). For the students in this study, their first-year experience meant it was harder for them to feel part of the University, due to the pandemic and the restrictions placed upon them during lockdown. Teagan specifically commented that online learning negatively impacting her sense of belonging and this was also a challenge for Florence during the lockdown in year one. This is illustrated by Teagan,

who told a story about feeling detached from her course mates when she returned to lectures and feeling that groups had already formed due to being online, as she explains here.

Teagan: I remember being really, really lonely, I used to sit at the back of the classroom but looking back, I feel like people probably did reach out to me quite a lot because people would be like, "Oh come sit with us, come sit with us," and I'd be like, "No it's okay, I'll sit here" (Interview 2, 15:07, October 2022).

Florence was also disappointed by her lack of sense of belonging and felt she had missed the first-year experience, commenting how she felt.

Florence: (We were) just kicked to the side and had to hope for the best and meet everyone in second year (Interview 2, 16:16, October 2022).

More positively, students in this study recognised that they could fit in with people at the university. For example, after meeting people on Twitter that went to Johnster University before she started, Teagan commented that she felt reassured that the university would not tolerate homophobia.

Teagan: I found out really quickly, Johnster is really like... you know LGBT+ positive (Interview 1, 27:42, February 2021).

An interesting finding was from Joy, who - as a commuting student - remarked on her dual identity, one at home and one at university. Once Joy received her diagnosis of ADHD in her second year, she felt more secure both at home with her father and with her university friends. This resonates with Knafo and Schwartz (2008) who found that sharing space with parents while living at home during university study can make the transmission of values easier.

The discussion above explores the Schwartz theory of values applied to a very different methodological study, a narrative inquiry. Evidently, the application of the model to the narratives from the Gen Z students in the study has been efficacious in enabling clarity about the values that these students have at this point in their lives. Further discussion will now consider factors that impacted value change for these students during this time, specifically experiences such as Joy's diagnosis and the impact of such critical incidents in developing values.

6.3 Critical incidents and turning points.

The analysis of the restoryings identifies critical incidents as key moments of story elicitation, and the impact of these on values is reported in the literature (Bardi *et al.*, 2009; Giacomino, Brown and Akers, 2011; Myyry, Juujärvi and Pessa, 2013 and Daniel *et al.*, 2022), noting that social, political or environmental factors can provoke value change. Examples from the data show sexuality and diagnoses of ADHD, studying abroad and experiencing an intruder as critical incidents or (here termed) turning points. Selingo (2018) comments on Gen Z valuing inclusion in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, while Clark, Howley and Swatt (2018) acknowledge increases in ADHD for Gen Z. This connects to findings from HEPI and Unite Students (2019) who report that today's students have more diverse needs and therefore more diverse requirements. In turn, the influence of values for Gen Z students is different to other generations based on their individual experiences and also their experience of being a student during COVID-19 (explored further below). On this basis, universities need to adapt to support student values' development when these critical incidents or turning points occur, being more responsive to their needs.

This is further evidenced, for example, in Florence's experience, when her search for inner harmony is expressed regarding her sexuality, as she comes out to her friend. This shows the way that values have developed for Florence, and her new relationship is a turning point for her. Subsequently, the reflections in Florence's stories illustrate how the end of this relationship impacted her mental health, below.

Florence: I got - to put it bluntly - dumped. So... so then like I slipped (Interview 2, 37:10, October 2022).

Similarly, in Joy's story, a turning point happens when she receives her ADHD diagnosis in her second year. This means, for her, that she can truly be herself and explain to the important people in her life how she thinks and how she learns. Her way of learning and behaving was affirmed through the diagnosis. From Joy's story, the values of inner harmony, coupled with health and self-respect are able to grow alongside this diagnosis.

Joy: I don't know how to read people and in second year I was able to get this diagnosis and go, "Look, I'm weird. I know I am." And they just completely get it now. They're like, "Yeah, it's just Joy" (Interview 2, 27:22, October 2022).

The concept of a turning point or critical event impacting values and how they change is illustrated by Bardi and Goodwin (2011, p. 280), who write that 'a new life situation

requires new behavior [sic]'. The authors use the example of taking a year abroad to study, as happened to Teagan, and the subsequent adapting of the self to the new life that takes place. This relates to Teagan's experiences, for example when she spoke of being more confident to approach strangers to walk into university with, showing curiosity and openness to change. From Teagan's perspective, the move to Japan challenged her values in order to fit in with the new environment (Schwartz and Sagie, 2000), which she does with delight, and feels that she is finding herself.

Another example of a critical incident impacting values is a story from Ann's second year, in which an intruder broke into her student house. This event invoked increased values of security. It would appear from her narrative, however, that the intensity of this heightened value was more short-lived (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011). This is recognised in research by Verkasalo *et al.* (2006) who discovered that after 9/11 the value of security increased, but ultimately returned to previous levels. The studies undertaken in Finland used SVS questionnaire data from before the terrorist attacks and after, with adolescents and university age students, including an undergraduate student sample of 104 (before the attack) and 55 students (one week after the attack). The perceived threat is lowered and life returns to somewhat normal. This was also evident in research undertaken by Bardi *et al.*, (2008), who report the temporary increase in the use of values words being used in newspapers during WW2 and the Cold War.

The next section will consider the impact of COVID-19 on values for the Gen Z students in this study.

6.4 The influence of COVID-19 on the personal values of the Gen Z students

The uniqueness of undertaking this study during COVID-19 has meant that the data collected are highly specific to this cohort who joined the University in 2020. Their first year experience should have been very different but was affected by lockdown restrictions (Daniel *et al.*, 2021; Institute for Government, 2022) and eventually the mandate for online learning and teaching.

Values are affected by the transition to university (Bardi *et al.*, 2014) and often occur alongside other life changes such as change of physical environment (moving out of home and to a new location) plus a change of the social environment, through meeting

new people. Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer - in their 2019 systematic literature review on value changeability - question this, finding more stability than change when transitioning to university, on examination of five longitudinal studies based in HE. Each study examined has created quantitative data from large-scale surveys. However, there were no qualitative studies included in the systematic review, that could have added nuance and richness to the data reported.

COVID-19 and its impact on this cohort and their student experience is certainly an example of more than one life-changing event and is likely to have made a difference to the values of the participants and those that they then talked about in this study. This is seen when the desire to make connections and friendships was hampered by lockdown restrictions, as evidenced by an episode from James' restorying.

James: We were sort of in person, but not the normal experience because we were masked up. Every other seat was sort of closed off and there wasn't a great time to make the connections with other people (Interview 2, 04:29, November 2022).

Likewise, for Teagan, the pandemic affected what mattered to her and therefore her values. The stress of having to go home because her parents feared for her safety - when she had left home to live in at university - because of lockdown, meant Teagan's values of hedonism and stimulation, and a sense of belonging at university were hindered. She really did not enjoy being back with her family because she missed university, and she recalls the time.

Teagan: I like cried so much they took me back (Interview 2, 11:04, October 2022).

These findings add to the literature on value change during COVID-19. Bojanowska *et al.* (2021) note that in times of change and uncertainty, such as the COVID pandemic, hedonistic values decreased while security increased. A limitation of the research by Bojanowska *et al.* (2021) is that it is limited to reporting on the first four weeks into the lockdown at the beginning of the pandemic. This contrasts with the current study which looked at values over the whole pandemic period.

While each student recalled behaviours and episodes that mattered to them individually due to COVID-19, there were commonalities in their accounts. For example, in each restorying of the year before university the values of security and benevolence were highlighted. This replicates similar findings from other studies, although not specifically Gen Z studies (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz and Bardi, 2001; Fischer and Schwartz,

2011; Bardi, 2022 and Leijen, van Herk and Bardi, 2022). The following section considers Schwartz's theory and its application to Gen Z students.

6.5 Schwartz's theory for Gen Z and beyond

Some of the values identified in Schwartz's theory were less important to the Gen Z students in this study, or not mentioned at all. For example, power is only mentioned by two of the Gen Z students in the study, James and Rose. In each example, they are not showing they value power but acknowledging it in others. For example, Rose is critical of it when observed in the behaviour of the Assistant Manager at the Nursery. This exemplifies what is found in the values literature with Schwartz and Bardi (2001, p. 285) and Bardi (2022) acknowledging that power is the least important value across three data sets (13 nations of a range of people, teachers from 56 nations and students from 54 nations). Another less-mentioned value was tradition, which was only revealed once in Teagan's restorying when referring to her year abroad when she was taught about Japanese hospitality and the values associated with it. These sessions encouraged her values of benevolence and respect for tradition.

Conservation values such as conformity were found, in some literature, to increase during the movement into adulthood (Vecchione *et al.*, 2016), but this was not wholly consistent with the data for these Gen Z students, where it was only recorded twice. This was from the year before university, when Florence spoke of her mother's decision to delay a visit abroad because of Florence's examinations, and when Rose left the bank in her first year and initially did not tell her mum. In this study stimulation and hedonism were not mentioned very often, in fact, only by three of the participants. However, in the academic literature, stereotypes of younger generations reported by others, specifically of Gen Z (Duffy, 2021), would suggest that these are important values to them. Only in the case of Teagan did she change her values to include hedonism as mattering to her, meeting her good friend Helen and having adventures with her, followed by travelling to Japan for her third year of study. Ann has an interesting mantra that she kept throughout her degree, that if you do what you enjoy it will not feel like work. She was keen to follow her brother's example and have some fun during Fresher's week, but this was stifled by the unprecedented lockdown rules. Florence was looking forward to coming to university to enjoy a varied life but had to wait until her second year to be '*let out our cages*' (Interview 2, 10:21, October 2022). Arguably, hedonism was a value for Florence, but opportunities were thwarted. This

value was part of her expectations of the student experience, and it was the COVID-19 restrictions that meant she did not have the opportunity to fulfil this value until her second year. A study by Gouveia *et al.* (2015) presents hedonism and stimulation as more important for younger adults compared to older adults. In contrast, for the Gen Z students in this study, these values were not as important during this time, or, due to the circumstances during their first year, they could not act upon them. This relates to Australian research by Daniel *et al.* (2022) who concluded that it may be worry over the pandemic that impacted personal values, causing a change as a person adjusts to the threat.

6.5.1 Mental health for Gen Z

Notwithstanding its credentials as a model of personal values, and its development in 2012 to an expanded 19 values, mental health is not a part of Schwartz's value theory. In contrast, the data show this to be important to Gen Z participants in this study, with Rose, Teagan and Florence sharing episodes from their university years and the year before when they were challenged by their mental health. It is worth noting, from the literature, that Sheldon (2004) reported change towards emotional and wellbeing values amongst graduating students twenty years ago. The data in this current study demonstrate that mental health is valued, as are relationships that support the mental health of students. For example, in Rose's story she talks about the impact of COVID-19 and a lack of understanding of the importance of her mental health from her employer.

Rose: I called in sick and I pretended that I was just unwell - like sick, which I don't really... I don't do anymore because I don't think there's any point in doing that. It doesn't help anyone. But when you feel like people don't understand it's quite difficult (Interview 2, 14:19, October 2022).

In another example, Teagan identified that her mental health was very important to her, and that the COVID-19 lockdown and consequent online learning helped her.

Teagan: I actually really enjoyed online learning because it meant I didn't have to leave my house. It meant I was in a really comfortable space (Interview 2, 7:19, October 2022).

This had followed Teagan's struggle with her mental health before university, and her desire to manage and cope, relating to findings by Sagiv *et al.* (2017) that show that values are influenced by experiences in different environments, including schooling. Teagan mentions her mental health regularly during her stories.

Related also to the importance of mental health to Gen Z students, James talks about the whole cohort of fellow students of his generation, and the importance of recognising that their wellbeing matters, in his role as a Student Representative.

James: [I am] sort of trying to give that perspective of an average undergrad student who perhaps, you know, cost of living and well-being and things like that. Maybe just giving it that voice that we're not... sort of feel we're not all in the same boat (Interview 2, 29:05, November 2022).

For Gen Z, mental health is part of their world:

Over a fifth of this latest generation of young people (22 per cent) are starting out adult life with signs of a common mental health disorder compared with 15 per cent of Millennials back in 1998, when they were the same average age. (Duffy, 2021, p. 99)

The data, cited by Duffy (2021), support the theory that HE should focus more on supporting the mental health of students. This was also found by Katz *et al.* (2021) who noted that 'Gen Zers concerns (are) about self-care, mental health and achieving a good work/life balance' (p. 186). Using this as a foundation, I contend, based on the restorings, that there should be an increased focus on helping relationships form and creating opportunities for collaborating and socialising with new and different people. This would support Gen Z students so they can be curious and open to change and feel that they have a sense of belonging on their course and on the university campus more widely (Selingo, 2021). This needs to become part of the student experience and not only an option for those who use existing student services specialising in mental health. HE should include access to academic and support staff who are trained to support student mental health and understand that this is part of their responsibility to the student body.

The omission of mental health as a value within the Schwartz theoretical model of values arguably indicates a generational blockage. As understanding of Gen Z develops, the lexicon used to support their growth needs to change and become more relevant. A range of reports and research briefings illustrate the mental health statistics for current students, with Lewis and Bolton (2023), for example, reporting a rapid increase from 2010 to 2020/21. Other publications have presented statistics and offered guidance for universities on supporting the mental health of students (e.g. RCPsych, 2021; IFF Research, 2023), depicting a similar increase. Additionally, the latest Student Academic Experience Survey (Neves and Stephenson, 2023) surveyed over 10,000 undergraduates and reports dissatisfaction with mental health support in some instances, but a statistical decline in students considering leaving their course

due to their mental health (but still the highest rank reason for doing so at 29%). A group that students did seek further support from was academic staff, which, as already suggested above, could be an area of further training and awareness. The report also suggests that assessment practice was a factor that affected mental health, so this could be investigated. In order to address some of these challenges, The University Mental Health Charter (Hughes and Spanner, 2019) was devised as a guideline of principles for all universities to use. However, as well as being a pre-COVID creation, the statistics for adoption of the charter are low, with only five universities achieving the award to date (Lewis and Bolton, 2023). Gaining award status is dependent on a whole university approach endorsed by leadership, requiring commitment and understanding of the importance of developing this aspect of the university.

The terminology is, however, slightly inadequate for the concept that has been expressed by the students in this study. Mental health is not an abstract noun like others such as benevolence or security found in Schwartz's model. What is needed is an encapsulation of being mentally healthy, but the inadequacy of the English language is such that there is not a single word that does this. It is insufficient to consider mental health (or whatever value term is found to be the most appropriate) just a part of the value of health within security, which is the related value in the Schwartz model. It is of enough importance to Gen Z for it to be a value of its own. Below is a list of the range of terms that can potentially be used:

- mentally healthful;
- healthfulness;
- mental wellbeing;
- self-care;
- mental healthiness;
- mental wellness; and
- self-compassion.

The data recognise the centrality of mental health to the lives of Gen Z students, particularly during stressful times. The students in this study were very comfortable talking about related experiences and showed awareness of their emotional wellbeing, as a prominent part of their lives, particularly those identifying as LGBT+. Recognising that this matters so much to Gen Z will enable the HE sector to reflect that the current model of responding to mental health challenges is a deficit model of using a service

once you are in crisis. However, to support positive mental wellbeing universities need to invest in training for all staff that students encounter; include an aspect of affective teaching in the curriculum; plan and deliver blended approaches to support the student who cannot be physically present that day (rejecting the notion of back to pre-pandemic business as usual after COVID-19); and develop assessment that better supports students adaptation to the different way of living that being at university involves.

This recognition will then generate further research, interest at policy and funding level and action in environments where Gen Z are, including at university. As a priority it can then be realistically resourced and foregrounded in HE practices.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter, the stories told are framed in the larger story of COVID-19, and the specific context of an English university during this unusual time. The existing field of literature considers the development of values in many other contexts and (except for a small number of early COVID studies) before the COVID-19 pandemic. For each Gen Z student in this study, their restoryings were of the year before university and their undergraduate years. After each pair of restoryings, a commentary compared the two in response to the research questions. While each student's narrative stands alone, there are aspects of commonality in the stories that can be drawn out and learned from.

The restoryings show that each individual student had their own experience that demonstrated their values (Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer, 2019) and endorses that value development is individual. However, from the synthesis of literature and data from this study, five areas for discussion were explored: the application of Schwartz's theoretical model to explore Gen Z student values; value change in the student restoryings during the university undergraduate years; the impact of critical incidents in relation to personal values; the influence of COVID-19 on the personal values of the Gen Z students; and mental health for Gen Z.

The methodology and method used resulted in six individual sets of restoryings. It is argued that personal values of the participants changed, or became more important, or were more relevant at that time of life. These experiences of values and value change at this age are replicated in the literature (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012b). Gamage *et al.* (2021, p. 4) claim that values change or develop during university 'subliminally rather than

being consciously selected and deliberately adopted by the individual' and that this happens through experiences and interactions with others. While this is evident in some of the data from this study, there are examples of conscious value change prior to university, for example when Rose speaks about working with children that are less privileged after wanting to be a private nanny. There is also an experience of conscious value change for Teagan when she goes to study in Japan in her third year. Teagan acknowledges that she is thinking differently and behaving differently.

This study supports the literature stating that Gen Z are fully engaged in an online world (Seemiller and Grace, 2016; Twenge, 2017; Selingo, 2018; Duffy, 2021) and that as Gen Z have access to information through the technological world they live in, they are enlightened and knowledgeable about wider society, and arguably can and do make conscious values decisions. Garvanova and Papazova (2019) found that the values of younger generations of students were changed by living in a technological world, and the data in this study support this.

Applying the model of values by Schwartz (1992) has enabled understanding of the values behind the stories told by the Gen Z students, while also exposing a gap in the model that does not match the current lexicon of Gen Z students. Potentially exacerbated by the context of the global pandemic, mental health as a value is prominent in the stories told and reveals concerns about the pace of change in the HE sector to acknowledge the importance of mental health and support for mental ill health amongst the student population.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

Gen Z students are a heterogeneous group who have unique stories to tell of their undergraduate experience and what mattered to them during that time and the year before they started at university. Their voices need to be heard and this narrative study has sought to explore their values and any change in values for each individual Gen Z student participant. As context, the rising number of mental health issues for young people is a concern and there is a considerable mental health impact of COVID-19 on this cohort. This study shows that critical incidents or turning points, such as experiencing university closures, having a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), making the decision to come out as a lesbian or experiencing mental health challenges, can create a change in values. While current values literature suggests that values are formed during adolescence and are largely stable beyond this point (Bardi *et al.*, 2014; Parks-Leduc, Feldman and Bardi, 2015) this study gives examples where, for each individual Gen Z student, values have changed during the undergraduate years. Significant life events and transitions impacted these Gen Z students. While each generation has experienced a significant critical incident (for example 9/11 for Millennials), Gen Z students have had to cope with a global pandemic.

Narrative research is messy (Andrews, 2021) as life can be. The stories told by the students in this study are about how they view themselves, reflecting on what matters to them, at a particular point in their life. The interpretations of the stories told have been analysed using a bespoke triad approach. This was important because the analysis was layered and enabled elicitation of behaviours that related to Schwartz's values. Restoryings were constructed, then member-checked for accuracy. Understanding the stories told and heard is a subjective act. As a narrative researcher, I draw on Andrews (2021, p. 10) conceptualisation of the narrative researcher as a 'cave explorer, adopting a posture of openness to the unexpected, tracing an unknown terrain'. My version of this is walking the hills, with a sense of freedom and unknowingness, interest and adventure, with different paths available to take to get to the destination.

This chapter will conclude the study by returning to the conceptual framework and the three disciplinary lenses: generational, narrative and values.

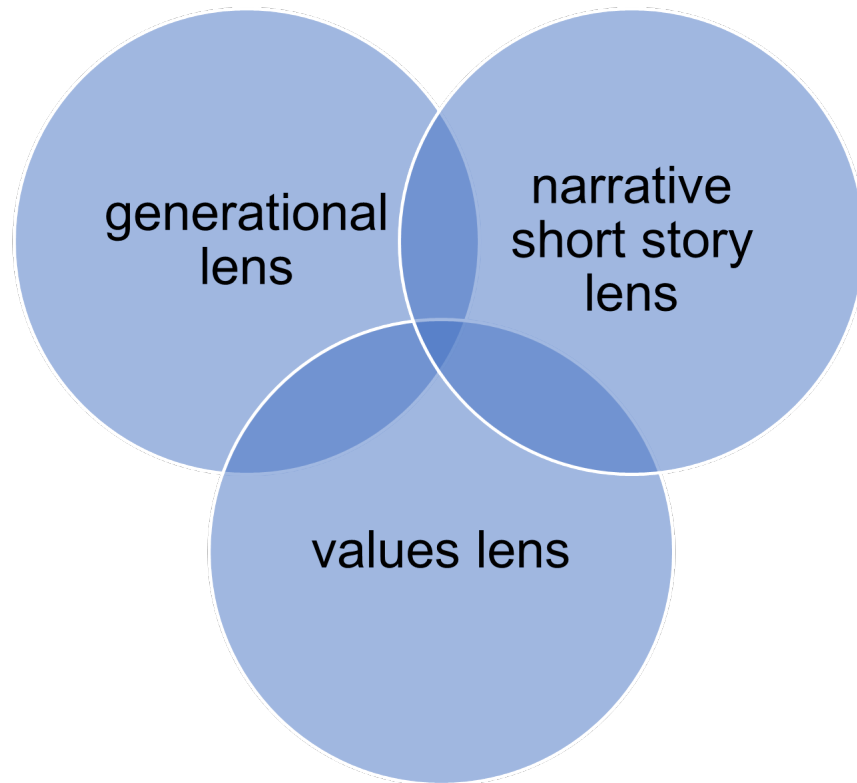


Figure 8: Conceptual Lenses Revisited

The conceptual framework has formed a golden thread throughout this thesis showing that each of the three lenses work together to enable the creation of this unique study, capturing the lived experience of Gen Z students during COVID-19. The generational lens focused the story-gathering on Gen Z students at university and allowed for an exploration of their values. This means that the sector can adapt and improve provision and help make the student experience the best it can be for this generation. The narrative short story lens has meant that rich and thick data have been collected and analysed so that the stories told illustrate the values of each Gen Z student at that time. It was critical then to look at the data through a values lens using Schwartz's values theory to elicit the data presented in the student stories. An expansion of these conclusions is provided below.

The chapter will synthesise all major points in relation to the aim, objectives and research questions.

Aim:

to explore what matters to Gen Z undergraduate students and how the student experience impacts their changing values.

Objectives:

- to evaluate Schwartz's values research in order to contextualise the following research;
- to use narrative short story interviews to explore changing student values;
- to use narrative analysis to interpret each student's values; and
- to understand the experiences that have impacted students' values change.

Research questions

- RQ1: Are there key elements within the stories of Gen Z students that impacted their values before coming to university?
- RQ2: Which experiences have impacted on each student's values while they are at university?
- RQ3: What do the students' stories reveal about their changing values?
- RQ4: What is identified from the student stories that impacts on values change at university?

This chapter seeks to present an argued case for the original contribution to knowledge which adds to the field of study, while establishing the importance of the work. This conclusion acknowledges Caine, Clandinin and Lessard's (2022) writing where they consider the importance of time and place in narrative inquiry, and is therefore relevant to this study:

In narrative inquiry, this sense of temporality that stretches backward and forward helps us understand that people, places, events, communities and artifacts all come from somewhere. They are always on their way. The experiences of each individual cannot be understood without what they are emerging out of, what they are still nested within. We cannot look at a moment in time as separate from all of the other moments that come before. (Caine, Clandinin and Lessard, 2022, p. 95)

Here, the place of the study is in an English university with a representative sample of Gen Z students on undergraduate degrees in the field of Academic Studies in Education. This sample is under-represented in the extant literature on Gen Z students and value change. When the study was conceived and the research proposal prepared, COVID-19 was not heard of, and the actuality of the government's stay-at-home orders known as lockdowns in the UK were unknown. The first phase of data

collection was scheduled for early 2020 (coinciding with the height of the pandemic) and universities in the UK closed and transitioned to remote learning. As such, this study captures the lived experience of Gen Z students at this unprecedented time in history. COVID-19 became part of the study.

The findings highlight that there are three main contributions to knowledge, grounded by the Discussion (Chapter 6) and the Student Stories (Chapter 5). The main contributions are, firstly, a contribution to the field of knowledge and the understanding of their values and the relation to experiences over time of Gen Z students; secondly, a contribution to the development of narrative methodology and methods; and thirdly, a contribution to values theory.

7.1 The generational lens - a contribution to the Gen Z literature.

The literature review revealed that Gen Z are much more technically competent than previous generations and are able to make social connections through technology. Social media is used to share emotions and knowledge, for example before coming to university by following existing members of the university to see if you fit in (James and Teagan) or using Snapchat to make friends during lockdown in halls (Ann). In Ann's example, greater reliance on social media was due to COVID-19, confirming that being connected to others, or connectedness, is importance to the Gen Z students in this study. The findings resonate with some of the literature reported that has already been written about Gen Z and their values (e.g. Seemiller and Grace, 2016, 2019) but the students in this study are in an English university (rather than one in the USA) and the timing of this study means that the findings have presented a different set of data than would have likely been revealed outside of the period of time of COVID-19.

Significantly, the voices heard in this thesis are of a time in history - a unique time in the student experience for Gen Z undergraduates. The findings demonstrate the significance of COVID-19, but on the other hand, allow for the question of whether the students' first year experience was skewed by the pandemic and its impact.

Furthermore, as outlined by Gouveia *et al.* (2015), the value priorities of generations can be shaped by the economic and educational resources at that time. Notably, both the economy and education were affected by COVID-19.

Developing the contribution to our understanding of the Gen Z student experience during a critical time, five other recent studies on Gen Z student values and COVID-19

are reported in the literature review. The five studies (Bonetto *et al.*, 2021; Bojanowska *et al.*, 2021; Freeman *et al.*, 2022; Harari, Sela and Bareket-Bojmel, 2022; Stahl and Literat, 2022) report data from the beginning of COVID-19. However, this study has allowed the Gen Z students to reflect on the whole period because it explores the year before they started university up to their final year. This makes the data even more novel and distinct as it captures the student participants' lived experience during the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, and from application to university through to their final undergraduate year. The limitations of the five published studies mentioned here are attended to through this study, by advancing knowledge about Gen Z student values throughout their undergraduate journey and presenting the findings in readable, honest and important restoryings. The fourth objective and the research questions are specifically addressed within this research contribution.

7.2 The narrative lens - developing the methodology with the bespoke triad analysis strategy and use of a peer debriefer.

This study also makes an original contribution to methodology, specifically the creation of a bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach for processing the narratives listened to into authentic restoryings, that tell the original stories of the Gen Z students and their values. This unique approach has been written as a journal article and accepted for publication in Spring 2024 (Hill, Gossman and Woolley, 2023). The bespoke, triad approach enabled layered engagement with the data using the work of three authors (Leggo, 2008; Loseke, 2009, 2012; Phoenix, 2013) in a novel way. Combining the three authors' work to create a bespoke, triad narrative analysis approach meant that the stories told were firstly narratively interrogated and reordered chronologically (Leggo, 2008), and at this point Schwartz's model of values (2006) was used to relate values to the short stories told (Hill, Gossman and Woolley, 2023). Secondly, the data were reviewed again, with deeper, holistic questions asked of it (Phoenix, 2013). This enabled meaning and importance to be explored, and critically the question of which stories the participants had chosen to tell helped organise the work into episodes, which meant that the restoryings were fluent and cohesive. Thirdly, the final layer of analysis focused more forensically on the words used and particularly considered symbolic language which Loseke (2009) calls symbolic and emotional language choices. Accepting the subjectivity of this final layer of analysis, the relationship with storytelling made this an appropriate final layer of narrative analysis. This resonated

with Jungian archetypes which were then added to help with expression of the abstract symbolism. Consequently, the bespoke, narrative analysis approach created contributes to the methodological field and can be used for further research studies, representing an advancement of each individual stage of the approach. The published paper (Hill, Gossman and Woolley, 2023) will help to disseminate the approach.

In addition, this research is also distinctive because it involved working with a peer debriefer (PD), recommended as a reflexive tool to enhance qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Lincoln and Guba, 1986; Cresswell, 2007; Kim, 2011). Working with a PD enabled greater credibility throughout the research journey, and, to this end, regular meetings took place with 'Polly'. Polly questioned some of the interpretation and language used and served as a reminder for maintaining an ethical attitude (Josselson, 2007) which was central to the study. The role included checking that the original voice of the Gen Z students was still being heard. What is evident is that this study used a PD effectively to support the inherent subjectivity of the methodology, method and analysis. The current literature landscape does not include any narrative studies on student values that use a PD. As such, the findings of this study present unique data gathered, that has been probed and explored through this effective reflexive practice. Moreover, meetings with Polly developed a confidence that as a professional with 30 years of teaching experience and 14 years in HE, the practice of listening could be priority. It was also a source of succour and connectivity during COVID-19 lockdowns when meetings took place, dependent on restrictions, in various locations including outdoors, in a greenhouse and online. This has been presented at the International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI) 2023 and an article is planned.

7.3 The values lens - evaluating the use of Schwartz's model of 10 values within a narrative inquiry study.

We tend to form our value systems and behaviours during late childhood and early adulthood, so major events have a much stronger impact on people who experience them while coming of age. (Duffy, 2021, p.5)

An objective of this research study was to evaluate Schwartz's values research (1987, 1992) in order to contextualise this research with Gen Z students, exploring their individual stories and any value change from before starting university to their final year as an undergraduate. Schwartz's value model was chosen as his work was the most

prolific in the review of literature and his theory of values is renowned, with it used in the ESS (Davidov, Schmidt and Schwartz, 2008). This is a survey conducted, since 2001, across 30 European countries every two years. It measures attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour patterns (European Social Survey, 2020). Indeed, Ponizovski *et al.* (2020, p. 885) state: 'The surge of empirical research on values in the past two decades is easily attributable to the theory of basic human values by Shalom H. Schwartz (1992)'. In the analysis process, the circular model was a concrete and visual tool to apply to the narratively analysed stories and the 10 value terms in the model (self-direction, benevolence, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, power, conformity, tradition, universalism and security) were supported by the expanded terms used in Schwartz (2006) (See Appendix C). As the Gen Z students shared their lived experience in each phase of the narrative short story interviews, the values they were speaking of typically connected with the Schwartz model in most examples. Interestingly, there were omissions (such as examples of stories that illustrate the value of tradition or conformity, and in most interviews the value of power was not mentioned). The 10 separate parts of Schwartz's model seem to have equal weighting, although the placement of conformity and tradition together presents them as associated. The stories told related to the model of 10 values and thus, on evaluation, it was an efficacious theoretical model for this study and method and a very useful way to interpret the students' stories and find out about their values without asking them directly. Paradoxically, notwithstanding criticism of narrative inquiry as subjective and non-representative, using a theory from a very quantitative field and applying it narratively, endorsed Schwartz's values model further. For the first time in the literature, an indirect approach to exploring values has been undertaken in this narrative study, using Schwartz's well-researched and considered values theory.

The findings identify the importance of mental health for Gen Z students and there is considerable support for this in the research available (Katz *et al.*, 2021; Selingo, 2021; Stahl and Literat, 2022). While Schwartz's values model refers to health as an aspect of security, there is no explicit mention of mental health or words that mean mental health within the model. This could be because of the changing language since the creation of Schwartz's model or it could be that mental health is a value for Gen Z and an omission from the Schwartz's value model that makes it less appropriate for Gen Z. As Seemiller and Grace (2016, p. 6) reported, Gen Z live in 'a world completely shaped by the Internet'. Having access to social media and global news through the Internet from a young age means that Gen Z have a wider vocabulary to express their values.

Therefore, the proposal is that mental health or words associated with it need to be included in the value model. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

7.4 What else has been discovered and developed?

Being a lone researcher during COVID-19 was demanding, when combined with home schooling two children with both parents working full time and managing other challenges of COVID-19. Considering this unique context, the role of the peer debriefer became a lifeline for support. Meetings occurred regularly (within the government guidelines), while walking, sitting on park benches, in the garden and inevitably, during the beginning of the lockdowns, online. This study therefore illustrates that connectedness and relationships mattered, both for the Gen Z student-participants and the Gen X researcher.

The research journey affected my own ontology and worldview, deepening the need for mattering, belonging and connectedness both professionally and personally. It was important to move beyond empathetic listening of anecdotes to valuing Gen Z voices and exploring their lived experience, rejecting stereotypes and really understanding what matters to them. This resonates with the writing of Gravett (2022) on relational pedagogies, but universities need to take the relational aspects beyond pedagogy and across the campus, acknowledging the breadth of the student experience and that it is not confined to lectures, seminars and the course group.

It has been proposed that Gen Z may be the first generation who can say, “it is me being me”. Whether that is through sharing their diagnosis of ADHD, how they identify their sexuality or their mental health challenges, these Gen Z students wanted to be heard and want what matters to them to be acknowledged. Interestingly, for this small group of Gen Z students, mental health challenges were greater for LGBT+ students and worsened during COVID-19. The HE sector needs to recognise this and respond accordingly. Suggestions are discussed later in this chapter.

7.5 Why does this research matter?

This research matters because it focuses on Gen Z students who are the majority undergraduates on campus today. Student massification and widening participation means different students with more complex backgrounds and mental health or well-

being challenges are coming into university, and they want their values to be recognised, both in and out of class. The findings demonstrate that it is not just the course or department that creates a sense of belonging, but the wider student experience:

We need a much better understanding of what it is like to be a student today, not just, for example, how well they are engaging with their studies and institution, and how likely they might be to discontinue or finish successfully. Contemporary student lives spread out much further than their course and institution, involving family, friends, social and leisure activities and employment. (Tight, 2019, p. 9)

Gen Z students want to make a difference and student spaces need to be designed from the students' perspective. This should not be something that is decided by Millennials, Generation X or Boomers but through active listening of Gen Z voices. If the HE sector is to thrive, it matters to know what Gen Z value and then universities can adapt. The importance of this is explained below:

While students' reasons for pursuing a university career may align with those of previous generations, their thinking when picking where to go for themselves does diverge. The stated values and perceived values of the institution are key - with 82 per cent saying it was very important or quite important to them'. (Carter, 2020, p. 11)

Hence, what matters to Gen Z students matters to the University. This presents as an opportunity for change and will be followed with recommendations later in the chapter.

7.6 Challenges and limitations

A challenge at the outset of the study was thinking about positionality and my changing role from lecturer to researcher. However, concern over this potential power position did not arise. The remote video interviews reduced the power imbalance, enabling the data collection to take place in an authentic and honest way with participants generously sharing their stories. Being an ethical researcher meant acknowledging that there is power in writing about the lived experience of the Gen Z students (Etherington, 2004). Reflexivity tools, especially using the peer debriefer, helped monitor this.

Another challenge was COVID-19 which is widely discussed in this thesis. Related to this is the explanation by Gouveia *et al.* (2015, p. 1278) who say that 'the economic and educational resources available at crucial times in the development of an individual seem to shape the value priorities of whole generations'. This could mean that COVID-

19 lockdowns during the participants' first year affected Gen Z values collectively, as the educational resources available to them were very different to previous and future cohorts due to the phenomena of the closure of universities and remote learning. Indeed, this could be a time that Dewey (1997) and Caine, Clandinin and Lessard (2022) describe as a mis-educative experience, whereby the students' opportunity to learn was hindered by their first-year COVID-19 pandemic experience. The findings in this study lean towards this. This challenge does, however, mean that the data are both unique and unrepeatably, as a captured series of Gen Z stories from this time. Additionally, as a researcher who was also embedded in the pandemic, I made efforts to provide the truth through reflexivity (detailed in Chapter 4) and, hopefully, credibility, trustworthiness or persuasiveness for the reader (Andrews, 2021).

A potential limitation of the methodology involves site and population. The study was undertaken in one university with a sample from the cohort of Academic Studies in Education at the University. Due to one participant withdrawing in the second phase of data collection, the participants were then only from two courses, rather than three. The remaining Gen Z student-participants still shared their lived experiences, and their narratives were analysed and restoried, becoming nuanced, enlightening and rewarding to read. This underlines that narrative methodology was the appropriate choice for this study.

7.7 Further research ideas

Having discussed challenges and limitations, this section now addresses how the findings present future research opportunities. This study and its findings build on studies that use Schwartz's values model, which has been confirmed as applicable to the narrative methodology employed. The values of the Gen Z student-participants in this study have been explored, analysed and restoried, creating dynamic pictures of their lived experience and what mattered to them during a unique time in history. As the HE sector continues to move forward following COVID-19, this study has, alongside its original findings, identified research opportunities for further investigation.

Notably, there is a need for emphatic and expedient gathering of the views of Gen Z about a lexicon that accurately represents the important value for Gen Z of mental health. Indeed, through the analysis process, it became apparent that some of the

words used in Schwartz's value theory are not always those that a Gen Z student would use. It would be interesting to explore the words they would use.

In contrast to the Gen Z students in this study, who all experienced university closure and remote learning due to COVID-19 lockdowns, it would be useful to explore how personal values changed for Gen Z students who did not experience the COVID-19 restrictions, but who will undoubtedly experience critical incidents or turning points themselves through their undergraduate degree. As such, a similar study with Gen Z students post COVID-19 could explore if values have changed in a particular fashion for the participants in this study. Following this, an evaluation of the impact of COVID-19 on student values could be undertaken.

Regarding the challenge of the sample population for this study, further research with more diverse Gen Z students would be beneficial and would support Gottlieb and Lasser's (2001) view that a sample should be hearing all voices, in their respectful critique of narrative research. To this end, greater diversity could be sought, as this study involved mostly women. While this is reflective of the gender profile of the sample population, future research could include more men, and students identifying as trans or non-binary. This is relevant to Gen Z, as exemplified by the 2021 Census of England and Wales, which reports that 1% of 16 to 24-year olds identify as trans. The Census also reports that of those identifying as non-binary, 84.98% are aged 16 to 34 years (Office for National Statistics, 2023). Consequently, this would be important data to allow for additional understanding of Gen Z students' values.

More narrative studies of student values are recommended, particularly for underrepresented groups, such as mature or international students, black students, students from different religious groups or those with socio-economic challenges (Office for Students, 2023). Exploration of their values using the bespoke triad analysis approach presented in this thesis would elicit potentially useful findings. These could potentially be used to further support the recommendations for policy and practice outlined in the following section.

7.8 Implications for practice

In this section, the identified implications for practice from this study are presented, both diagrammatically (see Figure 9 below) and as a discussion, providing an example for the University to consider. These implications are anchored in the findings of this

study and its context, and as such, recommendations for the wider HE sector are beyond its scope. However, readers are invited to consider the transferability to their own contexts.

The findings suggest the following three implications for practice:

1. The new way of terming mental health as a value for Gen Z students should be reflected in HE teaching, communication, policy and websites. This would then influence staff training, highlighting that university staff need to be made more aware of their part in promoting positive mental health. If it is something that is a value for our students, we must do more than simply pass it on to the team of experts who will triage and provide a six-week programme of counselling or mental health advice. All staff should be trained to support their personal tutees; students should know that the staff at their university have current training and are well-equipped to support them. This could extend to adapting pedagogy and the inclusion of affective aspects of teaching. Notably, all courses should embed this approach and 'make relationships central to the student experience' (Sellingo, 2021).

2. A workshop should be created about using a peer debriefer in education research. An example of a structure for meetings and objectives for the meetings could be presented.

3. Extra support should be available and increased inclusivity planned for members of the LGBT+ community on campuses. This is supported by Rees, Crowe and Harris (2021) who state that inclusivity should challenge heteronormativity and encourage acceptance. This is evidenced in the findings from this study, showing that students from the LGBT+ community have more mental health challenges than others.

The findings from this study add to the body of literature on Gen Z student values but focus on students in an English University. A model of how action can be taken by the university and the students in response to the stories told by the Gen Z undergraduate students in this study is presented in Figure 9, below. The model suggests alignment of the values voiced by Gen Z students in this study with American-based reports by Carter (2020) and Sellingo (2021) who, alongside Seemiller and Grace (2016), Trevino (2018), and Seemiller and Clayton (2019) presented their findings and recommendations for Gen Z students in the USA. The model draws from policy,

practice and campus culture which could be used across the university to engage with Gen Z students to support their feelings of belonging and mattering.



Figure 9: Proposed Model of Value Development and the Role of the University

Here follows an explanation of the proposed recommendations within each part of the diagram: the year before university, first year, second year and third year.

7.8.1 The year before university

In the year before university, the university should use social media to establish connections and share positive communications that reflect the inclusivity of the campus for the LGBT+ community, illustrated as positive by Teagan (see Teagan, Restorying 1) and James (see James, Restorying 1). Endeavouring to ensure marketing is not cis-heteronormative (where everyone identifies with binary genders and relationships between one man and one woman are the norm) will establish a Gen Z friendly environment before students start their undergraduate degree. This should

involve listening to the voices of Gen Z students from the LGBT+ community, supporting and encouraging the value of belonging. Extra support should be available and increased inclusivity planned for members of the LGBT+ community on campuses so that they feel authentically welcome. Rees, Crowe and Harris (2021) state that inclusivity should challenge heteronormativity and encourage acceptance because of evidence that students from the LGBT+ community have more mental health challenges than others. This research supports this, and advocates for these students.

7.8.2 The first year

In the first year induction, opportunities should be designed to enable students to share experiences from their lives before and outside of university, especially talking about their relationships with friends and family. This will reflect students' values of benevolence and security such as when Florence had new babies in the family (see Florence, Restorying 1), and when James showed the value of security mattered to him when his family supported his change of academic course (see James, Restorying 1). The induction should also include an affective aspect, with first-year students spending short amounts of time in purposeful icebreakers to garner a feeling of belonging in the group, meeting the need expressed by all the Gen Z participants. These affective pedagogies should be used as session starters throughout year one to revisit the value of a sense of belonging that mattered to the Gen Z students in this study. Furthermore, another way to promote values of a sense of belonging and benevolence is to plan formative assessments that incorporate small group collaboration, explicitly encouraging bonding and face-to-face co-working. This would create opportunities for new friendships and a sense of belonging within the lecture or seminar room. Assessment opportunities are planned that incorporate small group collaboration.

7.8.3 The second year

The experience of COVID-19 exposed the Gen Z students in this study to a different first-year experience. Given these data it would be reasonable to suggest that an improved second-year induction would benefit returning students and reflect their values of self-direction and friendship. While the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions occurred during their first year for the Gen Z students in this study, the literature shows that values are affected by critical incidents (Sortheix *et al.*, 2019) and the data in this study support this. For example, Ann experienced an intruder in her student house, showing heightened security values (see Ann, Restorying 2). Therefore,

developing an effective and affective induction in year two would support developing relationships and connectivity within a course group and also provide social opportunities for students on the wider campus (also supporting commuter students like Joy, see Restorying 2). This also relates to the stories of Florence and James, who both told of missing out on the first-year experience, leading them to seek opportunities to socialise and make connections at the beginning of their second year (see Florence, Restorying 2; and James, Restorying 2). Additionally, creating study groups and encouraging society membership in the second year will reflect the values of friendship and a sense of belonging as described by Joy, for example (see Joy, Restorying 2) and also by Rose (see Rose, Restorying 2). Session design and wider campus activities need to allow for developing friends on the course and in university life.

7.8.4 The third year

In the third year, as students' value of self-direction and achievement strengthens, it is important to start the year with a social focus setting goals for the final part of the undergraduate journey. This would support Gen Z students who know they want to be more focused on their future (see Florence, Restorying 2). At this stage of their student experience, case studies are presented during career talks that establish and model the importance of mentors in the workplace, such as those from work placement (such as in Rose's story of the headteacher who supported her, see Rose, Restorying 2). Tutors are re-introduced as referees and the relationship realigned to support growth into future pathways (see James, Restorying 2). At this point, the data points to the necessity to build contacts and provide signposting for wider student support and ongoing membership of the university as future alumni.

7.9 Summary

The findings of this study suggest that Higher Education Institutions need to acknowledge the rapid pace of change in society, which means that some values that were important in the past, or unrecognised or unidentified (such as mental health) have become and are important to this generation. On the other hand, values such as power, tradition and conformity – which were significant to previous generations – are rather less important to Gen Z. The data points to the need for education to respond to what matters to Gen Z students. This indicates that, rather than relying on surveys

such as the NSS, universities need to explore students' stories and listen to the lived experiences of the student body. These findings reinforce the need to move:

Beyond these crude metrics' of national surveys and have a respectful understanding of what matters to Gen Z students that is more than can be heard during interactions on campus in lectures and seminars. (Wainwright, Chappell and McHugh, 2020, p. 2)

The findings from this study offer insight for future scholarship, referring back to the three lenses of generation, narrative and values. For Gen Z, this study has highlighted that it is important to consider communication that supports a non cis-heteronormative stance, and pedagogy that acknowledges the value of a sense of belonging.

Methodologically, future scholarship could apply the use of narrative short story interviews with other students, and the bespoke triad analysis method for the data collected. In addition, this study indicates that reflexive researchers conducting narrative inquiry benefit from working with a peer debriefer. In the field of values research, the findings suggest that the development of understanding the term mental health on the university campus would enable a better student experience and create a space for staff training so that responsibility for mental health is wider and more clearly understood. A focus on developing mental health terminology for Gen Z lexicon is due.

This study has explored the lived experience and changing values of Gen Z students and then presented a deepened understanding of narrative inquiry and its efficacy when used. The generosity of the student participants during such a challenging time has enabled the creation of individual restorings that commemorate their unique experience, capturing what mattered to them and to what extent this changed by the end of their university degree.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Schwartz Search Tables

Initial search using two databases - Web of Science and APA PsycINFO (eliciting 161 articles authored by Shalom Schwartz)

Database	Date of search	Search strategy used	Total number of results	Comments
Web of Science	12.7.22	Schwartz (all fields) AND values (all fields)	6403	Too broad. Need to check author name is accurate.
Web of Science	12.7.22	Schwartz (author) AND values (all fields)	3752	Still too broad. Check author's name is correct.
Web of Science	12.7.22	Author search: Schwartz, Shalom S.H.	161	Still many sources. Look at citation count.
Web of Science	12.7.22	Citation report with citations highest first.	161	Within these results, need to conduct a search for theory (Table 2) and a search for

Database	Date of search	Search strategy used	Total number of results	Comments
				values in context (using the terms HE/FE/students)
Web of Science	12.7.22	Schwartz (author) AND values (all fields) AND theory (title)	30	Check author is correct, gave 30 relevant for full abstract assessment (see Table 2)
Web of Science	12.7.22	Schwartz (author) AND values (all fields) AND students OR 'Higher Education' or 'Further Education' (title)	42	Realised had searched only within titles, so re-searched students/HE/FE within abstract
Web of Science	12.7.22	Schwartz (author) AND 'personal values' (all fields) AND students OR 'Higher Education' or 'Further Education' (abstract) REFINE BY AUTHOR	5	Gave five relevant for full abstract assessment (see Table 3)

Database	Date of search	Search strategy used	Total number of results	Comments
APA PsycINFO	12.7.22	Schwartz (all fields) AND values (all fields)	2140	Too broad. Need to check author name is accurate.
APA PsycINFO	12.7.22	Schwartz (author) AND values (all fields) AND theory (title)	22	Gave 22 relevant for full abstract assessment after checking for duplications within Table 2. Reported in Table 4
APA PsycINFO	12.7.22	Schwartz (author) AND values (all fields)	727	Still too broad. Check author's name is correct. No Author filter but noticed Age filter- categories are perfect

Database	Date of search	Search strategy used	Total number of results	Comments
APA PsycINFO	12.7.22	Schwartz (author) AND 'personal values' (all fields) plus filtered by age group – adulthood (18 yrs.+) young adulthood (18-29) adolescence (13-17)	43	Gave ten relevant for full abstract assessment after checking for duplications within Table 3. Reported in Table 5.

Search for theory (30 relevant for full abstract assessment via Web of Science search above)

Used Boolean operators: Schwartz (author) AND values (all fields) AND theory (title)

NB an initial check of author was made to exclude other than Shalom H. Schwartz (resulting in the exclusion of 13/30 sources)

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
1467	A Theory of Cultural Values and some Implications for Work	Schwartz	1999	49 nations	Exclude based on work values not student values Useful paragraph on the validation of the theory p.10	D
1132	Extending the Cross-Cultural Validity of the Theory of Basic Human Values with a Different Method of Measurement	Schwartz Melech Lehmann	2001	South Africa (n=3210) and Italy (n=5867) and in samples of 13-14-year old Ugandan girls (n=840)	Analyses in representative samples yielded structures of relations among values similar to the theoretical prototype. In an Israeli student sample (n=200), the values exhibited	B

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
					convergent and discriminant validity, when measured with the PVQ and with the standard value survey.	
1039	Refining the Theory of Basic Individual Values	Schwartz et al.	2012	15 samples from ten countries (n= 6,059).	Refined theory defines and orders 19 values	A
1022	Toward a Theory of the Universal Content and Structure of Values - Extensions and Cross-cultural Replications	Schwartz Bilsky	1990	College students and teachers from Israel, Australia, USA, Hong Kong, Spain and Finland completed the survey. Between 184 and 1409 participants surveyed in each country 1968 through to 1985.	'It has derived what may be a nearly comprehensive set of different motivational types of values, recognized across cultures.' (Abstract) Gives overview of theory on p.122	A

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
436	Value Priorities and Behavior: Applying a Theory of Integrated Value Systems	Schwartz	1996	90 Hebrew University students (45 male, 45 female) (2 other studies reported not relevant to participant group)		B
373	Basic Human Values: Theory, Measurement, and Applications.	Schwartz	2006	Data from over 70 countries between 1988 and 2002. 233 samples from 68 countries belonging to all continents (a total of 64,271 people). Varied in terms of geographic location, culture, language, religion, age, gender, and occupation. Either representative samples of a country or	Primary source for data analysis- appendix diagram	A

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
				region of a country (16), samples of primary and secondary school teachers (74), or samples of undergraduate students from different disciplines (111), adolescents (10), or various samples of adults (22)		
65	Values and Behavior: Validating the Refined Value Theory in Russia	Schwartz Butenko	2014	266 respondents, approximately 90% students from various departments of universities in Moscow, Russia. Other acquaintances or family of the students. The sample was 67.7% women, mean age 20.7 years (SD = 4.02, range 16–45 years), mean years of formal education 13.6 (SD = 2.02, range 10–20).	This study supports the view that the same motivational compatibilities and conflicts that structure value relations largely organize relations among value-expressive behaviours	B

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
59	The Structure and Dynamics of Worry: Theory, measurement, and cross-national replications		1998		Excluded- as about worry and mental health	
32	Testing and Extending Schwartz Refined Value Theory Using a Best-Worst Scaling Approach	Lee Sneddon Daly Schwartz Soutar	2019		Excluded- as topic on animal welfare and refers to refined theory only	

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
27	Embedding the Organizational Culture Profile into Schwartz's Theory of Universals in Values	Borg, Groenen Jehn Bilsky Schwartz	2011	440 participants working in 88 teams. Primarily full-time employees, enrolled as part-time students at two business schools, and full-time MBA students at a third. The average age was 27.5, and 57% were male.	Endorses the Schwartz values theory: 'being able to explain the structure of these items to a substantial extent by the TUV shows the generalizability of this value theory and thereby strengthens the claim that it may identify a universal structure of values.' (p. 10)	C
26	Applying the Refined Values Theory to Past Data: What Can Researchers Gain?	Cieciuch Schwartz	2013	7,352 adult respondents from 13 countries: Australia, Brazil, Chile, Finland, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Slovakia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, and the United States.	Refers to ESS Explains instruments on p. 1216 Describes the circle: 'The circular continuum structure is critically important to the theory	A

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
		Vecchione			for three reasons: xxx' (p. 1216)	
22	Operationalizing the Theory of Human Values: Balancing Homogeneity of Reflective Items and Theoretical Coverage	Saris Knoppen Schwartz	2013	University of Gießen, Germany. Sample one included 395 students and sample two 321 students.	'The comprehensiveness and widespread validation of the Schwartz theory of human values led to its inclusion in the European Social Survey (ESS)' (p. 29) 'This study highlights the importance of combining and contrasting different methodological approaches when developing a theory and its operationalization' (p. 41)	C
15	Functional Theories of Human Values: Comment on	Schwartz	2014		Critique response by Schwartz	A

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
	Gouveia, Milfont, and Guerra (2014)					
11	Measuring the Refined Theory of Individual Values in 49 Cultural Groups: Psychometrics of the Revised Portrait Value Questionnaire	Schwartz Cieciuch	2002	49 cultural groups (N = 53,472)	Testing the refined 19 values theory with the revised PVQ 'The PVQ method measures values indirectly, without mentioning the word values. This indirect method fits the assumption that people may not have articulated values.' (p. 4)	C
4	Theory-Driven Versus Lexical Approaches to Value Structures: A Comment on De Raad et al. (2016)	Schwartz	2017		Comment on alternative approach to values structure. For example, lexical approach does not mention security	A
4	Introduction to the Special Issue on the Theory of Human Values	Davidov	2012	n/a	Introduces a series of theory papers on Schwartz's Theory of Human Values.	C

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
		Schmidt Schwartz			Whilst the topics included are not particularly relevant (unrelated to UG students), the conclusion invites the reader to research using Schwartz's theory. This illustrates the gap and the need for further study such as this.	
0	A Revised Theory and New Instrument to Measure Basic Individual Values	Schwartz	2012		PowerPoint for teaching, therefore excluded	

Search for personal values (all) AND cohort age (5 relevant for full abstract assessment via Web of Science search above)

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
588	The Big Five Personality Factors and Personal Values	Roccas Sagiv Schwartz Knafo	2002	246 psychology students at an Israeli university, with a mean age of 22 (range of 16-35 years), 65% female	Examines relations between the five-factor traits and personal values. Questionnaire which ranged from 7 (of supreme importance) to 3 (important) to 0 (not important) to -1 (opposed to my values) to evaluate values and another test for traits. Results showed that 'values and traits are conceptually and empirically distinct yet related psychological constructs' (p. 26).	C
426	Value Priorities and Subjective Well-being: direct relations and congruity effects	Sagiv Schwartz	2000	Two studies 1. Students and adults from Germany (n=1261) 2. Psychology and business students at an Israeli university	First study used a questionnaire about values feelings and attitudes and wanted to test the relationship between values and subjective well-being. 58 values reported upon from seven to minus one. Second study looked at students' values and the value culture in their university dept. 'Pre-professional university departments are useful sites for such research because they	B

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
					seek to socialize their members toward particular cultures of values.' (p. 194)	
361	Basic Individual Values, Work Values, and the Meaning of Work	Ros Schwartz Surkiss	2007	Second study: 179 Spanish secondary teachers on a summer school, plus 193 secondary trainee students at university in Madrid (mean age 25, 75% women)	Shows that teachers in practise have less values related to openness to change and pleasure and self-direction compared to students who are anticipating work that will incorporate those values. This could be due to the naive position of the prework student.	B
258	Values and Personality	Bilsky Schwartz	1994	331 German students (18-33, median 22), two-thirds female, studying Administration or Education. Rokeach value survey and Freiburg personality inventory used.	Theoretical links between values and personality using Schwartz's values theory and Maslow's deficiency and growth needs Results of exploring values and personality and why there was not much impact on researching the two together. 'Like other dispositions values are defined as relatively stable across time and situation' (p. 178)	C

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
					'...values are conscious goals evaluated in terms of importance. They are experienced as demands one places upon oneself, as part of one's self-identity. As such values are distinct from most other types of personality disposition' (p. 178)	
66	Personal Values and Academic Achievement	Vecchione Schwartz	2022	Two studies- 234 Italian students in fourth/fifth year of high school (50% female) PVQ	Found some obvious results e.g., hedonism = lower grades. Main conclusion was more research needed, but also that self-direction and conformity = higher grades. 'This is currently the most influential and widely used value theory of values in the social sciences (Cieciuch <i>et al.</i> , 2016, p. 1) 'Personal values theory argues that people continuously seek out roles and situations that allow them to express the values they cherish (Schwartz, 2017)' (p. 17)	C

Search for theory using same Boolean operators and search terms as Table 2 (5 via APA PsycINFO after duplications)

Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
Value priorities and behavior: Applying a theory of integrated value systems	Schwartz	1996		Nb book chapter Excluded as content refers to voting behaviour and not relevant	
The Refined Theory of Basic Values NB book chapter	Schwartz	2017	Used PVQ-RR 15 samples from 10 countries: Finland, Germany, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States. Then 266 Russian students. Then samples from 18 countries:	Intros refined theory of 19 values. Split some of the ten where he 'narrowed the original definition' (p. 6) and added face and humility as two new values Range of samples showed that respondents across diverse countries discriminate the 19 values. Undertakes evaluation of values based on gender, age etc. Reiterates findings on behaviour and values reported in Schwartz et al. Value trade-offs and behavior in four countries:	A

Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
			Basque region, Costa Rica, England, France, French Canada, Greece, Iceland, Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, and Vietnam	Validating 19 refined values. Comments: 'Of course, not every topic we study will benefit from making all 19 distinctions' (p. 26)	

Search in APA PsycINFO for Schwartz (author) AND 'personal values' (all fields) AND students (all fields) plus filtered by age group –

6 sources after duplicates

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
46	Changes in young Europeans values during the global financial crisis	Sortheix, Parker, Lechner, Schwartz,	2019	16 European countries European social survey	Impact of global economic crisis on youth and YA (16-35 yrs) Importance of security, tradition and benevolence increased, while hedonism, self-direction stimulation values decreased. This happens after a major event which could make interesting results due to C19, particularly the consequential economic crisis which this research looks at and draws on from the Great Depression	B
51	Values and religion in adolescent development: Cross-national and comparative evidence.	Schwartz, S.	2012	Data on Protestant, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish, and no religion	By mid-adolescence, the dynamic structure of conflicts and compatibilities that gives coherence to adult value systems has already developed. Moreover, this holds in all six religion groups.	C

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
				samples of adolescents and adults from representative national samples from 30 countries		
23	An Icelandic translation and validation of the revised 19-value Portrait Values Questionnaire.	McQuilkin Garoarsdottir Thorsteinsson Schwartz	2016	833 students from 2 largest universities in Iceland. 71% female. Mean age= 29.7	Revalidates PVQ RR and the 19 values of the refined theory Extra validation of the theory as applicable to Nordic Icelanders	D
40	Does the Value Circle Exist Within Persons or Only Across Persons?	Borg Bardi Schwartz	2017	Study 1: 327UG psychology students in Britain. 81% female. 8-51 yrs, m=20.55 Study 2: 69 British students Study 3:	On individuals and not groups: mapped against value profile onto 2D space and found clear value circles: 'The value circle exists within individuals, providing strong support for the underlying within-person rationale for the Schwartz (1992) value theory' (p. 151) On the lack of individual research:	B

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
				<p>2012 ESS-2261 Brits</p> <p>Study 4: US 151 adults 18-75 (m=35.64) most white (72.8%)</p> <p>Study 5: Iran 75 university students (57.3% female aged 18-29)</p>	<p>'the intraperson structure of values has received almost no attention' (p. 151)</p> <p>On student studies: 'many studies on values are based on a student population in a western country' (p. 154)</p> <p>'people differ only in their value priorities' (p. 159)</p> <p>In all 5 case studies the value circle was found, almost all values are organised in the Schwartz value circle</p>	
41	Values, Intelligence and Client Behaviour in Career Counseling: A Field Study	Sagiv Schwartz	2004		<p>'Unless there is a clear link between values and behavior, there is little point to efforts to establish and change values in daily conducts, such as in education and the mass media.' (p. 1207)</p> <p>'People may act in accordance with their values even when they</p>	A

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)
					<p>do not consciously think about them.' (p. 1208)</p> <p>'Values are relatively stable motivational characteristics of persons that change little during adulthood (e.g., Feather, 1971; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1997)' (p. 1208)</p> <p>'The natural way to pursue important values is to behave in ways that express them or promote their attainment.' (p. 1208)</p> <p>'universalism and benevolence values are congruent because actions that express both values promote the welfare of others.' (p. 1209)</p>	

Citation count	Title	Author	Date	Population size/ context	Summary of article/ usefulness	A-D (where A is very useful and D less useful)																						
74	Acculturation discrepancies and well-being: the moderating role of conformity	Roccas Horenczyk Schwartz	2000	102 UG, 75 women, age m=22 yrs Study 1: Self-reported Study 2: Partner-reports (50 student couples) Study 3: Peer-rated behaviour (182 UGs)	<p>TABLE 2: Examples of Behavior Items Expressive of Each Value</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Values</i></th> <th><i>Behavior Items</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Power</td> <td>Pressure others to go along with my preferences and opinions Choose friends and relationships based on how much money they have</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Achievement</td> <td>Study late into the night before exams even if I studied well in the semester</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hedonism</td> <td>Take on many commitments Take it easy and relax Consume food or drinks even when I'm not hungry or thirsty</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stimulation</td> <td>Watch thrillers Do unconventional things</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self-direction</td> <td>Examine the ideas behind rules and regulations before obeying them Come up with novel set-ups for my living space</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Universalism</td> <td>Use environmentally friendly products Make sure everyone I know receives equal treatment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benevolence</td> <td>Agree easily to lend things to neighbors Keep promises I have made</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tradition</td> <td>Observe traditional customs on holidays Show modesty with regard to my achievements and talents</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conformity</td> <td>Obey my parents Avoid confrontations with people I don't like</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Security</td> <td>Refrain from opening my door to strangers Buy products that were made in my country</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(p. 1211)</p> <p>'It would be best to apply multiple methods to study the broad range of value-behavior relations.' (1219)</p>	<i>Values</i>	<i>Behavior Items</i>	Power	Pressure others to go along with my preferences and opinions Choose friends and relationships based on how much money they have	Achievement	Study late into the night before exams even if I studied well in the semester	Hedonism	Take on many commitments Take it easy and relax Consume food or drinks even when I'm not hungry or thirsty	Stimulation	Watch thrillers Do unconventional things	Self-direction	Examine the ideas behind rules and regulations before obeying them Come up with novel set-ups for my living space	Universalism	Use environmentally friendly products Make sure everyone I know receives equal treatment	Benevolence	Agree easily to lend things to neighbors Keep promises I have made	Tradition	Observe traditional customs on holidays Show modesty with regard to my achievements and talents	Conformity	Obey my parents Avoid confrontations with people I don't like	Security	Refrain from opening my door to strangers Buy products that were made in my country	C
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Appendix B – Welcoming email

Hi ~~Shaunna~~

Thank you for your interest in my PhD research. I am excited to hear your experiences of the year before you came to university.

I am looking forward to meeting you on MS Teams so that I can spend time listening to your stories of this time.

My interest in values comes from my earlier career teaching in schools and noticing how important it was to have a positive environment, often through the values that the whole school considered as important. I am now keen to know what matters to you, as a member of Gen Z, and an undergraduate at university. I would like to understand how we can make your student experience the best it can be.

While we are in this unusual time of COVID-19, I hope using the technology in this way will be a useful tool. It should be straightforward, and I will send you a link for the interview time. I will also send you a few questions to think about the night before.

Please let me know a good time for you so that we can schedule our first interview. Also, if you have any questions, please email these to me and I will do my best to answer them.

Best wishes
Ellie

Ellie Hill
PhD Student

Appendix C – Schwartz’s (2006) diagram of the ten values and associated terms

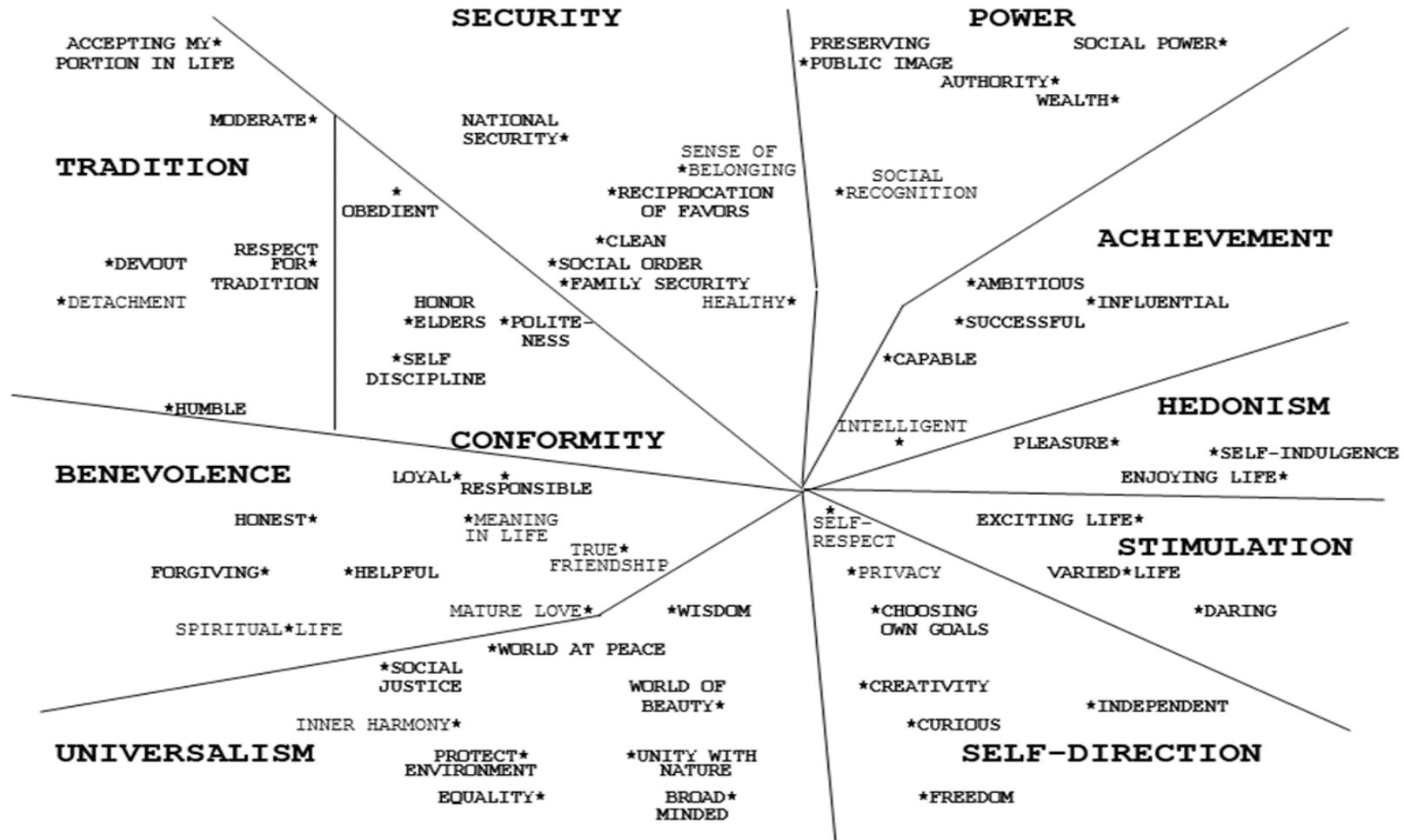


Table 3.1. Archetypes from Analysis of Classic, Brand, and Screenwriting Literature.

Identifier	Full Name	Description
CA	CAREGIVER	Feels the right thing to do is helps others and sacrifice
CR	CREATOR	Create something new, a wealth of ideas and visions
EV	EVERY(WO)MAN	Common person as underdog trying to better oneself
EX	EXPLORER	Always on the move seeking new destinations
HE	HERO	Take journey, overcome obstacles, and bring reward home
IN	INNOCENT	Associate with humbleness, purity, and naivety
JE	JESTER	Self interest in happiness, tricks, and play
LO	LOVER	Seeks sensuality, romance, intimacy, and love
MA	MAGICIAN	Interest in healing, transformation, and alchemy
OU	OUTLAW	Live outside the rules of society as rebel
RU	RULER	Thrives on power and control of assets
SA	SAGE	True expert backed by knowledge and wisdom
SH	SHADOW	The dark side of human behavior