

2008

University students' perceptions of their parents' childrearing styles associated with their inclinations to become parents

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PARENTS' CHILDREARING
STYLES ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR INCLINATIONS TO BECOME PARENTS

By

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A THESIS

Submitted to the College of Human Resources and Education
at West Virginia University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of the Arts
in
Educational Psychology

Department of Technology, Learning, and Culture

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Morgantown, West Virginia
2008

KEYWORDS: Childrearing, parenting style, parenthood status, college students, adolescents,
young adults.

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Abstract

Researchers have associated Diane Baumrind's parenting styles (Baumrind, 1967; Baumrind, 1966; Baumrind, 1968; Baumrind, 1971) with countless outcomes among children, adolescents, and adults. However, few, if any, have investigated an age group's perceptions of their childrearing compared with their inclination to become parents. This study examined 67 West Virginia University students' responses to the Adapted Parenting Attribute Questionnaire (APAQ) completed by Child Development and Family Studies majors in 2007. The purpose was to determine patterns of perceptions in guardians' parenting styles, then compare the participants' inclinations to become parents and their rankings of importance (low, medium, or high; low and high) in becoming parents. After the scores of parenting styles were separated and calculated using SPSS, the six subscales of like parenting styles correlated significantly and positively. However, no significance was found between the perception of parenting styles and the ranking in importance of becoming parents.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks go to my committee members for their guidance in this challenging process: Dr. Bobbie Warash, Dr. Carol Markstrom, and Dr. Amy Kennedy Root. My colleague, graduate student Elizabeth Demasi spent hours gathering the data and entering figures into the spreadsheets prior to my receiving the information. I also appreciate the invaluable input from Assistant University Librarian Kelly Diamond from the WVU Downtown Library Reference Department.

I also thank Sue Wang, Elaine Christie, and Joe Morasco in the Downtown Library Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery Department who have helped me gather and scan research documents. Thanks also go to my former department head, University Librarian Penny Pugh, and present department head, Associate Librarian Hilary Fredette, who have been flexible by allowing me to change my schedule each semester. Two additional supporters I must acknowledge are West Virginia and Regional History Collection Archivist Kyla Lucas and Professor Emeritus Dr. William Torry whose enthusiasm greatly sustained me.

I want to thank my family members: My sister Vicki Drumheller, and her husband Nathan; my brother, Michael Hubbard, my sister-in-law Carol Herrington, and my mother-in-law, Sister Mildred McCracken for all their prayers and encouragement; my son, Brian, has been very patient and accommodating; my mother and father, Carolyn and Ramon Hubbard, whose style and grace started me on life's journey and my academic career; finally, my husband, my biggest fan, and my best friend, who has been my ultimate supporter – thank you, Greg! I love you.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Overview

Raising a child involves many challenges, and some people foresee more risks and sacrifices than rewards (Schoen, Kim, Nathanson, Fields, & Astone, 1997; Weston, 2004). Many reasons some people would choose against having children are economic in nature: job market uncertainties, job instability, inflation, fluctuating interest rates (Weston, 2004), and low salaries. Non-financial reasons include: (a) time taken away from one's social life; (b) missed opportunities at work precipitated by a diminished position at work; and (c) difficulties managing both career and family obligations (Weston, 2004). From the 1987-88 National Survey of Families and Households, those who did not intend to become parents were White women for whom careers were important considerations (Schoen, Kim, Nathanson, Fields, & Astone, 1997). Other issues people have considered in deciding whether to become parents are: (a) whether one's partner would be a good parent; (b) one's partner's age; (c) stress and uncertainty on a couple's relationship; (d) finding good, affordable childcare; (e) whether the world is suitable for children; (f) the stress and worry of raising a child; and (g) concern that a particular child would be difficult to raise (Parker & Alexander, 2004).

Despite drawbacks, certain couples and individuals want to become parents. However, their ideal family sizes and their expected family sizes are not necessarily the same (Weston & Qu, 2004). A significant number of people interviewed by the Australian Institute of Family Studies wanted, on average, more children than they expected to have realistically. However, most men and women said they had or expected to have the number of children they wanted, and most men and women wanted two or more. Fewer than ten percent of those interviewed preferred to remain child-free (Weston & Qu, 2004).

Also regarding family size, studies using longitudinal and intergenerational data determining influences on childbearing revealed that mothers and families of origin shape young people's family size preferences (Axinn, Clarkberg, & Thornton, 1994; Axinn & Thornton, 1996; Barber, 2000). For example, in comparing numbers of children wanted in the future, children of widows and children of divorced mothers (both sets of mothers not remarried), the children of widows stated they wanted larger families. Children of remarried mothers said they wanted the same sized families as those children whose mothers remained continuously married (Axinn & Thornton, 1996). What is more, as adult children became older, the number of children they preferred was comparable to the same family sizes of their childhoods (Axinn et al., 1994). Finally, children whose mothers were oriented toward education and career have been found to delay marriage and child bearing, and want fewer children (Barber, 2000).

Those adults who forge ahead to become parents have reasons for wanting children. Emotional benefits rank high: (a) to add purpose or meaning to life; (b) to have someone to love; (c) to make one's partner happier; (d) for the good of the relationship; (e) to have at least one/another boy/girl; and (f) to give an existing child a brother/sister (Parker & Alexander, 2004). Brazelton and Cramer (1990) romanticize the wish for a child: "All the threads described above weave together into the incentive to have a child, stirring new conflicts as well as offering new solutions to old conflicts. . . "(Brazelton & Cramer, 1990, p.36). They describe the mother's and father's fulfillment of lost ideals and opportunities, wishes to mirror themselves in the child, the narcissistic need to complete themselves through having a child, and the renewing of old relationships, lost ties, and past attachments.

In addition to the emotionally beneficial and romanticized views of the desires to become parents, two national polls in the United States revealed that more than 80% of the respondents stated they wanted to have children. From September through October 2006, the Pew Research

Center surveyed 1,501 adults, including 579 aged 18-25 labeled “Generation Next.” Those younger than 26 years answered the question, “In looking ahead, do you definitely want children, probably want children, probably not want children, definitely not want children?” (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2007, p. 52). Their answers were as follows:

1. 52% Definitely want children
2. 34% Probably want children
3. 9% Probably do not want children
4. 4% Definitely do not want children
5. 1% Don’t know/refused to answer

Likewise, the Associated Press (AP) and MTV surveyed 1,280 adolescents and young adults aged 13-24 years during April 2007 (Associated Press, 2007). The percentages and the answers were exactly the same as the Pew Center Poll (2007).

In the case of biological parenthood, sometimes pregnancy interrupts peoples’ lives without warning. However, because some individuals are proactive in their measures to become parents, in cases of artificial reproductive treatments (ART), in vitro fertilization (IVF), and adoption, their motivations for having children are relevant to this study. Langdridge, Sheeran, and Connolly (2005) found that the most consistently reported motives for wanting a child were “. . . to give and receive love, experience the enjoyment of raising a child, and to create a family” (p. 336). Using a modified network analysis among expectant couples and couples undergoing medical interventions to become pregnant, including in vitro fertilization (IVF) and donor insemination (DI), the study also revealed that “[o]wn experience of being a child” (Langdridge et al., 2005, p. 329) ranked in the top 10 among 17 reasons IVF and DI couples wished to become pregnant. An adoptive mother gave motivations of altruism and yearning for a child (“The Many Faces of Black Mothers,” 2000).

Many women who seek to adopt have had difficulty becoming pregnant and are sterile, or have become sterile surgically or non-surgically for non-contraceptive reasons (Hollingsworth, 2000). Data have indicated some differences in associations by race. Among White women, significant factors associated with adoption-seeking behavior have included resources available to them: some college education, marriage, and history of infertility treatment. However, these characteristics are not significantly associated among African American women. Mature African American women who were sterile (non-surgically, or surgically for non-contraceptive reasons), and were without children were likely to seek adoption. Among foster parents, White women without children were more likely to seek adoption if they were older, non-surgically sterile, or experienced difficulty conceiving or carrying pregnancies to term, and experienced ART. African American women who foster-parented were more likely to seek adoption if they had no children, and their income was higher.

After a long-expected child is finally in the home, whether one arrived through the legal processes of adoption or the laborious processes of childbirth, a parent is the child's first teacher (Hamburg & Hamburg, 2002). As a first instructor, the parent will develop a style that socializes the youngster. Researchers have associated Diane Baumrind's parenting styles (Baumrind, 1967; Baumrind, 1966; Baumrind, 1968; Baumrind, 1971) with innumerable outcomes among children, adolescents, and adults.

Parents want to know which styles are effective ("Adults lack accurate," 2002; Henderson, 2008). Some have heard that to "spare the rod" is to "spoil the child" (Venning, 1649, p. 5, as cited by Bartlett, 1919/2000), but those who understand "rods" know that shepherds used them to guide sheep, not to beat them. Because sheep were an investment, beating them with rods would have harmed one's profit. Children, too, are an investment, and should receive guidance rather than thrashings (Finkelstein, 2000; Green, Brazelton, Friedman,

Reinhart, Schwartz et al., 1983; Straus, 2001). The most important work mothers and fathers can perform is to parent their children (Silvern, 1988). Adults who were reared with abusive discipline, but have not recognized the abusive quality, have displayed tendencies to use physical punishment in managing child and infant misbehavior (Bower-Russa, 2005; Bower-Russa, Knutson, & Winebarger, 2001; Zaidi, Knutson, & Mehm, 1989).

In three different studies (Bower-Russa, 2005; Bower-Russa et al., 2001; Zaidi et al., 1989), participants completed questionnaires about disciplinary techniques to identify participants reared in abusive or non-abusive situations. Participants also answered whether they thought their childrearing was abusive. Results of questionnaire determined some respondents to have been abused as children, but who did not identify themselves as being victims: these respondents further selected physical disciplinary practices, in some cases severe, to parenting response tests depicting a range of childhood behaviors needing adult management. Using the same questionnaires and parenting response tests, researchers found that adults reared with abusive discipline who acknowledged their abuse and adults reared without abusive discipline selected non-physical discipline significantly more often than those abuse victims chose, but did not identify themselves as physically abused. Dixon, Browne, and Hamilton-Giachritsis (2005) noted that parents who were physically abused as children are significantly more like to maltreat their children in the first 13 months of life unless single risk factors are removed: "Parents who acknowledge their abuse as children may adjust their own risk of infant maltreatment by choosing not to live with violent partners, planning later pregnancies and by seeking help and support for mental illness/depression or family violence" (p.54). The researchers mention that adult victims of violent upbringings must acknowledge their abuse in order to decrease the risk of continuing the abuse to the next generation.

Justification

Although studies reveal outcomes of harsh, lax, and insightful child rearing, few studies investigate an age group's perceptions of their childrearing compared with their inclinations to become parents. Also, although studies yield information about the kind of childrearing that produces abused children who grow up to abuse their children, investigations have not provided information about those who have matured to decide against becoming parents. The purpose of this study is to compare university students' perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' parenting styles to their own aspirations to become parents or to avoid becoming parents.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Many justifications exist either to become parents, or to circumvent parenthood. This literature review will be divided into two sections: first it will define parenting styles; then it will provide studies about adolescents' and young people's perceptions of their parents' childrearing styles. Because this study focuses on college students, the literature review will examine studies of persons in the same age group and those developing into young adults.

Parenting Styles

Whether or not they realize they have a parenting style, anyone who has a child has an approach to administering influence. After a long-awaited child arrives home, the question becomes how to rear the youngster. Baumrind (1967) established that at least three basic parenting styles exist: Authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive.

Baumrind (1987) characterizes authoritarian parents as unwilling to share power with their children, even adolescents, and discouraging negotiation or compromise. They reason infrequently, nurture less, criticize often, and push constantly (Baumrind, 1965). They value obedience, order, and work (Baumrind, 1968). One gifted college student remembered that as his father verbally battered him during little league baseball, he could not acknowledge or challenge his father's comments (Neumeister, 2004). Rather, he continued to practice and perform at games during his tortuous childhood summers.

Permissive parents are lenient with few demands (Baumrind, 2005), having little control over their children, and are high in nurturance (Baumrind, 1965). They attempt to affirm their children's wishes, and permit them to regulate their own activities without encouraging them to follow clear values (Baumrind, 1968). Their children have been characterized as having lower impulse control and self-sufficiency than children of authoritative parents. Children may receive

mixed messages from these parents because they do not know if their behavior is condoned or ignored. Although not all permissive parents raise law-breaking citizens, one study among Dutch prisoners found that they considered their mothers to be very loving but not corrective (Timmerman & Emmelkamp, 2005).

The final parenting style among the three basic types in this study is authoritative. Parents who are authoritative firmly and consistently guide their children's activities, and require their children to conform to declared expectations. They require orderliness and responsibility without provoking rebellion, which distinguishes authoritative parenting from authoritarian, which is restrictive and arbitrary and instead of being rational and warm (Baumrind, 1968). In addition, these parents provide loving, supportive atmospheres in their families, and allow their children to voice dissent or seek power throughout the parenting and socialization process (Baumrind, 1987).

Perceptions of Parenting Styles

Researchers have focused studies on young peoples' perceptions of their parents' authority patterns by associating varying outcomes of functionality with parenting styles. Outcomes have included academic achievement, hopefulness, coping ability, college adjustment, disruptive behaviors, disordered personality traits, and substance use (Cohen & Rice, 1997; Edwards & Price, 2002; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McKenry, 2000; Patock-Peckham, Cheong, Balhorn, & Nagoshi, 2001; Radziszewska, Richardson, Dent, & Flay, 1996; Smith, 2007; Vitaro, Brendgen, Larose, & Trembaly, 2005; Wolfradt, Hempel, & Miles, 2003; Yu, R. et al., 2007). Not only do perceived authority styles relate to these outcomes, but mediating factors, such as parental involvement in school and students' school engagement, appear to influence them as well (Patock-Peckham et al., 2001; Steinberg, Elmen, and Mounts 1989; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, and Darling, 1992).

Studies associating positive academic outcomes with authoritative parenting include Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, and Roberts (1987), Steinberg et al. (1992) and Steinberg et al. (1989) and Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, and Steinberg (1997). Dornbusch et al. (1987) discovered that adolescents who perceived their parents as purely authoritative achieved the highest mean grades, but those who perceived their parents as being different in styles, especially families having one parent perceived as authoritarian, fell short academically. The very lowest grades were among the perceived combination of authoritarian-permissive parenting styles between mothers and fathers. However, Steinberg et al. (1989) tested the amount of impact each the component of authoritativeness (acceptance, psychological autonomy, and behavioral control) would have on school achievement. Higher grades--the effects of authoritative parenting--appeared to be mediated by the adolescents' development of a strong work ethic and a sense of independence. Each dimension of parenting style independently contributed to school achievement. In addition, psychosocial maturity and a healthy orientation toward work mediate positive authoritative parenting outcomes.

Also, a moderating factor for academic success observed by Steinberg et al. (1992) was parental school involvement. In a 1987-1988 study among nine Wisconsin and California high schools in which academic data were collected, students reported family socialization practices, academic success. Academic success included three components (Grade Point Average, homework, and school expectations), and was positively associated with perceived authoritative parenting. Authoritative parenting was also positively associated with school engagement, which also includes three components (school orientation, bonding with educators, and school conduct). Students from "clearly authoritative" (Steinberg, et. al., 1992, p.1273) homes scored higher in academic achievement with moderate-to-large effect sizes than those from "definitely non-authoritative" (Steinberg, et. al., 1992, p.1275) homes.

In addition to these studies, more data combine perceived parenting styles and academic results. In a two-year survey of roughly 2,500 American high school students, many adolescents who viewed their parents as non-authoritative saw themselves as having less control over their own abilities (dysfunctional attribution) regarding academic outcomes (Glasgow et al., 1997). In other words, they thought any factors from luck to lack of ability were more likely to determine their grade point averages (GPAs) than doing homework or participating in class activities. One exception was in the second year of the study (Glasgow et al., 1997) among students who perceived their parents as non-authoritative, the “indulgent” cluster: They did not designate the dysfunctional attribution, and they had high academic expectations.

Another study which associated academic outcomes with students’ perceived parenting styles (Cohen & Rice, 1997) used 386 parent-student pairs to investigate tobacco and substance use. Parents’ perceptions of the parenting styles were strongly related to their children’s grades, but not to student-reported tobacco or substance use. Regarding student-reported associations, perceived permissive parenting styles were associated with lower grades, and tobacco and alcohol use; perceived authoritarian parenting styles were associated with lower grades; higher grades were associated with lower reported substance use.

In another substance use study, among college students’ perceptions of parenting styles, (Patock-Peckham et al., 2001), perceived permissive style was negatively related to self-regulation for males and females. Perceived authoritarian parenting style was not significantly associated with self-regulation, drinking control, alcohol use, or problems with alcohol. Investigators analyzed some results by gender because perceived parenting styles varied between male and female respondents. For females, perceived authoritative parenting was significantly positively correlated to self-regulation. Those fathers viewed as being permissive may have given little guidance to sons, whose responses indicated lower self-regulation, lower drinking

control, and problems with alcohol. Researchers asserted that self-regulation, regardless of parenting style, appeared to mediate the drinking variables measured in this study.

In a different college study, a type of perfectionism based on pleasing other people was positively related to perceived authoritarian parenting among gifted students (Neumeister, 2004). In a qualitative interview study, those students whose parents' characteristics were authoritarian had developed socially prescribed perfectionism, characterized by a belief that others have high expectations of them, a fear of disappointing others, and an equating of self-worth and achievement. The college students whose parents were rated as authoritative developed self-oriented perfectionism, which appears to be intrinsic, but also can develop by modeling parental perfectionist behaviors. However, whether high standards of achievement came from external or internal resources, the gifted college students in this study experienced increased anxiety performance in spite of authoritative households' likelihood of providing support and encouragement.

Similar to types of perfectionism are forms of goal orientations, which also have been associated with perceived parenting styles among college students (Gonzalez, Greenwood, & WenHsu, 2001). Like self-oriented perfectionism, mastery goal orientation is self-directed and persistent throughout difficulty. However, performance goals are externally motivated with interests in displaying talent and avoiding negative feedback. Among education and psychology students, perceived authoritative parenting from mothers was significantly related to mastery goals more among White females than all males. Perceived authoritarian parenting styles were associated with performance goal orientation. Authoritative parents emphasize independence and support, whereas authoritarian parents emphasize obedience and punishment; therefore students' goals associated with authoritative parents would be intrinsic, whereas those of authoritarian parents would be extrinsic.

Researchers in other countries have investigated young people's perceptions of their parents' styles, as well. One study included 108 Ukrainian college students who rated their parents in five scales: (a) warmth/affection; (b) neglect/indifference; (c) hostility/ aggression; (d) undifferentiated rejection; and (e) permissive/restrictive (perceived control; Cournoyer, Sethi, & Cordero, 2005). This population was unique because the students had been born shortly before or shortly after the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986, and would have experienced the break from the Soviet Union in 1991. Effects many on families included health concerns, economic hardships, and general stress. Overall students perceived fathers as less accepting than mothers and mothers' and fathers' permissive-restrictive ratings as alike among all parental pairings. Most students demonstrated positive self-concepts. Higher acceptance ratings were related to more positive psychological adjustment. Perceived parental control did not correlate with acceptance/rejection or with psychological adjustment. Despite challenges of Ukrainian families, these college students did not perceive significant levels of rejection during childhood, and permissiveness/restrictiveness did not appear to relate to their self-concepts.

To investigate coping ability, Wolfradt et al. (2003) measured German high school students' perceptions of the levels of parental pressure, control and warmth, and categorized perceived parenting styles information into four parenting clusters: Authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and indifferent (Baumrind, 1971). The associations with the perceived authoritarian parenting style, which was consistent with ratings of parental pressure and control, but not with warmth, was associated with higher levels of anxiety and passive coping, which manages emotions related to stressful events, rather than the events. Perceived authoritative parenting corresponded highly with ratings of parental control and warmth and moderate ratings parental pressure; it was associated with moderate levels of anxiety and high levels of active coping, which takes charge of stressful events, rather than managing only the emotions caused by them.

The passive parenting cluster was related to low ratings of parental pressure and control but high ratings of warmth. The passive cluster showed associations with low levels of anxiety and high levels of active coping. Anxiety association was high and moderate between the two parenting styles that are characterized as demanding (authoritarian and authoritative); however, that authoritative parenting is tempered with parental warmth could be the reason why the high school students whose parents fit in this cluster rated high in active coping. In this study, adolescents who perceived their parents as permissive rated themselves as low in anxiety and high in active coping.

Investigators studying adults and adolescents also recognized other outcomes of perceived permissive parenting. Among adult Dutch men aged 22 to 66, prisoner status was significantly associated with prisoners' and forensic patients' perceptions of maternal loving, caring behavior, but negatively related to maternal correcting behavior (Timmerman & Emmelkamp, 2005). Researchers asserted the idea that, as youngsters, the participants may have believed that because their mothers did not stop their misdeeds, their mothers must have approved of the misbehavior. Although some dysfunctional outcomes may be associated with permissive parenting, not all children raised by permissive parents become lawbreakers. In fact, to repeat the findings of Wolfradt et al., (2003), children whose parents were perceived as being permissive demonstrated active coping abilities.

Perceived permissive parenting by biological mothers was also associated with identifying negative reactions among 439 low-income urban adolescents (Miller, DiIorio, & Dudley, 2002). Among the adolescents, 41% perceived their mothers as being authoritative, 30% perceived their mothers as authoritarian, and 29% perceived their mothers as being permissive. The goal of the study was to determine reactions to hypothetical situations that could cause disagreements and possibly arouse fighting. The perceived authoritative and authoritarian styles,

which were associated with mothers' high expectations in the study, were also associated with adolescents' control over their own behavior. Perceived permissive parenting style was associated with responses indicating violent results; however, unlike the prison study's implications, which implied maternal consent for misconduct, those mothers whose children viewed them as permissive did not necessarily show approval for their children's misbehavior, but the mothers may have provided inconsistent discipline (Miller et al., 2002).

Unlike permissive parenting, harsh discipline and child abuse would fall under the authoritarian style because the goal is to control the child's behavior through physical force. Although not all children who suffer abuse grow up to face negative adulthoods, and some grown-ups who were not abused live dysfunctional lives (Maughan, Pickles, & Quinton, 1995), child abuse is often transmitted to the next generation when victims do not acknowledge their abuse (Dixon et al., 2005). Furthermore, Belsky, Lerner, and Spanier (1984) suggested that marital quality can buffer negative maternal effects of child abuse. Their premise was that women raised in harsh disciplinary environments who entered into troubled marriages could continue problematic parenting practices. However, satisfactory marriages could circumvent negative maternal affect.

Another study which measured marital discord as a variable in harsh parenting revealed that at least one other family stressor (maternal or paternal hostility, maternal or paternal psychiatric disorder, or paternal criminality) was present when harsh parenting occurred (Maughan et al., 1995). The four-year study with two groups (children of psychiatric patients in one group, and a sample selected from the general population in the control group) occurred in two phases, from 1965 to 1971, and during the 1980s when the participants were at least 21 years old. The study further showed that child rearing history is associated with a range of adult social functioning activities (work, social relations, intimate relations, and crime). Maternal harshness

was associated with continuing problems from childhood to adulthood for 50% males and 25% females in the sample and new onsets of problems in adulthood in 17% males and 40% females. (New onsets of adult problems occurred when no child conduct disorder was previously reported.) Almost a third of the males who experienced no maternal harshness but had child conduct disorders continued into adulthood with difficulties, while 3% females who experienced no maternal harshness but had child conduct disorders continued into adulthood with difficulty. However, new onsets of behavioral disorders among males and females who experienced no maternal harshness were nil. Although non-harsh mothering can be associated with child and adulthood behavior disorders, many more of the participants who experienced maternal harshness faced child conduct disorders continuing into difficulties in adulthood or new onsets of problems in adulthood than those not experiencing maternal harshness. This research has provided one more shortcoming of authoritarian parenting.

On a positive note, in 1973 Lott found that, when looking at relationships among parenting, women's liberation, and attitudes toward children, college students who remembered their mothers and fathers spending more time with them, nurturing them, and having more energy were highly motivated to become parents. However, adults whose parents had less time and energy, and provided less nurturance, were not as motivated to have children. Lott's concern was for society to find children as desirable, instead of necessary, and to understand child rearing as compatible with other pursuits, such as creativity and careers. Because Lott conducted the study in the 1970s when women's liberation and feminism were relatively new concepts, her concern, particularly for women, to parent without losing self-esteem or independence was valid. "Many will decide for all sorts of personally valid reasons, that parenthood is not for them, but others, remembering their own joyful childhoods, will be eager to participate in such an experience again, as parent now instead of child" (Lott, 1973, p.582).

Studies of authoritative parenting have provided insight into positive outcomes including academics (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Glasgow et al., 1997; Steinberg et al., 1989; and Steinberg et al., 1992), coping style (Wolfradt et al., 2003), self-regulation (Patock-Peckham et al., 2001), self-concept (Cournoyer et al., 2005), and goal orientation (Gonzalez et al., 2001). Studies on permissive parenting have revealed associations with poor self-regulation (Patock-Peckham et al., 2001) and low stress (Wolfradt et al., 2003). Authoritarian parenting has been associated with adulthood dysfunctions with relationships (Maughan et al., 1995), tobacco, drug, and alcohol use (Cohen & Rice, 1997; Patock-Peckham et al., 2001) and anxiety (Neumeister, 2004), but also self-control (Miller et al., 2002). However, with the exceptions of Langdridge, et al. (2005) and Lott (1973), studies in perceptions of parenting have not revealed young peoples' inclinations toward or avoidance of becoming parents relative to their own child rearing.

Summary

To pursue a college degree, students must excel academically in high school, and studies indicate that higher grades are an outcome of authoritative parenting (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Glasgow et al., 1997; Steinberg et al., 1989; and Steinberg et al., 1992) more often than of authoritarian or permissive parenting. In addition, two national polls (Associated Press, 2007; Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2007) of adolescents and young adults, including college-aged men and women, announced that more than 80% of the 2,781 survey sample wanted children.

One motivation to become parents that is relevant to this study is the enjoyment people experienced as children (Langdridge et al., 2005; Lott, 1973). Although these two studies imply that participants' childhoods were positive experiences, the reports do not explore specific parental characteristics. Another similar factor mentioned was the desire for a family size similar to family of origin (Axinn, Clarkberg, & Thornton, 1994). Because these three studies

pertain to childhood experience as factors in wanting children, they are relevant to the hypotheses for the current study:

- 1) University students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritative parenting would want to become parents.
- 2) University students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritarian parenting would not want to become parents.
- 3) University students who perceive their parents as being high in permissive parenting would not want to become parents.
- 4) University students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritative qualities would rank parenting children as extremely important.
- 5) University students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritative qualities would rank becoming parents higher in importance than would the university students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritarian qualities.
- 6) University students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritative qualities would rank becoming parents higher in importance than would the university students who perceive their parents as being high in permissive qualities.

The reasons for these hypotheses are: (a) Children of authoritative parents have been revealed to be productive, independent, and responsible, perform well in school (Steinberg et al., 1989; and Steinberg et al., 1992), show self-restraint (Patock-Peckham, et al, 2001), and have master goal orientation (Gonzalez et al., 2001) and a high work ethic (Steinberg et al., 1989). Also, children who are in homes where they are valued and nurtured remember their homes and are motivated to provide an environment in which they are the parents (Lott, 1973). (b) Children of authoritarian parents tend to show anxiety (Neumeister, 2004; Wolfradt et al., 2003) and perform inadequately in school (Steinberg et al., 1992). Becoming parents would add to stress

and difficulty to people who may not want to create an environment similar to what they remember. (c) Children of permissive parents acquire lower grades (Cohen & Rice, 1997), experience little anxiety or stress (Wolfradt et al., 2003), and show lack of self-restraint (Patock-Peckham, et al, 2001). People who anticipate becoming parents expect to experience stressors, and they realize that their wants and needs would come second; people who intend to become parents understand that self-restraint would be a necessity. Those brought up with little guidance or limitations may be unwilling to share resources with a child, whose needs are constant.

The association of college students' views of their mothers' and fathers' childrearing styles with their own inclinations to parent children is an unexplored topic. The lack of literature calls for this investigation. In addition to contributing to general knowledge, this study would add another facet of understanding motives for having children or avoiding parenthood.

Chapter III

Method

Procedure

West Virginia University (WVU) students majoring in Child Development and Family Studies (CDFS) were invited to participate in an investigation about parenting styles. During class time, participants completed anonymous questionnaires which included a statement outlining the study, ensured confidentiality, and empowered participants to withdraw or refuse participation without penalty (Appendix A). After the surveys were collected and numbered, a graduate assistant entered the results into a spreadsheet to be analyzed.

Sample

Although 94 students majoring in CDFS meeting university requirements participated, 22 provided incomplete or conflicting answers, leaving 77. Five of those participants were presently parents, and because the study was to determine whether one's rearing related to one's future desire to become a parent, those were eliminated, leaving 72: 69 females and 3 males. However, to create a more homogeneous sample, the male respondents were eliminated from the sample, leaving 69 females. The age of two of the remaining participants was 29 years; this age created an age gap and could have potentially confounded the results. After their responses were eliminated, the remaining 67 participants ranged in age from 18 to 23, with the average age being 20 ($M = 20.0$, $SD = 1.298$) years. All of the remaining respondents' answered that the persons they identified as their mothers were their biological mothers; all but five (93%) were raised with their biological fathers: Two participants were brought up without fathers, and the remaining three were raised with step-fathers. Non-WVU students and non-CDFS students did not play a role in this study.

Instrument

Participants completed an Adapted Parenting Attribute Questionnaire (APAQ; Appendix B), modified from the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991). During its construction phase, 21 professionals in education, psychology, social work, and sociology categorized 48 questions into the parenting patterns after learning Baumrind's verbatim descriptions of each style. Thirty-six questions met the criteria, and 30 were chosen for the final product. Test-retest reliability coefficients and internal consistency of the PAQ are highly respectable (Buri, 1991). The PAQ also has discriminate-related validity, which means each parenting style being measured is negatively associated with the other parenting styles.

To measure criterion validity, the PAQ was correlated with the nurturance construct in the Parental Nurturance Scale (PNS; Buri, Misukanis, and Mueller, 1988, as cited by Buri, 1991). One attribute not mentioned in Baumrind's typologies is nurturance. In order for the PAQ to be valid in measuring the three parenting styles, nurturance should be positively related to authoritative parenting, negatively related to authoritarianism, and show no relation to permissiveness. The PAQ and PNS bivariate correlations revealed the following:

Authoritative parenting was the highest in parental nurturance for both mothers ($r = .56$, $p < .0005$) and for fathers ($r = .68$, $p < .0005$); authoritarian parenting was inversely related nurturance to for both mothers ($r = -.36$, $p < .0005$) and fathers ($r = -.53$, $p < .0005$); and permissive parenting was unrelated to nurturance for both mothers ($r = .04$, $p < .10$) and fathers ($r = .13$, $p < .10$) (Buri, 1991, p.116).

These results confirm that warmth is a dimension of authoritative parenting, and that the PAQ has measured it positively or negatively as a criterion means that the test is valid in all three parenting styles.

The present study used the APAQ, developed by a WVU researcher participating in another investigation about parenting styles. Thirty items on the survey described attributes or actions of parents which were based on Baumrind's typology of parenting styles, authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive. Participants rated each parent on each attribute on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The following are examples of statements from the APAQ:

1. This parent believes that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do (Permissive).
4. Once a family policy had been established, this parent believes that parents should discuss the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family (Authoritative).
7. While they are growing up, this parent believed that parents should *not* allow their children to question any decision they have made (Authoritarian).

Demographics on the questionnaire included age and gender of the participants, whether or not the participants presently were parents, whether or not the participants planned to become parents, and the rating of becoming a parent (1 = not important at all, 5 = extremely important). Participants who were parents were asked to provide ages and genders of their children.

Measurement

Because participants answered 10 questions regarding each parent about each parenting style on a continuous scale from 1-to-7, each parent's score for each variable would range from 10-to-70. As a score approached 70, the more likely a parent exhibited the parenting style being measured. The parenting style mean scores of subscales (Permissive, Authoritative, Authoritarian) were to be compared with the "Yes-No" portion of the questionnaire ("Do you plan to have children in the future?") and with the 5-point continuous scale ("On a scale of 1 to

5, how import is it to you to parent children during your life? 1, “Not very important at all” to 5, “Extremely important”). SPSS software was used to complete analyses.

Chapter IV

Results

Using SPSS, each participant's 30 scores on parenting styles, which could range from 10 to 70, were separated, calculated, and relabeled into six continuous subscales. The scores of the students' perceptions of parenting styles were combined to form mothers' authoritativeness ($\alpha = .84$), fathers' authoritativeness ($\alpha = .78$), mothers' authoritarianism ($\alpha = .86$), fathers' authoritarianism ($\alpha = .88$), mothers' permissiveness ($\alpha = .74$), and fathers' permissiveness ($\alpha = .78$). After analyzing the data, the following results were determined: The scores of students' perceptions of mothers and fathers were highest in Authoritativeness ($M = 52.88, SD = 9.08; M = 51.10, SD = 8.15$); followed by the scores of students' perceptions of Mothers' and Fathers' Authoritarianism ($M = 39.78, SD = 10.54; M = 43.27, SD = 11.40$); with the scores of students' perceptions of Mothers' and Fathers' Permissiveness with the lowest scores ($M = 28.73, SD = 8.00; M = 27.60, SD = 8.99$; See Table 1).

Table 1

Means of Students' Perceptions of Mothers' and Fathers' Parenting Styles

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Range	
				Low	High
Mothers' Authoritativeness	67	52.8841	9.08382	28	70
Fathers' Authoritativeness	65 ^a	51.1045	8.14664	30	69
Mothers' Authoritarianism	67	39.7826	10.54105	15	69
Fathers' Authoritarianism	65 ^a	43.2687	11.40253	18	69
Mothers' Permissiveness	67	28.725	8.00794	11	54
Fathers' Permissiveness	65 ^a	27.597	8.99168	11	53

^aN drops to 65 among fathers because two participants grew up without fathers in their homes.

A bivariate analysis was conducted on the three the continuous subscales to flag significant correlations among the subscales. The correlation for parenting styles revealed that the mothers' and fathers' same styles were significantly and positively related at $p < .01$: Permissiveness, $r = .84$; Authoritativeness, $r = .61$; and Authoritarianism: $r = .75$ (See Table 2). Fathers' Permissiveness was negatively related to Mothers' Authoritativeness $r = -.27$, and Mothers' Authoritarianism was significantly negatively related to Fathers' Authoritativeness, $r = -.23$.

Table 2

Correlations of Parenting Styles Subscales

		Mothers' Permissiveness	Mothers' Authoritativeness	Mothers' Authoritarianism
Mothers' Permissiveness	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.016	-.031
	Sig (2-tailed)		.898	
	N	67	67	67
Mothers' Authoritativeness	Pearson Correlation	-.160	1.000	-.270*
	Sig (2-tailed)	.898		.027
	N	67	67	67
Mothers' Authoritarianism	Pearson Correlation	.803	-.27*	1.000
	Sig (2-tailed)	.803	.027	
	N	67	67	67
Fathers' Permissiveness	Pearson Correlation	.839**	-.266*	.093
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.032	.461
	N ^a	65	65	65
Fathers' Authoritativeness	Pearson Correlation	.009	.614**	-.225
	Sig (2-tailed)	.942	.000	.071
	N ^a	65	65	65
Fathers' Authoritarianism	Pearson Correlation	-.006	.036	.747**
	Sig (2-tailed)	.964	.776	.000
	N ^a	65	65	65

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.50 level (2-tailed).

^aN drops to 65 among fathers because two participants grew up without fathers in their homes.

Out of the 67 responses to the question, "Do you plan to have children in the future?" two answers were "No," and the rest were "Yes." Hence, there were not a sufficient number of subjects who did not plan to have children; therefore, the analyses could not be conducted.

Rankings in the importance of becoming parents in the future presented a challenge because on the scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important), only eight participants answered 3 or lower, and 59 answered higher. The categories were changed to low ($n = 8$), medium ($n = 11$), and high ($n = 48$) by recoding all rankings of 1s and 2s to 3s (low), and keeping the rankings of 4s (medium) and 5s (high) the same to test the second three hypotheses using a one-way ANOVA. However, the analysis yielded no significant comparison between the perception of students' rearing and their ranking of importance of becoming future parents (see Table 3).

Table 3

One-way ANOVA: Importance of Becoming a Parent

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Mothers' Permissiveness	Between Groups	123.148	2	61.574	1.011	.370
	Within Groups	3899.420	64	60.928		
	Total	4022.567	66			
Mothers' Authoritativeness	Between Groups	137.271	2	68.935	.817	.446
	Within Groups	5373.714	64	83.964		
	Total	5510.985	66			
Mothers' Authoritarianism	Between Groups	170.156	2	85.078	.799	.454
	Within Groups	6816.262	64	106.504		
	Total	6986.418	66			
Fathers' Permissiveness	Between Groups	140.056	6	70.028	.903	.411
	Within Groups	4086.929	62	77.531		
	Total	4946.985	64			
Fathers' Authoritativeness	Between Groups	176.235	6	88.118	1.462	.240
	Within Groups	3737.980	62	60.290		
	Total	3914.215	64			
Fathers' Authoritarianism	Between Groups	122.487	6	61.243	.481	.620
	Within Groups	7891.052	62	127.275		
	Total	8013.538	64			

To further test the hypotheses, the categories were changed to "low" and "high" for the importance of becoming parents by recoding all the 3s to 4s (low), and maintaining the 5s as they were (high). This time with only two scores in the dependent variable, an independent-samples *t*-test was calculated comparing the mean scores of participants' perceptions of the parenting styles with which they were reared to the ranking of importance they gave to becoming future parents

(See Table 4). The *t*-test revealed that the mean scores of students' perceptions of their parents' styles did not significantly correlate with student rankings of importance of parenting children.

Table 4

Independent Samples Test: Low vs. High Desire to Become Parent

		<i>t</i> test for equality of means						
							95% confidence interval of the Difference	
		<i>t</i>	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std Error Difference	Low Desire to Parent	High Desire to Parent
Mothers' Permissiveness	Equal Variances Assumed	1.273	65	0.208	2.68092	2.10615	-1.52534	6.88718
Mothers' Authoritativeness	Equal Variances Assumed	0.731	65	0.468	1.81579	2.48555	-3.14819	6.77977
Mothers' Authoritarianism	Equal Variances Assumed	-1.134	65	0.261	-3.15570	2.78263	-8.71300	2.40160
Fathers' Permissiveness	Equal Variances Assumed	0.733	63	0.460	1.76316	2.40635	-3.04554	6.57186
Fathers' Authoritativeness	Equal Variances Assumed	0.662	63	0.511	1.41762	2.14214	-2.86311	5.69830
Fathers' Authoritarianism	Equal Variances Assumed	-0.940	63	0.351	-2.87185	3.05434	-8.97546	3.23175

Chapter V

Discussion

Interpretation of results

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether there was a relationship between University students' perceptions of the guardians' parenting styles and their own future plans to have children. This study, like two national polls detected that a majority of participants have a strong inclination to become parents (Associated Press, 2007; Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2007). Out of the 67 responses to the question, "Do you plan to have children in the future?" two answers were "No," and the remaining 65 were "Yes." With only two participants not wanting to become parents, no analyses occurred for the first three hypotheses (University students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritative parenting would want to become parents; university students who perceive their parents as being high in authoritarian parenting would not want to become parents; university students who perceive their parents as being high in permissive parenting would not want to become parents).

Hypotheses one and four not accepted because most everyone answered "Yes" to the question, "Do you plan to have children in the future?" Also, many participants ranked the importance of becoming parents as "Extremely important." Even so, the results were not significant. Because almost everyone in this study stated they plan to have children, testing Hypotheses two and three was not possible; therefore, no determination could be made as to their assertions.

The APAQ asked how important parenting children would be in the future for participants, and although the Associated Press (2007) and Pew Research Center (2007) polls did not rank importance; they hinted respondents' unlikelihood of becoming parents: 4% replied "Definitely not." Added to the 9% "Probably not," the total 13% negative, or perhaps

ambivalent, response is comparable to the APAQ 12% “Low importance” answer to “How important is it that you parent children in your life?” In addition, the ages of the participants in this study are somewhat similar to the ages as those in the AP and Pew Research Center polls, 13-24 and 18-25, respectively. In addition, Hollingsworth (2000) noted that college education was among the characteristics of those seeking adoption. With adoption, becoming parents is not incidental; because this study investigated whether college students want to parent children, the Hollingsworth information is of interest to this study.

The other hypotheses were rejected. This study was unable to determine a significant relationship between the desire to become parents and the perceptions of the parenting styles of a sample’s mothers and fathers because nearly all participants desired to become parents. In addition, establishing a relationship among the rankings of the importance of becoming parents and the perceptions of parenting styles emerged as a challenge. Because so many respondents chose “Yes” (Do you plan to have children in the future?), the 5-point scale slanted toward the higher end in the level of importance of becoming parents in all of the parenting styles.

Few investigations, if any, have studied the desire to become parents, the importance level of becoming parents and related them to the group’s perceptions of their mothers’ and fathers’ parenting styles. Lott (1973) found that college students who remembered their parents’ nurturance and energy were more motivated to have children than those college students who remembered their parents having had less time or drive to spend with them as children. Also, Langdrige et al. (2005) indicated that one reason people wanted children was the fondness of their own childhood memories. Although these two studies imply that participants’ childhoods were positive experiences, and therefore, were a factor in wanting to become parents, the reports did not explore the participants’ perceptions of specific parental characteristics that the APAQ considers.

Mothers' and fathers' parenting styles were scored continuously according to the perceptions of University students based on the 1-to-7 scale describing a range of characteristics (permissive, authoritative, or authoritarian). In rankings, the parenting styles scored highest in authoritativeness, second highest in authoritarianism, and lowest in permissiveness. Authoritative parents have high expectations of their children (Baumrind, 1968). Children of authoritative parents have been revealed to be productive, independent, and responsible, work hard, and perform well in school (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Glasgow et al., 1997; Steinberg et al., 1989; and Steinberg et al., 1992). College students who remember higher acceptance from their parents have better psychological adjustment (Cournoyer et al., 2005). Students expected to continue to college, benefit from these characteristics as participants in this study may have. Although authoritativeness has appeared to provide the most beneficial parenting style among those studied, students can make positive gains from permissive and authoritarian parenting styles. Wolfradt et al. (2003), learned students of permissive parents convey less stress and attain active coping skills. Students who progress to college benefit from such characteristics by managing situations that arise in the academic realm. Positive aspects of authoritarian parents are the value of hard work and order (Baumrind, 1968). Miller et al. (2002) noted that both perceived authoritative and authoritarian parents have high expectations of their adolescents, and adolescents associated with those parenting styles exhibit control over their own behavior. Hard work, order, and self-control are positive attributes for those in the academic world.

Significance was found in the positive correlations between the mean scores of mothers' and fathers' like perceived styles. In other words, the mean scores of mothers' permissiveness were related to the mean scores of the fathers' permissiveness. Mothers' and fathers' mean scores in authoritativeness were related; and the mean scores of mothers' and fathers' authoritarianism related to each other. This indicated that the APAQ carries criterion validity and

that the APAQ would be a practical instrument for other investigators determining the perceptions of college students' perceptions of the mothers' and fathers' parenting styles.

Limitations

The APAQ was a useful instrument, but rewording is necessary. For example, the AP and Pew Research Center polls (2007) offered several choices when asking whether respondents want children in the future (Definitely want children; probably want children; probably want children; definitely do not want children). However, the APAQ provided only two choices, "Yes" and "No," and only two participants responded "No" to the question of having children. The number of participants in this study, 67 after eliminations, was too small to analyze with parenting styles. Additional choices are necessary, also, because some people may be aware of their reproductive status, and are unable to have children.

Additional choices in the 1-to-7 perception scores also would benefit the researcher. For instances some participants are unable to answer some questions (Two participants noted that they were not raised with father figures for most of their lives.). Choices such as "0 - Can not answer or Do not know" would be more helpful than unanswered questions. (Additional notes from respondents reared without fathers were helpful for this study, but not all participants would be so attentive.)

Also, to avoid receiving incomplete questionnaires, participants would need ample time to complete the APAQ. An answer or two may remain overlooked, but entire successions of unanswered questions toward the end of a questionnaire suggest that some participants potentially did not have enough time to finish.

The demographic section on this questionnaire (Appendix B) would also need rewording about the participants' parents or guardians ("The person I call *mother* (or *father*) is my"), such as "My female or male guardian during my childhood was my (a) Biological mother (or

father) ; (b) Step-mother (or Step-father); (c) Adoptive mother (or father); (d) Foster mother (or father); (e) Other.” Participants would also require an additional explanation to rank each parent to the degree they (participants) agree or disagree with each statement about each parent; this would prevent respondents from choosing the parent each statement may reflect.

Overall, a larger, more varied sample is necessary. Only 67 female WVU students in the CDFS (Child Development and Family Studies) discipline remained in the final analysis. If students in disciplines that oversee children are asked if they want to become parents, the potential for bias exists. A future study would need more participants from a variety of disciplines and as equal number of males and females as possible in the final analysis.

Furthermore, becoming a college student can be a product of academic success, which is often an outcome of authoritative parenting (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Glasgow et al., 1997; Steinberg et al., 1989; and Steinberg et al., 1992). All of the participants in this study were college students, whose perceptions of their parents scored high in authoritative qualities. The possibility of a different sample of participants raises several questions: Would young people aged 18-23 who are not in college answer questions in the same manner as these college students responded? Do college students consider all the implications of parenting children? Would a sample of young adults in their late 20s more carefully consider questions about parenting children?

Future directions

Studies have produced associations of positive outcomes associated with authoritative parenting (Cohen & Rice, 1997; Cournoyer et al., 2005; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Patock-Peckham et al., 2001; Steinberg et al., 1989; Steinberg et al., 1992; Wolfradt et al., 2003; Yu et al., 2007). Although this study’s participants’ perceptions of their parents’ childrearing styles have authoritarian and permissive attributes, the strongest indications revealed that participants

perceive their parents to have high authoritative characteristics. This study also revealed that 97% of the respondents want to be parents regardless of how they perceived their parents' childrearing styles. Individuals' reasons could be the wishes to have someone to love and receive love from, to experience the enjoyment of raising children, to create a family, or to complete themselves (Brazelton and Cramer, 1990; Langdrige, et al., 2005; Parker & Alexander, 2004). Participants in this study may want to become parents for reasons totally unrelated to their upbringing or their perceptions of the parents' childrearing styles.

CDFS students in this study want to parent children. This could be interpreted to mean that child development students are interested in children and families and therefore want families.

Future researchers would benefit by asking if or why people want to parent children rather than asking if people want children. Although the two concepts are not mutually exclusive, understanding the venture of parenting may prompt individuals and couples to reflect on children's needs rather than their own desires and somehow motivate them to seek education in positive, effective parenting practices. Furthermore, respondents may think more carefully about procreation, reproduction, or contraception when the implications of parenting children are coupled with the concept of having children.

Although this study was unable to determine whether or not respondents were inclined to parent children based on their own perceptions of their parents' style of parenting, the APAQ would be a practical tool for professionals trying to determine how adults perceive or remember their parents' or guardians' childrearing styles. Researchers could focus investigations on young working adults not in college or working college graduates to answer questions about the perceived parenting practices associated with their inclinations to become parents. Another pursuit would be to ask young parents their motivations for becoming mothers and fathers to

determine a correlation with the views they hold of their own parents. Although little has been written about this topic, more information would be available to interested investigators using the right tools and asking the right questions.

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Appendix A



APPROVED BY THE COLLEGE OF
HUMAN RESOURCES & EDUCATION
DATE:

R. R. Carberry

January 16, 2007

Dear Participant:

This research project is being conducted by Dr. Barbara Warash, Dr. Erron Huey, and Elizabeth Demasi, a graduate assistant. With this research project, Ms Demasi will fulfill partial requirements for a master's thesis. With this study the researcher is hoping to reveal current parenting styles versus ones used years ago. The subject's responses will be kept confidential. Names will not be requested and if given they will be removed/deleted. The subjects do not have to answer all the questions. The subject's job/student status will not be affected by refusal to participate or by withdrawing from the study. Participation is voluntary. If you have questions, you may contact me at WVU (304-293-2110).

Sincerely,

Barbara Gibson Warash, Ed.D
Professor, Child Development

Phone: 304-293-3049
Fax: 304-293-9424

Department of Technology, Learning, and Culture
• Instructional Design and Technology • Educational Psychology
• Child Development and Family Studies • Social and Cultural Foundations
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Morgantown, WV 26506-6122

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

Appendix B

Demographics																													
1. How old are you? _____ Years old	2. What is your sex? __Male __ Female																												
3. Are you currently a parent? __No __ Yes	4. Have you previously been a parent? __No __ Yes																												
If you answered No to both question 3 and 4: ▪ Do you plan to have children in the future? __Yes __No ▪ On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is it to you that you parent children during your life?	If you answered Yes to either 3, or 4: ▪ How long were you a parent? _____ years ▪ What were/are the ages, sex, and your relationship for each child?																												
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Not at all important</td> <td style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Extremely Important</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	Not at all important				Extremely Important	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Age</th> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Sex</th> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Relationship</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">3</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Male</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Stepson</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age	Sex	Relationship	3	Male	Stepson												
1	2	3	4	5																									
Not at all important				Extremely Important																									
Age	Sex	Relationship																											
3	Male	Stepson																											

Instructions. First, reflect on who you consider your parents to be and indicate your relationship to each person and your relationship to them.

The person that I call **mother** is my:

1. Biological mother
2. Step-mother
3. Adoptive mother
4. Foster mother
5. Other (please explain):

The person that I call **father** is my:

1. Biological father
2. Step-father
3. Adoptive father
4. Foster father
5. Other (please explain):

Next, read each of the following statements, and indicate how strongly you think your mother or father would agree with each statement describes (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Your responses should be based on your memories of how your parents handled things in your family. Try to read and think about each statement, but remember there are no right or wrong answers. So, don't spend a lot of time on any one item. Since this is voluntary, if you feel uncomfortable responding to any statement then skip it and go to the next, but please try to respond to as many as possible.

		Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree	
1.	This parent believes that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
2.	Even when children didn't agree with them, this parent believes that children should be forced to conform to what parent's think is right if parents feel that is for the children's own good	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
3.	While they are growing up, this parent believed that whenever children are told to do something by their parents, they should do it immediately without asking any questions	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
4.	Once a family policy had been established, this parent believes that parents should discuss the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
5.	This parent believes that parents should always encouraged verbal give and take whenever children feel that family rules and restrictions are unreasonable	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
6.	This parent believes that children need is to be free to make up their own minds and to do what they want to do, even if this does not agree with what parents might want	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
7.	While they are growing up, this parent believed that parents should <i>not</i> allow their children to question any decision they have made	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
8.	This parent believes that parents should direct the activities and decisions of the children in the family through reasoning and discipline while they are growing up.	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
9.	This parent believes that more parents should force their children to behave to way they are supposed to in order to get them to do what they want	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
10.	This parent believes that as children grow up they should <i>not</i> feel that they need to obey rules and regulations of behavior simply because they are established by someone in authority	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
11.	This parent believes that children should know what their parents expect of them in their family, but also felt free to discuss those expectations when they feel that they are unreasonable while they are growing up	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
12.	This parent believes that children wise parents should teach their children early just who is the boss in the family	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
13.	This parent believes that parents should seldom give children expectations and guidelines for their behavior	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
14.	This parent believes that parents should do what the children of the family want when making family decisions most of the time	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
15.	This parent believes that children parents should consistently give direction and guidance in rationale and objective ways as the children in the family grow up,	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
16.	This parent believes that parents should get very upset if their children try to disagree with them	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
17.	This believes that most problems in society would be solved if parents would not restrict their children's activities, decisions, and desires as they are growing up	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
18.	This parent believes that parents should let children know what behavior they expect and punish children when they don't meet those expectations as they grow up	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
19.	This parent believes that parents should allow their children to decide most things for themselves without providing a lot of directions while they are growing up	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree				
20.	As children grow up, this parent believed that parents should take their opinions into consideration when making family decisions, but parents should not decide for something simply because the children want it	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
21.	This parent believes that parents should <i>not</i> view themselves as responsible for directing and guiding their children's behavior as they grow up	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
22.	This Parent believes that parents should have clear standards of behavior for the children in their home as they grow up, but be willing to adjust those standards to the needs of each individual child in the family	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
23.	This parent believes that parents should give children directions for their behavior and activities as they grow up, expect them to follow their directions, but always be willing to listen to children's concerns and discuss their directions with the children	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
24.	While growing up, this parent believed that parents should allow children to form their point of view on family matters and generally allowed them to decide for themselves what they are going to do	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
25.	This parent believes that most problems in society would be solved if we could get parents to deal strictly, and forcibly, with their children when they don't do what they are supposed to do as the are growing up	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
26.	While growing up, this parent believed that parents should often tell their children exactly what they want them to do and how they expect their children to do it	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
27.	While growing up, this parent believed that parents should give children clear direction for their behaviors and activities, but also understand when the children disagree with them	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
28.	This parent believes that parents should <i>not</i> direct behaviors, activities, and desires of the children in the family	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
29.	While growing up, this parent believed that parents should let children know what is expected of them and insist that they conform to those expectations simply out of respect for parental authority	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
30.	While growing up, this parent believed that if parents make a decision in the family that hurts their children, the parents should be willing to discuss that decision with them and to admit if they made a mistake	Mother	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
		Father	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦