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Childhood Factors Affecting Aggressive Behaviors

A thesis
presented to
the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts in Criminal Justice & Criminology

by
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May 2012

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Keywords: Aggression, Parenting Styles, Affection, Income

ABSTRACT

Childhood Factors Affecting Aggressive Behaviors

by

Nicole Waddell

In the past there have been numerous studies regarding how childhood factors can affect adult behavior and attitudes. In the present study 124 East Tennessee State University students were given surveys. The surveys included items measuring demographics, parenting styles, and aggression. This study examined the impact of parenting styles on aggressive tendencies and perceptions the subjects have as young adults as well as the effects of socioeconomic status on parenting styles and aggression. The findings suggest that mid-level income families demonstrated more affection and less aggression to the subjects surveyed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Aggression both verbal and physical has its effects on the population. Aggression can develop through mental illness, the environment in which a person was raised, and socioeconomic status. Aggressive behavior can come from not only from how people live but how they were raised. Lack of affection and the possible use of corporal punishment could affect how aggressive children become later in life. A family's socioeconomic status, high or low, might also play the role of developing aggressive behaviors.

When considering the socioeconomics of a person, child or adult, certain circumstances can trigger stressors that might lead to aggressive behaviors. These factors may include feelings of oppression in the household due to unemployment, lack of financial stability, living situations, and education. In some cases these triggers could cause the adult(s) to become aggressive, and this aggression can often affect any children in the household.

Children born into an aggressive atmosphere may find themselves more prone to develop aggressive tendencies. A child under the care of an adult who uses corporal punishment may be more likely to develop these tendencies than one in a noncorporal punishment household. Children could find themselves being the outlet for the adults' aggression. Children who see their parents fighting or arguing often consider this kind of behavior normal, causing a child to become insecure. This insecurity could also influence the size of the child's social circle and self-confidence. This could cause a child to become defensive or aggressive. Perhaps the children feel

they must prove their worth through the means of physical and/or verbal aggression, stepping into the role of a bully.

Purpose of Research

How an individual could be raised can determine the type of adult that person becomes. Physical punishment of children is seen as normal in the United States both with regard to its acceptance and practice. Virtually all parents spank their children, (Strauss, 1991). Most adults favor corporal punishment for its direct approach on an act deserving of discipline. Baumrind, Larzelere, and Cowan (2002) argue that conceptual and operational definitions of parental aggression should distinguish between moderate practices intended to correct child behavior and harsh punitive practices that are more uniformly acknowledged to be detrimental to children and ethically unacceptable. A parent must differentiate the use of too much or too little aggression for the situation.

Parents also use verbal punishment in efforts to deter or intervene in their children's actions. In certain places a raised voice is more socially acceptable than spanking one's child. Verbal de-escalation techniques or verbal interventions may calm a child, decreasing the use of corporal punishment.

Race and gender may be large factors in determining aggression in addition to an individual's socioeconomic status and aggression level. For both male and female social standing may dictate what is deemed proper as a response to aggression. Additionally, race may play a factor. Research had been conducted on how childhood alcohol abuse and being children of alcoholics can lead to aggression. There had also been studies on how depression in mothers can

affect their children and how the parents who verbally abuse their children have them grow up to be physically or verbally aggressive. Past research seemed to focus on certain factors of the individual's childhood such as a single parent's style of parenting.

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a connection between a parent's income and the amount of affection the parents gave to their children. In the current study other factors were also taken in to consideration such as race, size of the family, and time spent with each sibling.

Research Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationships between parental income, the amount of affection they give their child, and the extent of child abuse. Corporal punishment is a type of abuse that is also measured. Affection was measured by the sum of expressed pride, the show of visible affection, and the amount of attention given to their child. There are several hypotheses included in this current study. The first hypothesis is to show a positive relationship between how many siblings one has and whether one has a bond with one's siblings or not. Second, there is a positive relationship between parental income and the presence/absence of a bond between parents and children. The third hypothesis is there is a relationship between race and the presence of affection between parents and their children. Then the hypothesis looks at if there is a positive relationship between parental employment status (either work or only one works) and whether parents express pride in their children or not. The fifth hypothesis is there a positive relationship between parental racial status (whether one's parents are Caucasian or Non-Caucasian) and whether parents express pride in their children or not. Hypothesis six is there is a negative relationship between family of origin parental status and the amount of yelling one's

parents practiced. The seventh hypothesis tests for a relationship between family of origin's parental status and the amount of spanking one's parents practiced on the respondent as a child. The eighth hypothesis looks at the relationship between parental beating of the respondents and if this leads to the respondents being aggressive toward others. The final hypothesis looks at the relationship between parental affection and respondent tendencies of aggression toward others.

Limitations

Even though this study contributed to the research of how families' styles of parenting and their socioeconomic status could affect an individual's adult aggression, it still has some limitations. First of all, the study consisted of a small sample size and of all college students. Second, the study was done by questionnaires which limited the number of questions that could be asked. If the study was conducted on a larger population and possibly not in a university setting, different results may have been obtained. The level of education and size of the sample could affect results of how aggressive the respondents are.

Definitions

Economic status is defined by the amount of money a person makes. Data about economic status indicate that poor people become defendants in court cases at a much higher rate than higher income people (Hashimoto, 2011). Social status can determine how people portray others in a positive or negative way.

Corporal punishment can be defined as an act of punishment such as spanking. Individuals who endorse a general spanking norm are more likely to find corporal punishment

acceptable in a wide range of settings (Flynn, 1998). This is shown in a wide range of environments and families.

Aggression can be defined as any act meant to cause harm. Verbal aggression is when someone deliberately uses words as a form of harm. According to Kratcoski (1985) it is noteworthy that most aggressive incidents between child and parent are associated with conflicts about home responsibilities, money, and privileges. Most notable would be the use of shouting when the child is upset about whatever consequence follows the conflicted arrangement between the child and parent. Verbal aggression was not limited to the use of profanity can also be associated with use of 'shouting' aloud to the point of letting out aggression in a manner almost in the same way physical aggression is released. Aggression toward the parent can stem from such things as lecturing the child or perhaps even blaming the child for a mistake. Making the child feel as though that child has become some form of disappointment to the adult or by the direct approach of commanding the child can lead to aggression. When children deviate from what is expected, parents often use a repertoire of negative communication habits: accusing, blaming, lecturing, shaming, commanding, and ordering. (Robin & Foster, 2002).

Physical aggression usually comes as a result of the adolescents feeling they are not being heard, so adolescents could resort to physical contact in order to better convey their feelings. Such physical aggression can range from attempting to bring harm to another individual or used against an inanimate object to vent. Physical aggression can usually be focused toward an 'object,' and is in any case used with the intent to cause bodily injury instead of mental harm. Physical aggression does not always mean to be aimed at one particular person.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aggressive behavior has been shown to come from many different sources. This literature review is focused on the most current and relevant research available regarding childhood aggressive behaviors. In addition, this review provides comparison of aggressive behaviors between different cultures and common misconceptions regarding adolescent aggression.

Alcohol Use

The impact of alcohol usage is often considered an important variable in aggression research. Dudow, Boxer, and Huesmann (2008) conducted research on predictors of early adulthood alcohol use and how it can lead to aggression. The purpose of the study was to examine how certain social and behavioral factors predict alcohol use by children during early to middle adulthood. The study looked at aggression, popularity, behavior inhibition, educational attainment, and depression in relation to alcohol use. Three waves were conducted about 10 years apart from each other measuring different areas of the individuals aggression. The participants were in third grade in the first wave sample in 1960 and were then resurveyed in 1970, 1981, and 2000. The study indicated that higher popularity, aggression, and lower behavioral inhibition at age 19 predicted quantity of alcohol use at early adulthood. Lower levels of behavioral inhibition and higher levels of popularity at age 19 also predict more problems drinking in middle adulthood. This particular study indicated that behavioral risk factors of

aggressiveness in childhood and adolescence led to greater quantity or frequency of drinking in adulthood. These results were consistent with previous studies on problem behaviors of children.

Evidence is mixed regarding whether alcohol abuse by parents can lead to aggression in the home. While most studies have indicated a connect between parental alcohol use and aggression, Nicholas and Rasmussen (2006) attempted to expand on this research by controlling for variables connected to past abusive behavior and alcoholic family's research. A purpose of the study was to investigate the relation of the family variables and parental alcohol use to the outcome variables of depression and aggression. The participants were 142 females and 156 male students at a western university. Results did not show a significant relationship between alcoholism and aggression for either men or women. Instead, emotional abuse within the family was more important, especially for women being abused by their fathers. This study shows that while alcohol use by the child or the child's family might be an important factor to examine in studies involving aggression, many other factors also play an important role.

Depression

Depression has also been shown to have an impact on aggression. There is shown to be a close association between the quality of the parent-child relationship, aggression, and maternal depression. Considerable evidence suggests that depressive symptoms in mothers who display negative, unsupportive, and withdrawn behaviors toward their offspring are less likely to result in secure attachments (Cicchetti, Rogosch, & Toth 1998). There are also studies that showed a strong association between depression and aggressive behavior in adolescent males. In fact, depressive symptoms in adolescents have been shown to predict aggression measured as much as 1 year later (Hale, Van der Valk, & Meeus 2008).

Miller, Hammen, and Brennan (2010) examined whether young adult offspring of depressed mothers display elevated levels of aggressive behavior at age 20. The sample used in this research was derived from a birth cohort study while focusing the on demographic factors such as maternal education and income. Follow-up studies was completed on the families when the youth were 15 and then again when they were 20. These follow up studies were in the form of interviews and questionnaires and showed a decrease of about 10% of participation from the original 815 families participating. The study measured maternal depression, including both clinical episodes of major depression and chronic subsyndromal depression, and youth aggression at 15 and 20 using the corresponding scales of the Child Behavior Checklist and Youth Self-Report, socioeconomic status, parent-child relationship quality, maternal romantic relationship conflicts, youth social functioning at 15, and youth depression. The results suggest that a history of maternal depression prior to the age of 15 does predict higher levels of offspring aggression during the transition to adulthood. Aggression in young adulthood may also present risks to long-term psychological functioning, as the relationships of peers and romantic partners and new behavioral patterns of interaction may be established. The results of this study were consistent with previous research demonstrating aggression.

Types of Aggression

Aggression can be classified into the two subtypes of reactive and proactive. Reactive type aggression is emotionally charged, poorly controlled, and impulsive. Proactive type aggression is more controlled and unemotional. Children who are proactively aggressive regard physically coercive acts consider it normal to employ force to obtain the use of what they want. Dodge and Coie (1987) suggest that reactive aggression underlies the association between

aggression and suicidal behavior, with the implicit assumption that proactive aggression was unrelated to suicidal behaviors. Similar research was done in an interview type study by Conner, Swogger, and Houston (2009). The Premeditated Aggression Scale was developed to measure impulsive and premeditated aggression. Other variables that were looked at were depressive symptoms, alcohol problems, primary substance of use, drug use, and suicide attempts. The results showed that reactive aggression was associated with greater probability of suicide ideation and attempts. The likelihood of both ideations and attempts of aggression also increased among individuals with higher Alcohol Use Disorders. The results did indicate that proactive aggression was associated with an individual's attempts to self-harm. Therefore, there is evidence that perhaps both reactive and proactive types of aggression have a relationship with suicidal behavior.

One important aspect of aggression can be found by examining a person's relationship with that person's family. Overt inter-parental conflict and psychological control involve a parent's relationally aggressive orientation toward dealing with family issues (Li, Putlallaz, & Su, 2011). This is important because of a possible spillover effect. In other words, one who handles family issues in an aggressive manner might also act aggressively toward others outside the family.

Family Related Risk Factors

A child's early social development is deeply rooted in opportunities, skills, and recognition that occur through early interactions with family members, peers, and teachers. How these individuals treat a child can determine how the child develops into adulthood. Fraser (1996) did a study on aggressive behavior in children and how their community, family, schools,

peers, and neighborhood affected them. Aggressive behaviors that began in adolescence can stem from failures at school and home. There were services that can help these children and help them increase their social behavior.

One important influence on a child's behavior is aggression learned from siblings. Hardy, Beers, and Burges (2009) completed a scenario study on how siblings affected each other when it came to aggression and violence. The study was conducted using 506 undergraduate participants at a small college in southwest Florida. Approximately half (48.2%) of the participants had one sibling, 28.6% had two, and 24% had three or more. There were four sibling aggression scenarios given. Examples of the scenarios given were of two siblings fighting over the remote and the older sibling grabbing the remote. In the scenario one of the sibling's then begins to hit the other sibling. The participants would rate the acceptability of the hypothetical sibling's behavior in the scenarios. The purpose of the study was to indicate that male siblings were more likely to react aggressively in the type of scenarios given. Further, the younger siblings appeared not to act as aggressively as older siblings. The hypothesis was proven true and in fact the male participants were more accepting than the female participants of escalating with violence. The study proved by using the scenarios that aggression in a sibling's relationship is common and can provoke negative behavior. Being the perpetrator of sibling aggression or violence was the most significant predictor of future aggression toward others.

Another important factor in a child's development is the aggressiveness of the child's parents. According to many studies children are subjected to aggressive parental behaviors in their own homes (Hemenway, Solnick, & Carter 1994). Parents showing aggressive behavior toward their children has been shown to be a more common experience in today's society. Over

90% of American parents use physical discipline with their children to correct their misbehaviors (Strauss, 1991). This could lead to psychological effects on the children that can lead to violence not only in childhood but also to adulthood. Decades of research have shown that being subjected to parental aggression such as verbal abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and /or physical discipline is associated with negative impacts on psychological functioning in childhood (Devet, 1997). Recent research with adults revealed that exposure to acts of parent aggression during childhood is negatively associated with self-concept and its various dimensions in adulthood. Those that report experiencing more instances of verbal abuse from their primary caregiver during childhood tend to lack positive self-esteem (Briere & Runtz, 1990). The result of parent's aggressive behavior could not only affect how they act but also how their children perceive their self-behavior toward others.

Research by Giant and Vartanian (2003) looked at children's perceptions of their parents' aggressive behavior to identify if this behavior could be a predictor of the child's current self-concept. The study examined 119 students, with a majority of them being Caucasian. The Perception of Parental Behavior Questionnaire and the Self-Perception Profile for College Students were used during the study. The study used simple correlation and simultaneous multiple regression analyses to show that parents' aggressive behaviors are a predictor to an individual's adult self-concept.

Larsen and Dehle (2007) conducted a study that examined if parental emotional support and rural adolescent aggression is related to psychopathology and/or substance abuse. The hypothesis was that there was a direct negative relationship between parental emotional support and adolescent aggression mediated by both adolescent psychopathology and adolescent

substance abuse. The participants consisted of 24 males and 38 female high school students from an agricultural community in Idaho. The mothers or stepmothers of the students also participated in the research. The data collection was completed in 1 to 2 hour sessions conducted in the participants' homes. Each person completed their questionnaires separately, and then the parent and adolescent were asked to engage in a 10-minute interaction, while the investigator took note of their interactions toward each other. The adolescents reported the frequency of various verbal and physical behaviors demonstrated to each parent. The research indicated that the proposed model appeared to hold true and the hypotheses were proven correct.

Anger and aggression are particularly destructive forms of adulthood problems, and some researchers have found that retrospective reports of psychological abuse by adults are correlated with increased experiences of anger. For example, Allen (2011) examined the utility of self-trauma theory for explaining the long-term impact of childhood psychological abuse on aggression by using hierarchical regression analyses to examine data from 268 university students. The results of the study indicated that self-capacities such as identity impairment and problems with interpersonal relationships were predicted by maltreatment and psychological abuse. The results also suggested that more frequent maltreating experiences predict more dysfunctional self-capacities, which can in turn increase the probability of displaying various forms of aggression.

Relatively little research has evaluated the connections between parenting styles and child abuse potential or parent-child aggression. Baumrind's (1966) classic conceptualization of parenting style characterizes parental control as generally manifest in three broad styles: permissive (in which the parent exerts minimal control over the child with few demands);

authoritarian (in which the parent enforces control of the child by ensuring unquestioned adherence to absolute standards); and authoritative (in which adherence to rules is a cooperative endeavor between parent and child but the parent remains firm in setting standards). Although parenting style was not measured specifically, child abuse potential was positively associated with coercive parenting approaches and negatively associated with sensitive and consistent parenting in a community sample of parents (Margolia, Gordis, Medina, & Oliver 2003).

Children with behavioral problems such as physical aggression are at higher risk of adolescent-directed verbal and physical aggression toward their fathers, regardless of the child's gender. Pagani et al. (2009) tried to determine whether a childhood life-course of violence was likely to result in aggression toward fathers. The study looked at the impact of socioeconomic factors, individual genetic factors, family environment, and prospective and concurrent parent process. The study took place within the context of a larger longitudinal child development data set that included a random sample of 6,397 children attending kindergarten in French speaking public elementary schools. During the course of the study 2,809 of the children were annually assessed from the end of kindergarten to mid-adolescence. At about the age of 15 or 16 the child and the parents were contacted for interviews and follow-up questionnaires. Verbal and physical aggression toward the child's father and the parents' education was also measured. The education of the parents was selected to represent the father's access and control over wealth. Finally, parental supervision was measured. The independent variables measured were parent-child involvement, family structure, problematic substance use by the adolescents and parents, verbal punishment, and corporal punishment. Childhood life course and teacher related aggression significantly impacted the verbal and physical aggression toward fathers. There was a striking relationship between punishment implemented by fathers and the child's aggression toward their

father. Family involvement, family structure, and parental substance consumption did not seem to have a significant relationship with aggression toward their father. A weak parental environment evidenced by a lack of shared activities and positive communications increased the risk of child aggression. Problematic substance abuse also increased aggression in adolescence by 53% (Pagani et al., 2009).

Carrasco, Holgado, Rodriguez, and Barrio (2009) conducted a study that examined the concurrent and across time relations between father and mother hostility, and child aggression in a sample of 523 primary and secondary school children. That study was a longitudinal study conducted over 3 years in which the data were drawn from a larger prospective project designed to demonstrate links between family relationships and children's adjustment. The original group of participants consisted of 961 from wave one, 771 from wave two, and 523 from wave three. The retention rate from all three waves was about 54% due to missing data, adolescents moving out, and individuals refusing to participate. The families were mostly from middle and low-middle class incomes. The correlation analyses and cross-sectional equations showed a strongly significant relationship between parental hostility from both parents and a child's aggression. Hostility from the mother appeared to show a positive path leading to concurrent and future aggression. The model showed that the fathers' hostility and aggression model was lower than that of the mothers. The study indicated that fathers show more hostility to their child at a younger age and the mother appears to show hostility consistently across time.

Aggression Stability of Children

Addressing aggression in children is particularly important because there is significant stability in aggression from childhood to adulthood in some individuals. According to a study by Sheline, Skipper, and Broadhead (1994) boys who exhibit violent behavior in elementary schools were more likely not to live with their father, had unmarried parents, siblings, and fathers who never showed them affection. The study used 530 students in an low-income Hispanic neighborhood. The subjects were students who got in trouble at least twice a semester. The results of the study indicated that children who were aggressive and violent in school were 11 times as likely not to live with their father and six times as likely to have parents who were not married. This confirms the above research indicating that family factors are very important. Similar studies have shown that school truancy, fighting, or troublesome behavior as early as first grade predicts similar behavior in high school as well arrests for juvenile delinquency (Sheline et al., 1994). This could be associated with higher adult rates of arrest, violence, and drug use in adults. Longitudinal studies of criminals found that parenting practices associated with future delinquency include poor supervision or neglect by both parents and lack of affection by the mother.

According to Kokko and Pulkkinen (2005) both women and men show their aggression to be stable from ages 8 to 14 and again from 14 to adulthood. There tended to be a correlation between aggression of individuals at age 8 and 36, which tend to be higher in men than women. Maltreatment experiences can predict more dysfunctional self-capacities that can increase various forms of aggression. These forms of aggression could be particularly destructive forms of adulthood problems, and some researchers had found that retrospective reports of

psychological abuse by adults were correlated with increased subjective experiences of anger (Allen, 2010). Although some children cease to show serious aggressive behavior as they mature and others are helped by treatment, many children who avoid seeking help lead lives characterized by heavy drinking, drug use, and marital violence (Elliott, 1994). This could be changed by positive influences and good parenting styles.

Misconceptions

Juvenile aggression and violence can affect society in a wide manner. The victimization and distress caused by the behaviors are staggering and have increased over the last few decades. Even though this has been shown true, Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber (1998), identified five misconceptions and controversies concerning the development of aggression and violence. First, there was the misconception that high stability coefficients of aggression over time imply that aggression from childhood to early adulthood is negligible to adulthood. Second, there is the misconception that all serious forms of violence have an origin of aggression from early childhood. Then there was the controversy of whether a single pathway or multiple pathways best represent an individual's development of antisocial behavior and violence. There is also controversy on whether causes of violence are similar to the causes of property offending. Last, there is the assumption that the development of women was similar to that of men (Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1998).

Aggression and Different Cultures

Feldman, Masalha, and Derdikman-Eiron (2010) conducted a study relating to children's ability to handle conflict can be learned at home through participation and observation. The study examined modes of conflict resolution in the three contexts of 1) parent-child, 2) marital, and 3) peers as predictors of a child's aggression behavior. Importantly, the authors were interested in how this aggression formed differently from two different cultures. The study was conducted with 86 Israeli and 55 Palestinian middle class families and their toddlers from 1996 to 2000. The families were interviewed when the infant was 5 months old. Family interactions were then videotaped and parents were then asked to complete self-report measures. A Parental Leave Inventory questionnaire was completed, the father's involvement was measured, and two home visits indicated the ecology of parent-child conflict, marital conflict, mother-child, father-child, and triadic interactions that were done by self-reports. The results indicated that the Israeli families used more open-ended tactics, including negotiation disregard, and conflict was resolved by compromise. Palestinian parents tend to consent or object more during conflict. The study also showed higher child aggression in families with higher marital hostility, more parental undermining, and ineffective behavior in both cultures. Importantly, these factors existed across both cultures notwithstanding vast cultural differences.

Lau et al. (2006) explored whether risk for parent-to-child aggression among Asian American families may be related to cultural heritage or stressors associated with immigration and acculturation. The study consisted of a sample of 1,293 Asian American parents. The study examined nativity, indicators of acculturation, socioeconomic status, family climate, and stressors associated with minority status. Asian American of Chinese descents were more likely

to report minor parental aggression. A national survey of Asian Americans was used and reported that parent-to-child aggression was reported lower than expected. An overall rate of 33.3% parent-to-child assaults was reported. Parents with higher education appeared to report assault more than lower educated parents. Chinese parents reported the highest rate of assaults and Vietnamese report the lowest.

Li et al. (2011) examined how inter-parental conflict styles relate to Chinese children's overt and relational aggression given directly and indirectly through parenting behaviors. The hypotheses were that inter-parental conflict may relate to child aggression through the increased use of coercive control, psychological control, and decreased parental warmth. Another hypothesis was that a child's overt and relational aggression would positively relate to both overt and covert inter-parental conflicts. This could be shown by observational learning. Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) and structural models were conducted for maternal and paternal variables separately. Each model contained the overt and covert conflict styles, the three parenting behaviors, and two aggression outcomes. As predicted, maternal and paternal coercive control and maternal psychological control were positively correlated with male's overt and relational aggression, whereas paternal coercive control and psychological control were positively correlated with female relational aggression. Contrary to predictions, paternal warmth was also positively correlated with female relational aggression.

Social Status and Aggression

Many studies examining links between aggression and social status only involved boys or only examined overt forms of aggression (Luther & McMahon 1996). There has been a link between aggressive behavior and peer liking, with aggressive children and adolescents being more rejected by peers as shown in a study by Vaillancourt and Hymel (2006). Vaillancourt and Hymel's study involved three distinct indices of social status: social preference, perceived popularity, and power. The authors also examined the peer-valued characteristics of the links between social status and how aggression varied by the individual's gender. There are two ways that individuals can achieve status in a peer group through the explicit use of aggressive behavior and through the possession of peer valued characteristics. Vaillancourt and Hymel (2006) had 585 participants in a longitudinal study where the participants completed multiple questionnaires. The "Class Play" measure included peer evaluations of socio-metric liking and disliking, perceived popularity, perceived power, overt or physical, and relational aggression, and other behavioral characteristics. Sex differences were examined and found a similar pattern for girls and boys, although the relationship was stronger for boys in power and popularity. As hypothesized, the link between aggression and perceived power depended on the level of peer valued characteristics possessed in aggression. This behavior was associated with the thought of greater power of individuals with more peer-valued characteristics of aggression. The results indicated that both peer-valued characteristics and relational aggression were statistically significant independent predictors of social preference.

A child is known to be at high risk for future offending if he or she shows early signs of disruptive behavior, has parents with poor child-rearing skills, comes from a lower

socioeconomic status, reports parental criminality, and exhibits poor emotional awareness (Hill 2002). Early disruptive behavior was reported to often be visible by an increase in aggressive behavior. A disproportionate number of dysfunctional families also have a low socioeconomic status that can place a child at further risk of anti-social behavior.

McLoughlin, Rucklidge, Grace, and McLean (2010) conducted a study of 94 children in which the measures were selected to gather a broad range of information about child behavior, family functioning, emotional intelligence, and psychopathy. In this study individuals with aggression issues reported to have a poorer economic status and below average household income. The results indicated that the children in the high unemotional aggression groups scored higher than the low unemotional aggression groups on a range of behavioral problems and social problems. The results did indicate that like other research aggressive behavior took many forms, including relational, physical, and verbal aggression.

Corporal Punishment

Studies have indicated that there was a gender difference in attitudes toward spanking and that males are more likely to spank than females. Some researchers debate on whether individuals growing up being spanked are more aggressive than those not spanked, and if they are more likely to be in favor of corporal punishment. Evidence does show that milder forms of parent-to-child aggression including corporal punishment are associated with mental health problems later in childhood and adulthood (Gershoff, 2002).

Flynn (1998) completed a study using undergraduate students to determine their attitudes toward spanking as a function of situational context and age of the child. The study leader

administered a questionnaire to 207 students. The sample participants were 64% female and 86% white. The spanking attitudes were measured by asking the ages that were appropriate to spank a child. The ages were divided in different levels of: 3 or 4 years, 7 or 8 years, and 11 or 12 years. Then the questionnaire gave six different situations. The results indicated that for the younger and middle children it was appropriate to spank for things like not cleaning their room. The study indicated that only stealing and talking back to the parent was reason for physical punishment. Over 90% of male respondents agree that it was okay to spank a younger child and 70% supported spanking older children. About 80% females supported spanking for younger child and about 64% for older children. The study also indicated that black individuals were more likely to spank in public and find it acceptable for every age. The results also indicated that the respondents suggested that not only was it okay to spank younger children but it was okay to slap them too. There was a tie between those who found it acceptable to use physical punishment and those who used corporal punishment toward their children.

Rodriguez's (2010) study determined that the greater use of corporal punishment and physical maltreatment would be associated with child abuse potential and selected parenting styles. There were three independent studies examined that included two community samples and a clinical at-risk sample of parents. The study was done using the Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI) to include 160 statements to which the respondents would agree or disagree. The Abuse Scale was also used which included: Distress, Rigidity, Unhappiness, Problems with Child and Self, Problems with Family, and Problems with Others. The Parent-Child Conflict Tactics Scale was used to measure physical assault. Importantly, this was one of the few studies that examined aggression in relation to demographic factors such as race and socioeconomic status. The first study included 327 parents of children younger than 12 who responded to an

online parenting study. A majority of the respondents were Caucasian with a mean annual family income of \$54,299. The second community sample consisted of 115 parents of children between ages 7 and 12. The majority of the respondents were Caucasian, were living with a partner, and had an average of three children. The third study focused on mothers of 7 to 12 year old children diagnosed with behavior problems. This study consisted of 74 mothers, with a majority of them being Caucasian; most of the respondents did graduate high school and had a mean annual family income with \$41,016. The three studies indicated that the CAPI Abuse scale scores were significantly positively correlated with the Parenting Scale scores. The abuse potential was not significantly correlated with the reported CTSPC Non-Violent Discipline tactics. The parents who indicated they engaged in any physical maltreatment obtained higher CAPI Abuse scores and higher Parenting Score Over reactivity scores than those who did not participate in those abusive tactics.

Frustration-Aggression Theory

Drawing from the family systems perspective and the frustration-aggression theory of family violence, mothers who are caregivers are most likely to result to physical discipline. Stolley and Szinovacz (1997) hypothesized in their study that care giving would be positively related to the use of spanking and care giving would be positively related to the frequency of spanking among mothers who use physical aggression. The study used data from the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH) which consists of 3,771 individuals, two thirds of the participants being female. The two dependent variables were whether or not spanking was used as discipline during the past week and how often the child was spanked. The independent variable for the analyses is care giving responsibilities. The results indicated that 27% of men

and 42% of women reported spanking their child in the past week. Controls included in the analyses were variables that had been linked to caregiver stress and physical punishment of children. The presence of a child who is disabled in the household enhanced the probability of child spanking. Other variables significantly related to child spanking included number of children under 5, child anxiety, age of respondent, race, education, and religious outlooks.

Summary

There are many different ways to look at how aggression affects an individual. The literature indicated that there is a connection between a child's relationships with his or her parents and the aggression the child tends to develop as an adult. Past research does show that men are more physically aggressive. Also the economic status of an individual can influence how aggressive a person could become.

Past research also indicates that abuse from their parents can cause children to become aggressive in their adult years. Studies show that aggression can be determined by how frustrated people become due to the lack of connection to their community. When all the factors at hand are placed into dual aggression and socioeconomics categories, these factors seem to multiply. Social expectations or even an individual's economic status can lead to aggressive behaviors merely out of defense for one's self-image.

Lack of parental supervision can easily stimulate aggressive behaviors in adolescents and teens during their transitional phase to adulthood. Factors other than social growth can contribute to aggressive behavior. The current study was to help determine if there was not only a connection between income and aggression but also how the individual was raised and aggression.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the current study was to examine how the respondent's family of origin determines or affects how aggressive the respondent is as an adult. The study analyzed whether how the respondents were raised affects their aggression level as an adult. There are several hypotheses included in this current study. The first hypothesis is there is a positive relationship between how many siblings one has and whether one has a bond with one's siblings or not. Second, there is a positive relationship between parental income and the presence or absence of a bond between parents and children. The third hypothesis is there is a positive relationship between race and the presence of affection between parents and their children. Then the hypothesis looked a positive relationship between parental employment status (either work or only one works) and whether parents express pride in their children or not. The fifth hypothesis is, there is a positive relationship between parental racial status (whether one's parents are Caucasian or Non-Caucasian) and whether parents express pride in their children or not. Hypothesis six is there is a negative relationship between family of origin parental status and the amount of yelling one's parents practiced. The seventh hypothesis tests for a relationship between family of origin's parental status and the amount of spanking one's parents practiced on the respondent as a child. The eighth hypothesis looks at the relationship between parental beating of the respondents and if this leads to the respondents being aggressive toward others. The final hypothesis looks at the relationship between parental affection and respondent tendencies of aggression toward others.

Respondents

The sample for this current study was 124 undergraduate and graduate students at East Tennessee State University. The participants were selected from university Criminal Justice classes. There was a wide range of ages, from 18 to 44 years of age. There were 78 (62.9%) male and 46 (37.1%) female participants. Most of the respondents were Caucasian (84.7%). The remaining respondents consisted of 12 African Americans (9.7%), 5 Hispanic (4.0%), and 1 Asian or other (.8%). There was a fairly large response rate of over 90%.

Demographic Items

The demographic items contained items about each individual's age, race, number of siblings, family of origin's income, the respondent's class rank, and parents' employment status. The questionnaire was also administered to each participant to obtain personal information.

Parenting Style Questionnaire

The Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) was derived from literature published by McCord (1988) and McCord, McCord, and Howard (1961). The participants responded to the statements on a five-point Likert Scale: 1-never, 2- rarely (only 1 to 2 times), 3- occasionally (1-2 times a year), 4- frequently (1-2 times a month), 5- typically. Scores were obtained by assigning points for every response. One point was assigned for every "never" response, two points for every "rarely" response, three points for every "occasionally" response, four points for every "frequently", and five points for every " typically" response. There are 25 questions in the questionnaire and certain questions had higher scores than others. The questions were about how the respondent's parents raised the respondent as a child.

Aggression Questionnaire

The Aggression Questionnaire by Buss and Perry (1992) contains 29 items that are measured on a Likert Scale ranging from one being non-characteristic to five being very characteristic. The questionnaire is comprised of four distinct subscales: Physical Aggression, Verbal Aggression, Anger, and Hostility. Buss and Perry's Aggression Questionnaire offers modest but adequate evidence for construct validity. In this study the terms "low level" and "high level" of self-reported aggression were based on each participants' score on the Aggression Questionnaire. The survey looks at how aggressive the respondent is as an adult.

Procedure

Consent forms were given to the participants before distributing the surveys. The consent form informed the participants how to get more information on this topic, who to reach with any questions, and specified that participants are to be at least 18 years old and students. The lead investigator informed the participants that their participation was voluntary and their responses would be anonymous. The Demographic Questionnaire, Parenting Style Survey, and Aggressive Survey were then distributed to undergraduate and graduate East Tennessee State University students. The respondents were given approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete the surveys. The current study was approved by the IRB at East Tennessee State University.

Experimental Design

Based on the self-reports of parenting style of the family of origin and gender, the participants were categorized into groups depending on their primary caregiver and parenting style. There were five independent variables that were tested. The independent variables included race, the number of siblings, the respondent's family of origins income, who the respondent lived with as a child, and which parent (or both) worked. The two dependent variables were how much attention the parent gave and the amount of aggression in the home of the family of origin. Another dependent variable was respondent aggression, which was measured by the item: given enough provocation, the respondents may hit another person, and the study looked at aggression in the family of origin by the parents yelling, cursing, spanking and if the child was physically abused. The attention variable involved the amount that the parent cared, the affection given to the child, how much the parent and child bonded, and the amount of time they interacted. The data then were collapsed and recoded into SPSS.

Method of Treating Data

The data were collapsed and coded before being processed in SPSS using crosstabulations and Chi-Square tests. Siblings was coded from 1 equals only one child, 2 equals 1 to 2 siblings and 3 equal more than 2 siblings. Siblings were coded to have 1 equal small family (1-2 siblings) and 2 equal large families (over 2 siblings). The variable for the fathers and mothers jobs were coded into one variable with 1 equaling both parents worked and 2 equaling only one parent worked. The variable indicating who the respondent lived with growing up was coded from 1 equaling living to only mother growing up, 2 equaling only living with their father, 3 equaling living with their grandparents growing up, 4 equaling both parents, and 5 equaling

living with another. The code variable had 1 as yes (lived with both parents) and 2 equaling no (lived with only one parent). Everything was processed using chi-square crosstabs, chi square, Phi, and Cramer's V.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to analyze relationships between such factors as parental affection, parental aggression, other family of origin factors, and respondent aggression. There were many different aspects looked at in this study. The study determined how income of the family of origin could affect the amount of affection given to the individual as a child and how this could affect their adult aggression. Surveys were distributed to East Tennessee State University undergraduate and graduate students to measure the respondent's parents' style of parenting and the respondent's aggression as an adult.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Information was collected on a variety of demographics of 124 student respondents. The frequency distributions and percentages of the characteristics are presented in Table 1. As indicated in the table, 62.9% of the respondents were male and 37.1% of the respondents were females. A majority of the respondents were Caucasian (84.7%). Nine percent were African American, 4% were Hispanic, and .8% were Asian or other. The majority of the respondents were 18 to 22 years of age. A majority of the respondents were raised in families that made \$25,000-\$74,000 a year, with 39.5% report \$75,000 or more a year and 8.1% with a \$25,000 and below income a year. There were 73.4% of the respondents who were raised by both parents and 63.7% of the respondents had mothers who worked full-time jobs while they were going up.

Table 1

Demographics of Respondents

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	78	62.9%
Female	46	37.1%
Race		
White	105	84.7%
Hispanic	5	4.0%
Asian	1	.8%
African American	12	9.7%
Other	1	.8%
Age		
18 to 22	92	74.1%
23 to 28	31	17.7%
29 to 44	10	8.2%
Income		
\$75,000 and more yr	49	39.5%
\$25,000-\$74,000 a yr	65	52.4%
\$25,000 and below yr	10	8.1%
Live with		
Mother only	24	19.4%
Father only	2	1.6%
Grandparents	1	.8%
Both Parents	91	73.4%
Other	6	4.8%

Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is a positive relationship between how many siblings one has and whether one has a bond with one's siblings.

Hypothesis Two: There is a positive relationship between parental income and the presence of a bond between parents and children.

Hypothesis Three: There is a positive relationship between race and the presence of affection between parents and their children.

Hypothesis Four: There is a positive relationship between parental employment status (either work or only one works) and whether parents express pride in their children.

Hypothesis Five: There is a positive relationship between parental racial status (whether one's parents are Caucasian or Non-Caucasian) and whether parents express pride in their children.

Hypothesis Six: There is a negative relationship between family of origin parental status and the amount of yelling one's parents practiced.

Hypothesis Seven: Tests for a relationship between family of origin's parental status and the amount of spanking one's parents practiced on the respondent as a child.

Hypothesis Eight: Looks at the relationship between parental beating of the respondents and if this leads to the respondents being aggressive toward others.

Hypothesis Nine: Looks at the relationship between parental affection and respondent tendencies of aggression toward others.

Table 2: Hypothesis One: There is a positive relationship between how many siblings one has and whether one has a bond with one's siblings.

Results: A cross-tabulation of the number of siblings one had as a child and one's bond with his or her siblings showed a significant difference (significance = .023). Ninety-six percent of respondents with 1 or 2 siblings reported having a bond with their siblings but only 83% of those with over two siblings reported have a bond with their siblings. Apparently it is slightly more likely to have a bond with one's siblings when there is only one or two of them as compared to having more than two siblings. The strength of the relationship was between weak and moderate (phi = .205). Of course, we did not measure the strength of the bond, so no comments can be made about how intense the bond with brothers and sisters was. This information is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Crosstab of Sibling Bonding

Bond with siblings	Number of Siblings					
	1 to 2 siblings		Over 2 siblings		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No Sibling bonding	4	4.2%	5	16.7%	9	7.3%
Has a bond with siblings	90	95.8%	25	83.3%	115	92.7%
Total	94	100%	30	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = 5.204 df = 1 Significance = .023 Phi = .205

Table 3: Hypothesis Two: There is a positive relationship between parental income and the presence of a bond between parents and children.

Results: A cross-tabulation of parental income and the presence of a bond between parents and children was significant. One hundred percent of the respondents whose parents earned \$75,000 or more a year reported bonding with their parents; 89% of those respondents whose parents earned between \$25,000 and \$75,000 a year reported such bonding; and 80% of those respondents who reported earning less than \$25,000 a year reported such bonding. The relationship between the two variables was between weak and moderate: $\phi = .245$. This results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Crosstab of Parental Bonding and Income of the Family of Origin

Bond Between Parents and Respondent	Income of Family of Origin							
	\$75,000 and more a yr		\$25,000 to \$75,000 a yr		Below \$25,000 a yr		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No parental bonding	0	0%	7	9.8%	2	20%	9	7.3%
Parental bonding	49	100%	58	89.2%	8	80%	115	92.7%
Total	49	100%	65	100%	10	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = .7437 df = 1 Significance = .024 Phi = .245

Table 4: Hypothesis Three: There is a positive relationship between race and the presence of affection between parents and their children.

Results: A cross-tabulation of race and the presence of affection in the family of origin was performed and it was significant. Ninety-three percent of white respondents reported the presence of parental affection in their family of origin but only 68% of Non Caucasian respondents reported such parental affection (significance = .001). The strength of the relationship was between weak and moderate ($\phi = .21$). Apparently there is a racial difference in showing affection toward one's children. This could be either cultural or perhaps income-related. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Crosstab of Race and Relationship Between Affection from Parents

Affection Towards Their Children	Race					
	Caucasian		Non-Caucasian		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lack of Affection within race	7	6.7%	6	31.6%	13	10%
Presence of Parental Affection within race	98	93.3%	13	68.4%	111	90%
Total	105	100%	19	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = 10.640 df = 1 Significance = .001 Phi = .21

Table 5: Hypothesis Four: There is a positive relationship between parental employment status (either work or only one works) and whether parents express pride in their children or not.

A cross-tabulation of parental employment status and whether parents express pride in their children or not was not significant (significance = .449). Over 90% of both types of parental employment status apparently expressed pride in their children. Results on the crosstabs on the amount of pride a parent expresses to the respondent as a child are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Crosstab Between if Parents Worked and Pride Given Toward Their Child

Pride given to the Children	Family of Origin					
	Both Parents Work		One Parent Worked		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lack of Pride given	4	6.3%	2	3.3%	6	4.8 %
Presence Pride given	60	93.8%	58	96.7%	118	95.2%
Total	64	100%	60	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = .572 df = 1 Significance = .449 Phi = .068

Table 6: Hypothesis Five: There is a positive relationship between parental racial status (whether one's parents are Caucasian or Non-Caucasian) and whether parents express pride in their children or not.

A cross-tabulation of parental racial status and whether parents express pride in their children or not was not significant (significance = .209). Ninety-six percent of white parents and 89.5% of

Non Caucasian parents apparently expressed pride in their children. These cross tabulation results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Crosstab Race and Pride Given

Pride given to the Children	Race					
	Caucasian		Non-Caucasian		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lack of Pride given	4	3.8%	2	10.5%	6	4.8 %
Presence Pride given	101	96.2%	17	89.5%	118	95.2%
Total	105	100%	19	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = .1.576 df = 1 Significance = .209 Phi = .113

Table7: Hypothesis Six: There is a negative relationship between family of origin parental status and the amount of yelling one’s parents practiced.

Results: A cross-tabulation of family of origin parental status and the amount of yelling in the home was not significant (significance = .246). Sixty-six percent of respondents who lived with both parents as a child and 54.5 % of respondents who lived with only one parent reported that they were not yelled at by their parents. Conversely, 34% of respondents from homes with both parents and 46% of respondents from homes with only one parent present reported having been yelled at in their family of origin. Perhaps if the sample size had been larger, this 11-point

difference might have been significant. Parental status at the family of origin and the amount the parents yell at their child are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Crosstab of Who the Respondent's Parents in Relation to if They Yelled

Yelling Toward their Child	Family of Origin					
	Live with both parents		Live with one parent		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No yelling in the Family of Origin	60	65.9%	18	54.5%	78	62.9%
Yelling in the Family of Origin	31	34.1%	15	45.5%	46	37.1%
Total	91	100%	33	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = 1.346 df = 1 Significance = .246

Table 8: Hypothesis Seven: There is a negative relationship between family of origin parental status and the amount of spanking one's parents practiced.

Results: A cross-tabulation of family of origin parental status and the amount of corporal discipline in the home was not significant (significance = .975). Seventy-five percent of respondents who lived with both parents as a child and 75% of respondents who lived with only one parent reported that they were spanked by their parents. Apparently, about three quarters of all parents spank their children. Perhaps the problem with this issue is that there may be differences in how much parents spank their children rather than in whether they spank at all or

not. If we had measured the amount of spanking, perhaps there would have been a significant difference between families with both parents in the home and families with only one parent in the home. The results of the cross tabulation between the respondents family of origin and spanking are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Crosstab of Family of Origin in Relation to Spanking

Spanking	Who respondents Lived With as a child					
	Both parents		One parent		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No spanking	23	25.3%	8	25%	31	25%
Spanked by parents	68	74.7%	24	75%	92	75%
Total	91	100%	32	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = .001 df = 1 Significance = .975

Table 9: Hypothesis Eight: There is a negative relationship between parental beating of respondents and respondent tendencies toward aggression.

Results: A cross-tabulation between parental violence and respondent aggression showed no significant relationship (significance = .419). Specifically, 27.1% of the respondents whose parents never or rarely beat the respondent as a child reported a tendency to hit other people. Only 16.7% of the respondents who indicated they had typically been beaten as a child by their parents reported a tendency to hit other people. The clearest finding in Table 9 is that most of the

respondents reported having never been physically abused or rarely been physically abused. Perhaps parents spank as a discipline technique, but it appears that they do not resort to beating their children.

Table 9:

Crosstabs Between Parental Beating of Respondents and Their Tendencies to Hit

Respondents Hitting Others	Beat By Parents					
	Never-Rarely		Typically		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Never Rarely Hit Others	86	72.9%	5	83.3%	91	73.4%
Typically Hit Others	32	27.1%	1	16.7%	33	26.6%
Total	118	100%	6	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = .419 df = 1 Significance = .572

Table 10: Hypothesis Nine: There is a negative relationship between parental affection and respondent tendencies toward aggression.

Results: A cross-tabulation between parental affection and respondent aggression showed no significant relationship. Specifically, 20% of the respondents whose parents never or rarely showed affection toward them reported a tendency to hit other people, while 27.5% of the respondents who typically received affection had a tendency to hit other people. It is unclear why a higher percentage of persons who received affection reported a tendency to hit orders. Because

only 15 respondents reported never or rarely receiving affection, sample size may be a factor. Another possibility is that this was a college sample which may be somewhat atypical.

Table 10:

Crosstabs of Parents that Showed Affection and Respondents that Hit Other People

Respondents Hitting Others	Respondents Parents Showed Them Affection					
	Never-Rarely		Typically		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Never or Rarely Hitting Other People	12	80%	79	72.5%	91	73.4%
Typically Hits Others	3	20%	30	27.5%	33	26.6%
Total	15	100%	109	100%	124	100%

Chi-Square = _.382_ df = 1 Significance = _.536_

Summary

Cross-tabulations showed that three of the hypothesized relationships were significant. There was a positive relationship between how many siblings one has and whether one has a bond with one's siblings or not. There was a positive relationship between parental income and the presence of a bond between parents and children. There was a positive relationship between race and the presence of affection between parents and their children. The other hypothesized relationships were not significant. It is particularly noteworthy that there were no significant

relationships between family of origin parental status (living with both or only one parent) and two measures of parental discipline: parental yelling and parental corporal discipline (spanking). Also, there were no significant relationships between parental affection or beating and whether the respondent has a present tendency to hit other people.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND LIMITATIONS

The purpose of this study was to analyze relationships between such factors as parental affection, parental aggression, other family of origin factors, and respondent aggression. This was accomplished by using surveys on parenting styles and aggression that were distributed to East Tennessee State University undergraduate and graduate students. There were 124 participants with minimal missing variables. The objectives achieved were connections between parent and child bonding and how the number of siblings the respondents have can influence aggression. There was a lower relation than predicted on how much the parents yelled and/or spanked their children affected future aggression.

Summary

Research suggests that child abuse and maltreating experiences by parents can lead to adult aggression. Allen (2011) discusses that psychological abuse significantly predicted participants' self-reported levels of various forms of aggression even after controlling for the impact of physical abuse and neglect. Past research also indicates that economic status and culture can have an effect on how aggressive a person can be. Some past research discussed how childhood aggression has gained great attention because of its delirious effects on a child's adjustment and developmental trajectories (Dodge & Coie 1998).

The goal of the current study was to analyze relationships between family of origins variables and respondent variables. More specifically, this study examined such variables as number of siblings, one's bond with one's siblings, parental income, parental affection, parental

aggression, parental race, parental status, and respondent aggression. The current study was conducted by distributing questionnaires on demographics, the respondent's parents' style of parenting, and aggression to 124 East Tennessee State University students. After collecting the data, the data then was processed through SPSS, the analysis used crosstabs. This was done to determine if there were significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables, especially respondent aggression.

Conclusions

As noted in Chapter 4, statistical tests showed that three of the hypothesized relationships were significant. There was a negative relationship between how many siblings one has and whether one has a bond with one's siblings. There was a positive relationship between parental income and the presence of a bond between parents and children. The results showed significant relationship between race and the presence of affection between parents and their children. All the other hypothesized relationships were not significant. For example, this study found no relationship between family of origin parental status and the amount of yelling one's parents practiced. Similarly, this research found no relationship between family of origin parental status and the amount of spanking one's parents practiced. The results indicate that living with both parents or only one parent did not affect these measures of parental discipline. There was also no relationship found between the amounts of affection the parents gave the respondent as a child or if they were beaten by their parents and the respondent having a tendency to hit others.

Observations

The data in the current study showed that there was a high percentage of the respondents who indicated that their families that made more than \$75,000 a year (39.5%), lived with both parents (73%), and had working parents, tend to have more parent bonding and affection toward their child, seen in the three significant tables. There was interesting findings, considering one would think that if the parent was at home there would be more bonding or showed they cared, and lower income families would be more likely than higher income families to have both parents working. Surprisingly, according to the results of the study, Caucasians appear to have more pride and bond more with their children but also appear likely to spank their children. It was interesting to find in the results that spanking appeared to be used more often than yelling. Three fourths of the respondents reported been spanked by their parents but only 37% reported being yelled at by their parents. Perhaps spanking is remembered more than yelling. There is a question on whether spanking is remembered more than yelling due to it being more effective in getting a response from children when they are in trouble by their parents.

Limitations

Despite the findings, limitations were found in the current study that can be looked at for future research. The first limitation was how small the sample size was. The larger the sample the more the results may differ for future studies. The second limitation is the sample frame of just college students. The respondents with no more than a high school degree may give results on the amount of affection given and aggression in the family of origins household differently do to the change in mind set.

One limitation of the analyses reported in Chapter 4 is that only cross-tabulations was used in collecting the current study's data. Multivariate analysis would have allowed for more specific and sophisticated testing of the hypotheses. Multivariate testing, however, was beyond the scope of this project. The final limitation was that the questionnaires could have been more in depth. Future research could expand the ability to explore the connection between how people were raised and how it affected their aggressive behavior as an adult. Over three fourths of the respondents reported that they were from higher income families, making it possible that the results may have differed if the current study was given to a different population of individuals.

Findings show that there was a significant relationship between how many siblings one has and whether or not one has a bond with one's siblings. This suggests that smaller family size may have some positive effects on the family bond between respondents and their siblings. Respondents whose family of origin income was below \$25,000 a year reported the lowest percentage of bonding; 20% reported not bonding with their parents. Perhaps parent effectiveness training would be helpful. Although the relationship between race and presence of parental affection was significant, small sample size (only 19 non-Caucasian in Table 6) necessitates caution in drawing strong conclusions from this table.

Perhaps the most important finding in this study are the lack of a relationship between parental aggression (beating of children) and respondent aggression (respondents reporting they may hit someone if given enough provocation) and the lack of a relationship between parental affection and respondent aggression. As noted in Chapter 4, only six respondents reported being beaten by their parents on a typical basis. Perhaps parents simply do not resort to beating very often or perhaps these respondents were in fact beaten as a child but choose not to report it or

else have cleared it from their memory. Concerning affection, it is encouraging that most respondents (109) reported that their parents had typically shown them affection.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Demographics

1) Age: _____

2) Gender: (1) Female _____

(2) Male _____

3) Race: 1. ASIAN

2. AFRICAN AMERICAN

3. HISPANIC

4. WHITE

5. OTHER- please specify: _____

4) Class Rank: (1) Freshman _____

(2) Sophomore _____

(3) Junior _____

(4) Senior _____

(5) Grad- Student _____

5) How many siblings do you have:

Only child _____

1 to 2 siblings _____

More than 2 siblings _____

6) Approximate family income while you were growing up:

More than \$100,000 a year _____

\$75,000-\$100,00 a year_____

\$50,000-\$74,000 a year_____

\$25,000-\$49,000 a year_____

Below \$25,000 a year_____

7) Father employed full-time while you were growing up:

Yes_____

No_____

Part time_____

8) Mother employed full-time while you were growing up:

Yes_____

No_____

Part time_____

9) Who did you primarily live with while growing up?

Mother only_____

Father only_____

Grandparents_____

Both parents_____

Other please specify_____

APPENDIX B

Parenting Styles

Based on your overall perceptions of life with your parent(s) read each item and decide how often you experienced the behavior: never, rarely, occasionally, frequently, and typically. Parent(s) is defined as primary caregiver. Record your experience by placing a circle around one of the choices listed directly below each statement. Please circle the number that most closely corresponds with your answers. Please answer each question based on your experience and do not put your name anywhere on the survey.

1= never

4= frequently (1-2 times monthly)

2= rarely(only 1-2 times)

5= typically

3= occasionally (1-2 times yearly)

1. My parent(s) showed me affection.

1 2 3 4 5

2. My parent(s) embarrassed/belittled my worth.

1 2 3 4 5

3. My parent(s) yelled/cursed at me.

1 2 3 4 5

4. My parent(s) expressed pride in me.

1 2 3 4 5

5. My parent(s) used instructions/directions to discipline me. (i.e. "Don't do that, it is wrong.")

1 2 3 4 5

6. My parent(s) spanked and yelled to discipline me.

1 2 3 4 5

7. My parent(s) restricted privileges to discipline me.

1 2 3 4 5

8. My parent(s) tried to shame me (made embarrassing, humiliating comments) to discipline me.

1 2 3 4 5

9. My parent(s) allowed my input in discussion.

1 2 3 4 5

10. My parent(s) respected my opinion/individuality.

1 2 3 4 5

11. I knew my parent(s) expectations of me.

1 2 3 4 5

12. My parent(s) left me little or no direction.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Before disciplining me, my parent(s) explained the consequences of my behavior.

1 2 3 4 5

14. My parent(s) treated me inconsistently alternating between affection and rejection.

1 2 3 4 5

15. My parent(s) were consistently affectionate to me.

1 2 3 4 5

16. My parent(s) were consistently rejecting me.

1 2 3 4 5

17. When I was punished it had to do more with my parent(s) mood than with what actually did.

1 2 3 4 5

18. When my parent(s) disciplined me they would explain the reason to me.

1 2 3 4 5

19. My parent(s) let me know they cared for me.

1 2 3 4 5

20. My parent(s) praised me for my accomplishments/good behaviors.

1 2 3 4 5

21. My parent(s) beat me.

1 2 3 4 5

22. My parent(s) paid attention to giving me a great deal of direction.

1 2 3 4 5

23. My parent(s) tried to bond with me.

1 2 3 4 5

24. My parent spent time interacting with me.

1 2 3 4 5

25. My parent(s) ignored me.

1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX C

Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire

Please read each statement below and then indicate, on a scale of 1 (extremely uncharacteristic of me) to 5 (extremely characteristic of me), how much each statement is like you.

1 2 3 4 5

extremely, somewhat sometimes, somewhat extremely uncharacteristic but characteristic of me, infrequently of my characteristic, extremely characteristic of me

- 1 At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life.
- 2 Given enough provocation, I may hit another person.
- 3 I am an even-tempered person.
- 4 I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy.
- 5 I am suspicious of overly friendly strangers.
- 6 I can think of no good reason for ever hitting a person.
- 7 I can't help getting into arguments when people disagree with me.
- 8 I flare up quickly but get over it quickly.
- 9 I get into fights a little more than the average person.
- 10 I have become so mad that I have broken things.
- 11 I have threatened people I know.
- 12 I have trouble controlling my temper.
- 13 I know that "friends" talk about me behind my back.
- 14 I often find myself disagreeing with people.
- 15 I sometimes feel like a powder keg ready to explode.
- 16 I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back.
- 17 I tell my friends openly when I disagree with them.

- 18 I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things.
- 19 If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.
- 20 If somebody hits me, I hit back.
- 21 My friends say that I'm somewhat argumentative.
- 22 Once in a while I can't control the urge to strike another person.
- 23 Other people always seem to get the breaks.
- 24 Some of my friends think I'm a hothead.
- 25 Sometimes I fly off the handle for no good reason.
- 26 There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows.
- 27 When frustrated, I let my irritation show.
- 28 When people annoy me, I may tell them what I think of them.
- 29 When people are especially nice, I wonder what they want.

VITA

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