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perceived parenting styles, psychosocial  
development, and locus of control orientation in  
college students

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**AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED  
PARENTING STYLES, PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND  
LOCUS OF CONTROL ORIENTATION  
IN COLLEGE STUDENTS**

by

**Cheryl Sue Marsiglia, M.A.**

**A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
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**August 2002**

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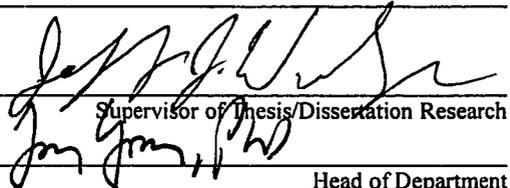
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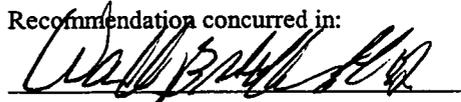
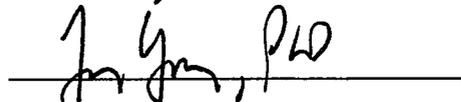
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor of Thesis/Dissertation Research

\_\_\_\_\_  
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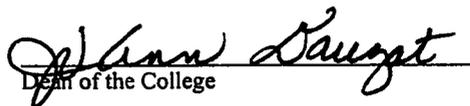
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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationships between perceived parenting styles, psychosocial development, and locus of control orientation in 334 college students. Perceived parenting styles were assessed with Buri's (1991) Parental Authority Questionnaire, based on Baumrind's (1973) parenting typology. The parental dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness are categorized into three styles of parenting: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. Psychosocial development was assessed with the Measures of Psychosocial Development (Hawley, 1988), which is based on Erikson's (1950) developmental theory of personality development. Locus of control, based on Rotter's (1954) social learning theory, was measured by Rotter's (1966) I-E scale. Results indicated that authoritative parenting is associated with successful task resolution in psychosocial development, while permissive and authoritarian parenting are associated with less successful task resolution. Maternal authoritative parenting was found to be associated with an internal locus of control, while maternal permissive and authoritarian parenting were associated with an external locus of control. Lastly, the study posited that locus of control would serve as a moderator between parenting styles and psychosocial development. The results indicated that locus of control can moderate the relationship between parenting styles and psychosocial development. Clinical and theoretical implications are discussed, as well as considerations for future research.

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"There will come a time when you believe that everything is finished . . . that will be the beginning." Louis L' Amour

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

Research on various socialization practices provides consistent evidence that certain parental behaviors are associated with positive developmental outcomes in children (Macoby & Martin, 1983). Both theory and research suggest that parental influence may continue to exert an influence, even when individuals are no longer in daily contact with their parents (Lapsley, Rice, & FitzGerald, 1990; Kenny, 1987). Studies have shown that adolescents whose parents provide high levels of security and adequate supervision are more likely to have higher levels of social competence, college adjustment, and academic achievement (Rice, Cunningham, & Young, 1997; Holmbeck & Wandrei, 1993; Melby & Conger, 1996; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994).

Although these studies suggest that the practices and rules established by parents continue to affect young adults, few studies have examined the role parenting styles might play in adolescents' developmental success. Baumrind (1973) defined parenting style as the consistent patterns with which parents interact with their children along two dimensions: demandingness and responsiveness. Demandingness refers to parental efforts to integrate the child into the family through behavioral expectations and disciplinary practices. Responsiveness refers to parental actions that are supportive and consistent with the needs and demands of the child. Baumrind (1973) used these dimensions to

define three parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Authoritative parenting combines high demands for maturity with a high degree of emotional responsiveness and warmth; authoritarian parents have high levels of maturity demands with low levels of responsiveness. Permissive parents impose few maturity demands but have high levels of responsiveness.

Research examining the relationship between parenting style and outcomes has yielded consistent results. Parenting style has been found to predict child well-being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behavior. Authoritative parenting contributes to adolescent competence and adjustment across a wide array of domains, including academic achievement, mental health, reduced behavior problems, and psychosocial competence (Steinberg, 1990). Generally, authoritative parenting has been found to be conducive to children's growth, development and psychological health (Macoby & Martin, 1983).

In general, research suggests that parental responsiveness predicts social competence and psychosocial functioning, while parental demandingness is associated with academic competence and behavioral control (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Authoritative parenting has consistently been associated with both instrumental and social competence and lower levels of problem behavior in both males and females at all developmental stages (Macoby, 1994). Children and adolescents from authoritarian families tend to perform moderately well in school and be less involved in problem behavior, yet they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression. Conversely, children and adolescents from permissive families are more

likely to be involved in problem behavior and perform less well in school, but they have higher self-esteem, better social skills, and lower levels of depression (Darling, 1999).

Research has been fairly consistent that parenting styles influence later adjustment in individuals. One area that has not received much attention is the impact of parenting styles on psychosocial development in late adolescence. During this time of developmental transition, as young adults are leaving home and entering the adult world, the impact of family dynamics on psychosocial development is an important relation to explore. Erikson (1950, 1975) developed a theory of psychosocial development useful for exploring this connection. He proposed that development operates by the epigenetic principle, which states that individuals develop socially by proceeding through eight stages. Success in later stages is in part determined by an individual's success, or lack of success, in resolving conflicts of previous stages.

Erikson emphasized developmental change throughout the human life span. In his theory, eight stages of development unfold as individuals proceed through the life span. Each stage involves certain developmental tasks that are psychosocial in nature; these tasks involve the relationship between an individual and society. Each of these stages is critical in terms of the development of a certain bipolar dimension of personality. If a stage is managed well, an individual will gain a virtue or psychosocial strength that will help with healthy functioning throughout the rest of the stages in life. The failure to gain the psychosocial strength may result in maladaptations, as well as undermine future development.

Although the stage of identity versus identity diffusion has been studied more than any other stage (Oshe & Plug, 1986), the role that perceived parenting styles plays

during this critical developmental stage is an underexplored area as most of the parenting styles studies have been conducted with younger children (Strange & Brandt, 1999). Erikson's theory explicates the reciprocal interactions between individuals and their environments and the unique way in which the individual processes interpersonal experiences against a background of his or her personal history. The parenting styles under which an individual is raised may be a strong determinant of this process.

Another variable important to consider in relation to parenting styles is the effect that different parental behavioral patterns have on the locus of control orientation of individuals. Locus of control is a personality construct based on Rotter's (1954) social learning theory and refers to a person's attributional tendency regarding the cause or control of events (Spector, 1982). Specifically, it refers to the generalized expectancy that reinforcements are under personal control (Phares, 1976). People classified as *externals* believe to a large extent that fate, luck, other people, or social structures determine reinforcements; individuals classified as *internals* believe that effort or ability determine reinforcements (O'Brien, 1984). Like many aspects of adolescent development, locus of control is influenced by a number of factors, including interpersonal dyads, family, and environmental factors (Kopera-Frye, Saltz, Jones, & Dixon, 1991). Beliefs about causality and control impact behavior in important ways. Locus of control orientation has a considerable influence on motivation, expectations, self-esteem, and risk-taking behavior (McCombs, 1991).

Although the locus of control construct is one of the most studied variables in psychology (Rotter, 1990), there are few studies examining the relationship between perceived parenting styles and locus of control orientation. These studies have been laden

with methodological problems concerning the definition and measurement of parental behaviors and characteristics and have predominately involved children (Krampen, 1989).

The preponderance of results indicate that parenting behaviors and locus of control are related (Trusty & Lampe, 1997; McClun & Merrill, 1998; Kopera-Frye, Saltz, Jones, & Dixon, 1991). In a review of research involving parenting styles and locus of control orientation, internal locus of control was significantly correlated with consistency of discipline, reinforcement of positive behaviors, and balanced autonomy (Krampen, 1989). Additionally, positive parental involvement has been associated with the development of an internal locus of control in academic areas (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989). Furthermore, locus of control has been found to have a moderating effect on psychological symptoms, feelings of stress, and the development of anxiety in children (Frost & Clayson, 1991; Chorpita & Barlow, 1998).

Building on previous research, the primary purpose of this investigation is to examine the relationship between parenting styles, psychosocial development, and locus of control orientation. A secondary purpose is to explore the moderating relationship of locus of control between parenting styles and psychosocial development. This study will attempt to answer the following question: What are the effects of perceived parenting styles on college students' psychosocial development and locus of control orientation? Additionally, this study will examine the moderating role of locus of control between parenting styles and psychosocial development.

## Statement of the Problem

Few studies have examined the role parenting styles might play in college students' developmental success. Attention to late adolescents' background tends to be limited to consideration of such factors as race and ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and level of parents' or other family members' educational attainment (Strage & Brandt, 1999). These studies do not consider details of the individuals' relationships with their parents or the pattern of parenting practices the late adolescents may have experienced during their formative years.

Most research on parenting styles has focused on children during their formative years. Yet, parenting styles may significantly impact adolescent development. For example, parenting style has been shown to influence career development (Splete & Freeman, 1985) and the development of disruptive behavioral disorders in adolescents (Rey & Plapp, 1990). How parenting style impacts development in young adult psychosocial functioning and locus of control orientation is an important, but relatively unexplored, issue.

Prior research on parenting styles indicates that adolescent outcome measures usually involve an assessment of educational success, such as grades (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994, 1992). However, well-being during adolescence is not encapsulated simply by academic scores. Using academic achievement as a measure of adolescent success is incomplete unless the discrepancy between ability and achievement is addressed. Additionally, academic achievement may be one of the measures least responsive to parenting style since achievement is mostly

determined by the adolescent's cognitive abilities. This study will fill a gap in the literature by including outcome measures of psychosocial development and locus of control orientation.

This study will utilize adolescents' reports of their parents' behavior. While this may be biased by a variety of factors and should not be taken as unbiased assessments of parents' practices, there are advantages to this method. The phenomenological approach of using adolescents' reports will permit the study of a larger and more representative sample of adolescents than would have been the case if parents' participation in the study were required. Grusec and Goodnow (1994) maintain that effects of discipline should not be construed in terms of the use of particular methods but rather in terms of the child's interpretation and evaluation of methods, the relationship in which parent-child interactions are embedded. Additionally, it is important to bear in mind that there is extensive literature documenting that adolescents can accurately and reliably report on their parents' practices (Golden, 1969 ; Moscovitz & Schwarz, 1982). It has also been shown that adolescents can accurately predict their own academic achievement (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987), problem behavior (McCord, 1990), psychological distress (Roberts, Andrews, Lewinson, & Hops, 1990), and psychosocial competence (Greenberger & Bond, 1976).

This study will investigate the effects of perceived parenting styles on the psychosocial adjustment and the locus of control orientation of college students. The specific relationships during this time of developmental transition between parental inputs, students' locus of control orientation, and successful psychosocial development to date are unexplored. The current study is expected to explicate further the nature of

parental influences on the psychosocial development of late adolescents as they make the transition to young adulthood. Additionally, the study will examine the social influences of parental warmth and responsiveness on the development of the young adult's locus of control orientation in hopes of replicating prior research on the role of parenting styles on locus of control orientation. To date, these two constructs have only been correlated in junior high students, although studies suggest that locus of control can be moderated by age and context (Blanchard-Fields & Irion, 1988).

#### Justification for the Study

As noted previously, few studies have examined the role parenting styles or practices play in the lives of late adolescents. Yet, both theory and evidence from extant research suggest that these parenting styles may exert a distal influence. Evidence supports the assertion that in some areas such as moral development, parental influence actually increases during adolescence (Lasseigne, 1975). Additionally, developmental life transitions occurring at pivotal times provide unique opportunities for the study of the role of the family in adaptive functioning (Kazak, 1992).

The findings of this study should have practical applications in the following respect. They may add to the understanding of the effects of parental influence in healthy development of college students. Findings might lead to training modules focused on parental skills and interventions, and add to the body of knowledge regarding family influences on an individual, even when that individual is no longer in daily contact with his or her family. Results should also have clinical implications when counseling college students by identifying the correlates of adaptive psychosocial development.

The role of perceived control has received much attention in the literature, especially in the area of depression and illness (Abramson, Metalsky, & Alloy, 1989; Irving, Snyder, & Crowson, 1998). Rotter's social learning theory has impacted other theories and interventions, such as attribution theory, social cognition, cognitive behavioral theory and therapy, psychotherapy, and health behaviors (Strickland, 1989). Valuable information regarding parental interventions and the issue of locus of control can be gained from the research. Braine (1993) instructed parents to give directives to their children, but to do so in a manner that appeared to leave the decision to comply or not up to the child. Children were asked to describe their feelings after different forms of adult intervention along a continuum of sadness, anger, and happiness, with this continuum representing increasing levels of empowerment. Braine concluded that feelings of empowerment might result from internalization of control.

An examination of the variables that contribute to the development of locus of control orientation, internal or external, is needed for clinical practice and for the empowerment of clients. Previous research suggests that coping skills training may result in shifts toward a more internal locus of control (Smith, 1989). For example, Smith (1970) found that patients who underwent life crisis counseling geared toward the development of new coping skills became more internal. Studies involving biofeedback training (Stein & Wallston, 1983) and problem-solving intervention (Duckworth, 1983), confirmed similar results in shifts of locus of control. Understanding the processes that contribute to the development of locus of control will increase the necessary knowledge for control shift interventions.

This study has theoretical implications as well. Beliefs about personal control traditionally have been conceptualized in the coping literature as an important individual-difference factor that can influence cognitive appraisals of stressful situations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In this way, locus of control may provide protection against the experience or threat of distress, but it also may influence the way individuals cope (Skinner, 1995). Indeed, one aspect of attributional retraining concentrates on strengthening an individual's internal locus of control and coping mechanisms (Deshler, Schumaker, & Lenz, 1984). The findings in this study concerning the moderating effect of locus of control between parenting styles and psychosocial development may provide empirical support for these coping theory processes.

#### Literature Review

The present review of the literature provides the conceptual framework for an investigation of the impact of perceived parenting styles on psychosocial adjustment and locus of control orientation. A brief definition of terms are presented to aid in understanding the literature review. Parenting style theory are presented first, followed by a review of the parenting style literature in the adolescent population. A section is devoted to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. The review of literature on the theory primarily focuses on the stage of identity development. The final section focuses on Rotter's (1954) social learning theory and a literature review of locus of control literature as it pertains to parenting styles, psychosocial development, and as a moderator of stressful events.

## Definition of Terms

The following definitions will aid in understanding the literature review:

- 1) **Authoritarian parenting style**—type of parenting with high levels of maturity demands with low levels of responsiveness.
- 2) **Authoritative parenting style**—type of parenting with high levels of responsiveness and moderate levels of maturity demands; considered the optimal parenting style.
- 3) **Demandingness**—one of the two dimensions used by Baumrind (1973) to characterize the typology of three parenting styles; refers to parental efforts to integrate the child into the family through behavioral expectations and disciplinary practices.
- 4) **External locus of control**—cognitive expectancy that future events are based upon luck, chance, or powerful others instead of one's own ability or effort.
- 5) **Internal locus of control**—cognitive expectancy that future events are controlled by one's ability or effort; the belief that reinforcements are under personal control.
- 6) **Permissive parenting style**—type of parenting characterized by high levels of responsiveness and low levels of demandingness.
- 7) **Psychosocial crisis**—time of vulnerability in each stage of Erikson's theory when, if managed well, a virtue or ego-strength can be gained.
- 8) **Responsiveness**—one of the two dimensions used by Baumrind (1973) to characterize the typology of three parenting styles; refers to parental actions that are supportive and consistent with the needs and demands of the child.

## Parenting Styles

*Theory of Parenting Styles.* Many researchers who have investigated parental behavior on children's psychological development have categorized constellations of parental behaviors into groups to form parenting styles. A range of behaviors and parenting style labels have been used to identify differing styles of acceptance, nurturance, and discipline used in child-rearing (Becker, 1964; Kelly & Goodwin, 1983; Steinberg, Elmer, & Mounts, 1989). A preponderance of research indicates that parenting behaviors that foster autonomy and mutual respect between parent and offspring are associated with positive behaviors in adolescents (Macoby & Martin, 1983).

Baumrind (1966, 1971, 1978, 1991) outlined the behavioral dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness as central to the task of parenting. Baumrind (1991) defined demandingness as “. . . the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys ” (p. 61). She referred to responsiveness as “. . .the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands” (Baumrind, 1991, pp. 61-62).

The theoretical model underlying Baumrind's approach represents a paradigm shift away from previous parenting models that relied on behavioral and social learning perspectives to define styles solely on the basis of specific behaviors. Baumrind's model focused on cognitive variables, including parental attitudes and goals, and not only on specific parental practices. Her early research identified normal variation in the patterning of parental authority (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Darling and Steinberg (1993) said of

Baumrind's model that it puts "the emotional and behavioral processes that underlay earlier models of socialization into a conceptualization of a parenting style that was anchored in an emphasis on parents' belief system" (p. 489).

Baumrind proposed three parenting styles based on the degree to which responsiveness and demandingness behaviors are practical or perceived. These labels are categorized as authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Authoritative combines high demands for maturity with responsiveness and warmth, and includes behaviors that are moderately restrictive and responsive, balanced by explanations of policy and equality between parent and child. Authoritarian parents have high levels of maturity demands with low levels of responsiveness; permissive parents impose few maturity demands but have high levels of responsiveness. Authoritarian and permissive styles represent the extremeness of the behavioral continuum, while authoritative style represents a balance between the two extremes.

Numerous studies have documented the variable effects of different parenting styles on child development (Baumrind, 1971; Lewis, 1981; Olweus, 1980). Most research in this area has found that children with authoritative parents are more socially and academically competent (Baumrind, 1973, 1991; Baumrind & Black, 1967; Coopersmith, 1967; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991; Olweus, 1980). Authoritative parenting is associated with children who are more self-reliant and non-aggressive than children whose parents are either authoritarian or permissive. Authoritative parenting has beneficial effects on adolescent competence and adjustment across a wide array of domains, including academic achievement, mental health, behavior problems, and psychosocial competence (Macoby & Martin, 1983; Steinberg, 1990).

Authoritative parents attempt to direct the child in a rational, issue-oriented manner by explaining the reasoning behind rules. They recognize the child's individuality, encourage verbal give-and-take, and engage with the child in joint decision-making. Another aspect of authoritative parenting is a high degree of warmth or acceptance. Authoritative parents assume a deep and lasting commitment to promoting the best interests of the child, even when this commitment means setting aside their own self-interests. At the same time, the parent asserts that the child shall progressively assume more responsibility for responding to the needs of other family members within the limits of a child's capabilities (Macoby, 1992). Authoritative parents tend to provide appropriate scaffolding for their children's learning by supporting the child when tasks are difficult and backing away when the child is succeeding (Pratt, Kerig, Cowan, & Cowan, 1988).

Authoritarian parents have high levels of maturity demands with low levels of responsiveness. They tend to exhort the child to follow rules without explanation, restrict the child's autonomy, and reserve decision-making for themselves only. They also tend to be less responsive and accepting toward their child. Authoritarian parents make high demands for mature behavior and are harsh, uncompromising, and power-assertive in their exercise of authority. Parental strictness and high control are associated with defiant and immature behaviors (Deci, Driver, Hotchkiss, Robbins, & Wilson, 1993; Patterson, 1982). Compared with parents of other types, authoritarian parents tend to rear girls who are less independent, boys who are more aggressive, and children who appear discontent (Greenberger & Goldberg, 1989). Baumrind (1973) identified a control technique used by authoritarian parents as the deliberate frightening of children, with the goal being to

arouse fear and distress and inhibit unwanted behavior. Authoritarian parenting has been associated with extrinsic motivation, lower cognitive self-worth, and less self-regulatory abilities (Wentzel, 1991; Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993). Children with authoritarian parents tend to do well academically but not socially, and the reverse is true for children with permissive parents (Strage, 1998).

Permissive parents impose few maturity demands but have high levels of responsiveness. They fail to make sufficient demands for mature behavior and either indulge or neglect their children's needs. By ignoring misbehaviors, avoiding problems, and accepting a child's behavior without challenge, permissive parents tend to have children who are the least self-reliant and self-controlled. A number of studies focus on the relations between parental permissiveness and susceptibility to peer influence. Bronfenbrenner (1967) and Condry and Simon (1974), for example, established that peer-oriented youth receive less parental support than adult-oriented youth. Similarly, Steinberg (1987) observed that parental permissiveness was related to susceptibility to antisocial peer pressure, and Dornbusch et al. (1985) observed a relation between permissiveness and involvement in deviant behavior. Children of neglectful parents do least well on all measures of competence (Lamborn et al., 1991).

Baumrind posited that parents who differ in the way they use authority also tend to differ along other dimensions. For example, parents whose control practices warranted the label "permissive" or "authoritarian" made fewer maturity demands, communicated less effectively and more unilaterally, and acted less nurturing than authoritative parents (Baumrind, 1967).

Macoby and Martin (1983) proposed a synthesis of the dimensions of control and warmth-hostility, and in doing so, added a fourth parenting style of uninvolved parenting. Macoby and Martin's (1983) model is a two-dimensional framework (see Chart 1). The first dimension is parental responsiveness and ranges from responsive or accepting of child behavior to unresponsive or rejecting of child behavior. The second dimension is parental control or demandingness and ranges from demanding and controlling behavior to undemanding and low in parental control. These two dimensions yield four parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful. Responsive and demanding parenting yields an authoritative parenting style; responsive and undemanding parenting yields an indulgent parenting style. Unresponsive and demanding parenting yields an authoritarian parenting style; unresponsive and undemanding parenting yields a neglectful parenting style. Macoby and Martin (1987) observed that parental neglect has consistently been found to be harmful to children. They reported that the children of psychologically unavailable mothers exhibited disturbed attachment relationships and deficits in all areas of functioning.

Chart 1.

## Macoby and Martin's (1983) Classification of Parenting Styles

	Responsive, Accepting	Unresponsive, Rejecting
Demanding, Controlling	Authoritative	Authoritarian
Undemanding, Low in Control	Indulgent	Neglectful

*Parenting Styles in Adolescent Populations.* Most research on parenting styles has utilized Baumrind's approach: a typology that has been applied to diverse populations and a variety of outcome measures. Initially, Baumrind (1971) tested her model on preschool children. Indeed, most early work on parenting focused primarily on preadolescent children and identified variables that promote positive adjustment, such as warmth (Sears, Macoby, & Levin, 1957). More recently, investigators have examined how parenting behaviors relate to the functioning of adolescent children. For example, Fauber, Forehand, Thomas, and Wierson (1990) reported that maternal rejection, or the absence of warmth or acceptance, is associated with adjustment problems in adolescence.

Few studies have examined the distal effect of parenting styles on the late adolescent. The few that exist yield consistent results demonstrating the benefits of authoritative parenting. Dornbusch and colleagues extended Baumrind's work to

adolescents (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987). They examined the relation of parenting styles to academic achievement. High school students who rated their parents as more authoritative were earning better grades than classmates who reported their parents as authoritarian or permissive. These findings were consistent across family structure, level of parental education, gender, and ethnicity. Dornbusch et al. (1987) found that the grades of students from authoritative families to be the highest followed by students from authoritarian and permissive parents, respectively. The lowest grades were found in families with the most inconsistent parenting types, regardless of the parenting styles. Dornbusch et al. (1987) posited that the values parents hold and the goals toward which they socialize their children are critical determinants of parenting behavior. These socialization goals include the child's acquisition of specific skills and behaviors, such as manners, social skills, and academic ability, and the child's development of more global qualities, such as critical thinking, independence, spirituality, and the capacity to experience joy and love.

Baumrind (1991) observed that adolescent children of parents who practiced an authoritarian style tended to be unfriendly, uncooperative, and had higher incidents of delinquency. Permissive parents had adolescents high in aggression and high in independence. Behaviors and attitudes displayed by adolescents of authoritative parents were generally more positive and included friendliness, responsibility, social competence, leadership, and trust.

McIntyre and Dusek (1995) investigated how perceived parental rearing practices affected styles of coping in university students. Participants who perceived their parents as having warmth and nurturance coupled with close monitoring and age-appropriate

demandingness used more social support and problem-focused coping than did participants from permissive and authoritarian families. In a related study (Klein, O'Bryant, & Hopkins, 1996), the effect of parenting styles on self-perception in university students was explored. Authoritative parenting was generally associated with positive self-esteem, while an authoritarian style was associated with low self-esteem. Gender differences were found for several self-perception dimensions; maternal authoritativeness was particularly important for high self-esteem in women.

The role of narcissism and perceived parenting styles was studied in 324 undergraduates. Perceived parental authoritativeness was found to be associated with less narcissistic maladjustment. Perceived permissive style was associated with immature grandiosity, while perceived authoritarian parenting style was associated with inadequate idealization (Watson, Little, & Biderman, 1992). Ramsey, Watson, Biderman, and Reeves (1996) replicated these results. The researchers concluded that perceived parental permissiveness and authoritarianism are independent predictors of narcissistic tendencies.

In another study of college students, Flett, Hewitt, and Singer (1995) examined the association between dimensions of parental authority and perfectionism. Perfectionism is a multidimensional personality style that is associated with a large number of psychological, interpersonal, and achievement-related problems. It is less of a disorder and more of a vulnerability factor. Self-oriented perfectionism is the requirement that the self be perfect, while socially prescribed perfectionism is the perception that others require one's self to be perfect. Results indicate that parenting style contributes to level of perfectionism in students. Socially prescribed perfectionism was associated with

high ratings of authoritarian parenting behaviors in males, but not in females. Self-oriented perfectionism was associated with an authoritative style of parental authority.

In a longitudinal study with 120 adolescents, Steinberg, Elmen, and Mounts (1989) defined three dimensions of authoritative parenting as parental acceptance, autonomy granting, and behavioral control. This optimal parenting cluster included two of Baumrind's (1977) elements—warmth and control—and added a third quality which Steinberg et al. (1989) labeled psychological autonomy or democracy. The researchers found all three elements to be associated with improved grades in the subsequent academic year. Further analyses suggested the relationship between parenting and grades is mediated by an over-time enhancement of the adolescents' psychosocial maturity attributed to the parenting style. Subsequent longitudinal studies (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994) have replicated these findings in adolescents. Authoritative parenting was found to promote higher levels of psychosocial maturity and school competence and lower levels of internalized distress and problematic behavior.

Strange and Brandt (1999) explored the effects of parenting style on college students' adjustment and success. Student grades, confidence level, persistence, task involvement, and rapport with teachers were predicted from current and childhood levels of parental autonomy granting, demandingness, and supportiveness. These findings were consistent for students living with their parents and those living on their own. Parental behaviors were less predictive of seniors' adjustment and success than they were for freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. These findings indicate that parenting styles continue

to play an important role in the academic lives of college students, although their effect may attenuate over time.

To summarize, during the past three decades, research based on Baumrind's conceptualization of parenting style has produced a notably consistent characterization of the type of parenting conducive to the socialization of children into successful adults. An authoritative parenting style consists of a constellation of parent attributes that includes emotional support, high standards, appropriate autonomy granting, and clear bi-directional communication. This parenting style has been shown to help children and adolescents develop an instrumental competence distinguished by the balancing of societal and individual needs and responsibilities. Among the indicators of instrumental competence are responsible independence, cooperation with adults and peers, psychosocial maturity, and academic success (Baumrind, 1989).

#### Psychosocial Development

*Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development.* Erikson (1950, 1975) developed an extremely powerful and influential theory of psychosocial development, consisting of eight stages of ego identity development, five of which are experienced during the first 20 years of life. At each stage, a certain developmental task confronts the individual, resulting in a crisis. The term crisis refers to a time of increased vulnerability as well as a time for potential growth. Each stage is identified by possible positive and negative outcomes, or ego qualities. This progression of development operates by the epigenetic principle, which states that individual's progress through each of the eight stages is in part determined by that individual's success in resolving previous stages.

At each stage, conflict arises between newly emerging personal needs and social demands, culminating in a crisis as alluded to above. The crisis represents a turning point in development that leaves both positive and negative residues and has lingering effects. If a stage is resolved well, an individual will gain a certain virtue that will encourage healthy functioning throughout the rest of the stages in life. The failure to gain the psychosocial strength may result in maladaptations and endanger future development. Erikson postulated that unsuccessful resolution of a crisis will lead to difficulty in resolving each successive crisis and thus decrease the chance of gaining the positive ego quality of that stage. The eight stages are briefly reviewed (see Chart 2).

Chart 2.

#### Erikson's Stages of Human Development

Erikson's Stages of Human Development		
Life Stage	Psychosocial Crisis	Psychosocial Virtue
Infancy	Trust vs. mistrust	Hope
Toddler	Autonomy vs. shame	Will
Early Childhood	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose
Middle Childhood	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence
Adolescence	Identify vs. role confusion	Fidelity
Young Adult	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love
Midlife	Generativity vs stagnation	Care
Later Life	Integrity vs. despair	Wisdom

Erikson (1963, 1968) suggested that the foundation of personality is laid in infancy as the child interacts with parents. The first stage is in infancy, and occurs

approximately during the first year of life. The developmental challenge is to develop trust in a primary caretaker without completely eliminating the capacity for mistrust. The early social interactions between infant and parents form the basis for this crisis. During this initial stage of *basic trust versus mistrust*, infants learn whether they can rely on others to meet their needs. Infants will come to view the world as a safe place if the baby's needs are met in a consistent and affectionate manner by the caregiver. If the parents meet their needs consistently and responsively, infants will not only develop a secure attachment with parents, but will also learn to trust their environment and the future as well (Ainsworth, 1968). If not, infants will develop mistrust towards people and things in their environment, even towards themselves.

Again, parents play the pivotal role in the child's acquisition of basic trust. The characteristic manner in which parents interact with infants affects infants' early experiences as the parents structure the physical and social environment for the infant. Cohn and Tronick (1983, 1988) demonstrated that infants as young as three months respond to the affective quality of the parent's interaction. In a related study, Pickens and Field (1993) found that three-month-old infants of depressed mothers displayed more sadness and anger than infants of nondepressed mothers. Parents should be attentive, but overindulgent parents will lead a child into the maladaptive tendency Erikson calls sensory maladjustment. Overly trusting, even gullible, these children live naively, refusing to believe anyone would bring them harm. If the proper balance between attentiveness and aloofness is achieved, as with authoritative parenting, a child will develop the virtue of hope: trust in the future.

The period from one and one-half to three years of age is critical for the child's development of a sense of self (Erikson, 1968). Accordingly, the second stage is referred to as *autonomy versus shame and doubt*. The crisis of this period centers on the child's attempts at self-control. Successful resolution of this crisis leads toddlers to develop a sense of autonomy, including a realistic view of what they are capable of accomplishing. Toddlers begin to view the self as a separate entity from the caregiver. However, if caregivers place unrealistic demands on the toddler, as might the authoritarian parent, then compliance is impossible and these children acquire a sense of shame and doubt about their capability to deal effectively with people and objects. Likewise, if parents are overprotective, or disapproving of the children's acts of independence, the children may begin to feel ashamed of their behavior and begin to doubt abilities. Erikson (1963) viewed personality and the child's concept of self as a product of a broad socialization process. Erikson asserted that some shame and doubt is beneficial. Without it, children will develop the maladaptive tendency of impulsiveness. If children receive the proper balance of autonomy and shame and doubt, they will develop the virtue of willpower or determination.

Once children have resolved the second crisis and have a sense of their abilities to individuate, they become more assertive in their activities. This stage lasts from three to six years and involves *initiative versus guilt*. At this stage, children are eager and ready to learn cooperative skills. They welcome adult assistance which enables them to demonstrate their own skills. If children's initiative and enthusiasm consistently elicit a reprimand, then they may experience a sense of guilt. Erikson contended that a small amount of guilt is normal and enables children to gain self-control over future actions.

However, if children are over-burdened with reprimands and subsequent guilt feelings, they may lose the sense of initiative, a state Erikson called inhibition. Children can achieve a healthy resolution of the crisis of initiative versus guilt by having limits and rules clearly set for self-expression. The virtue, or psychosocial strength of purpose can be obtained. Authoritative parents are purported to provide such limits (Baumrind, 1977).

The period of middle childhood corresponds to Erikson's (1963) fourth stage of psychosocial development. In this stage of *industry versus inferiority*, children develop a view of themselves as productive beings. Children acquire a sense of their ability to be useful. Success and accomplishments in school or sports provide children with evidence of their ability to initiate and complete tasks. Erikson has defined the sense of industry as "a sense of being useful . . . of being able to make things and make them well and even perfectly" (1980, p.91). When children fail to find an area in which to demonstrate their competence, they can form a view of themselves as inadequate, incompetent, and even inferior.

Erikson (1950) identified both outer and inner hindrances during this stage. Inner hindrances result from task difficulty beyond a child's present level of mastery. Outer hindrances may be unrealistically high expectations of parents. An overbalance of too much industry results in the maladaptive tendency called narrow virtuosity, while too little industry is called inertia. Narrow virtuosity is the obsessive practice of a limited set of skills, while inertia results from the repeated failure of the child to complete tasks or develop requisite skills. If a successful balance is achieved, then the virtue of competency will be an enduring psychosocial virtue gained at this stage.

Adolescence is the stage of development during which the crisis of identity is most acute, and is referred to by Erikson (1975) as the *identity versus role confusion* stage. The developmental task is the formation of a secure ego identity, which is adolescents' perceptions and feelings about themselves. Psychosocial achievement during this period results in a stable and unified sense of self. Failure to achieve such an identity results in role confusion. A feeling of self-diffusion can occur and the adolescent will lack definition, commitment, and a sense of integration. Erikson refers to the malignant tendency of the lack of identity as repudiation, which relates to the rejection of a personal identity and role in society. Symptomatic of repudiation is a fusing of identity with that of an organization or group, especially the kind of group that is eager to provide the details of identity: religious cults, militaristic organizations, and groups or gangs founded on hatred.

In contrast, if the development of a sense of identity becomes so strong that it blankets any experience of role confusion, adolescents can become too focused on their own ideals that they lose sight of the value and place of any alternative positions or understanding. This occurs when adolescents are so involved in a particular role in a particular society or subculture that there is no room left for tolerance. Erikson (1975) referred to this maladaptive tendency as fanaticism and is characterized by rigid dogmatic beliefs.

Erikson (1950) referred to the adolescent mind as "mind of the moratorium" (pg. 262) and describes adolescence as the time "between the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult." The psychosocial strength gained in successful negotiation of this identity phase is fidelity. Fidelity implies loyalty, that is, the

ability to live by society's standards despite its imperfections and inconsistencies.

Erikson (1950) referred to the sixth stage as *intimacy versus isolation* since the developmental task of young adulthood is to achieve intimacy, as opposed to remaining in isolation. To be intimate, individuals must first be identity achieved, which is the formation of an ego identity. According to Erikson (1975), individuals are not capable of a fully intimate relationship until the identity crisis is well resolved. That is, individuals must have a sense of who they are before fusion of that identity with another takes place with full appreciation of the other's uniqueness and separateness. Once they accomplish the successful definition of their beliefs, values, and roles, they can then healthfully affiliate and socialize with others.

Some individuals love "too freely" or become indiscriminately attached. Erikson labeled this maladaptive form promiscuity, referring particularly to the tendency to become intimate without any emotional attachment in the relationship. This maladaptive form can be true of relationships with friends and neighbors as well as with lovers. The malignancy called exclusion refers to the tendency to isolate oneself from love, friendship, and community, and to develop bitterness in atonement for one's loneliness. If one successfully negotiates this stage, the psychosocial strength to be gained is love. In the context of Erikson's theory, love means setting aside differences and antagonisms through "mutuality of devotion" to another. Erickson's definition of love includes not only the love one finds with a romantic relationship, but also the love between friends and the love of one's neighbor.

The seventh stage is that of middle adulthood with a developmental challenge to cultivate the proper balance of *generativity versus stagnation*. Generativity is an

extension of love into the future; it is a concern for the next generation and all future generations in light of one's pending mortality. As such, generativity is considerably less "selfish" than the intimacy of the previous stage. Erikson described generativity as "primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation" (1963, p 267). Adults may express generativity through nurturing, teaching, leading, and promoting the next generation while generating life products and outcomes that aim to benefit the social system and promote its continuity from one generation to the next. Stagnation, on the other hand, is self-absorption, or caring for no one. The stagnant person ceases to be a contributing member of society. Erikson refers to this maladaptive tendency as over-extension and the malignant tendency as reactivity. Over-extension refers to the tendency to be so generative that one ignores personal needs. Individuals who are overextended no longer contribute well. Reactivity occurs when there is too little generativity and too much stagnation. Reactivity can result in the cessation of participating and contributing to society and lead to bitterness.

In the final stage of late adulthood, individuals experience the crisis of *ego integrity versus despair*. Integrity is experienced as emotional acceptance of one's life with all of its limitations and with a full awareness of its brevity and finality (Erikson, 1976). Despair occurs when an individual believes that time is running out and there is no further chance of finding an alternate path to an acceptable life. As in the earlier stages, there is an inner struggle and a balance to be found. The maladaptive tendency in stage eight is called presumption and happens when individuals "presume" ego integrity without actually facing the difficulties of old age. The malignant tendency is called disdain, or contempt of life. Individuals who achieve a favorable ratio of integrity over

despair attain the virtue of wisdom: "the detached and yet active concern with life itself, in the face of death itself" (Erikson, 1976).

It is important to note that Erikson's epigenesis placed emphasis on the existence of all the psychosocial issues throughout life. Each of these issues has its own time of acute importance, thus defining the stage, "but they all must exist from the beginning in some form, for every act calls for an integration of all" (Erikson, 1963, p 271). The synthesis, integration, and reintegration of these issues under the dominance of the current stage is a life-long process.

*Literature Review Addressing Identity vs. Role Confusion.* Research on Erikson's theory of psychosocial development is vast and extensive. The preponderance concerns the identity versus role confusion stage (Oshe & Plug, 1986). As noted previously, the developmental challenge of adolescence is the formation of a stable identity and a cohesive sense of self. In reviewing the literature, one finds that the majority of empirical research relating to Erikson's theory focuses on the formation of identity during the college years and is based on Marcia's (1966) concept of identity statuses. The major developmental tasks during late adolescence are thought to involve the exploration of the various dimensions of identity and to culminate in a commitment to an inner sense of stability, which is referred to as an ego identity (Marcia, 1966). Exploration is defined as the active consideration of alternatives that comprise ideological and interpersonal issues. Commitment refers to the attainment of a stable sense of self-definition or ego identity and is characterized by distinctly defined values, beliefs, goals, and sexual orientation (Waterman, 1985).

Marcia (1966) proposed that individuals resolve the identity versus role confusion stage in one of four possible outcomes, each of which is defined by a different ego identity status:

- 1) *Moratorium* status describes individuals who are currently exploring but have not yet committed themselves to the various dimensions of identity.
- 2) The *identity-achievement* status refers to individuals who have gone through a period of exploration (as in the moratorium status) and have emerged with a clear commitment to their ego identity.
- 3) The *foreclosure* status refers to individuals who have attained a firm level of commitment by adopting the attitudes of their parents or others (i.e. peers) without deliberation or exploration. This resolution is considered unhealthy (Waterman, 1985).
- 4) The *diffusion* status is characterized by an absence of both exploration and commitment.

Research has failed to uncover significant gender differences in identity status outcomes (Waterman, 1985). There is a tendency for researchers to pigeon-hole an individual into one overall, stable identity status, which has been criticized. In contrast, Kroger (1988) and Waterman (1985) view identity formation as a series of particular yet interrelated tasks rather than as one single, global undertaking. Waterman and Archer (1990) regard identity development as a life-long process that is reflected by age and changes in life circumstances.

Although parents are not the only agents contributing to the socialization of young adults, the family continues to be seen as the major arena for socialization. Thus, the

parenting styles construct is important to consider in relation to psychosocial development during late adolescence. For example, Steinberg, Elmen, and Mounts (1989) correlated parenting styles with school achievement and with adolescents' psychosocial maturity, which they defined as the individual's sense of self-reliance and identity. They found that the impact of authoritative parenting on school achievement was mediated by psychosocial maturity. Their data suggested a reciprocal relationship between authoritative parenting and psychosocial maturity rather than a linear, causal one. In a related study of adolescents' psychosocial maturity and parenting style, adolescents from authoritative homes reported significantly higher levels of psychosocial development when contrasted with adolescents from authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful households (Lamborn et al., 1991).

A follow-up study (Steinberg et al., 1994) uncovered that differences in adolescent adjustment associated with the various parenting styles are maintained or magnified over time. The researchers also revealed that the benefits of authoritative parenting are stable. In contrast, adolescent self-confidence associated with authoritarian parenting decreases over time. These findings reiterate the benefits of authoritative parenting over authoritarian parenting throughout young adulthood. The present study investigated whether that childhood experience, particularly parental influence, has lasting effects in young adulthood.

#### Locus of Control Orientation

*Social Learning Theory.* According to social learning theory, a reinforcement acts to strengthen an expectancy that a particular behavior or event will be followed by a reinforcement in the future. Once a behavior/reinforcement expectancy is firmly

established, the failure of a reinforcement to occur can reduce or extinguish the expectancy over time. Another corollary of social learning theory is that when a reinforcement is not perceived to be the result of an individual's behavior, then its occurrence will not increase an expectancy as much as when it is seen to be contingent. Depending on the individual's history of reinforcement, individuals differ in the degree to which they attribute reinforcements to their own actions (Rotter, 1966).

Rotter (1954) developed social learning theory during a time when the dominant perspective in clinical psychology was Freudian psychoanalysis, which focused on an individual's instinctual motives as determinants of behavior. Individuals were thought to be unaware of their unconscious impulses. Treatment of psychopathology required long-term analysis of childhood experience. Learning approaches at the time were dominated by drive theory, which held that people are motivated by physiologically based impulses pressing for their gratification. Recognized as a paradigm shift, Rotter (1954) departed from instinct-based psychoanalysis and drive-based behaviorism. He combined behaviorism and the study of personality, while dispensing with physiological instincts or drives as a motive force.

Rotter's social learning theory assumed that personality results from an interaction between the individual and his or her environment. The theory precluded the referencing of a stable personality that is independent of the environment. Rotter forbade describing a behavior as an automatic response to an objective set of environmental stimuli. Rather, to understand behavior, he argued that one must take both the individual and the environment into account. Rotter described personality as a relatively stable set of potentials for responding to situations in a particular way (Rotter, 1954).

Rotter (1960) identified four components of his social learning model of behavior. These components are behavior potential, expectancy, reinforcement value, and the psychological situation.

- 1) *Behavior Potential* is the likelihood of engaging in a particular behavior in a specific situation. In other words, what is the probability that the person will exhibit a particular behavior in a situation? In any context, there are multiple behaviors in which one can engage. For each possible behavior, there is a behavioral potential. The individual will exhibit whichever behavior has the highest potential.
- 2) *Expectancy* is the subjective probability that a given behavior will lead to a particular outcome, or reinforcer. Having high expectancies means an individual is confident the behavior will result in the outcome. Having low expectancies means that an individual believes it is unlikely that his or her behavior will result in reinforcement. If two or more outcomes are equally desirable, an individual will engage in the behavior that has the highest expectancy. Expectancies are formed based on past experience. The more often a behavior has led to reinforcement in the past, the stronger the person's expectancy that the behavior will achieve that outcome in the future.
- 3) *Reinforcement Value* refers to the desirability of a behavioral outcome. Things coveted by the organism have reinforcement value. Conversely, things that are noxious are low in reinforcement value. If the likelihood of achieving reinforcement is the same for two or more behaviors having equal expectancies, the one with the greatest reinforcement value will prevail. Reinforcement value is

subjective. The same event or experience has different desirability to different individuals. For example, punishment from a parent would be negatively reinforcing to most children, and something to be avoided. However, children who get little positive attention from parents can seek out parental punishment because it has a higher reinforcement value than neglect.

- 4) *Psychological Situation* implies that the context of behavior is important. The manner in which an individual perceives the situation can affect both reinforcement value and expectancy. It is an individual's subjective interpretation of the environment, rather than an objective array of stimuli, that is meaningful to him or her, and subsequently determines behavior.

Rotter (1960) developed a conceptual formula based on these four constructs.

Behavior Potential (BP), Expectancy (E) and Reinforcement Value (RV) are combined as follows:

$$BP = f(E \& RV)$$

This formula is read as follows: behavior potential is a function of expectancy and reinforcement value. The likelihood that a given behavior will occur in a given situation is a function of the individual's subjective expectation about the outcome of his or her behavior and how important a particular reinforcement is to the individual. If expectancy and reinforcement value are both high, then behavior potential will be high. None of the formula's components are to be translated into exact empirical referents. Rather, they provide a heuristic function.

Beliefs about causality and control impact behavior in significant and important ways. One of the most powerful of these is the expectancy for internal versus external

locus of control of reinforcement (Rotter, 1966; Strickland, 1989); this construct is one of the most studied dimensions of personality (Rotter, 1990). Internal control is defined as the degree to which people generally perceive that reinforcements or outcomes of their lives are contingent on their own behavior or personal characteristics. External control refers to the degree to which people generally expect that life events or outcomes are a function of chance, luck, fate, the will of powerful others, or other causes beyond their control. Such biases in perceptions of personal agency generalize across situations (Rotter, 1966). Individuals are selective in what aspects of their behavior are strengthened, depending on their perception of the situation.

This locus of control dimension is considered an aspect of personality because it is stable and is pervasive in its influence. Rotter (1966) posited that an individual's tendency to view events from an internal locus of control could be explained from a social learning theory standpoint. The totality of specific learning experiences create a generalized expectancy about whether reinforcement is internally or externally controlled based on one's reinforcement history.

*Review of Locus of Control Literature.* As noted above, loci of control are the internal-external (I-E) beliefs (generalized expectancies) that reflect consistent individual differences regarding the degree to which one perceives contingencies between his or her behavior and subsequent events. Rotter (1966) developed a reliable and valid survey of an individual's locus of control orientation called the I-E Scale, which is still in use today. The I-E Scale predicts outcomes, such as the susceptibility to gambling, hospitalization, smoking, persuasion, one's achievement motivation, and tendency to conform (Hock, 1999).

The earliest work on this construct focused on how individuals with different I-E beliefs would respond to outside influence or control. For example, Crown and Liverant (1963) investigated this construct. Their findings suggested that individuals with an internal locus of control were significantly less conforming and more independent than those with an external locus of control. Traits such as independence and resistance to influence have obvious societal implications. For example, prisoners with an internal locus of control were significantly more likely than prisoners with an external locus to have known about, learned, and recalled salient information about prison regulations and opportunities for release (Seeman, 1963), presumably because they felt they could influence their futures. Similarly, research findings of Seeman and Evans (1965) suggested that tubercular patients with an internal focus knew more about their physical condition, asked more questions of physicians and nurses, and were less satisfied with the information they were receiving from hospital personnel. Levy (1985) found those patients who have an internal locus of control also have a "fighting spirit," and make adaptive responses to breast cancer.

Despite extensive research, there have been relatively few studies that have examined the relationship between locus of control and parenting styles in college students. However, a review of the literature suggests that parental behaviors and locus of control may be related (Hock, 1999). In another review, an internal locus was associated with consistency of discipline, frequent use of positive reinforcement, and balanced autonomy for children (Krampen, 1989). Granting autonomy is related to a family's mutual affection, openness, and expression of differences (Grotevant & Cooper, 1986).

Parenting styles were suggested by Rotter (1966) as a likely source of the development of locus of control. He speculated that parents who administer rewards to their children in unpredictable and inconsistent ways encourage the development of an external locus of control. From an intuitive standpoint, one would expect that predictability of reward might foster the development of a specific control orientation in children. Parents who are more contingently responsive provide the child with more occasions to control reinforcement. Authoritarian parents may not allow enough room for a child to control his or her environment. Permissive parents, who are less intrusive and protective, allow children to experience natural consequences for their behavior. However, since behavior is not reinforced or punished in a consistent manner, a child may be more likely to develop an external locus of control. Authoritative parenting would seem to provide the child with opportunity to develop new skills and to explore and manipulate the environment, which should foster an internal locus of control.

Such speculation has been supported in a number of studies. Diethelm (1991) investigated the impact of parenting behavioral patterns on locus of control. The findings indicated parents who are consistently and contingently responsive to their children have offspring with a more internalized locus of control. Davis and Phares (1969) found that inconsistent parental behavior during a family decision-making task is associated with an external locus of control. Similarly, Skinner (1986) confirmed a correlation between high parental contingency and an internal locus of control in children.

Gordon and colleagues (1981) demonstrated that parents who provide more opportunity for autonomy and independence and who encourage the development of new skills foster internal locus of control in their children. Sixty second-graders and their

mothers were observed attempting to solve a difficult puzzle. Mothers and children were allowed 25 minutes to complete this puzzle. They were videotaped and the investigators found that mothers of internally controlled children were warmer, offered less criticism, and were more willing to allow the child to work independently than were mothers of children externally controlled. The mothers of children with an external focus tended to interfere and criticize. These results again emphasize the importance of positive parental interaction for developing an internal locus of control orientation in children.

Chorpita and Barlow (1998) recently reviewed evidence on the potential importance of parenting styles in the development of a sense of an internalized sense of control in children. The results support two propositions. First, parents who provide contingent support foster an internal sense of control. This is accomplished by providing children with more opportunities to exercise control over their environment as when parents provide attention, food, and other necessities early in life in a consistent and predictable manner based on a child's good behavior. Second, parents who are less protective and intrusive and provide their children with opportunities to explore the world encourage the development of skills to cope with unanticipated contingencies. By encouraging these opportunities, children develop a sense of control (Chorpita & Barlow, 1998). Additionally, Chorpita and Barlow (1998) posited that locus of control acts as a moderator between parental influence and the development of anxiety in children.

Parenting style influences control orientation in junior high students. McClun and Merrill (1998) observed that authoritarian and permissive parents produced offspring with external locus of control; an authoritative style was linked to an internal locus of control. Trusty and Lampe (1997) examined high school seniors' perceptions of parental

involvement in their lives, seniors' perceptions of parents' control over their lives, and the relationship of these to the students' locus of control orientation. Parental involvement and parental control were found to be predictors of adolescents' locus of control. Parental control coupled with parental involvement were found to be related to internal locus of control, while control without involvement was related to external locus of control. This study supports the view that security derived from parental involvement and control fosters adolescent self-regulation. Again, there is a need to see if these findings generalize to college students.

Parenting styles relate to feelings of security in children. Children of authoritative parents are the most secure (Baumrind, 1977). Black and McCartney (1997) examined the association between security with parents and the quality of interactions between adolescent best friends. Females between the ages of 15 and 18 were videotaped while discussing unresolved problems each adolescent had experienced in her life. Security with parents and peers, self-esteem, and locus of control orientation were assessed. Girls high in security with respect to their parents had higher positive interaction scores in the videotaped task, higher self-esteem, and higher internality scores than those low in security. These data suggest that security with parents, which has been linked to parenting styles, may contribute to the development of control orientation.

Like many aspects of adolescent development, locus of control is influenced by a number of factors including both interpersonal relationships and environmental variables. In adolescence, locus of control is related to perceptions of power and autonomy, achievement, social involvement, and competence (Weisz, Weiss, Wasserman, & Rintoul, 1987; Mowbray, 1980). Kopera-Frye, Saltz, Jones, and Dixon (1991) suggest

that the quality of the relationship an adolescent has with his or her primary caretaker influences locus of control orientation.

Locus of control has been found to moderate coping with life stressors. For instance, in a study conducted by Porter and Long (1999), locus of control was investigated in adult victims of childhood sexual abuse. No differences in locus of control were observed between victims and non-victims, and no relationship was observed between a woman's perception of control over the victimization experience and her later locus of control. However, locus of control and victimization status interacted in predicting women's symptom severity as well as problems such as depression, anxiety, and hostility. Women with a severe abuse history and an internal locus of control reported lower levels of distress. An internal locus of control is associated with more direct coping efforts and fewer attempts at suppression (Parkes, 1984).

The current study will examine the social influences of parental warmth and responsiveness on participant's locus of control orientation. This study will address the following issue: Is an individual's locus of control orientation influenced by the type of perceived parenting style he or she receives? It is important to consider not only the effects of positive parenting on an individual's control expectancy, but also the effects of negative parenting as well. Consider the individual who has survived traumatic or abusive childhood events, and yet, leads a productive, healthy adult life. It is important to explore the personality characteristics that may moderate the impact of negative childhood events, one of which may be locus of control orientation. This study will examine the moderating effects of locus of control orientation on the relationship between parenting styles and psychosocial success.

## Hypotheses

The research reviewed above demonstrates that parenting styles influence locus of control orientation. This study posited that authoritative parenting fosters the development of an internal locus of control in college students. This development is accomplished by providing them, as children, the opportunity to learn new skills and to explore and manipulate the environment. Authoritarian and permissive parenting infrequently allow for such opportunities and tend to foster an external locus of control.

Research has additionally demonstrated that parenting styles are significantly associated with adolescent functioning (Lamborn et al., 1991). Authoritative parenting provides the framework for Erikson's healthy resolutions, particularly in the first five stages. In the first stage of trust versus mistrust, the virtue of hope is achieved when infants develop a secure attachment. In the second stage of autonomy versus shame and doubt, authoritative parents clearly set limits and rules conducive to self-expression, allowing the virtue of purpose to be attained. In the third stage, authoritative parenting encourages initiative and promotes purpose and goal-directedness (Baumrind, 1973). In the fourth stage, authoritative parents have confidence in the child's ability and perceive the abilities as accurately as possible (Macoby, 1994), allowing for the attainment of competence. In the identity versus role confusion stage, the influence of authoritative parenting may help the adolescent in his or her quest in becoming true to one's own belief system within the context of others by offering the optimal balance of responsiveness and demandingness that fosters successful completion of the previous stages (Lamborn et al., 1991).

Social learning theory posits that psychological functioning is the product of more than just environmental influences. The locus of control construct helps to explain the interaction between situation constraints, personal values, and expectancies. Locus of control orientation can serve as a buffer between negative parental influences on psychosocial development. In light of these findings, a new model demonstrating the relationship of parenting styles, locus of control, and psychosocial success is proposed. This model of psychosocial development is an active relationship process between parenting style processes and the moderating influence of locus of control. An adolescent may have had the misfortune of non-optimal parenting, but an internal locus of control may buffer those negative influences and allow successful psychosocial development.

The following hypotheses were tested to illuminate the relationships between perceived parenting styles, psychosocial development, and locus of control orientation.

*Hypothesis One*

- a) Perceived maternal authoritative parenting will be associated with higher resolution of psychosocial development.
- b) Perceived paternal authoritative parenting will be associated with higher resolution of psychosocial development.

*Hypothesis Two*

- a) Perceived maternal permissive parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.
- b) Perceived paternal permissive parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.

*Hypothesis Three*

- a) Perceived maternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.
- b) Perceived paternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.

*Hypothesis Four*

- a) Perceived maternal authoritative parenting will be associated with internal locus of control orientation.
- b) Perceived paternal authoritative parenting will be associated with internal locus of control orientation.

*Hypothesis Five*

- a) Perceived maternal permissive parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.
- b) Perceived paternal permissive parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.

*Hypothesis Six*

- a) Perceived maternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.
- b) Perceived paternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.

*Hypothesis Seven*

- a) Locus of control orientation will moderate the relationship between maternal perceived parenting styles and psychosocial success.

- b) Locus of control orientation will moderate the relationship between paternal perceived parenting styles and psychosocial success.

## CHAPTER 2

### Method

#### Participants

The participants were undergraduate college students enrolled in introductory psychology classes at Louisiana Tech University. Approximately 335 participants were recruited to complete surveys. The sample included equal numbering of males and females of differing races and ethnicity. Participation was voluntary; extra credit was given for completion of the packet. Those students desiring not to participate were given an alternative extra credit assignment. The study obtained approval from the university's internal review board. A consent form was signed by each individual and all collected information is held confidential and only viewed by the researcher.

#### Instrumentation

##### *Demographic Survey*

The demographic survey (Appendix B) contains information requesting age, gender, race, college status, and household information. Instructions were provided that requested the participant to specify whether he was parented by two biological parents, single parent, step-parent, or other (i.e. foster parents, adoptive parents, relative).

##### *Parental Authority Questionnaire*

Buri (1991) and Buri, Louiselle, Misukanis, and Mueller (1988) designed a 30-item scale, the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) (Appendix C). This instrument

assesses Baumrind's (1971) constructs of permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles. Items are written from the perspective of the child; thus, an authoritative item concerning the child's mother reads "My mother has always encouraged verbal give-and-take whenever I have felt that family rules and restrictions were unreasonable." There is a 30-item scale to evaluate the authority of the father and a 30-item scale to evaluate the authority of the mother. Responses to each of these items are made on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Thus, the PAQ yields six separate scores for each participant: mother's permissiveness, mother's authoritarianism, mother's authoritative, father's permissiveness, father's authoritarianism, and father's authoritative. Scores on each of these variables can range from 10 to 50; the higher the score, the greater the appraised level of the parental authority prototype measured (Buri, 1991). For the purpose of this study, the highest score determined classification into one of three types of parenting for each parent.

In a college sample (Buri, 1991), the mean score for mother's permissiveness was 25.43; mother's authoritarianism was 26.69; and mother's authoritative was 23.01. The mean score for father's permissiveness was 25.12; father's authoritarianism was 28.74; and father's authoritative was 35.56.

Test-retest reliability (over a two week period) yielded these reliability coefficients: .81 for mother's permissiveness, .86 for mother's authoritarianism, .78 for mother's authoritative, .85 for father's permissiveness, .85 for father's authoritarianism, and .92 for father's authoritative. Internal consistency criterion for each of the six PAQ scales are: .75 for mother's permissiveness, .85 for mother's authoritarianism, .82 for mother's authoritative, .74 for father's permissiveness, .87

for father's authoritarianism, .82 for father's authoritativeness. Both the test-retest reliability coefficients and the Cronbach alpha values are adequate, especially in view of the fact that there are only 10 items per scale (Buri, 1991).

To establish discriminant validity for the PAQ, Buri (1991) tested 127 college students. Divergent validity was shown in the responses of the 127 participants. Mother's authoritarianism was inversely related to mother's permissiveness ( $r = -.38, p < .0005$ ) and to mother's authoritativeness ( $r = -.48, p < .0005$ ). Similarly, father's authoritarianism was inversely related to father's permissiveness ( $r = -.50, p < .0005$ ) and to father's authoritativeness ( $r = -.52, p < .0005$ ). Additionally, mother's permissiveness was not significantly related to mother's authoritativeness ( $r = .07, p > .10$ ), and father's permissiveness was not significantly related to father's authoritativeness ( $r = .12, p > .10$ ) (Buri, 1991).

Criterion-related validity was tested by the completion of the PAQ with the Parental Nurturance Scale (Buri, 1991). The following Pearson correlations between the PAQ scores and the Parental Nurturance Scale scores were obtained from 127 undergraduates tested: The authoritative parents were found to be highest in parental nurturance for both mothers ( $r = .56, p < .0005$ ) and fathers ( $r = .68, p < .0005$ ); authoritarian parenting was inversely related to nurturance for both mothers ( $r = -.36, p < .0005$ ) and for fathers ( $r = -.53, p < .0005$ ); and parental permissiveness was unrelated to nurturance for both mothers ( $r = .04, p > .10$ ) and fathers ( $r = .13, p > .10$ ). These results confirmed that parental warmth is a dimension of parental authority that is inherent in the PAQ measurement (Buri, 1991).

*Measures of Psychosocial Development Scale*

The Measures of Psychosocial Development (MPD) was used to assess the participants' level of successful task attainment in his or her psychosocial development. The MPD is a self-report instrument that is based on Erikson's theory of personality development. It is designed to measure the degree to which the resolution of each of the eight stages of development has been reached. It consists of 112 self-descriptive, Likert-type statements that make up 27 scales: eight positive, eight negative, and eight resolution scales, as well as three total scale scores. The 16 positive and negative scales measure the positive and negative attitudes associated with each psychosocial stage of development. The resolution scales reflect the status of conflict resolution for each of the eight psychosocial stages (Hawley, 1988).

The three total scales (total positive, total negative, and total resolution) assess overall psychosocial adjustment. To calculate resolution scale scores, the raw score for each negative scale is subtracted from the raw score for its corresponding positive scale. High positive scores indicate a high positive resolution of that stage. High negative scores indicate a high negative resolution of that stage. An individual who has successfully resolved the conflicts of each stage would obtain high scores on the positive scales and low scores on the negative scales. The corresponding profile of resolution scores for the individual would be uniformly high (Hawley, 1988).

The MPD takes approximately 20 minutes to complete, and scoring is conducted by summing responses for items on each of the scales (Hawley, 1988). Of the 27 scales, 18 were used in this study. These scales reflected the first five stages of development: trust resolution scale, autonomy resolution scale, initiative resolution scale, industry

resolution scale, and the identity resolution scale. A total resolution score of these first five stages determined the participant's overall psychosocial development, with the higher score indicating more successful development.

Internal consistency reliability of this measure was assessed, using alpha coefficients, on a sample of 372 individuals (Hawley, 1988). The implicit theory behind the construction of theory-based tests is that individual items tap some small aspect of the trait the scale is designed to measure. Only two scales failed alphas of .70 or more, and this instrument has acceptable internal consistency, particularly since coefficient alpha provides a conservative estimate of reliability. The alpha coefficients for the scales were as follows: trust scales were .65 to .72, autonomy scales were .78 to .72, initiative scales were .77 to .69, industry scales were .84 to .70, identity scales were .73 to .83, and for the intimacy scales, the alpha coefficients were .70 to .76. (Hawley, 1988).

The test-retest reliability coefficients were assessed on a sample of 108 adolescents and adults who completed the MPD twice (with an interval of 2 to 13 weeks between administrations). The coefficients were ranged as follows: .75 to .77 for the trust scales, .79 to .76 for the autonomy scales, .85 to .78 for the initiative scales, .84 to .67 for the industry scales, .82 to .91 for the identity scales and .72 to .82 for the intimacy scales. The scale coefficients approach or exceed .80, with the exception of inferiority scale, which is still at an acceptable level of .67. (Hawley, 1988). Overall, the MPD test-retest coefficients are adequate for a personality measure.

The construct validity of the MPD was assessed by administration of three self-report measures of Erikson's theory of personality development to samples ranging in size from 136 to 372 (Hawley, 1988). The three measures administered were the MPD,

the Inventory of Psychosocial Development (IPD; Constantinople, 1969), and the Self-Descriptive Questionnaire (SDQ; Boyd, 1966). A multitrait-multimethod matrix design was used to guide the investigation of construct validity. The data from the study exhibited consistent evidence for convergent validity in monomethod, heteromethod, and cross-method blocks.

### *Locus of Control Scale*

For the evaluation of the locus of control, the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E; Rotter, 1966) was administered (Appendix D). While a number of scales have been developed to study locus of control, Rotter's (1966) scale dominates the literature (Calderone, Hey, & Seabert, 2001). Internal-external (I-E) locus of control is hypothesized to be a bipolar construct. The Rotter scale is designed to show whether or not an individual believes that control in learning situations is the result of his own behavior or the result of other forces such as luck, chance, or a controlling person. The locus is internal if a person perceives events to be contingent upon his or her own behavior; the locus is external when events are perceived to be contingent upon luck, fate, the control of others, the environment, or anything else not under his/her control (Marsh and Richards, 1986).

The I-E is a 29-item forced-choice test, with 6 filler items, designed to assess externality or the perception that events are unrelated to the individual's behavior and therefore beyond personal control. The lower the score the more internally controlled the subject and vice versa; the median score is 8.15. Higher scores represent a higher degree of externality. Rotter (1966) reported an internal consistency of .71, and a 4-week retest reliability of .72. These results indicate a satisfactory reliability for the scale. Rotter

(1966) also stated that there is sufficient evidence for both construct and discriminant validity for the instrument. A validity study by Cardi (1968) showed a significant correlation between IE scores and clinical interview ratings of Locus of Control. This scale has been shown to have satisfactory internal reliability, to be test-retest reliable in the absence of treatment, and to be independent of age, sex and social desirability (Lefcourt, 1976; Wallston & Wallston, 1978).

#### *Measure of Social Desirability*

Social desirability is defined as the tendency for participants to respond in a self-enhancing manner (Wiggins, 1973). In his review of the literature on the measurement and control of social desirability bias, Nederhorf (1985) noted that social desirability is one of the most common sources of bias affecting the validity of survey research findings. The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS) is a 33-item true/false questionnaire that was designed to measure the tendency to endorse items that are considered to be conventional or socially desirable (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The MCSDS has been used extensively in personality research as an adjunct measure to assess the impact of social desirability on self-report measures. The original MCSDS consisted of 33 true-false items and was developed as an alternative measure to more clinically based scales of social desirability, such as the Edwards Social Desirability Scale, and scales *L* (Lie), *F* (Frequency), and *K* (Correction) of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Butcher, Dahlstrom, Graham, Tellegen, & Kaemmer, 1989). The MCSDS is intended to measure social desirability in terms of the need of participants to respond to self-reports in a culturally sanctioned way (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).

A 13-item short form was used in the present study (see Appendix F). Sample items are "I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me" and "I sometimes try to get even rather than to forgive and forget." Scale scores were based on total number of responses in the socially desirable direction. This 13-item composite subscale has a reliability of .70, which is only .05 less than that for the full scale (Ballard, 1992). Crowne and Marlowe's dichotomous response format was preserved because it is theory based.

### Procedures

The participants were undergraduate volunteers from introductory psychology classes at Louisiana Tech University. Appropriate approval was obtained from the university's internal review board (IRB) before the study was initiated (Appendix A). Informed consent was obtained (Appendix E) from the volunteers. Instructors apprised participants that the purpose of the study was to investigate family factors that are believed to influence certain aspects of personality development. Four measures were administered and one demographic survey. The participants received the following instructions: a) there are no right and wrong answers and therefore they should respond to each item as honestly as possible, b) not to spend too much time on any one item as the researchers are interested in their first reaction to each statement, and c) answer each item in the questionnaires.

### Analyses of Data

#### *Descriptive Statistics*

The means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations for the demographic variables, parenting styles, and the outcome variables were conducted, presented, and

discussed. All variables were examined for gender differences. Since no differences were found, the data were collapsed into one data set. Cronbach alphas were generated for the scales. Pearson Rs were calculated for the Social Desirability Scale scores and all other measures.

#### *Hypotheses One – Three*

The first analysis examined whether there are differences between the three levels of parenting styles and total psychosocial resolution of the first five stages. This difference was measured by analysis of variance (ANOVA), which compared the means of the two independent groups. The independent variable included three levels of parenting: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. Psychosocial development was determined by the total resolution score for the first five stages of the MPD. If a statistical significant difference in means was found, Tukey's post-hoc analysis was employed to identify which group means were significantly different.

#### *Hypotheses Four – Six*

The second analysis examined the three levels of parenting and locus of control development. This difference was also measured by analysis of variance (ANOVA). Again, the independent variable was three levels of parenting and the dependent variable was the score on the I-E scale. If indicated, Tukey's post-hoc analyses were conducted to identify which group means were significantly different.

#### *Hypothesis Seven*

The effect of locus of control as a moderator variable was assessed using hierarchical regression analysis. Demographic variables were first blocked against the components of psychosocial development. The effects of parenting style were then

blocked against the components of psychosocial development. Next, locus of control was blocked against the components of psychosocial development. Lastly, the interaction between parenting styles and locus of control orientation was entered. If the interaction added significant incremental variance, then the locus of control construct was found to be moderating the effects of parenting styles on psychosocial development (Bobko & Russell, 1991). To reduce possible multicollinearity among predictor variables, variables were standardized prior to use in regression analyses (Cohen & Cohen, 1983; Jaccard, Turrisi, & Wan, 1990). Additionally, prior to regression analysis, intercorrelations of the demographic, parenting styles, and locus of control variables were examined to ensure that problems of multicollinearity were not present.

## CHAPTER 3

### Results

The present study investigated the relationships among perceived parenting styles, locus of control orientation, and psychosocial development. Data came from four instruments and one demographic survey. SPSS program for Windows (1998) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive data and statistical analyses, organized in order of the research hypotheses, are presented.

#### Demographic Data

The demographic survey contained information regarding gender, age, race, college status, and household composition. Three hundred thirty-four undergraduate students participated in the study. The sample consisted of 165 males (49.4%) and 169 females (50.6%), and ages ranged between 18-23 years in all four undergraduate classes. College freshmen numbered 228, representing 68.3% of the sample. Sixty-five participants (19.5%) were college sophomores, 33 participants (9.9%) were juniors, and eight participants (2.4%) were college seniors. The average age of participants was 18.67 with a standard deviation of 2.62. Five ethnic categories were represented in the sample: 264 Caucasians (79%), 50 African Americans (15%), 12 Asian/Pacific Islanders (3.6%), six Hispanic/Latinos (1.8%), and one Native American (.3%). One participant (.3%) was identified as "other".

Parental household composition was comprised of 267 participants (79.7%) from a two-parent home of biological or adoptive parents; 36 (10.8%) were parented by single

parents; 26 (7.8%) were parented by a biological parent and a step-parent; and three participants (.9%) were classified as “other”, and were parented by relatives and foster parents. Number of children in family ranged from one to 13; the mean number of siblings was 2.55.

Demographic characteristics, including frequencies, distributions, and percentiles, are presented in Table 1. Means and standard deviations for the participant’s age and number of siblings in household are also presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

*Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Data*

Variable	N	%
<b>College Status</b>		
Freshman	228	68.3
Sophomore	65	19.5
Junior	33	9.9
Senior	8	2.4
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	169	50.6
Male	165	49.4
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Caucasian	264	79.0
African-American	50	15.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	12	3.6
Hispanic/Latino	6	1.8
Native American	1	.3
<b>Parental Household Composition</b>		
Two biological/adoptive parents	267	79.9
A single parent	36	10.8
Biological parent and step-parent	26	7.8
Other	3	.9

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Average age of participants:	18.67	2.62
Average number of siblings:	2.55	1.49

### Descriptive Statistics

Gender differences were not observed in any of the psychological variables.

Consequently, the data were collapsed into one data set. Table 2 reports the correlations between gender (dummy coded 0 = male and 1 = female) and the outcome variables.

Table 2.

#### *Gender Correlations*

		MPD	Locus of Control	PAQ- father	PAQ mother	Social Desirability
<u>Pearson Correlation</u>	<u>Gender</u>	.065	-.062	.075	.09	.080
<u>Sig. (2-tailed)</u>	<u>Gender</u>	.240	.442	.196	.196	.710
<u>N</u>	<u>Gender</u>	334	334	296	318	334

#### Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)

Perceived parenting styles were measured by the PAQ (Buri, 1991). Frequencies, sample means, and standard deviations for each measure of parenting style (i.e., maternal authoritarianism, authoritativeness, and permissiveness; paternal authoritarianism, authoritativeness, and permissiveness) were calculated. Raw scores were used to classify subjects into one of three parenting classifications for descriptive information (McClun & Merrill, 1998). The raw scores for each of the six parenting domains were used for correlation and regression analyses. Sixty-nine of the participants' parenting style data

(31 of the maternal data; 38 for paternal data) were excluded or missing for one of two reasons: they had tying scores on the PAQ, and thus, could not be categorized or else the participant only reported data for one parent.

The data from the present study were similar to data from the normative samples for the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991). Means and standard deviations for the PAQ are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

*Mean Scores Comparison*

	Current Sample Mean PAQ Score	SD	Normative Sample Mean PAQ Score	SD
Maternal Authoritativeness	35.62	6.51	35.43	4.87
Maternal Authoritarianism	33.25	6.81	26.69	7.12
Maternal Permissiveness	23.68	5.79	25.43	5.60
Paternal Authoritativeness	34.06	6.84	35.56	6.57
Paternal Authoritarianism	33.31	7.41	28.74	7.90
Paternal Permissiveness	22.94	5.62	25.12	5.39

For both the maternal and paternal parenting style, the majority of the participants (56.6% for maternal and 52.4% for paternal) perceived their parents as having an authoritative parenting style. The maternal authoritarian style was represented by 124 participants (37.1%) and the maternal permissive parenting style was represented by 15

participants (4.5%). One hundred twenty-eight participants (43.3%) were classified in the perceived paternal authoritarian parenting style, while 13 participants (3.9%) were classified in the paternal permissive style. Overall, there was a larger percentage of authoritarian parenting represented by fathers. Item analyses of the 10 questions representing each parenting style on the PAQ demonstrated that authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles had Cronbach Alpha's ranging from .66 to .85. These coefficients would be considered adequate internal consistency reliability (Buri, 1991).

#### Locus of Control: I-E Scale

Locus of control orientation was measured by Rotter's (1966) I-E Scale. Descriptive analyses for locus of control orientation revealed a sample mean higher than the normative mean of 8.95 (Rotter, 1966) with a sample mean of 10.33 and a standard deviation of 3.72. Lower scores on the instrument represent an internal locus of control. A Cronbach alpha of .82 suggests that there was adequate internal consistency reliability.

#### Measures of Psychosocial Development (MPD)

The Measures of Psychosocial Development (MPD) assessed psychosocial task resolution. Of 27 scales on the MPD, 18 were utilized, representing the first five stages of development. A total resolution score of these first five stages determined the participant's overall psychosocial development. Higher scores indicate more successful development. The scores ranged from -69 to 116, with the mean of 40.94 and the standard deviation of 31.34. A Cronbach alpha coefficient of .75 indicates adequate internal consistency reliability for the MPD (Hawley, 1988).

### Revised Version of Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale

Social desirability was measured using a revised version of Marlowe-Crown's Social Desirability Scale, with a mean of 5.69 and the standard deviation of 2.71. The Cronbach alpha of .67 is adequate internal consistency (Ballard, 1992).

Descriptive statistics for all three questionnaire responses are presented in Table 4, including the means, standard deviations, and coefficient alphas for each scale.

Table 4.

*Descriptive Statistics for Parenting Styles, Locus of Control Orientation, Psychosocial Development, and Social Desirability*

Variable	N		
<b>Parenting Style—Maternal</b>			
Authoritative	179	56.6	
Authoritarian	124	37.1	
Permissive	15	4.5	
<b>Parenting Style—Paternal</b>			
Authoritative	155	52.4	
Authoritarian	128	43.3	
Permissive	13	3.9	
Variable	Mean	SD	Alpha
<b>Parenting Style—Maternal</b>			.79
Authoritative	35.62	6.54	.70
Authoritarian	33.25	6.81	.72
Permissive	23.68	5.79	.68
<b>Parenting Style—Paternal</b>			.85
Authoritative	34.06	6.84	.70
Authoritarian	33.31	7.41	.68
Permissive	22.94	5.62	.66
Locus of Control	10.33	3.72	.82
Measures of Psychosocial Development	40.94	31.24	.75
Social Desirability	5.69	2.71	.67

Table 5 presents Pearson product-moment correlations between all the variables. The only significant correlation with the demographic variables was between age and MPD ( $r = .13$ ). The negative correlation of  $-.44$  between paternal permissive and paternal authoritarian was expected (Buri, 1991). The other significant correlations occurred between the corresponding parenting styles (i.e. maternal authoritarian and paternal authoritarian =  $.45$ ) and between locus of control and the MPD ( $r = -.24$ ).

There were no significant relations found between race and other variables, with the exception of social desirability. There is mixed evidence concerning the validity of parenting constructs across ethnic groups (Strage, 1999). Several studies have concluded that parenting styles may foster different outcomes across ethnicities (e.g., Chao, 1996). It was not the intention of this study to focus centrally on ethnicity in the analyses, but it is noteworthy that no correlations were found.

Table 5.

*Correlations Among Variables*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Age	—											
2. Gender	.00	—										
3. Race	-.06	-.05	—									
4. Paternal Authoritative	-.04	.03	.06	—								
5. Paternal Authoritarian	.15*	-.10	.09	-.20*	—							
6. Paternal Permissive	-.02	.00	.00	.13*	-.44*	—						
7. Locus of Control	-.01	-.08	-.02	-.13*	.10	.05	—					
8. Maternal Authoritative	.03	.04	.07	.31*	-.02	.03	-.29*	—				
9. Maternal Authoritarian	.00	-.04	.00	-.02	.43*	-.11*	.21*	.37*	—			
10. Maternal Permissive	-.05	-.05	.01	-.06	-.08	.45*	-.03	.08	-.37*	—		
11. MPD	.13*	.08	-.02	.26*	-.01	-.06	-.24*	.25*	-.06	-.09	—	
12. Social desirability	.01	.04	-.18*	.11*	-.08	.09	-.17*	.04	-.04	.05	.26*	—

\*  $p < .05$

## Statistical Analyses

### *Hypotheses One - Three*

The first research questions examined the differences among group means as a function of parenting styles and total psychosocial resolution of the first five stages of psychosocial development. The first research questions posited that perceived authoritative parenting (maternal and paternal) will have a greater influence on psychosocial development than either perceived authoritarian or perceived permissive parenting styles. Specifically, hypotheses one through three state:

- 1a) Perceived maternal authoritative parenting will be associated with higher resolution of psychosocial development.
- 1b) Perceived paternal authoritative parenting will be associated with higher resolution of psychosocial development.
- 2a) Perceived maternal permissive parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.
- 2b) Perceived paternal permissive parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.
- 3a) Perceived maternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.
- 3b) Perceived paternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with lower resolution of psychosocial development.

The differences between parenting style means were compared using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The independent variable, parenting styles, had three levels: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. The dependent variable was total

resolution of the first five stages of psychosocial development. Participants were classified into one of three parenting categories, separately for maternal and paternal, as determined by the category with the highest score on the PAQ. The total resolution score for the first five stages of the MPD determined psychosocial development. Results of the ANOVA,  $F(2, 315) = 7.45, p < .001$ , indicate a significant relationship between parenting styles and psychosocial development. Post-hoc analyses were conducted to specify the source of the significant test. The results of the ANOVA for maternal parenting styles (Hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 3a) are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.

*Analysis of Variance for Perceived Maternal Parenting Styles and Psychosocial Development*

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	p value
Between Groups	2	14077.9	7038.95	7.453	.001
Within Groups	315	297482.2	944.38		
Total	317	311560.1			

Tukey's post-hoc analyses revealed that hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 3a were supported; mean difference for maternal authoritative parenting was significant at the .001 level.

Those participants who perceive their mothers as authoritative scored significantly higher on the MPD ( $M = 46.9$ ) than those who perceive their mothers as either authoritarian ( $M = 33.54$ ) or permissive ( $M = 33.13$ ), and the latter two styles did not differ significantly from each other. Results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7.

*Post Hoc Analyses (1)*

MPD Total Resolution (first five stages)			
Mothers parenting style category	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
		1	2
Permissive Style	13	33.13	
Authoritarian Style	128	33.34	
Authoritative Style	155		46.90
Significance		NS	$p < .05$

The relation between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychosocial development were addressed using a one-way ANOVA. The results indicated a significant relationship,  $F(2, 293) = 4.83$ ,  $p < .009$ , and post-hoc analyses were conducted. The results of the ANOVA are presented in Table 8.

Table 8.

*Analysis of Variance for Perceived Paternal Parenting Styles and Psychosocial Development*

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	p value
Between Groups	2	9376.9	4688.44	4.83	.009
Within Groups	293	285114.6	973.09		
Total	295	294491.5			

A post-hoc Tukey test was computed in order to specify the sources of the significant test. Participants who perceive their father as authoritative had significantly higher scores on the MPD than those who perceived their father as authoritarian, who in turn achieved higher scores on the MPD than those who perceive their father as permissive. The differences in scores between permissive and authoritarian fathers were significant, as were the scores between authoritarian and authoritative and permissive and authoritative. The mean score for perceived authoritative parenting style was  $M = 45.45$ , indicating better resolution of psychosocial development. The perceived permissive style had the lowest score ( $M = 24.38$ ), with perceived authoritarian parenting scores following

with  $M = 36.35$ . Therefore, hypotheses 1b, 2b, and 3b are supported. The results of the post-hoc analyses are presented in Table 9.

Table 9.

*Post-Hoc Analyses (2)*

MPD Total Resolution (first five stages)			
Fathers parenting style category	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
		1	2
Permissive Style	13	24.28	
Authoritarian Style	128	36.35	36.35
Authoritative Style	155		45.45
Significance		$p < .05$	$p < .05$

*Hypotheses Four - Six*

The next research questions concern the effects of perceived parenting styles on locus of control orientation in college students. Specifically, the hypotheses are as follows:

- 4a) Perceived maternal authoritative parenting will be associated with an internal locus of control orientation.

4b) Perceived paternal authoritative parenting will be associated with an internal locus of control orientation.

5a) Perceived maternal permissive parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.

5b) Perceived paternal permissive parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.

6a) Perceived maternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.

6b) Perceived paternal authoritarian parenting will be associated with an external locus of control.

The independent variable for these analyses was perceived parenting style, with three categories: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive for maternal and paternal. The I-E Scale was used to measure the dependent variable, locus of control. On the I-E scale, higher scores indicated a more external locus of control. The results of the ANOVA indicated a significant relationship,  $F(2, 315) = 37.01, p < .000$ , and post-hoc analyses were conducted to specify the sources of significance. Results for the perceived maternal parenting style and locus of control are presented in Table 10.

Table 10.

*Analysis of Variance for Perceived Maternal Parenting Styles and Locus of Control Orientation*

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	p value
Between Groups	2	853.1	426.53	37.01	.000
Within Groups	315	3630.6	11.53		
Total	317	4483.7			

Using Tukey's analysis to locate the source of significant means, it was found that perceived maternal authoritative parenting was associated with lower I-E scores (internal locus of control) as compared with perceived authoritarian and permissive styles. Perceived permissive styles were associated with the highest scores, that is, the most external locus of control, but were not significantly different from the authoritarian style. A perceived permissive style was significantly different from an authoritative style, but not from an authoritarian style. Perceived authoritarian style had significantly higher scores than authoritative parenting styles. Rotter's (1966) normative mean for the I-E Scale is 8.95, and any score lower is by definition an internal locus of control. Scores higher are defined to be an external locus of control. Therefore, hypotheses 4a, 5a, and 6a were supported. Results of the post-hoc analyses are presented in Table 11.

Table 11.

*Post-Hoc Analyses (3)*

Locus of Control Orientation			
Mother's parenting style category	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
		1	2
Authoritative Style	179	8.82	
Authoritarian Style	124		12.08
Permissive Style	15		13.40
Significance		p < .001	NS

To test the effect of perceived paternal parenting styles on the locus of control orientation (hypotheses 4b, 5b, and 6b), a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results indicated no significant relationship between the two variables,  $F(2, 293) = 1.93$ ,  $p = .196$ . The results of the ANOVA are presented in Table 12.

Table 12.

*Analysis of Variance for Perceived Paternal Parenting Styles and Locus of Control Orientation*

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	p value
Between Groups	2	52.2	26.11	1.93	.196
Within Groups	293	3946.7	13.47		
Total	295	3998.9			

The analysis failed to find an effect of paternal perceived parenting styles on the locus of control orientation and thus, no post-hoc testing was conducted. The null hypotheses for hypotheses 4b, 5b, and 6b are retained.

*Hypothesis Seven*

The final research question concerns the moderating effect of locus of control orientation between perceived parenting styles and total task resolution of psychosocial development. Specifically, the hypotheses are as follows:

- 7a) Locus of control orientation will moderate the relationship between perceived maternal parenting styles and psychosocial task resolution.

7b) Locus of control orientation will moderate the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychosocial task resolution.

To assess the relative contributions of perceived parenting styles and locus of control and the possible moderating effect of locus of control on psychosocial development, hierarchical regressions were conducted for total task resolution of psychosocial development, which was the dependent variable. Separate regressions were conducted on maternal and paternal parenting styles. As recommended by Nunally and Bernstein (1994), psychosocial development was regressed onto a series of hierarchical blocks. The initial block consisted of dummy-coded demographic variables (gender, race, and parental household composition). The second block consisted of the three measures of perceived parenting styles (maternal authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive). The third block consisted of the total locus of control score. The final block tested the interaction effects by simultaneously entering all possible interaction terms between the three parenting types and locus of control.

In the initial step, the demographics were not significant,  $F(3, 311) = .964$ . The second step incrementally added maternal perceived parenting styles. That model was found to contribute significantly,  $F(6, 308) = 5.195, p < .0001$ , to the variance in psychosocial resolution beyond the effects of demographic variables. The examination of incremental variance in the second model indicated  $R^2$  of .083, which is an improvement over the .009 of the first model.

The standardized beta weights provide a means of assessing the relative contribution for each of the predictor variables on the dependent variable. Authoritative parenting was the strongest predictor among the maternal perceived parenting style

variables ( $B = .266, p < .05$ ). Permissive parenting was also a significant predictor ( $B = -.125, p < .05$ ), while authoritarian was not.

The third model determined the effect of locus of control on psychosocial development, while holding constant the factors previously entered. This model was significant,  $F(7, 307) = 6.09, p < .001$ , and the  $R^2 = .122$ , which is significantly larger than that of the previous two models. Standardized beta weights suggest that the strongest predictor was maternal authoritative parenting ( $B = .213$ ). The other two significant predictors were locus of control ( $B = -.187$ ) and permissive parenting style ( $B = -.119$ ).

Finally, the results of adding the interaction of parenting styles and locus of control also produced a significant model,  $F(3, 311) = 4.55, p < .001$ . The  $R^2 = .131$ , which is larger than the previous three models. Although there were no significant beta weights for the interaction terms, this model is significant in that it is answering a theoretical question involving a moderating effect rather than an empirical one.

Hypothesis 7a was supported; locus of control moderates the effect of maternal parenting style on psychosocial development. The results are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13.

*Hierarchical Regression for Psychosocial Development onto Demographics, Maternal Perceived Parenting Styles, Locus of Control, and Maternal Perceived Parenting Styles X Locus of Control (N = 314)*

	$r_a^2$	$\Delta^2$	B
Step 1—Demographics	.009	.009	
Gender			.062
Race			.069
Parental Household Composition			-.002
Step 2—Perceived Parenting Styles	.092	.083	
Maternal Authoritative			.266*
Maternal Authoritarian			-.051
Maternal Permissive			-.125*
Step 3—Locus of Control	.122	.030	-.187*
Step 4—Interaction of Maternal Perceived Parenting Styles X Locus of Control	.131	.090	
Maternal Authoritative x l of c			.519
Maternal Authoritarian x l of c			.031
Maternal Permissive x l of c			-.207

To assess the relative contributions of paternal parenting styles and locus of control and the possible moderating effect of locus of control on psychosocial development, hierarchical regressions were conducted for the dependent variable, total

task resolution of psychosocial development. The demographic variables were entered in the first step. Then the paternal perceived parenting style variables were entered into the equation. Next, the locus of control variable was added. Finally, the interaction terms (computed as a cross-product of predictors in the previous step: paternal perceived parenting styles x locus of control) were entered into the regression equation.

In the first step of the hierarchical regression, the demographic variables alone did not account for a significant amount of variance in psychosocial resolution. Step 2 added the incremental value of paternal perceived parenting styles. This model was significant,  $F(6, 285) = 5.28, p < .0001$ , with paternal authoritative style ( $B = .289$ ) being the only significant predictor.

Adding the incremental value of locus of control to predict psychosocial development raised the  $R^2$  from .113 to .136, and model 3 was significant,  $F(7, 284) = 6.277, p < .0001$ . The largest predictor was paternal authoritative parenting ( $B = .266$ ), and the only other significant predictor was locus of control ( $B = -.188$ ).

To test for the moderating effect of locus of control on the relationship between paternal parenting styles and psychosocial development, the interaction between parenting style and locus of control was added. The  $R^2$  changed from .113 to .186. Again, this model was significant,  $F(10, 281) = 7.569, p < .0001$ . A significant interaction was present in paternal parenting styles. As predicted in hypothesis 7b, locus of control moderates the effect between paternal perceived parenting styles and locus of control orientation. Specifically, the significant predictors of this model are paternal authoritarian parenting style x locus of control ( $B = .667$ ) and paternal permissive parenting style x locus of control ( $B = -.700$ ). Participants who perceive their father as authoritarian or

permissive but who nonetheless have developed an internal locus of control have greater resolution of psychosocial development than those participants who perceive their father as authoritarian or permissive and have an external locus of control. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis supported. The results are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14.

*Hierarchical Regression for Psychosocial Development onto Demographics, Paternal Perceived Parenting Styles, Locus of Control, and Paternal Perceived Parenting Styles X Locus of Control (N = 291)*

	$r_a^2$	$\Delta^2$	B
Step 1—Demographics	.002	.012	
Gender			.083
Race			.072
Parental Household Composition			.005
Step 2—Perceived Parenting Styles	.081	.088	
Paternal Authoritative			.289*
Paternal Authoritarian			.033
Paternal Permissive			.357
Step 3—Locus of Control	.113	.034	-.188*
Step 4— Interaction of Paternal Perceived Parenting Styles X Locus of Control	.186	.055	
Paternal Authoritative x l of c			-.095
Paternal Authoritarian x l of c			.667*
Paternal Permissive x l of c			-.700*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Discussion

#### Summary of Research Problem

The effects of parenting styles on various outcomes in children have been extensively examined in the literature (e.g., Baumrind, 1989, Maccoby & Martin, 1983; McClun & Merrill, 1998; Maccoby, 1984). However, the long-term impact of parenting styles on young adults is less clear. This gap in the literature is important and it is one that has needed to be filled. The impact of parental influences does not end in childhood; rather, parental influences extend into adolescence and young adulthood. (Newcomb, 1997a). Adolescents and their parents should be studied independently of younger children, as major changes in parent-child relationships occur during this stage because of physical, cognitive, behavioral, and social changes in offspring (Collins & Russell, 1991).

Additionally, prior research on parenting and adolescence has usually involved an assessment of educational success, such as grades (Dombusch, et al., 1987). This study aimed to supplement this literature by including outcome measures of psychosocial development and locus of control orientation in college students. The specific relationships during this time of developmental transition between parental inputs, students' locus of control orientation, and successful psychosocial development to date were largely unexplored.

Psychosocial development was chosen as an outcome measure inasmuch as Erikson's theory underscores the reciprocal interactions between individuals, their environments, and the unique way in which they process interpersonal experiences against a background of their personal history. In this study, it was postulated that parenting styles under which individuals are raised may have far-reaching effects that influence an individual into young adulthood.

Research indicates that parenting styles and locus of control in children are related (Trusty, & Lampe, 1997; McClun & Merrill, 1998). The present study examines the influence of parenting styles on the development of the young adults' locus of control orientation with the expectation of replicating prior research involving these two constructs. Additionally, research indicates that locus of control can have a moderating effect between negative life events and psychological health (Lefcourt, Miller, Ware, & Sherk, 1991; Cowen, Wyman, Work, Kim, Fagan, & Magnus, 1997). The present data further indicates that it can also have a moderating effect between parenting styles and psychosocial development.

### Summary of Results

#### *Demographic and Descriptive Data*

Results of analyses involving the demographic data revealed no unusual or unexpected findings. Correlations between demographic data and the research variables were generally non-significant with these exceptions: significant correlations were observed between age and paternal authoritarian parenting style ( $r = .15$ ) and with the MPD ( $r = .13$ ) but were inconsequential in magnitude. The Revised Version of Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale produced moderate correlations with other variables.

The largest correlation was with the MPD ( $r = .26$ ). However, the correlations are few and are low enough that social desirability can be discounted as an important source of bias affecting the validity of this research, especially since each of the measures utilized has been previously validated.

### *Interpretation of Hypotheses One - Three*

The first research question investigated the effects of perceived parenting styles on the psychosocial development of college students. The results indicate that college students who perceive their parents as authoritative have better task resolution of psychosocial development than their peers who perceive their parents as either authoritarian or permissive. Parents who provide consistent maturity demands and high levels of responsiveness appear to enable their children to master important developmental tasks.

This study specifically addressed the first five stages of Erikson's (1950) theory by assessing task resolutions of trust, autonomy, initiative, industry, and identity. Prior research has clearly shown that attaining a sense of identity is an important task for healthy adult functioning (Waterman, 1985, 1990; Marcia, 1980). Authoritative parenting tends to provide a framework for Erikson's healthy resolutions, particularly in the first five stages. In the first stage of trust versus mistrust, the virtue of hope is achieved when infants develop a secure attachment. In the second stage of autonomy versus shame and doubt, authoritative parents clearly set limits and rules conducive to self-expression, allowing the virtue of purpose to be attained. In the third stage, authoritative parenting encourages initiative and promotes purpose and goal-directedness (Baumrind, 1973). In the fourth stage, authoritative parents have confidence in the child's ability and perceive

the abilities as accurately as possible (Maccoby, 1994), allowing for the attainment of competence. In the identity versus role confusion stage, the influence of authoritative parenting may help the adolescent in his or her quest in becoming true to one's own belief system within the context of others by offering the optimal balance of responsiveness and demandingness that fosters successful completion of the previous stages (Lamborn et al., 1991). The results of this study lend further support of the salutary effects of authoritative parenting.

Conversely, the effects of authoritarian and permissive parents were found to foster less successful task resolution of psychosocial development. Participants who perceived their parents as authoritarian or permissive scored lower on the MPD, suggesting less overall attainment of the task resolutions of the first five stages. Reference is again made to the example of Erikson's third stage of *initiative versus guilt*, which is the stage when children are typically eager and ready to learn cooperative skills. They welcome adult assistance especially when it enables them to demonstrate their skills (Erikson, 1950). If their initiative and enthusiasm consistently elicit a reprimand, such as with authoritarian parenting, then they may experience a sense of guilt. Even so, Erikson (1950) conceded that a modicum of guilt is normal and enables children to gain self-control over future behavior. However, if children are over-reprimanded, they will tend to lose a sense of initiative. At the other end of the parental continuum, at the third stage a child needs limits and rules clearly set for self-expression. Prior research has shown that permissive parents have been found observed to lack limit-setting (Baumrind, 1973; Maccoby, 1983). This is just one example of how authoritarian or permissive parents may influence their children's developmental psychosocial growth and progress.

*Interpretation of Hypotheses Four - Six*

Research questions four through six investigated the effects of perceived parenting styles on the locus of control orientation of college students. Locus of control is a personality construct that refers to an individual's perception of the cause of life events, determined internally by his or her own behavior or by fate, luck, or other external causes. Results showed that perceived maternal parenting styles had different effects than did perceived paternal parenting styles on locus of control. Specifically, maternal parenting style is associated with locus of control orientation, while the perceived paternal parenting style is not. Overall, participants who perceive their mothers as authoritative had a more internal locus of control than did their peers who perceive their mothers as authoritarian or permissive. These findings are consistent with those of previous studies that have investigated the effect of parenting styles on locus of control in younger-age children (e.g., McClun & Merrill, 1998; Trusty, & Lampe, 1997).

In studies utilizing Rotter's (1966) I-E Scale, scores under 8.95 are considered internal while those above the mean are considered external (Lefcourt, 19760). Participants in this present study in the perceived authoritative parenting category averaged scores indicating an internal locus of control, while both the authoritarian and permissive category participants had means indicating an external locus of control. These results are consistent with previous studies (McClun & Merrill; Chorpita & Barlow, 1998). For example, Krampen (1989) observed that an internal locus of control was associated with consistency of discipline, frequent use of positive reinforcement, and balanced autonomy for children, which describes behaviors associated with authoritative parenting. Conversely, Davis and Phares (1996) found that inconsistent parental

behaviors during a family decision-making task were associated with an external locus of control.

Since the locus of control construct is influenced by an individuals' reinforcement history, one might expect that parents who are more contingently responsive to their children provide them with more occasions to control reinforcement. That is, if they are praised or punished in accordance with behavior, then they will be granted the contingency to control their own reinforcement, becoming more internal. By exerting excessive maturity demands, authoritarian parents may not allow enough latitude for children to control their environment. Permissive parents, who are less intrusive and protective, allow children to experience natural consequences of their behavior. However, since behavior is not reinforced or punished in a consistent manner, a child may be more likely to develop an external locus of control (Chorpita & Barlow, 1998).

Gordon, Nowicki, and Wichern (1981) demonstrated that parents who provide more opportunities for autonomy and independence and encourage the development of new skills foster an internal locus of control in their children. Similarly, Diethelm (1991) observed that parents who are consistently and contingently responsive to their children raise offspring with a more internalized locus of control. Authoritative parenting seems to provide children with opportunities to develop new skills and to explore and manipulate their environments (Chorpita & Barlow, 1998; Schneewind & Pheiffer, 1978). Similarly, Skinner (1986) used observational methodology to assess parental contingency, and a tendency for high parental contingency was associated with the child's internal locus of control.

An interesting finding of this study was the difference in perceived maternal versus paternal parenting and their differential association on locus of control. As noted previously, perceived authoritative maternal parenting had an association to an internal locus of control, while perceived maternal authoritarian and permissive styles had an association to an external locus of control. No such differences were found between the perceived paternal parenting styles and locus of control. There was no relationship found between any of the paternal parenting styles and locus of control. Why might mothers have more influence on their children than fathers in terms of locus of control? Rotter (1966) suggested that locus of control is formed early in childhood, unlike psychosocial development, which is epigenetic in nature and extends through the lifespan. If this is so, then perhaps the greatest influence would be the primary caretaker, which is usually the mother (Ainsworth, 1968).

Differences between maternal and paternal parenting practices are reported in the literature. For example, Vuchinich, Emery, and Cassidy (1988) observed that fathers are more likely than mothers to intervene as third parties in disputes between other family members. Mothers are more likely to mediate between the disputants and to gather information, whereas fathers adopt a more authoritarian style, characterized by statements such as "I don't want to listen to this" or "Don't argue with your mother, you're going." The findings of the current study suggest the need for including parenting measures separately for mothers and fathers in research of this type. Many studies on parenting styles utilize only one score for parents and do not differentiate between the maternal and paternal styles (e.g., Dornbusch, et al., 1987). The results of this study suggest that this method may be inaccurate as this sampling of participants rated their parents differently.

*Interpretation of Hypothesis Seven*

This research question examines the moderating effect of locus of control between parenting styles and psychosocial development. A large body of research asserts that beliefs about control and causality impact behavior in many powerful ways. For example, McCombs (1991) found that locus of control orientation has a significant influence on motivation, expectations, and self-esteem. An impressive number of situational and individual difference variables, including locus of control, have been identified as factors that increase the vulnerability (or, conversely, the resiliency) of people to the impact of negative life events. For example, Porter and Long (1999) investigated the role of locus of control and childhood trauma. The research findings suggested that locus of control was a moderator variable between adult victims of childhood sexual abuse and psychological symptomology.

Research on adaptive coping has been aimed at identifying moderators of the coping process. The thrust of empirical work in this area has been to demonstrate that coping processes vary as a function of the perceived controllability of the situation (Folkman, 1994). A sense of control presumably has to have adaptive value even in the face of misfortune because it provides victims with the motivation to work hard to change their plight in contrast to a sense of apathy or hopelessness (Seligman, 1975; 1991). Consider adults who were reared, as children, with less than optimal parenting but yet develop and function in a psychologically healthy manner. The results of this study indicate that locus of control moderates that relationship.

Luther, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000) posited that the effects of adversity, such as low socioeconomic status, community trauma, or child abuse, can be moderated by

personal qualities. These personal qualities are often referred to as resiliency factors.

Resilience refers to the class of phenomena characterized by favorable outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development (Masten, 2001). Research on resilience factors endeavor to understand the processes that may account for these positive outcomes. The findings of the present study suggest that locus of control may be a resilience factor between non-optimal parenting and psychosocial development.

Shaw and Scott (1991) reported similar results when studying the influence of parent discipline style and delinquent behavior. Punitive parenting was associated with a decrease in the amount of juvenile crime behaviors when an internal locus of control moderated the effect. Conversely, reports of delinquency increased with inductive parenting and the effect was moderated by an external locus of control. Their results indicate that locus of control served as a buffer between poor parental practices and delinquent crime. The results of this present study confirm other studies regarding the powerful effect of the locus of control construct (Skinner, Chapman, & Baltes, 1988; Weisz & Stipek, 1982).

A significant interaction was found between perceived maternal parenting style and locus of control on psychosocial development. Even so, there were no significant beta weights present; thus, it was not possible to interpret the direction of the interaction. However, with fathers, the findings suggest that offspring who perceived their fathers as either authoritarian or permissive, and nonetheless had an internal locus of control, yielded better task resolution scores for psychosocial development than those who had an external focus. This finding suggests that the locus of control construct may contribute more to healthy psychosocial development than parenting style. It additionally suggests

the need to explore factors beyond parenting styles that influence an individual's locus of control orientation. Research has shown that socioeconomic status, health status, and other early environmental factors also play a role in forming the locus of control orientation (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1997).

In the present study, there appear to be differences in the data related to locus of control in respect to the maternal versus paternal influence. Only the maternal styles influenced the locus of control development; there were significant interaction effects found with the paternal styles. What might account for these differences? There are various theoretical perspectives, ranging from social learning theory to psychoanalytic theory, emphasizing that mothers and fathers provide different socialization experiences for children and adolescents. Collins and Russell (1991) compared the parenting of mothers and fathers and found that their means of exerting influence during adolescence differed considerably. Specifically, the findings indicate that when fathers interact with their children, the interactions are frequently around instrumental goals (e.g., school achievement) and are characterized by fathers' exercising authority. Similarly, Almeida and Galambos (1991) reported that, compared to mothers, fathers exhibit less affect and have fewer interactions with adolescents. Again, these deficits are attributed to fathers being less involved with their adolescents. Therefore, if fathers interact less with their adolescents and their interactions are characterized by exertion of authority, then adolescents may be more inclined to perceive them as having an authoritarian parenting style during this particular developmental stage. Yet, these paternal characteristics may not have been present during other developmental phases. This effect could account for the differences between perceived paternal and maternal data.

## Implications for Theory and Practice

*Parenting Styles and Adolescent Population.* Investigation of the impact of parenting styles on the college age student has been an underexplored area. Yet, it is reasonable to postulate that childhood experiences set the stage and influence the path for the remainder of life (Newcomb, 1996). In fact, Newcomb (1997a) contended that "the parent and family environment is the earliest and primary socialization force in a child's life, and all subsequent socialization experiences shape and modify this prior influence" (p. 374). Newcomb (1997a) examined the influence of adolescent family support and bonding on deviant behaviors and psychological distress. Deviant or problem behaviors, such as substance abuse, are those that violate conventional norms. It was found that family support and bonding reduced the relationship between general deviance and psychological distress for both male and female adolescents.

While psychologists have known for some time how important parenting practices are for children, the results of this study extend the knowledge of how parenting practices influence young adults. Kazak (1992) reported that developmental life transitions provide unique opportunities for the study of the role of the family in adaptive functioning. This study addressed the transition to young adulthood, which entails the developmental tasks of forming an identity, leaving the parental home, and forming new social networks outside the family. The results indicate that parental practices and behaviors are still a salient influence during this time of adolescent development. Specifically, this study found that perceived authoritative parenting assists psychosocial development; maternal authoritative parenting may promote the development of an internal locus of control in college students; and having an internal locus of control, despite being reared by an

authoritarian or permissive father, may lead to better psychosocial development. These are important findings because they lend support to the notion of the continuing influence of parental practices in the late adolescent and young adult population, and thus, extend the knowledge of family practices in later development.

*Clinical Implications.* There may be important clinical implications as well. These findings, if replicated and confirmed by experimental research, could lead to training modules focused on fostering parental skills and interventions. An accurate and comprehensive understanding of parenting style has important implications for establishing appropriate intervention, prevention, and treatment programs (Cowen, Powell & Cowen, 1998). The correlates of authoritative parenting have consistently been shown to favor positive outcomes (Darling, 1999). Interventions designed to teach parents the necessary skills of balancing demandingness and responsiveness could have far-reaching effects. For example, authoritative parenting requires attentiveness to the child's changing capacities, efforts to promote understanding rather than thoughtless obedience, and persistence in gaining the child's compliance with expectations for mature behavior. These are skills that can be taught to parents and implemented within the family. If parents are successful in this balance between demandingness and responsiveness, then their children may be able to achieve the developmental tasks.

With respect to counseling practice, this investigation may enhance the relationship between theory and practice by the identification of correlates of adaptive psychosocial development. Perceived authoritative parenting and an internal locus of control were observed to contribute to task resolution and healthy psychosocial development. In college counseling centers, therapeutic interventions might include

approaches addressing the parenting issues. Inclusion of parenting issues would appear to fit nicely with many family system approaches (Sabatelli & Mazor, 1985). This finding suggests that clinicians who are seeking to enhance adolescent outcomes should not overlook the parent-child relationship.

*Theoretical Implications of Locus of Control.* Locus of control was also correlated with healthy psychosocial development. Locus of control orientation is known to have an influence on one's motivation, expectations, self-esteem, risk-taking behavior, and even on the actual outcome of one's actions (McCombs, 1991). Increasing internal locus of control can be seen as a reattributional process helping individuals see the world as a place that can be altered or adapted (Reich & Zautra, 1981). The development of a strong identity and intimate peer relationships are key tasks for adolescents and young adults (Blos, 1979). These developmental tasks involve leaving the parental home, individuating within one's family of origin, developing social support networks, and developing intimate peer relationships (Bray & Harvey, 1992). These tasks present significant adaptive challenges for many individuals (Cantor & Langston, 1989). Therefore, college counseling practitioners and professionals can assist students in altering their perceptions of the stressful developmental times and help them develop a sense of control in adapting to their constantly interchanging work, school, and social environments.

The results have theoretical implications as well. Individual differences can buffer or build resilience against negative life events (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Masten, 1999b; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Locus of control can moderate psychological symptoms, feelings of stress, and the development of anxiety in children (Frost & Clayson, 1991; Chorpita & Barlow, 1998). Beliefs about personal control

traditionally have been conceptualized in the coping literature as important individual-variables that can influence cognitive appraisals of stressful situations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Locus of control may confer protection against the experience or threat of distress, and may influence the way individuals cope (Skinner, 1995). Indeed, one aspect of attributional retraining concentrates on strengthening their internal locus of control and coping mechanisms (Deshler, Schumaker, & Lenz, 1984). The present findings suggest that an internal locus of control moderates between non-optimal parenting and psychosocial development and provides empirical support for these coping theory processes. Not only do these results replicate prior research about locus of control (e.g., Lefcourt, Miller, Ware, & Sherk, 1991; Kim, Sandler, & Tein, 1997), but more importantly, they extend prior research by suggesting a resiliency factor for individuals who have been exposed to non-optimal parenting styles while growing and developing.

*Clinical Implications of Locus of Control.* The locus of control data of this study are useful for clinical practice and for the empowerment of clients. Previous research suggests that coping skills training may result in shifts toward a more internal locus of control (Smith, 1989). For example, Smith (1970) observed that patients who underwent life crisis counseling geared toward the development of new coping skills became more internally oriented. Studies involving biofeedback (Stein & Wallston, 1983) and problem-solving intervention (Duckworth, 1983) obtained similar shifts in locus of control. This study suggests certain parental behaviors and practices contribute to the development of locus of control, and thus, has increased the necessary knowledge for control shift interventions.

Control shift interventions may be useful when counseling clients with histories of non-optimal parenting. These interventions may enable them to nullify some of the negative consequences of parenting practices that were either too demanding or too uninvolved. This cognitive restructuring can be accomplished by empowering the clients with the belief that many aspects of their lives are under their own control. That is, they may have been "dealt a bad hand" in their early years, but they can learn to be the masters of their own fate from intervention techniques. In a seminal work on psychotherapy, Strupp (1970) noted that issues of control underlie all therapeutic approaches. Frank (1982) argued that individuals seek psychotherapy because of demoralization involving subjective incompetence, loss of self-esteem, alienation, hopelessness, or helplessness and noted that these feelings are accompanied by a sense of loss of control. It appears that most schools of psychotherapy attempt to empower clients by bolstering their sense of internal control.

Although parenting practices have an impact on the future adjustment of their offspring, therapeutic interventions addressing locus of control shifts may buffer some of these negative consequences. For example, abused children have been conceptualized in terms of learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975; Taylor, 1995), a phenomenon hypothesized to result from experiencing repeated instances of lack of control accompanied by aversive circumstances. Again, offering control shift interventions may change an individual's perception of his or her reinforcement history.

The role of perceived control and its relation to anxiety has been investigated. Many studies support the notion that an immediate sense of diminished control is associated with the immediate expression of anxiety (Barlow, 1988; Beck & Emory,

1985; Sanderson, Rapee, & Barlow, 1989). Chorpita and Barlow (1998) advanced this concept and suggested that early experience with diminished control may foster a cognitive style characterized by an increased probability of interpreting or processing subsequent events as out of one's control. In turn, this cognitive style may represent a psychological vulnerability for anxiety. They posited that early experience can be disproportionately important in that it changes the perception of subsequent experience. Thus, parenting styles can be linked as an important component to the development of anxiety.

In the last two decades, several control-related constructs have been developed and explored. Investigations have refined therapeutic interventions to provide individuals with increased control over their affect, behavior, and cognitions. For example, Seligman's (1975) concept of learned helplessness was postulated based on research involving animals and humans who had a history of unavoidable noxious events. Similarly, Bandura's (1977) construct of self-efficacy suggested that the subjective assessment that one has the resources to cope with a given situation is a powerful predictor of behavior (Everly, 1989). Similarly, Folkman (1984) suggested that generalized beliefs about control influence primary cognitive appraisals whereas situational appraisals of control are an important component of the evaluation of coping resources and options. Together, this body of work demonstrates that a clients' ability to gain and maintain a sense of control is a central element in psychotherapy and mental health. Findings of the present study reaffirm the need to consider the influence of parental factors on children and the role they play in future adult functioning.

### Limitations of Current Study

Despite the positive findings and implications revealed in this study, certain issues and caveats regarding the research need to be addressed. One limitation that should be addressed in future research is the question of directionality among the variables. The implicit supposition underlying much of the research in parenting styles is that parental authoritativeness fosters a variety of positive child and adolescent outcomes. However, it could be argued that the relationship between parenting styles and offspring outcomes is bidirectional in nature. That is, parents, consciously or unconsciously, may adjust their parenting style in response to evidence of their children's competence and maturity, as well as to other cognitive, behavioral, and emotional characteristics of their children. There is good reason to believe, for example, that children's behavior and temperament influence the quality of parenting they receive (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992), and that parental influence on behavior may moderate the impact of stress (Gunnar, 2001).

*Limitations of Self-Report Data.* Another important caveat involves the use of self-report data, and particularly the self-report of perceived parenting styles. Information on parenting styles was obtained from adolescents and not from objective observations of parent-child relations. Therefore, perhaps the only conclusion that can be drawn is that adolescents who perceive that their parents are accepting, democratic, and firm have better task resolution in psychosocial development. Additionally, it is possible that such factors as denial, naiveté, or temporary stressors in student-parent relationships may negatively bias these self-reports. As a self-report measure, the psychosocial development instrument used may also be contaminated in that students who describe their parents in a more positive manner may be more likely to describe their own behavior more positively

as well. However, the lack of strong correlations between construct measures and the social desirability scale removes the latter as a potential confound. Future research, especially if longitudinal, might adopt objective measures of parenting practices, such as parent-child observations or obtain collaborating data from family members, social contacts, and so forth.

Despite these caveats, aside from ease of data collection, there are other advantages to using the self-report method. The phenomenological approach of using adolescents' reports permits the study of a larger and more representative sample of adolescents than would have been the case if parents' participation in the study were required. Likewise, Grusec and Goodnow (1994) have argued convincingly that effects of discipline should not be construed in terms of the use of particular methods but rather in terms of the child's interpretation and evaluation of methods and in the context of the relationship in which parent-child interactions are embedded. Additionally, there is extensive literature documenting the validity of adolescents' reports on their parents' practices (Golden, 1969; Moscovitz & Schwarz, 1982).

*Permissive Parenting Style Findings.* The infrequency of the permissive parenting style is of some concern. Although other research has shown permissive parenting to be the least prevalent of the three types (Strage, 1998), this sample had an unusually low number of permissive mothers and fathers. Therefore, results should be interpreted with caution concerning the permissive parent. In recent longitudinal studies with adolescents, participants have been categorized into perceived parenting types by using only the data derived from a "pure type" (Lamborn, et al., 1991; Steinberg et al., 1989). Lamborn and colleagues (1991) eliminated two-thirds of the data and used only the middle tertride as

the pure parenting types. Indeed, many of the participants in this study had scores very near in range to each other. Thirty-one participants actually tied on two different parenting types and the data were eliminated. A larger sample size with less range restriction would have allowed this method and results could be interpreted with less caution.

*Sample Characteristics Limitations.* The sample of participants was restricted in age, ethnic diversity, educational level, as well as geographical location. The results can only be considered to apply to primarily white, middle-class students in their late teens and early twenties. Not only does this limit the range of individuals to whom these data generalize, but may also restrict variability in scores on the measures, thereby attenuating the strengths of the correlations observed. For example, it is possible that college students have a more internal locus of control than the general population. Also, greater variability in parenting style categories may have emerged by using a more mainstream sample.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

*Relationship Directionality.* Future research should address the directionality of the relationship between the variables. Among the most influential longitudinal studies on parenting styles are Steinberg et al. (1989) and Lamborn et al. (1984). Both of these longitudinal studies confirmed the positive effects of authoritative parenting and the deleterious effects of less supportive, more restrictive parenting. A longitudinal study investigating the interaction between parenting styles, psychosocial development, and locus of control orientation could address this issue of directionality, especially if childhood temperament and other personality variables were taken into account.

*Older Populations.* Future research should replicate these results with older adults; most participants (68.3%) for this study were college freshmen. For instance, Strage (1999) reported that the link between parenting styles and their adjustment and success in college was somewhat weaker for the seniors than for their younger counterparts. Perhaps as students successfully make their way through college, they form new social and support networks and identify new role models, and the perceived parenting practices are not as influential. Quantitative and qualitative data on these factors would be helpful in determining if parental influences decrease as individuals get older. Additionally, locus of control has been found to be moderated by age and context (Blanchard-Fields & Irion, 1988), and the replication of this current study in an older adult population would shed supplementary information on the relation of locus of control and age.

*Identification of Resiliency Model.* Finally, future research should attempt to identify additional individual differences that moderate the effect between poor childhood parenting and adult functioning. Locus of control clearly is a powerful personality construct, but perhaps a more general resiliency model could be proposed and explored. Identifying the personality and experiential factors that overcome negative childhood parental practices would have beneficial clinical implications.

### Conclusion

Certainly one must be cautious in interpreting correlational and self-report data. Nevertheless, these data paint a fairly consistent picture as summarized below:

- 1) Perceived parenting styles influence the adolescent and young adult. Although many studies have shown the favorable effects of authoritative parenting on

children, the present results suggest that authoritative parenting promotes successful psychosocial development, even at the college-age level. Conversely, the effects of demanding, harsh, punitive parenting or indulgent or involved parenting may have deleterious effects on psychosocial development on college students as well.

- 2) The perceived parenting styles for mothers and fathers produced differential effects. This finding is important as the majority of parenting styles studies have utilized one rating, combining maternal and paternal styles into a single dimension.
- 3) Authoritative mothers tend to foster an internal locus of control in young adults, while authoritarian and permissive mothers tend to foster an external locus of control.
- 4) Locus of control can moderate the impact of non-optimal parenting and psychosocial development. This finding is perhaps the most meaningful one of the study, as it raises the possibility that direct control shift interventions can be offered to the adult client who suffered the effects of non-optimal parenting as a child. Perhaps more importantly, children who suffer from the effects of non-optimal parenting, such as those in the foster care systems, may benefit from preventive interventions that promote resilience.

It is hoped that this study further illuminates the complexity of parental influences on late adolescents as they make the transition to young adulthood. These data in combination with future research may advance the fields of developmental and clinical psychology both clinically and theoretically.

As an aside, this discussion ends at the very beginning of the present study— at the roots of its inception. Single case observations can be compelling for heuristic purposes (Masten & O'Connor, 1989), and it was a single observation that inspired this data collection. Many years of working in the foster care system led to numerous observations of poor parenting and its deleterious outcomes. However, occasionally a resilient child would somehow overcome such adversity. One such child was Jessica\*, who experienced much childhood trauma in her 13 years of life, as had her 14 year-old brother, Jimmy\*, to include extreme paternal authoritarian parenting and extreme uninvolved maternal permissive parenting. Unlike Jimmy, however, Jessica proved resilient many times over. She was healthy, socially competent, academically successful, and appeared to have favorable psychosocial development. Jimmy, by age 14, was unable to function outside a highly structured environment, and was often hospitalized for stabilization of a conduct disorder and for depression. They both had been brought up in the same environment, had very similar foster care experiences in placement, and both had the same therapist. When asked what she thought the difference was between her and her brother, Jessica replied, "I have learned to play offense in my life; Jimmy is still playing defense."

This statement was quite remarkable coming from a child who was in a system that by definition has total control and legal rule over her. In the foster care system, a child has little stability in placement or choice in such matters. Yet, Jessica perceived that she had choices and that her own ability and efforts would determine her future. Several years later, Jessica wrote a letter and ended it with a quote, "I am no longer afraid of the storms for I am learning to sail my own ship" (Author Unknown). One personal goal in

conducting this research was to gain insight on the factors that may account for such remarkable resilience. And thus, this study finds its roots: Its aim was to investigate the relationship between parenting styles, locus of control, and psychosocial development. It is hoped that the findings offer a more positive outlook on human development and adaptation, as well as direction for practice aimed at enhancing the development of children and adolescents.

\* Names have been changed to protect anonymity.

**APPENDIX A**

**Study/Project Information for Human Subjects Committee**

**TITLE:** The Relationship Between Perceived Parenting Styles, Psychosocial Development and Locus of Control Orientation in College Students

**PROJECT DIRECTOR:** Dr. Jeffrey Walczyk

**DEPARTMENT:** Department of Psychology, Louisiana Tech University

**PURPOSE OF STUDY:** To determine the effects of perceived parenting styles in relation to psychosocial development and locus of control in college students.

**SUBJECTS:** Louisiana Tech University students selected from Introductory Psychology classes.

**PROCEDURE:** Approximately 400 volunteers from the university will be selected from various sections of Introductory Psychology classes. They will be requested to complete a packet of surveys including measures of demographic characteristics, perceived parenting styles, psychosocial development, locus of control orientation, and social desirability. A consent form will be signed by each participant and kept separate from the packet of instruments in order to protect the anonymity of respondents.

**INSTRUMENTS AND MEASURES TO INSURE PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMITY:** A 30-item scale developed by Buri (1991) designed to measure perceived parenting styles will be administered. The Measure of Psychosocial Development designed by Hawley (1988) is a 112-item scale developed to measure stage resolution of psychosocial development will be administered. Locus of control orientation will be assessed by using Rotter's (1966) 29-item IE Scale. A 13-item measure of social desirability will be used for validity purposes. In addition, a brief self-report developed by the researcher will be used to collect demographic information. A consent form will be signed by each individual and the consent form will be separate from the other measures to insure anonymity. All collected information will be held confidential and only viewed by the researcher.

**RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS:** There are no risks associated with participation in this project. Participation is voluntary and there are no alternative treatments. The tasks required consist only of answering questions in survey form.

**SAFEGUARDS OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING:** This study involves no treatment or physical contact. All collected information will be held confidential and only the researcher will have access to the content.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Demographic Information**

## Demographic Information

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Male  
\_\_\_\_\_ FemaleRace/  
Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_ African American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Asian/Pacific Islander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino  
\_\_\_\_\_ Native American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)College Status:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Freshman  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sophomore  
\_\_\_\_\_ Junior  
\_\_\_\_\_ Senior  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

Since one variable in this research project is assessing the type of parenting style in which you were raised, some information will be needed about your childhood household. If you were raised in any type of two-parent household, complete the two (2) parenting style forms on the following pages for both mother and father. If you were raised by a single parent, complete only the form which is applicable (either for mother or father).

Check one of these four choices:

The majority of my childhood, I was parented by:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ two (2) biological or adoptive parents
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ a single parent
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ a biological parent and step-parent
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ other (please specify; i.e., foster parents, adoptive parents, relatives, etc.)

If you answered "b", was this single parent your:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ mother
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ father

Were your biological parents divorced? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ or No \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered "c", was this step-parent your:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ stepmother
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ stepfather

If you answered "d", was this household a:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ two-parent household
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ single parent household

Number of children in the family: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### Parental Authority Questionnaire (Father)

## Parental Authority Questionnaire (Father)

<b>Instructions</b> <i>For each of the following statements, circle the number on the five point scale that best indicates how that statement applies to you and your father. Try to read and think about each statement as it applies to you and your father growing up at home. There are no right or wrong answers, so don't spend a lot of time on any one item. We are looking at your overall impressions regarding each statement. Be sure not to omit any items.</i>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Partially agree/disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
1. While I was growing up my father felt that in a well-run home the children should have their way as often as the parents do.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Even if his children did not agree with him, my father felt that it was right for our own good if we were forced to conform to what he thought.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Whenever my father told me to do something as I was growing up, he expected me to do it immediately without asking any questions.	1	2	3	4	5
4. As I was growing up, once family policy had been established, my father discussed the reasoning behind the policy with the children.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My father has always encouraged verbal give-and-take whenever I have felt that family rules and restrictions were unreasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My father has always felt that what 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 their parents might want.	1	2	3	4	5
7. As I was growing up my father did not allow me to question any decision that he had made.	1	2	3	4	5
8. As I was growing up my father directed the activities and decisions of the children in the family through reason and discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My father has always felt that more force should be used by parents in order to get their children to behave the way they are supposed to.	1	2	3	4	5
10. As I was growing up my father did not feel that I needed to obey rules and regulations of behavior simply because someone in authority had established them.	1	2	3	4	5
11. As I was growing up I knew what my father expected of me in my family, but I also felt free to discuss those expectations with my father when I felt they were unreasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My father felt that wise parents should teach their children early just who is the boss in the family.	1	2	3	4	5
13. As I was growing up, my father seldom gave me expectations and guidelines for my behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Most of the time as I was growing up, my father did what the children in the family wanted when making family decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
15. As the children in the family were growing up, my father consistently gave us directions and guidance in rational and objective ways.	1	2	3	4	5
16. As I was growing up my father would get very upset if I tried to disagree with him.	1	2	3	4	5

17. My father feels 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.	1	2	3	4	5
18. As I was growing up, my father let me know what behavior he expected of me, and if I didn't meet those expectations, he punished me.	1	2	3	4	5
19. As I was growing up my father allowed me to decide most things for myself without a lot of direction from him.	1	2	3	4	5
20. As I was growing up my father took the children's opinions into consideration when making family decisions, but he would not decide something simply because the children wanted it.	1	2	3	4	5
21. My father did not view himself as responsible for directing and guiding my behavior as I was growing up.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My father had clear standards of behavior for the children in our home as I was growing up, but he was willing to adjust those standards to the needs of each of the individual children in the family.	1	2	3	4	5
23. My father gave me direction for my behavior and activities as I was growing up and he expected me to follow his direction, but he was always willing to listen to my concerns and to discuss that direction with me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. As I was growing up my father allowed me to form my own point of view on family matters and he generally allowed me to decide for myself what I was going to do.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My father has always felt that most problems in society would be solved if we could get parents to strictly and forcibly deal with their children when they don't do what they are supposed to do while growing up.	1	2	3	4	5
26. As I was growing up my father often told me exactly what he wanted me to do and how he expected me to do it.	1	2	3	4	5
27. As I was growing up my father gave me clear direction for my behavior and activities, but he was also understanding when I disagreed with him.	1	2	3	4	5
28. As I was growing up my father did not direct the behaviors, activities, and desires of the children in the family.	1	2	3	4	5
29. As I was growing up my I knew what my father expected of me in the family and he insisted that I conform to those expectations simply out of respect for his authority.	1	2	3	4	5
30. As I was growing up, if my father made a decision in the family that hurt me, he was willing to discuss that decision with me and to admit if he made mistake.	1	2	3	4	5

**APPENDIX D**

**Rotter's I-E Locus of Control Scale**

## Rotter's I-E Locus of Control Scale

Circle the most answer that is the MOST consistent with what you believe. You must choose either a or b in each question.

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1. a. Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.  
b. The trouble with most children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.
2. a. Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck.  
b. People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.
3. a. One of the major reasons why we have wars is because people don't take enough interest in politics.  
b. There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.
4. a. In the long run people get the respect they deserve in this world  
b. Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he tries
5. a. The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.  
b. Most students don't realize the extent to which their grades are influenced by accidental happenings.
6. a. Without the right breaks one cannot be an effective leader.  
b. Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities.
7. a. No matter how hard you try some people just don't like you.  
b. People who can't get others to like them don't understand how to get along with others.
8. a. Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality  
b. It is one's experiences in life which determine what they're like.
9. a. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.  
b. Trusting to fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.
10. a. In the case of the well prepared student, there is rarely, if ever, such a thing as an unfair test.  
b. Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.
11. a. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it.  
b. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.
12. a. The average citizen can have an influence in government decisions.  
b. This world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much the little guy can do about it.

13. a. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.  
b. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.
14. a. There are certain people who are just no good.  
b. There is some good in everybody.
15. a. In my case getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.  
b. Many times we might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.
16. a. Who gets to be the boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place first.  
b. Getting people to do the right thing depends upon ability, luck has little or nothing to do with it.
17. a. As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are the victims of forces we can neither understand, nor control.  
b. By taking an active part in political and social affairs, people can control world events.
18. a. Most people don't realize the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings.  
b. There really is no such thing as "luck."
19. a. One should always be willing to admit mistakes.  
b. It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.
20. a. It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you.  
b. How many friends you have depends upon how nice a person you are.
21. a. In the long run, the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones.  
b. Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.
22. a. With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption.  
b. It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.
23. a. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the grades they give.  
b. There is a direct connection between how hard I study and the grades I get.
24. a. A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do.  
b. A good leader makes it clear to everybody what their jobs are.
25. a. Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.  
b. It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.
26. a. People are lonely because they don't try to be friendly.  
b. There's not much use in trying too hard to please people; if they like you, they like you.
27. a. There is too much emphasis on athletics in high school.  
b. Team sports are an excellent way to build character.

28. a. What happens to me is my own doing.  
b. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.
29. a. Most of the time I can't understand why politicians behave the way they do.  
b. In the long run, the people are responsible for bad government on a national as well as on a local level.
-

**APPENDIX E**

**Human Subjects Consent Form  
Group Format**

Human Subjects Consent Form  
Group Format

**TITLE OF PROJECT:** The Relationship of Perceived Parenting Styles, Psychosocial Development and Locus of Control Orientation in College Students

**PURPOSE OF STUDY:** To determine the effects of perceived parenting styles in relation to psychosocial development and locus of control in college students.

**PROCEDURE:** Approximately 400 volunteers from the university will be selected from various sections of introductory psychology classes. They will be requested to complete a packet of surveys including measures of demographic characteristics, perceived parenting styles, psychosocial development, locus of control orientation, and social desirability. A consent form will be signed by each participant and kept separately from the other measures to insure anonymity.

**INSTRUMENTS AND MEASURES TO INSURE PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY:** The instruments used to collect data for this study are self-report inventories. **All information will be held confidential and each participant's anonymity will be protected.**

**RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS:** There are no risks associated with participation in this project. Participation is voluntary and there is no alternative treatment. The tasks required consist only of answering questions in survey form.

**BENEFITS/COMPENSATION:** None

I attest with my signature on the attached page that I have read and understood the description of the study and its purpose and methods. I understand that my participation in this research is strictly voluntary and my refusal to participate will not affect my relationship with the university or my grades in any way. I understand that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty. I understand that the results of this study will be confidential, available only to the researcher, myself, or a legally appointed representative. I have not been requested to waive nor do I waive any rights related to participation in this study.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** The researcher listed below may be reached to answer any questions about the research, subjects' rights, or related matters:  
Cheryl Marsiglia 257-3825; Dr. Jeffrey Walczyk 257-3004

The human subjects committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be resolved with the researcher. Dr. Mary Livingston 257-4315  
Dr. Terry McConathy 257-2924



**APPENDIX F**

**Revised Version of Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale**

## APPENDIX F

## Revised Version of Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and CIRCLE whether the statement is true or false as it pertains to you.

- T or F 1. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.
- T or F 2. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.
- T or F 3. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
- T or F 4. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.
- T or F 5. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.
- T or F 6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.
- T or F 7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
- T or F 8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.
- T or F 9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
- T or F 10. I have never been irked when people express ideas very different from my own.
- T or F 11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
- T or F 12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
- T or F 13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.

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