1982

The effects of family structure upon late adolescent depression, internal-external locus of control and help-seeking behavior

Manya M. Jiannino

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project

Part of the Family, Life Course, and Society Commons, and the Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation

https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/251

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the John M. Pfau Library at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses Digitization Project by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.
THE EFFECTS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE UPON LATE ADOLESCENT DEPRESSION, INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL AND HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty of California State College, San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree Master's of Science in Counseling Psychology

by
Manya M. Jiannino
March 1982
THE EFFECTS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE UPON LATE
ADOLESCENT DEPRESSION, INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL
AND HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty of
California State College,
San Bernardino

by
Manya M. Jiannino
March 1982

Approved by:
[Handwritten signature]
[Handwritten date]
ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of structural family relationships upon personality adjustment during late adolescence. It was hypothesized that subjects reporting a primary two-person bond of parent-parent within the family during childhood would demonstrate less crisis or discomfort during the adolescent transition than subjects reporting a primary cross-generational bond. University students, ages ranging from 17 to 25 years, reported on the primary two-person bond during their childhood. Subjects were assessed for personality adjustment using the Beck Depression Inventory, the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and the behavior of help-seeking. Results did not statistically support the hypotheses that adolescents reporting a cross-generational primary bond would demonstrate a higher level of depression and a lower sense of personal control than adolescents reporting a primary parent-parent bond. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research in the area of family relationship patterns were discussed.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODS</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects and Procedures</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULTS</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCUSSION</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: FAMILY RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: BECK DEPRESSION INVENTORY</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C: ROTTER INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Reported Primary Bond by Sex of Subject.................................16

TABLE 2: Help-Seeking Behavior by Primary Bond for Male Subjects...............18

TABLE 3: Help-Seeking Behavior for Primary Bond for Female Subjects............19
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and express appreciation to Dr. Edward Teyber, committee chairman and thesis advisor, and to committee members Dr. Charles Weis and Dr. Charles Hoffman. Heartfelt thanks also go to the University of California, Riverside, Counseling Center for their vast assistance and encouragement. I would also like to express gratitude to the students who volunteered to participate and to the statisticians, Dr. David Lutz and Dr. Sheldon Kaminiecki, for their patience. And, finally, a very special thank-you goes to my beloved family and dear friends who listened, emphasized and encouraged.
INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of specific structural family relationships upon personality adjustment during adolescence. It is expected that during this period in human development the individual is psychologically separating from the family of origin and establishing himself as a more autonomous person. There are certain factors within family structure, however, which are thought to influence the success of this late adolescent-young adult transition. The present study examined the relationship between one of those factors, the primary two-person alliance within the family and three measures which were thought to reflect crisis or comfort with the developmental task of transition. The measures used reflected (1) the current level of depression, (2) the sense of control and direction felt by the adolescent over his life and (3) whether or not the adolescent sought help from the University Counseling Center.

Developmental Stages

Personality theorists (Erickson, 1963; Sullivan, 1946; Levinson, 1979) have made common the idea of universal human developmental process. Influenced both by the physiological maturation process and by the cultural pressures and expectations, each individual undergoes the same basic life changes. Movement
from one stage to another is a time of transition and readjustment. This time requires psychological changes and the reorganization of relationships and roles. Difficulty with a particular transition can be reflected in both immediate personal difficulty or dissatisfaction as well as interfere with later life transitions.

Peter Blos (1975) views adolescence as another individuation process - the shedding of family dependencies in order to become a member of the adult world. According to Blos, individuation implies the growing person assumes increasing responsibility for identity and behavior. Similarly, an issue common to the Ericksonian model of developmental stages (1963, 1968) is the growth of increasing individual competence and a developing sense of personal identity and self-acceptance.

Erickson postulates a series of eight developmental stages with the successful completion of one often dependent upon the resolution of earlier stages. Erickson's fifth stage of human development begins as the individual experiences puberty. At this time the individual is struggling with the need to balance an attachment to the family of origin with the need to find one's role in life as an autonomous adult with a set of attitudes and values about oneself and one's goals. In our culture the stage of adolescent separation is marked by graduation from high school. Although many young adults do not actually leave home, this is commonly seen as the period in life when one is mature enough to leave the shelter of the family
home and adjust to the outside world. (Duvall, 1962) This study examined the adolescent task of becoming an individual with a distinct self-concept and goals independent from those established by the significant people in one's life.

**Familial Influences on Adolescent Separation**

This late adolescent separation is a time of great change and reorientation not only for the separating individual but for the entire family as well. One of the major tasks of the family is the eventual separation of the child from that family. (Fleck, 1966) This, of course, cannot be viewed as a sudden development; it is an evolutionary process, it is prepared for slowly by a series of steps and changes in the family relationships. Those individuals in the population under study who have not been able to "warm up" or to practice separation will find it a much more difficult maneuver than those who have been gaining a sense of self-definition over a period of time.

Adolescence is normally a difficult time for both the child and the parents. There are several factors which can make it even more so. Fleck (1966) defined the "healthy" family as a family capable of readjusting to meet a change or crisis. A part of this family health includes the ability of the parents to clearly establish generational boundaries. This means the marital couple should be capable of forming a primary bond and setting themselves up as a unit to nurture and guide offspring. They become an allied subsystem. Minuchin (1974) agrees that
effective parenting requires a primary alliance of the parental subsystem. Parents are the executives and, as the executives, need a base of authority. A non-existent or weakened parental alliance often corresponds with the development of a cross-generational bond (e.g. mother-daughter) as the primary bond in the family. The main goal of this study is to examine the effects of a cross-generational bond upon the personality adjustment of the late adolescent. A strong emotional involvement of primary importance in the family structure, this bonding pattern crosses those generational boundaries established by the "healthy" family and undermines the parenting dyad. The primary bond within the family, therefore, becomes the parent-child bond rather than the parent-parent bond. For the parent that relationship with the child may assume primary importance. The parent may begin to look to the child for intimacy and for the fulfillment of relationship needs. The child may be expected to serve in some ways as a "parent" to the parent.

Boszormenyi-Nagy (1973) offers the relevant concept of parentification. Parentification is the process of looking to significant others to gratify those emotional needs normally provided for by one's parents - the nurturance, the caretaking, reassurance, approval and sense of belonging. To some degree parentification of others as an adult is normal and appropriate; the extreme, making a parental relationship from a non-parent, can be detrimental to the growth of both parties.
The parentified child may become trapped into a continual care-taking relationship, striving to meet the emotional needs of his own parent while receiving a minimum of parenting for himself. The child may be discouraged or prevented from separating emotionally from the relationship for fear of deserting or causing pain to the dependent parent or of disrupting an established family balance. Any attempt to practice independence, to "warm up" for the eventual separation, will place stress on the delicate family system and may be viewed with alarm. Parentification is a difficult process to assess directly. It could, however, be suggested by certain structural relationships within the family. A primary cross-generational bond suggests a high emotional involvement with and dependency upon that child in order to meet the parent's security needs.

This cross-generational involvement can also be observed in the degree of parental intrusions into the child's life. (Borzormenyi-Nagy, 1973) While one task of parenting is the establishment of boundaries to guide and protect offspring, an overly involved parent may intrude into a child's life in a variety of personal and inappropriate ways. A parent who continues making excessive personal decisions for a growing child or adolescent, who interferes in relationships with others or who does not allow the child privacy also interferes with the growth of an increasing sense of autonomy, competence and self-control. Attempting to meet the rigid expectations of
an intrusive or needy parent requires the child yield or forfeit developing independence. The child will not easily undertake the developmental tasks of independent exploration and problem-solving and may, therefore, fail to develop an adequate sense of personal competence.

This study utilized self-reports of family structure to examine the hypotheses below. When the primary dyadic bond within the family has been between that parent-parent dyad, the adolescent-young adult will find it less difficult to separate from the family. When the primary bond has been cross-generational, the adolescent-young adult will find it more difficult to separate from the family, a difficulty which is reflected in both the measures of personality adjustment and the help-seeking behavior.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 predicted that subjects reporting the primary bond within the family as cross-generational will experience significantly greater depression as measured by the Beck Depression Inventory than those subjects reporting a primary bond between the parenting dyad.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that subjects reporting the primary bond within the family as cross-generational will have a lower sense of personal control over their lives, scoring more external on the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, than those subjects reporting the primary bond to be parent-parent.
Hypothesis 3 predicted that subjects reporting the primary bond within the family as cross-generational would be significantly more likely to seek counseling than subjects who reported the primary bond within the family to be parent-parent.

**Measures Used to Reflect Difficulty**

Three measures were used to determine the extent of the difficulty experienced during this late adolescent developmental transition. Depression was chosen as the first outcome measure in this study for several reasons. Seligman (1975) hypothesizes depression as resulting from a sense of human helplessness - a feeling of inadequacy and incompetence in dealing with day-to-day problems. A child who has not been allowed to explore, to develop a sense of self as a separate person and a sense of competence in solving problems will frequently suffer from low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy and helplessness. Recent research seems to indicate a relationship between depression in young adults and their reports of parents as non-nurturing and non-supportive. (Blatt, Wein, Chevron and Quilan, 1975) Raskin (1971) found patients reported their parents to be overly intrusive and intolerant of any autonomous exploration. Lastly, depression is frequently associated with guilt and self-blame; guilt is a prominent personality component of the parentified child who sees himself as responsible for the parental unhappiness or, at least, inadequate at providing happiness for that parent. It would then
be predicted (Hypothesis 1) that subjects reporting a primary parental bond would also report a lower level of depression. Subjects reporting a cross-generational bond as primary were expected to demonstrate a higher level of depression.

The second measure (Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale) reflects the sense of being responsible for and able to have some effect upon one's life. An Internal Locus of Control reflects the subject's belief in one's own personal efficacy in guiding one's life. An External Locus of Control reflects a subject's belief in the basic inability to effect one's own life or environment. To have developed this Internal Locus of Control an adolescent needs to have developed the belief that personal control can be exerted and decisions made effecting the course of one's life. The parent who is heavily invested in and controls the child's life interferes with the child's developing sense of personal or "internal" control. Offspring of an overly-involved or highly bonded parent will tend to look to others for feedback and direction. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 predicted that subjects reporting the parental bond as primary would score more internal on the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale than adolescents who reported a cross-generational bond as primary.

The third measure was whether or not a late adolescent would seek counseling. The population in this study was self-divided into two contrast groups. The experimental group
or help-seeking sample were clients at the University of California, Riverside, Counseling Center. The contrast group was a sample of volunteer students from general education classes who had not sought help in the form of counseling. It was assumed that help-seeking subjects were, in general, experiencing greater adjustment difficulties at this time. Hypothesis 3 predicted that late adolescents reporting a primary cross-generational bond would be more likely to seek counseling than adolescents who reported a primary bond of parent-parent.
METHODS

Design

The overall design of this study was a 2 X 2 factorial design with sex of subject and reported two-person primary bond within the family as the independent variables. Dependent variables were the scores on the Beck Depression Inventory, the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale) and the behavior of help-seeking in the form of counseling.

Measures

A three-part questionnaire was administered to subjects. Part One, the Family Relations Questionnaire (See Appendix A) collected data to be used as an independent variable. Although there are no published validity and reliability data, the Family Relations Questionnaire has been successfully used to differentiate adjustments in female college students as a function of primary marital bond. (Teyber, 1977) This questionnaire solicited information on bonding patterns between family members in the childhood home of each subject. Specifically, each subject was asked to rank order the importance of various familial dyads. Subjects reported the primary two-person bond within their family e.g. mother-father, parent-child. If parent-child was reported, further delineation was requested, i.e. mother-son, father-son,
mother-daughter, father-daughter. Subjects were also asked to report on the quality of the marital relationship as perceived by the subject.

The last two parts of the questionnaire, the Beck Depression Inventory (Appendix B) and the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Appendix C) served as two of the three outcome measures. The Beck Depression Inventory (Beck et al, 1961) is probably the most widely used self-report depression scale. It contains 21 categories of symptoms and attitudes clinically related to depression. The Beck Depression Inventory was chosen for its ease of administration. Analysis of the Beck Depression Inventory demonstrated good reliability as indexed by internal consistency and stability criteria; split-half Spearman-Brown corrected Pearson r = .93, significant at the p < .001 level. (Becker, 1974) Validation studies (Beck et al, 1961) using clinician ratings of the severity of depression were found to be significant at the p < .001 level. Finally, recent investigation (Bumberry and Oliver, 1978) found the Beck Depression Inventory to be a valid instrument for the measurement of depression in a University population.

With a possible range score of 0 to 63, Beck (1961) categorizes 0 to 9 as not depressed, 10 to 15 as mildly depressed, 16 to 23 as moderately depressed and 24 to 63 as severely depressed. It was predicted that adolescents reporting a primary bond of parent-parent would be less depressed than adolescents reporting a cross-generational bond.
The I-E Scale (Rotter, 1966) has been used in this study as a measure of the personal sense of control over self and life events as felt by the individual. An Internal Locus of Control, demonstrated by a low score on the I-E Scale, reflects an individual's belief that life events are dependent upon one's behavior or characteristics. An External Locus of Control, demonstrated by a high score on the I-E Scale, reflects the belief that reinforcement following an action is the result of luck, fate, chance or powerful others and cannot be predicted because of the complexity of the forces around the individual. (Rotter, 1966)

Split-half and Kudar-Richardson reliabilities for the I-E Scale tend to consistently fall around .70. Retest reliabilities within a few months remain at the same level. (Anastasi, 1976) The I-E Scale contains 23 items in a forced-choice format plus six filler items. The possible range of scores is 0 to 23; the higher the score the more external the orientation of the individual. It was predicted that adolescents reporting the parental bond as primary would be found to have a more internal orientation. Adolescents who reported a primary cross-generational bond would be more external in outlook.

**Subjects and Procedures**

Subjects were male and female students at the University of California, Riverside campus. For research purposes
adolescents were considered to be between the ages of 17 and 25 years. The grouping of the subjects served as the third outcome measure. The hypothesis predicted that subjects reporting the parental bond as primary would be less likely to choose to seek help in the form of counseling while subjects reporting a cross-generational bond as primary would be more likely to seek help. In order to test this hypothesis, subjects were selected from two populations. Those seeking help were labeled the experimental group and were thought to be seeking help in the form of counseling because of personal crisis or discomfort experienced during this period in their lives. Participants for the experimental group, self-selected by choosing to seek help, were clients of the Counseling Center. Subjects voluntarily chose to participate by completing and returning the questionnaire.

The comparison group, students not currently involved in counseling, were assumed to be in less personal discomfort at this point in their lives. The comparison population was obtained by soliciting students from the University of California, Riverside campus. In order to duplicate as closely as possible the general campus characteristics, the population sample was contacted by requesting volunteers from a wide range of classrooms. Respondents who identified themselves on the questionnaire as currently involved in counseling were excluded from the comparison group.

The entire questionnaire took approximately 45 minutes to
complete. It was mailed to the University Counseling Center clientele during the seventh week of the Spring quarter, 1980. Completion and anonymous return of the questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope were considered to indicate the subject's informed agreement and consent to participate in the study.

For the comparison group the questionnaire was distributed for individuals who volunteered from campus classrooms in response to request. The control population subjects were allowed to take the questionnaire with them to be completed and returned by mail. No identifying data was collected with the questionnaire.
RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to test the general hypothesis that separating adolescents who reported a primary bond of parent-parent would experience less difficulty with personal adjustment than separating adolescents who reported a primary cross-generational bond.

Of the 150 students who responded to this study, 55 were male and 95 were female. The mean age of all subjects was found to be 21.03 years; the median age was 20.72 years. Table 1 summarizes the reported primary bond across sex of subject.

Hypothesis 1 predicted significantly greater depression in subjects reporting a primary cross-generational bond than in subjects reporting the primary bond as parent-parent. T-tests were performed for females and for males comparing the two group means for the Beck Depression Inventory. A t-test analysis comparing means for females reporting a primary bond of parent-parent ($\bar{X}=9.06$) with the means for females reporting a cross-generational bond ($\bar{X}=10.51$) was non-significant, $t(66.2)=.67$, p-value of .849. A t-test analysis comparing means for males who reported a primary bond of parent-parent ($\bar{X}=8.71$) with the means for males reporting a cross-generational bond as primary ($\bar{X}=8.77$) was also not significant, $t(42.1)=-.02$, p-value of .982.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reported Primary Bond</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Parent</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother-Son</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother-Daughter</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father-Son</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father-Daughter</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child-Child</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparent Involved in Primary Bond</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Bond Reported as 'None'</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95  55
Hypothesis 2 predicted subjects reporting the parent-parent bond would score significantly lower on the I-E Scale, therefore, demonstrating a more Internal Locus of Control than subjects who reported a cross-generational bond as primary. An independent t-test comparing the means for females reporting a primary parental bond ($\bar{X}=10.94$) with females reporting a primary cross-generational bond ($\bar{X}=9.89$) was calculated. Results were not significant, $t(61.5)=.19$, with a p-value of .849. T-test analysis comparing the I-E Scale scores of males reporting a primary parent-parent bond ($\bar{X}=7.4$) with the scores of males reporting a cross-generational bond as primary ($\bar{X}=8.8$) was also not significant, $t(41.3)=-1.01$, p-value of .319.

Hypothesis 3 predicted a significantly greater number of subjects reporting a cross-generational bond would seek help at the Counseling Center compared to subjects with a primary bond of parent-parent. Chi-square analyses were performed for, first, the female population and, secondly, the male population. Tabulations on help-seeking by reported primary bond are indicated in Table 2 and Table 3. A chi-square analysis for females reporting a primary bond of parent-parent and for females reporting a primary cross-generational bond was not significant, $\chi^2(2)=.962$. Similarly, a chi-square analysis for males reporting a primary bond of parent-parent and males reporting a primary cross-generational bond was not significant, $\chi^2(1)=.399$. 
TABLE 2
HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR BY PRIMARY BOND FOR MALE SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORTED BOND</th>
<th>Parent-Parent</th>
<th>Cross-Generational</th>
<th>totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Population,</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Seeking Help</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Center</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3

HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR BY PRIMARY BOND FOR FEMALE SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORTED BOND</th>
<th>Parent-Parent</th>
<th>Cross-Generational</th>
<th>totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Population, Not Help-Seeking</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Center Clients</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION

Research findings were non-significant and did not support the three specific hypotheses of (1) a higher score on the Beck Depression Inventory, (2) a more external score on the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and (3) a tendency to be in counseling for those subjects reporting a cross-generational bond. The results can be examined and discussed from three vantage points, those of the procedures, the measures and the theory of cross-generational bonding patterns.

Measures

Two of the measures chosen to assess adolescent adjustment difficulties during the transition into adulthood may work as limitations in this study. Both the choice of depression as a major symptom of adolescent adjustment difficulties and the assumption regarding the Counseling Center clientele may be examined further.

While the Beck Depression Inventory is an excellent measure of depression, it may be that depression is not necessarily a major resulting symptom of crisis in the late adolescent transition. A heightened degree of anxiety may be more symptomatic of a subject attempting to emancipate from the family of origin. According to Bowen, families
work on an emotional level. The adolescent withdrawal from the family - even the healthy family - creates intra- and interpersonal conflicts for family members. If a family feels they need the adolescent member to safely maintain the equilibrium the family will experience emotional crises. The adolescent will be caught between two pulls, the urge to grow and individuate and the need to be loyal to and responsible for the pain of family members. The intense emotional crisis and conflict creates anxiety for both the family and the separating adolescent who is placed into a double bind.

A second measurement flaw is the assumption that the Counseling Center clients would have a significant percentage of the reported cross-generational bonds within their families of origin. Counseling Center clients may be suffering distress from a wide range of difficulties, ONE of which is the cross-generational bond. Also, since many people in emotional distress do not seek counseling, there will be in the student sample some adolescents undergoing those same adjustment issues. Furthermore, loyalty and a sense of responsibility for parental happiness may interfere with the healthy behavior of seeking help.

Procedures

Some of the procedures used to conduct this study may have acted as interfering variables upon the research results. Both the age range of the subjects and the manner in which the
the data was collected will be discussed.

The age range of the subjects in this study were 17 to 25 years with a mean age of 21.03 years. Teyber (1981, 1982) has consistently found significant results in the effects of the cross-generational upon adolescent emancipation from the family; Teyber, however, used only freshmen and sophomores in college as subjects in his research. This suggests that adjustment difficulties, complete with family conflict, may occur most urgently as the separating offspring begin the process by entering college. Those older subjects, while sharing the personal issues and difficulties caused by the cross-generational bond, may have already spent a few years resolving their internal conflicts or learning to cope with their feelings. The adolescent adjustment difficulties may be a "freshman phenomena."

Another aspect of the procedure which calls for examination is the manner used in collection of the information on early family bonds. The Family Relations Questionnaire asks subjects to report the most intense or the closest two-person bond within the family by checking the appropriate line. There are limitations to the pencil and paper questionnaire as opposed to the interviews conducted by Teyber. Questions can be raised concerning the uniform understanding on the part of the subjects about the task of reporting bonding patterns. Both the vocabulary used and the concept of family bonds may be foreign to some people. Subjects may need an
"education" in the ideas of family structure and a chance to begin using the concept before attempting to report their own family in those terms. Perhaps, a paragraph or two describing the terminology and ideas involved would better orient the subject to the task. Subjects might also benefit from drawing a three-generational map (Satir, 1967) of family relationships, discussing the patterns with the interviewer.

In support of this idea it can observed that subjects in this study tended to report from an egocentric point of view. Female subjects, while reporting parent-daughter bonds, rarely reported parent-son bonds. Male subjects reversed the tendency, reporting parent-son bonding but rarely reporting parent-daughter bonds. There may be an immediate tendency to report that emotional bond which is most salient for the subject. While this has merit in that the most salient bond may be the most "real" for that subject, it may cause difficulty in the objective assessment of overall family relationship patterns and resulting personality adjustment in adolescent offspring.

Theory

In this study cross-generational bonds were reported by both populations, Counseling Center clients and non-clients, by those scoring depression on the Beck Depression Inventory and those not and by both those subjects who had external and those who had internal orientations to life as measured by
the I-E Scale. Theorists such as Minuchin (1974), Bowen (1965) and Boszormenyi-Nagy (1973) and current research (Teyber, 1981, 1982) still suggests that a cross-generational bond complicates and interferes with adolescent leave-taking. In the cross-generational relationship, however, there may be more to consider than family structure alone. There are, perhaps, a variety of variables which moderate, neutralize or intensify the effects of the parent-child bond.

Within that parent-child relationship alone there are several elements which may need to be examined further. It may be important to more precisely measure or assess the degree of parental neediness or identification with the child. How much emotional care-taking did that parent need from the child and was the child the only or main source of care-taking for that parent? A parent who "needs" constantly or consistently or who has frequent outbursts of crisis may have a different long-term effect than a parent who is closely bonded and needs emotional care-taking but finds alternative sources when the child does not or cannot respond.

Another element within the parent-child relationship requiring examination are the sexes of the parent and the child. Greater information on the sex of the parent to whom the child is bonded is needed. A same-sex bond and a cross-sex bond may demonstrate significantly different effects in late adolescence. Would it be easier or more difficult i.e. more anxiety producing to separate from a parent of the opposite sex?
Because of the difference in the socialization process and the ego development of boys and girls, differing effects for each of the four possible bonds could be possible.

There are variables within each individual child's environment which needs recognition. Significant people other than the bonded parent may have the potential to counteract or modify the effects of that cross-generational bond. Having a significant adult to turn to as refuge and relief and to serve as a validator of the child's internal response to the parentification process may help the child deal with those feelings in a less potentially damaging manner. It may be important to know what position or role the other parent assumed and whether they encouraged, accepted or reinforced the cross-generational bond. Whether or not the child has another role model may effect the degree to which the child accepts the responsibility for meeting that parent's needs.

More examination of the entire family system which accompanies the parentification process is needed. Several possible limitations of this study have already been offered and there are many improvements, some already mentioned, to be made. While the hypotheses are not statistically supported, the results are in the predicted direction in every case but one. Further consideration of this complex problem is encouraged; certainly, greater understanding is needed in the area of healthy adolescent individuation.
APPENDIX A

Family Relations Questionnaire

Age _____ Number of Siblings _____ Present Place of Residence
Sex _____ Major ____________ Parents' home
Ethnic Identity ________ Own apartment

(1) As you look back to your childhood and consider the bonds of emotional closeness and involvement, what was the primary two-person relationship in your family? Check one.
- Mother-Father
- Parent-Child
- Grandparent-Parent
- Grandparent-Child
- Child-Child
- None

(2) If you answered 'parent-child' in the previous question, then what relationship was primary?
- Mother-Son
- Mother-Daughter
- Father-Son
- Father-Daughter

(3) Once again, considering bonds of emotional closeness and involvement, what two-person 'teams' went together in your family? Check as many as applicable.
- Mother-Father
- Child-Child
- Mother-Daughter
- Mother-Son
- Father-Son
- Father-Daughter
(4) Were there any highly involved sub-groups or teams larger than two people in your family, e.g. mother-children? List as many as applicable.


(5) Did you feel that either parent was closer to and more involved with grandparent than with the family unit of father, mother and children? If so, mark as applicable.
   ______ Mother-Grandmother
   ______ Mother-Grandfather
   ______ Father-Grandmother
   ______ Father-Grandfather

(6) To which relationship would your mother and father give greater priority and importance?
Mother:  ______ Marital relationship primary
         ______ Parental relationship primary
         ______ Relationship with her parents primary
Father:  ______ Marital relationship primary
         ______ Parental relationship primary
         ______ Relationship with his parents primary

(7) How do you imagine that your parents would describe themselves in terms of roles? For each parent, please rank order as many role labels as applicable, i.e. assign numbers (1,2,3,4,etc.) in order of importance to that parent.
Mother:  ______ Wife
         ______ Mother
         ______ Daughter
         ______ Career/Working Woman
         ______ Homemaker
         ______ Friend
         ______ Community Volunteer
Father:  ______ Husband
         ______ Father
         ______ Son
         ______ Breadwinner/ Career Man
         ______ Head of Household
         ______ Friend
         ______ Community Volunteer

(8) While you were growing up, with which of the following did you feel your parents were highly involved? Again, please rank by assigning numbers according to involvement.
   ______ Marital Partner
   ______ You
   ______ Other Children
   ______ Grandparent
(9) Please pick the adjective set that best describes the marital relationship of your parents.

____ close and generally cooperative
____ cool and distant
____ conflicted and tense

(10) While you were growing up, with whom did you feel more emotionally close and more closely bonded. Mark one.

____ Mother
____ Father
____ Both equally
____ Neither parent
APPENDIX B

BECK DEPRESSION INVENTORY

Please select one descriptive sentence from each of the following sets of sentences as it applies to you.

(1) ______ I do not feel sad.
    ______ I feel blue or sad.
    ______ I am blue or sad all the time and I can't snap out of it.
    ______ I am so sad or unhappy that it is quite painful.
    ______ I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it.

(2) ______ I am not particularly pessimistic or discouraged about the future.
    ______ I am discouraged about the future.
    ______ I feel I have nothing to look forward to.
    ______ I feel that I won't ever get over my troubles.
    ______ I feel that the future is hopeless and that things cannot improve.

(3) ______ I do not feel like a failure.
    ______ I feel that I have failed more than the average person.
    ______ I feel I have accomplished very little that is worthwhile or that means anything.
    ______ I look back upon my life and all I can see is failure.
    ______ I am a complete failure as a person.

(4) ______ I am not particularly dissatisfied.
    ______ I feel bored most of the time.
    ______ I don't enjoy things the way I used to.
    ______ I don't get satisfaction out of anything any more.
    ______ I am dissatisfied with everything.

(5) ______ I don't feel particularly guilty.
    ______ I feel bad or unworthy a good part of the time.
    ______ I feel quite guilty.
    ______ I feel bad or unworthy practically all the time.
    ______ I feel as though I am very bad or worthless.

(6) ______ I don't feel I am being punished.
    ______ I have a feeling something bad may happen to me.
    ______ I feel I am being punished or will be punished.
I feel I deserve to be punished.
I want to be punished.

(7) I don't feel dissappointed in myself.
I am dissapointed in myself.
I don't like myself.
I am disgusted in myself.
I hate myself.

(8) I don't feel I am any worse than anyone else.
I am critical of myself for my weaknesses and mistakes.
I blame myself for my faults.
I blame myself for everything that happens.

(9) I don't have any thoughts of harming myself.
I have thoughts of harming myself but I would not carry them out.
I feel I would be better off dead.
I have definite plans about committing suicide.
I would kill myself if I could.

(10) I don't cry any more than usual.
I cry more now than I used to.
I cry all the time now. I can't stop it.
I used to be able to cry but now I can't cry at all even though I want to cry.

(11) I am no more irritated now than I ever am.
I get annoyed or irritated more easily than I used to.
I feel irritated at all times.
I don't get irritated at all at the things that used to irritate me.

(12) I have not lost interest in people.
I am less interested in other people now than I used to.
I have lost most of my interest in other people and have little feeling for them.
I have lost all my interest in other people and don't care for them at all.

(13) I make decisions about as well as ever.
I try to put off making decisions.
I have great difficulty making decisions.
I can't make decisions at all any more.
(14) I don't feel that I look any worse than I used to.
   I am worried that I am looking old or unattractive.
   I feel that there are permanent changes in my appearance and they make me look unattractive.
   I feel I am ugly or repulsive looking.

(15) I can work about as well as before.
   It takes extra effort to get started at doing something.
   I don't work as well as I used to work.
   I have to push myself very hard to do anything.
   I can't do any work at all.

(16) I can sleep as well as usual.
   I wake up more tired in the morning than I used to.
   I wake up 1-2 hours earlier than usual and find it hard to get back to sleep.
   I wake up early every day and can't get more than five hours sleep.

(17) I don't get any more tired than usual.
   I get tired easier than I used to.
   I get tired from doing anything.
   I get too tired to do anything.

(18) My appetite is no worse than usual.
   My appetite is not as good as it used to be.
   My appetite is much worse now.
   I have no appetite at all any more.

(19) I haven't lost much weight, if any, lately.
   I have lost more than five pounds.
   I have lost more than ten pounds.
   I have lost more than fifteen pounds.

(20) I am more concerned about my health than usual.
   I am concerned about aches and pains or upset stomach or constipation.
   I am so concerned with how I feel that it's hard to think of much else.
   I am completely absorbed in what I feel.

(21) I have not noticed any recent change in my interest in sex.
   I am much less interested in sex than I used to be.
   I am much less interested in sex now.
   I have lost interest in sex completely.
APPENDIX C

ROTTER INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL SCALE

Please select the one statement from each pair of statements that you strongly believe to be the case as far as YOU are concerned. This is a measure of personal belief; there is not right or wrong answers.

(1) Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.
    The trouble with most children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.

(2) Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck.
    People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.

(3) One of the major reasons we have wars is because people don't take enough interest in politics.
    There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.

(4) In the long run people get the respect they deserve.
    Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he tries.

(5) The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.
    Most students do not realize the extent to which their grades are influenced by accidental happenings.

(6) Without the right breaks one cannot become an effective leader.
    Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities.

(7) No matter how hard you try some people just don't like you.
    People who can't get others to like them don't understand how to get along with others.

(8) Heredity plays a major role in determining one's personality.
    It is experiences in life which determines personality.
(10) In the case of the well-prepared student there is rarely, if ever, such a thing as an unfair test. Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to coursework that studying is really useless.

(11) Becoming a success is a matter of hard work; luck has little or nothing to do with it. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place in the right time.

(12) The average citizen can have an influence in government decisions. This world is run by the few people in power and there is not much the little guy can do about it.

(13) When I make plans, I am almost certain I can make them work. It is not always wise to plan ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyway.

(14) There are certain people who are just no good. There is some good in everyone.

(15) In my case, getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck. Many times we might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.

(16) Who gets to be the boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place at the time. Getting people to do the right thing depends upon ability; luck has little to do with it.

(17) As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are the victims of forces we can neither understand or control. By taking an active part in political and social affairs the people can control world events.

(18) Most people don't realize the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings. There is really no such thing as "luck."

(19) One should always be willing to admit mistakes. It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.

(20) It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you. How many friends you have depends upon how nice a person you are.
(21) In the long run, the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones. 
Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness or all three.

(22) With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption. 
It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.

(23) Sometimes, I can't understand how teachers arrive at the grades they give. 
There is a direct connection between the grades I get and how hard I study.

(24) A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do. 
A good leader makes it clear to everybody what their jobs are.

(25) Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me. 
It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.

(26) People are lonely because they don't try to be friendly. 
There's not much use in trying too hard to please people; if they like you, they like you.

(27) There is too much emphasis on athletics in high school. 
Team sports are an excellent way to build character.

(28) What happens to me is my own doing. 
Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction of my life.

(29) Most of the time, I can't understand why politicians behave the way they do. 
In the long run the people are responsible for bad government on a national as well as a local level.
REFERENCES


