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Relationships between family environment, psychological maltreatment, and well-being and symptoms

Rhonda Kay Alvarez

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FAMILY ENVIRONMENT, PSYCHOLOGICAL MALTREATMENT, AND WELL-BEING AND SYMPTOMS

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

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
In
Psychology

by
Rhonda Kay Alvarez
June 2001
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MALTREATMENT, AND WELL-BEING AND SYMPTOMS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to conduct an examination of the relationships between family environment, psychological maltreatment, subjective well-being and psychological distress. Examination of the literature suggested certain family environments may be more at risk for engaging in psychological maltreatment than others. It also suggested that psychological maltreatment may have a harmful impact on a person's subjective sense of well-being, which in turn may negatively impact a person's vulnerability toward psychological symptoms of distress. A sample of 175 college students participated in the study. The analyses demonstrated several significant relationships and several non-significant relationships. Generally, level of family distress was associated with psychological maltreatment, symptoms of psychological distress, and lower well-being. Additionally, level of family distress was associated with decreased positive relations to others and decreased self-acceptance. Level of family achievement pressure was associated with psychological maltreatment, and with a higher sense of autonomy. Psychological maltreatment was associated with more symptoms of psychological distress and with decreased positive relations to others. Additionally,
there was a trend in that psychological maltreatment appears related to decreased self-acceptance. Finally, symptoms of psychological distress were associated with decreased overall well-being. Several possible explanations of the results are discussed. Recommendations for future research in this area were also made. The implications derived from the current study are relevant to the clinical setting; a better understanding of the impact of family environment and behavior on individual psychological adjustment has implications for interventions with distressed families and their children.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

General Introduction

Families exist in countless variations. They have differing numbers of children at different developmental levels and they have differing numbers and types of parental figures. They have differing layers of blending and complexity, varying from the traditional nuclear family to the single parent family, to families with stepparents and stepsiblings, to families with grandparents in the parental role, and countless other variations. In addition to structural variety, families also vary in their climate. Some families are close and nurturing, some are distant and disengaged, some are hostile and abusive - the variations are numerous. Structure and climate interact so that each family member contributes a unique involvement in the family’s system dynamics. Additionally, each member is influenced by the contributions of the others. Members grow and develop within their respective families and thus the influence of the family on the individual is significant and considerable. Understanding the family’s influence on a person is important in understanding that person (Moos &
Moos, 1986). The present study will explore a number of family climates and dynamics, specifically those related to the psychological maltreatment of children, and how these factors relate to the subjective well-being and psychiatric symptoms exhibited by adult individuals.

Family Dynamics and Climates

Parenting Style and the Outcome of Child Behavior

The methods and skills of parenting have come under scrutiny in recent years. News reports are filled with examples of violent acts among young people, stories of teenage birth rates, statistical reports of how much the average child watches television, and the like. One wonders if parents are adequately supervising and guiding their children, as well as whether one's own parenting is effective. Moursund (1993) asserts that parents have become uncertain about the "limits of their authority: their right to make and maintain family rules and to discipline their children" (p. 177). Parenting is no longer considered merely the act of having a child and doing what comes naturally; it is an aspect of life that has generated a large amount of scientific study and professional opinion.
Methods of parenting have been researched, and some methods are believed to be more effective than others. Baumrind (1993) states that even in "normal" homes, that is, homes where there is no overt child abuse, there is much variation in parenting that affects the development of children. Baumrind (1971) offers probably the best known view of parenting styles, which outlines three basic types of parenting: authoritarian, which emphasizes strict adherence to rules, is often characterized as a punitive style, and allows for little discussion of rules and discipline; authoritative, which also places firm limits on child behavior, but to a lesser extreme, is demanding but nurturing, and is receptive to discussion with the child; and permissive, which places few restrictions overall, may not adequately monitor child behavior, and may be either nurturing or disengaged. The authoritarian style is associated with children being withdrawn and distrustful, and with children who are less independent than those whose parents fall under the other parenting styles. The authoritative style is associated with children's self-reliance, independence and autonomy, and social responsibility. The permissive style is associated with children's lack of self-reliance and self-control, and less explorative behavior (Baumrind, 1971). The authoritative
style is generally regarded as the most effective by many researchers and theorists (e.g. Santrock, 1995), providing a balance in terms of setting appropriate boundaries for children while still fostering their personal growth.

**Child Autonomy as Related to Parenting Style and Involvement**

As noted above, the style of parenting considered most effective, the authoritative style, is characterized by parental involvement, the setting of standards, and the expression of caring and concern as factors in establishing autonomy (a sense of self-worth, effectiveness, competence, and internal locus of control) in children. A lack of parental involvement has been related to negative adolescent behavior (Simons, Johnson, & Conger, 1994). Parental involvement, then, is important in contributing to child behavior. The combination of the authoritative style's high involvement and high control has been demonstrated to relate to internal locus of control (an element of autonomy), contrasted with the more authoritarian style of low involvement and high control, which is related to an external locus of control (Trusty & Lampe, 1997).

In addressing the importance of autonomy, research has been conducted on how autonomy can be influenced in
children. Discipline itself can hinder or foster autonomy, for example, even in very young children (Crockenberg & Litman, 1990). In other words, harsher punishment styles, such as physical, hinder autonomy whereas supportive styles, such as appropriate limit-setting, foster autonomy. Furthermore, teachers who employ an authoritative teaching style promote similar benefits in child autonomy, as do authoritative parents (Wentzel, 1997). It appears, however, that autonomy is not easily acquired, and requires an active fostering on the part of parents or other adults. For example, Miserandino (1996) studied children who all scored above average on an achievement test. Despite the fact that all children were doing well, those who perceived themselves as less competent and who exhibited a lack of autonomy experienced more negative affect and withdrawal. Furthermore, the study was able to predict a decline in grades of these children from the beginning of the year to the end, suggesting that these problems can magnify over time. It was suggested that adults find ways to provide guidance that fosters autonomy and a sense of competence (Miserandino, 1996).
The Role of Attachment in Child Behavior

Exploring attachment is also a way of examining the relationship between parenting and child behavior. Bradford and Lyddon (1994) suggest that attachment does indeed relate to personal adjustment, and that assessments have been developed to test this very important relationship. Healthy attachment between parent and child promotes independence, a sense of security, and autonomy. Unhealthy attachments can lead to insecurity and even psychopathology. For example, Rosenstein and Horowitz (1996) demonstrated that the type of attachment can be transmitted across generations from parent to child, giving support to the idea that problems can be perpetuated in a family. Parenting that fosters healthy attachment, then, is promoting health and well-being in the children being raised. In contrast, parenting that fosters insecure (ambiguous or avoidant) attachment does not promote well-being and instead leads to negative outcomes that can interfere with subsequent relationships.

What emerges out of reviewing this literature is that the style of parenting, comprised of certain strategies (i.e., those that promote autonomy and secure attachment) relates to the well-being and behavior of children. Implied
in these studies is that the direction of the relationship flows from parent to child, which is the basis for many people questioning the effectiveness of parents since it appears so many children of today are maladjusted. This appears to be a legitimate question, but it would be too hasty to ask at this point. There are some who question this directionality, and there is evidence that the direction of influence may not necessarily be absolute in flowing from parent to child.

A Question of Directionality: Parental and Child Influences

Instigating the idea that child characteristics can influence parenting is Bell's (1968) classic paper that offered a reinterpretation of directionality. He states that most studies suggesting that parenting influences child development can be reinterpreted as showing that children evoke responses from their parents. Assertive children may be punished more quickly, for example. Children with lower person orientation (e.g., eye contact, smiling) may evoke less nurturance and be more frequently punished. He also notes that maternal affection is expressed differently toward each child. He illustrates this by citing animal studies in which the presence of infants could be manipulated to stimulate lactation and
parenting behavior in animals that had not given birth. What this demonstrates is that the characteristics of the infants themselves played a role in evoking parenting behavior. Overall, he states that the parent-effect model is too narrow and that an expanded model is needed to account for both directions (Bell, 1968). Several studies do account for this bidirectionality. The study by Crockenberg and Litman (1990) suggests the possibility that the defiance exhibited by the toddlers evokes stronger control, and that even self-assertiveness, if it is frequent, may lead to frustration on the part of the parent. Additionally, hyperactive children may evoke punitive behavior from parents, and child attributes are one predictor of whether or not a parent spanks the child (Bachar, Canetti, Bonne, DeNour, & Shalev, 1997; Day, Peterson & McCracken, 1998).

Moving beyond the child as a solitary influence of parenting, Belsky (1984) offers a model of parenting that suggests many factors influence people as parents. First, each parent is influenced by his/her own characteristics, such as developmental history (note transmission of attachment, above), and psychological well-being. Next, parents are influenced by their child's characteristics, such as temperament. Finally, parents are influenced by
social context and support, such as their marital relationship and friends and family as support. These all work simultaneously to influence how parents parent. This multiple influence is what Belsky refers to as parenting being "multiply determined". He further demonstrates that since parenting is multiply determined, if one factor (such as developmental history) is weak or problematic, then the other areas (such as support from family) may be able to compensate. He says, though, that each factor contributes differentially (i.e., some are more important than others in their influence or impact), and if two areas fail, it would be best if the remaining strong factor was the characteristics of the parent, presumably because this is the strongest factor (or most direct influence). What is clear from this review of the literature is that it is not always clear who influences whom, and to what degree parents contribute to the behavior of their children.

Perceptions of Parent Behavior

As if to confuse matters further is the question of what happens when there is a discrepancy between what parents demand of their child and the behaviors engaged in by the parents themselves (e.g., parents say "Don't lie," but do it themselves). Children often learn by observation, and often imitate parents' actions despite what parents
tell them (Santrock, 1995; Holmes, 1997). Furthermore, children are more likely to imitate a behavior they see rewarded (Santrock, 1995). Modeling, then, is an important facet of child rearing that should not be ignored.

Additionally, the perceptions children have of what a parent's behavior means may influence their own behavior. Simons, Johnson and Conger (1994), for example, suggest (based on their study examining punishment and involvement), that there may be a relationship between the use of corporal punishment and involvement, such that the use of this type of punishment, as opposed to other types, may imply to the child that the parent does not care, leading the child to withdraw from the parent, therefore resulting in less involvement and support from the parent. The conclusion, then, is that when parents and children interpret parents’ behavior, in particular corporal punishment, differently (e.g., parents seeing it as involvement and a form of discipline and children as lack of care), the consequences can be negative and children may develop psychological problems.

Family Environment

While it may not be clear to what extent parents influence children and children influence parents, what is clear is that both influences are in place and are
interactive. The overall effect, then, may be best understood in terms of a general family climate. Moos and Moos (1986) have developed a model of family climate they refer to as "family environment". The model of family environment they offer is comprised of three dimensions: the relationship dimension, the personal growth dimension, and the system maintenance dimension. The relationship dimension involves the relational climate between family members, such as the extent to which feelings are expressed openly, extent of encouragement and support, and extent of conflict. The personal growth dimension involves to what extent independence, achievement, intellect, and morality are encouraged. The system maintenance dimension involves the degree to which the mechanics of the family system is focused on.

Moos and Moos (1986) then developed from these dimensions a classification system of seven family types, based on which factors are predominant within the family. Within the relationship dimension, there are two family types: the support-oriented family, and the conflict-oriented family. Within the personal growth dimension there are four family types: the independence-oriented family, the achievement-oriented family, the moral-religious-oriented family, and the intellectual-cultural-oriented
family. Within the system maintenance dimension, there is one family type: the disorganized family.

Moos and Moos (1986) found that distressed families presented more dysfunctional environments than normal families, such as being highly controlled, having higher conflict levels, and lower levels of cohesion and lower levels of encouragement of independence. Additionally, they noted that abusive families displayed unhealthy patterns, noting that the children and parents perceived the environments differently in terms of power. They stated that “These differences...are consistent with findings in other settings indicating that people (such as parents) who have more authority and responsibility in an environment tend to view that environment more positively than people (such as children) who have less authority and responsibility” (Moos & Moos, 1994, p. 10). As noted above, differing perceptions between children and parents of the same conditions can be problematic. In abusive conditions especially, then, it appears this discrepancy is built in. Thus, not only the abusive conditions themselves, but perhaps also the discrepancy between perceptions of the family environment combine to adversely affect the individual. Most meaningful however, when looking at child outcomes, are how children perceived their families since
this constitutes their subjective reality. Do children who perceived their family environments as distressed (e.g., highly conflicted and controlling) show less independence or autonomy as adults? Is their attachment negatively impacted? Does this environment impact their self-concept and self-esteem negatively? Understanding these relationships can provide useful information for interventions with distressed families.

While Moos and Moos (1986) examined abusive families and their dysfunctional environments, the types of abuse they studied were families displaying physical and sexual abuse only. An often overlooked type of abuse is the less tangible one of psychological abuse/maltreatment. For families who engage in this type of abuse, it is less clear what their family environments are like, especially as perceived by the children who grow up in them. This study will add to the literature by evaluating the relationship between family environments and psychological maltreatment.

Psychological Maltreatment

Of all the types of child abuse, psychological maltreatment seems to be the most difficult to define. Given this difficulty, research on psychological maltreatment has lagged behind research on other types of
abuse (Burnett, 1993; Hart & Brassard, 1987). Lack of an adequate definition and interventions compelled Garbarino (1978) to refer to emotional abuse (psychological maltreatment) as "the elusive crime." Despite these setbacks, psychological maltreatment has gained recognition by professionals and researchers as a real form of abuse deserving study (Barnett, Miller-Perrin, & Perrin, 1997; McGee & Wolfe, 1991).

**Characteristics**

The problem in describing the characteristics of psychological maltreatment lies in the fact that it is so difficult to define. It is made even more difficult for the average person to conceive of when professionals themselves do not agree on what it is. Reviewing the literature is a bit overwhelming and confusing; researchers are stressing the importance of a cohesive, balanced definition, yet agreeing on none. In a sense, they are talking past each other, each with a different focus. One researcher questions which elements of behavior should be considered: the interaction of physical and non-physical (e.g., the psychological impact of being physically abused by one’s parent), the act (e.g., the abuse itself, such as berating), the outcome (e.g., the child’s distress), or all factors combined (McGee & Wolfe, 1991). Many focus on
different perspectives, such as developmental (e.g., adequate attachment) (McGee & Wolfe, 1991; Hart & Brassard, 1987; Garbarino, 1978), social (e.g., encouraging criminal behavior), and competence of self (e.g., autonomy) (Garbarino, 1978). Many struggle with which is the better choice: a broad definition (encompassing the idea that psychological maltreatment is inherent in all forms of abuse and allowing for the subtleties that might otherwise go unnoticed), or a narrow definition (allowing for more certainty in reporting, intervening, and taking other legal action) (Burnett, 1993; Garbarino, 1978; Hart & Brassard, 1987; McGee & Wolfe, 1991)? One researcher points to the distinction between psychological abuse (affecting cognitive functioning) and emotional abuse (affecting emotional well being) (O’Hagan, 1995). Another distinguishes between two types of psychological maltreatment: hostile/verbally abusive and psychologically unavailable (Egeland, Sroufe, & Erickson, 1983). Basically, the struggle lies in where to draw the line between what is abusive and what is not, and whether (and how) to distinguish from these. Many try to outline particular behaviors, but others argue that it is the totality (sustained, repetitive quality) of the behaviors that constitute abuse (O’Hagan, 1995). It appears that common
elements to many definitions are distinctions between verbal and non-verbal components, the presence of harmful behaviors and the absence of beneficial behaviors (e.g., Burnett, 1993; Egeland et al., 1983; Garbarino, 1978; O’Hagan, 1995).

Despite all the research and arguments, we are still left in the uncomfortable position of describing what psychological maltreatment is. To a large extent, then, the characteristics of psychological maltreatment depend upon which definitional framework one is relying. The definition used in this project is a broad definition, utilizing the verbal and non-verbal categories used by Egeland et al. (1983). In their study, Egeland et al. (1983) defined hostile/verbally abusive mothers as those who, “chronically found fault with their children and criticized them in an extremely harsh fashion. . .The mothers in this verbal abuse group engaged in constant berating and harassment of their children” (p. 462). They defined psychologically unavailable mothers as, “unresponsive to their children and, in many cases, passively rejecting of them. These mothers appeared detached and uninvolved. . .there was no indication that these mothers derived any pleasure or satisfaction from their relationship with their children” (p. 462). Following these definitions, then, the behaviors
comprising psychological maltreatment may include the verbal behaviors of criticizing a child harshly (this would include public humiliation) and never being satisfied with the child. They may also include the non-verbal behaviors of ignoring, remaining emotionally distant/unnurturing, and rejecting (including rejecting physical affection from the child).

The fact that current researchers point out that psychological maltreatment is being recognized as pervasive, serious, and a form of abuse in its own right (Barnett et al., 1997; Burnett, 1993; Hart & Brassard, 1987; McGee & Wolfe, 1991) indirectly highlights that this was not historically the case. Rather, psychological maltreatment was often viewed as a less serious by-product of other forms of abuse (e.g., physical). Some research, however, suggests that not only is psychological maltreatment as serious as other forms of abuse, but it may be even more damaging, and if it is an inherent component in all other types of abuse, it may be the most damaging portion (Egeland et al., 1983; Hart & Brassard, 1987; McGee & Wolfe, 1991; O’Hagan, 1995).

Psychological impact

The impact of psychological maltreatment can vary depending on the definition used. Generally, however,
short-term and long-term effects include: problems with interpersonal adjustment (such as insecure attachment and problems with peers), intellectual deficits (such as academic difficulty and lower creativity), and affective-behavioral problems (such as aggression, anxiety, and dependence) (Barnett et al., 1997). O'Hagan (1995) further suggests affective problems are a consequence of emotional abuse, characterized by either a lack of emotional expression or of emotional volatility. Egeland et al. (1983) demonstrated that effects of hostile/verbal abuse in children included anger and avoidance of their mother. The effects of psychologically unavailable mothers were the worst of all abuse types studied; the children exhibited a large number of pathogenic behaviors, avoided their mothers, were angry, non-compliant, showed diminished creativity, diminished persistence and enthusiasm, and showed an increased dependence on adults. As mentioned above, many researchers suggest that psychological maltreatment is the most serious form of abuse, having the most detrimental effects over all other types. Of interest is the extent to which psychological maltreatment is associated with particular family environments.
Subtle Forms of Psychological Maltreatment

In addition to overt, verbal hostility or withdrawal of attention and affection, parents who are controlling and highly competitive often pressure their children to achieve (e.g., in sports, academics, extra-curricular activities). When these expectations are of such an extent as to be unrealistic and/or excessive, the children may begin to experience shame and diminished self worth due to repeated reminders (verbal or non-verbal) from their parents concerning their lack of expected achievement. Thus, this excessive pressure to achieve, or "achievement pressure", may be considered a subtle form of psychological maltreatment.

There is a relative absence in the literature examining the pressure to achieve placed on children by their parents. It has been suggested that there is a trend toward achievement pressure by parents on their children (Robinson, 1991). Very little research has, however, examined whether this pressure alone, in its extreme form, constitutes a form of psychological maltreatment. The research that has been conducted in this area is quite recent; most of it is still in dissertation form.
Therefore, little is currently known about its characteristics or impact.

**Characteristics**

Achievement pressure may relate to psychological maltreatment primarily through shame. Although little research currently exists on achievement pressure, what does exist suggests a potential relationship between achievement pressure and shame. For example, McGinniss (1998) found that maternal achievement control (emphasis on achievement) was associated with shame in women, and paternal achievement control with shame in men. Additionally, inappropriate and unattuned parental responses to children's emotions are both considered psychological maltreatment (Egeland et al., 1983; McGee & Wolfe, 1991; O'Hagan, 1995) and shaming (Karen, 1992). Thus, parents who exert excessive achievement pressure could be regarded as being unattuned to their children's emotional state, particularly when their children begin to develop negative psychological responses (e.g., anxiety, depression) as a result of this pressure. We begin to see, then, that parental pressure on children to achieve can be related to negative psychological outcomes, which suggests the potential for this pressure to be considered a subtle form of psychological maltreatment. With this in mind, we
can examine achievement pressure by using verbal and non-verbal categories, following from the verbal and non-verbal forms of psychological maltreatment as outlined above. Thus, parallel to the unattuned responses inherent in psychological maltreatment generally, achievement pressure can also take the forms of hostile, critical responses (verbal), and unavailable, uncaring responses (non-verbal) that convey disapproval.

An example will illustrate the differences between the verbal and non-verbal types of achievement pressure. Suppose three elementary school-aged boys are part of an extra-curricular soccer team. They are each accompanied by their fathers to a weekend game. Each boy makes a couple minor mistakes (e.g., tripping, missing the ball), and a couple of accomplishments (e.g., making a successful pass, making a goal). On the journey home, the first boy is praised for his successes by his father, and the mistakes are not dwelled upon. We will label this a healthy response and experience. The second boy, on the other hand, is repeatedly berated for his mistakes, his successes are scarcely touched upon or are negated, and his worth as a soccer player is called into question. This instance is said to constitute an overt, verbally hostile form of psychological maltreatment and a hostile, shaming
experience for the boy. The third boy, by contrast, is hardly spoken to on the journey home. Neither his successes nor his mistakes are discussed. Perhaps the father reminds the boy of the chores waiting for him at home, or perhaps the father has been on his cell phone the entire time, conducting business. This instance constitutes a non-verbal, neglectful, and unavailable form of psychological maltreatment and an empty, shaming experience for the boy. Inherent in the messages from these silent fathers is, "You’re not good enough for my approval – there is no room for mistakes." The child is left with the impression that his parent is never satisfied and that the parent’s love is conditional. The pressure to achieve, then, is constituted by the child’s desire to win parental love and approval, although by different means in the examples. The verbal maltreatment motivates the child to do better so the parent will address those praiseworthy behaviors, rather than focusing on the negative behaviors. The non-verbal maltreatment motivates the child to do well in hopes of even being noticed by the parent, doing so well the parent must take notice. As Karen (1992) states:

Nothing, apparently, defends against the internal ravages of shame more than the security gained from parental love, especially the sort of
sensitive love that sees and appreciates the child for what he or she is and is respectful of the child’s feelings, differences, and peculiarities. Nothing seems to make shame cut more deeply than the lack of that love. (p. 43)

**Psychological Impact**

Achievement pressure experienced in its extreme may have a negative psychological impact on its victims. Moos and Moos (1994) note that children perceived a higher emphasis on achievement than did their parents in terms of their sense of the degree to which they emphasized achievement. Further, an emphasis on achievement from parents toward their children was related to stress. The dissatisfaction and conditional love that may be experienced by children whose parents pressure them to achieve (either verbally or non-verbally) may compel these children to try harder to earn the attention and approval of their parents. For example, Turner (1998) found that extrinsically motivated students who experienced shame in academics increased their motivated behavior. Although the study framed this as “resilience,” what may have actually been happening was that the students tried harder because they were shamed by perceived parental pressure.

Contrarily, Fletcher (1996) found that a proneness to shame
was not related to achievement motivation, but was related to fear of success. What may be happening, then, is that achievement pressure may elicit perfectionist, over-achieving tendencies in some people, and a fear of achievement in others. Alternatively, the effects may be an outcome of the degree of pressure. Robinson (1991) demonstrated that achievement pressure by parents had favorable effects at lower levels (higher self-esteem, higher school interest), but more problematic effects as the pressure increased, exhibited by various clinical symptoms. A third possibility is that the effects vary with the type of pressure used (overt and hostile, or covert and rejecting). Overall, then, it seems clear that achievement pressure is related to negative psychological outcomes in children. It is less clear which types of parents/family environments engage in this type of maltreatment and which forms (verbal, non-verbal) are related to which outcomes. Of interest is whether or not families that are highly controlling and achievement oriented have a negative psychological impact on their children.
Conclusions and Current Research Questions

To summarize, families vary in both structure and climate/environment. Family members impact each other, which includes influence from parent to child and child to parent; the overall system and climate create a “family environment.” Family members may or may not agree on the type of family environment they perceive, which may create problems in itself, and in abusive households, this disparity is expected. However, when looking at adult outcomes of children who grew up in abusive households, understanding the children’s perceptions of how those environments were constructed gives us insight into which subjective interpretations are associated with negative outcomes.

One type of abuse that is not examined adequately in the literature is that of psychological abuse/maltreatment. This type of abuse may be in the form of overt hostility, withdrawal of love or affection, and dissatisfaction with the child’s level of achievement wherein the parent highlights the child’s inadequacies. This type of abuse has many effects, (including lowered self-esteem, high levels of anxiety, depression, etc.). Furthermore, psychological
maltreatment may be present more often in certain types of families, such as those in which levels of conflict and control are high.

The purpose of the present study was to conduct an examination of the relationship between family environment, psychological maltreatment, and the outcomes of subjective well-being and psychological distress in adults. There are several general research questions that emerge from a review of the literature.

To address general family environment and psychological maltreatment, we questioned what the relationship is between these two variables. More specifically, we questioned whether families who are higher in conflict and control (level of family distress) are more likely to engage in psychological maltreatment. Further, we questioned what the relationship between level of family distress and the outcomes in terms of symptoms of psychological distress and subjective well-being were.

To explore family achievement pressure and its relationship to psychological maltreatment, we questioned whether families who are higher in achievement orientation and control (level of family achievement pressure) are more likely to engage in psychological maltreatment. Further, we questioned the relationship between level of family
achievement pressure and the outcomes in terms of symptoms of psychological distress and subjective well-being.

To address the impact of psychological maltreatment, we questioned the relationship between psychological maltreatment and the outcomes in terms of symptoms of psychological distress and subjective well-being. Of particular interest was the impact of psychological maltreatment on these grown-up children's sense of autonomy, self-esteem, and ability to engage in positive relationships with others.

Finally, since research often looks at psychological symptoms, but less often at subjective well-being, we thought it would be useful to explore the relationship between these two outcomes directly. Thus, in this study, we evaluated the direct relationship between symptoms of psychological distress and subjective well-being.

There are nine main hypotheses that are derived from the research questions, three of which contain related subhypotheses. The first hypothesis was that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family distress and psychological maltreatment. Specifically, participants who rated their families as high on levels of conflict and control (level of family distress) would also
rate their families as higher on measures of psychological maltreatment.

The second hypothesis was that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family distress and symptoms of psychological distress in the respondents. Specifically, with higher levels of family distress, more symptoms of psychological distress would be reported.

The third hypothesis was that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family distress and subjective well-being. Specifically, the higher the levels of family distress, the lower the respondents' levels of well-being. Additionally, well-being was further broken into the three components of autonomy, positive relations with others, and self-acceptance. Thus, this hypothesis was further broken into three subhypotheses. The first was that there would be a significant negative relationship between levels of family distress and respondents' levels of autonomy. Specifically, the higher the level of family distress, the lower the respondent's personal sense of autonomy. The second was that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family distress and positive relations with others, hereby indirectly tapping attachment templates.
and the ability to develop positive relationships with others. Specifically, the higher the level of family distress, the lower the respondent’s sense of having positive relations with others. The third was that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family distress and self-acceptance. Specifically, the higher the level of family distress, the lower the respondent’s level of self-acceptance.

The fourth hypothesis was that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family achievement pressure and psychological maltreatment. Specifically, we hypothesized that participants who rated their families as high on levels of control and achievement orientation (combined to yield the construct of level of family achievement pressure) would also rate their families higher on measures of psychological maltreatment.

The fifth hypothesis was that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family achievement pressure and symptoms of psychological distress. Specifically, the higher the level of family achievement pressure, the more symptoms of psychological distress would be reported.

The sixth hypothesis was that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family
achievement pressure and the respondents' subjective sense of well-being. Specifically, the higher the level of achievement pressure, the lower the respondents' sense of well-being. Additionally, well-being was further separated as previously described, yielding three subhypotheses. The first was that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family achievement pressure and the respondents' sense of autonomy. Specifically, the higher the level of family achievement pressure, the lower the respondents' sense of autonomy. The second was that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family achievement pressure and the respondents' sense of positive relations with others. Specifically, the higher the level of family achievement pressure, the lower the respondents' sense of positive relations with others. The third was that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family achievement pressure and the respondents' sense of self-acceptance. Specifically, the higher the level of family achievement pressure, the lower the respondents' sense of self-acceptance.

The seventh hypothesis was that there would be a significant positive relationship between psychological maltreatment and symptoms of psychological distress.
Specifically, the higher the level of maltreatment, the more symptoms of psychological distress would be reported by the respondents.

The eighth hypothesis was that there would be a significant negative relationship between psychological maltreatment and subjective well-being. Specifically, the higher the level of psychological maltreatment, the lower the respondents' sense of well-being. Additionally, well-being was further broken as previously described, yielding three subhypotheses. The first was that there would be a significant negative relationship between psychological maltreatment and the respondents' sense of autonomy. Specifically, the higher the level of psychological maltreatment, the lower the respondents' sense of autonomy. The second was that there would be a significant negative relationship between psychological maltreatment and the respondents' sense of positive relations with others. Specifically, the higher the level of psychological maltreatment, the lower the respondents' sense of positive relations with others. The third was that there would be a significant negative relationship between psychological maltreatment and the respondents' sense of self-acceptance. Specifically, the higher the level of psychological maltreatment, the lower the respondents' sense of self-acceptance.
maltreatment, the lower the respondents' sense of self-acceptance.

The ninth hypothesis was that there would be a significant negative relationship between symptoms of psychological distress and subjective well-being. Specifically, the more symptoms are reported, the lower the respondents' sense of well-being.

Significance and Implications

The significance of this study was primarily to contribute to the understanding of psychological maltreatment by several means. First, it furthers the understanding of this type of maltreatment by examining whether certain types of family environments are more likely to engage in this type of abuse than other family environments. Next, an important facet of this study was its inclusion of subjective well-being in addition to psychological symptoms, since most studies examine symptoms but not subjective well-being. Since it is possible to have a low subjective sense of well-being but be able to function well enough so as to exhibit few symptoms or, conversely, to exhibit symptoms while maintaining a sense of well-being, the assessment of well-being had the potential of showing the impact of psychological
maltreatment or family environment that may not otherwise be apparent. Finally, this study also examined achievement pressure as a possible variant of psychological maltreatment. The implication of this possibility is that parents may be pushing their children too hard (e.g., by pushing their children into too many activities and by pushing them to excel in many things) and that this pressure to achieve may have long-term negative consequences for the children.

Limitations

The current study was limited in a number of ways. First, it is by nature difficult to generalize when a sample of college students is used, because college students may be very different from the general population. Second, the vast majority of participants in this study were female, again limiting generalizability to males and also limiting potential analysis (e.g., evaluating male/female differences on the hypotheses of interest). For example, it has been suggested that male and female children may perceive parents and their expectations differently, thus differentially influencing their adjustment as adults (e.g., Moos & Moos, 1994).
Some limitations of the study were due to the necessity of limiting the scope of the research so as to be sufficiently focused. For example, one of the scales used breaks down into useful subtests, such as for depression and anxiety. The use of an overall score on this scale potentially limits the information possible. In addition, another scale used evaluates psychological maltreatment for mothers and fathers separately. These different categories would be very useful to examine separately. However, it was beyond the scope of the present study to include these factors as additional variables to examine. Doing so would have required a larger sample size.
CHAPTER TWO
METHODOLOGY

Design

In this study, a correlational design was used to test all hypotheses. The variables were: level of family distress, level of family achievement pressure, psychological maltreatment, subjective well-being (broken into overall well-being, autonomy, positive relations with others, and self-acceptance), and symptoms of psychological distress. All variables were correlated with each of the other variables as outlined in the hypotheses.

Two family environments were operationally defined and measured by portions of the Family Environment Scale (FES). The conceptualization of families at higher risk of engaging in psychological maltreatment includes those families that are conflicted and controlling, called “level of family distress” in this study. Level of family distress is therefore defined and measured using the combined scores of the conflict and control subscales of the FES. The conceptualization of families at higher risk of engaging in achievement pressure as previously described include those families that are achievement oriented and who also exhibit controlling environments. Thus, a “level of family
achievement pressure" reflects these two factors. Level of family achievement pressure is therefore comprised of the combined scores of the control and achievement orientation subscales of the FES.

Psychological maltreatment was operationally defined and measured by the Psychological Maltreatment Scale (Briere & Runtz, 1988). We summed the scores for psychological maltreatment by both mothers and fathers to yield an overall psychological maltreatment score. Overall subjective well-being was operationally defined and measured by the Scales of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff, 1989), using the overall score derived by summing the scores from each subscale. Specific subscales were also used independently to reflect particular components of well-being outlined in the review of the literature: autonomy was operationally defined and measured by the autonomy subscale; attachment was operationally defined and measured by the positive relations with others subscale; and, to reflect the conditional love and "not good enough" subjective experience related to family achievement pressure, the self-acceptance subscale of the FES was used. Symptoms of psychological distress was operationally defined and measured by the Symptom Checklist 90, Revised (SCL-90-R), using the overall score, which was derived by
summing the scores from each subscale (somatization, obsessive-compulsive, interpersonal sensitivity, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation, psychoticism, and additional items).

Participants

Data was collected from a total of 175 male and female college students at a university in Southern California. All participants were treated in accordance with American Psychological Association (APA) ethical guidelines (APA, 1992).

Materials and Scoring

Family Environment Scale

The Family Environment Scale (FES) (Appendix A) (Moos & Moos, 1994) was developed in order to gain a naturalistic understanding of family social environments. It was originally normed on a sample of over 1,000 people comprising 285 families. A wide variety of ethnic minority families were included in the sample to ensure generalizability to the population at large. The FES has been found to reliably assess family members' perceptions of their family's functioning. It assesses ten dimensions of family environments. The current study used the FES to measure the constructs of level of family distress and
level of family achievement pressure. Therefore, the following three subscales were used: 1) Control, which reflects the amount and flexibility of family rules; 2) Conflict, which reflects the amount of openly expressed anger, aggressiveness, and conflict among family members; and 3) Achievement Orientation, which reflects the degree of importance the family places on success and/or competition. In its original form, participants were instructed to rate a statement as true if it was mostly true for the responder's family and rate it as false if it was mostly untrue for that family. In the current study, the format has been expanded to allow participants to indicate more accurately the extent to which a statement is true for their family. For example, statements such as "Family members really help and support one another" are answered on a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 4 (almost always). Each subscale ranges from 9 (low occurrence) to 36 (high occurrence). Internal consistencies ranged from moderate to substantial across subscales. Specifically, internal consistencies for the subscales used were: conflict: .75, control: .67, and achievement orientation: .64. Additionally, test-retest reliability coefficients are all within an acceptable range, varying from a low of .68 to a high of .86 across
subscales. Specifically, two-month test-retest reliability coefficients for the subscales used were: conflict: .85, control: .77, and achievement orientation: .74. Construct validity for the FES has been reported as significant when correlated with or compared to similar measures (e.g., Spiegel & Wissler, 1983).

Psychological Maltreatment

This was assessed using the Psychological Maltreatment Scale (Appendix B) (Briere & Runtz, 1988). This is a seven-item self-report scale that assesses parental behavior that is attitudinal or verbal in nature (e.g., yelling, insulting, humiliating). Participants are asked to rate, on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (more than 20 times in a year), the extent to which their mothers and fathers (or step or foster parents) engaged in each behavior during an “average” year prior to the time the participant was 16 years old. For the current study, mother and father behaviors were combined. The overall score ranges from 0 (no psychological maltreating behaviors from either father or mother) to 42 (high number of psychological maltreating behaviors from both mother and father). The authors reported reliability coefficients for this scale to be .87 for both mothers and fathers.
The Scales of Psychological Well-Being (Appendix C) (Ryff, 1989) assess six dimensions of well-being. These six subscales, which can be combined to yield an overall well-being score, include: 1) autonomy, which assesses self-determination and independence; 2) environmental mastery, which assesses a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment and everyday events; 3) personal growth, which assesses the individual's sense of personal growth, development, and openness to new ideas; 4) positive relations with others, which assesses interpersonal relatedness and the degree to which warmth, trust, and mutuality characterize relationships with others; 5) purpose in life, which assesses the degree to which purpose, directedness, and life goals are experienced; and 6) self-acceptance, which assesses the degree to which satisfaction with self and acceptance of both positive and negative parts of self is experienced. For the current study, the overall well-being score was used, as well as the autonomy, positive relations with others, and self-acceptance subscales, described above. The overall score ranges from 84 (low overall well-being) to 504 (high overall well-being). Each subscale ranges from 14 (low...
level) to 84 (high level). The measure is scored using a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Internal consistency coefficients range from .83 to .91 across subscales. Specifically, the internal consistencies for the subscales used are: autonomy: .83, positive relations with others: .88, and self-acceptance: .91.

**Symptom Checklist**

The Symptom Checklist 90, Revised (SCL-90-R) (Appendix D) is a self-report inventory designed to reflect the current psychological adjustment of participants (Derogatis, 1983). The SCL-90-R assesses for symptoms characteristic of disorders such as depression (e.g., appetite and mood changes), paranoid ideation (e.g., distrust and suspiciousness), somatization (e.g., chest and back pain), and anxiety (e.g., pounding heart and feeling lightheaded), as well as an overall distress score (obtained by summing all symptoms reported). For the purpose of this study, the overall distress score was used. The overall score ranges from 90 (low report of psychological symptoms) to 450 (high report of psychological symptoms). Participants rate each item on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely often) to indicate the degree to which the
symptoms are present or being experienced by the participant. The internal consistency coefficient and test-retest reliability for this scale has been reported at .84 (e.g., Derogatis, 1983).

Other Materials

A demographic questionnaire (Appendix E) was used to obtain relevant descriptive information about participants in the current study. The following dimensions were included: gender, educational level of parents, income of parents, parents' work status, and family's social status (i.e., type of neighborhood lived in). Additionally, an informed consent form (Appendix F), which described the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and confidentiality, was administered. This form also informed participants of the study's compliance with APA and IRB standards, and also referred participants to the study's supervisors, with whom the present author worked, for discussion of additional information or concerns. Finally, a debriefing statement (Appendix G), which restated the purpose of the study, the usefulness of the obtained data, and thanked the participants for their participation, was also given to participants.
Procedure

An announcement was made during classes in undergraduate psychology courses at a southern California State University, requesting volunteers to participate in a psychology research project. Volunteers were told that all answers are confidential, and that only group data would be used in the study. Participants were asked to sign an "informed consent" form, which described the study and the voluntary nature of their participation. After signing the informed consent sheet, the volunteers were given a questionnaire that included the demographic questions and the instruments previously described. The participants were asked to answer each item as truthfully as possible. The volunteers were treated according to the Ethical Guidelines for Psychologists (APA, 1992) at all times. After completing the questionnaire, the subjects were asked to return it to the Psychology Department Student Advising Office, at which time they received a receipt for "extra class credit". The subjects were then also given a debriefing statement, restating the purpose of the study, the anticipated date of completion, and treatment resources. In addition, information regarding how to obtain a copy of the results was provided. Extra credit slips were
given to each volunteer upon completion, as a "thank-you" for their participation.

Analyses

Each of the hypotheses was tested by Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. The following associations were addressed, reflecting each of the hypotheses:

1) Level of family distress and psychological maltreatment;

2) Level of family distress and symptoms of psychological distress;

3) Level of family distress and subjective well-being,
   a) Level of family distress and autonomy,
   b) Level of family distress and positive relations with others,
   c) Level of family distress and self-acceptance;

4) Level of family achievement pressure and psychological maltreatment;

5) Level of family achievement pressure and symptoms of psychological distress;

6) Level of family achievement pressure and subjective well-being,
a) Level of family achievement pressure and autonomy,
b) Level of family achievement pressure and positive relations with others,
c) Level of family achievement pressure and self-acceptance;

7) Psychological maltreatment and symptoms of psychological distress;

8) Psychological maltreatment and subjective well-being,
   a) Psychological maltreatment and autonomy,
   b) Psychological maltreatment and positive relations with others,
   c) Psychological maltreatment and self-acceptance;

9) Symptoms of psychological distress and subjective well-being.

A significance level of \( p < .05 \) was established to determine statistical significance for all results. Missing data was managed by supplying the series mean of the individual scale item for each missing cell. Additionally, two participants were excluded listwise during calculations requiring the FES subscales, due to substantially incomplete responses.
CHAPTER THREE
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

A total of 175 college students participated in the current study. The mean age of respondents was 26.63 years, and approximately 25% were male and 75% were female. Most participants' parents had a high school level of education, most grew up in stable, middle-class neighborhoods, and most families earned an annual income between $30,000 and $50,999. Job status of participants' families showed nearly even percentages of skilled blue and white collar workers and professionals. See Table 1 for a summary of demographic information.

A total of 18 Pearson product-moment correlations were run to test each of the 9 main hypotheses and all related subhypotheses. Of these 18, 10 were significant at p ≤ .05, 7 were not significant, and 1 approached significance. Generally, a family's level of distress was associated with several negative outcomes. A family's level of achievement pressure was associated with one negative outcome and one positive outcome. Psychological maltreatment was associated with more symptoms of psychological distress and less of some components of subjective well-being. Symptoms of
Table 1
Summary of Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent's Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father: High School</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother: High School</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable, Middle-Class</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000 - 50,999</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Job Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled, Blue Collar</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled, White Collar</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
psychological distress was associated with lower subjective well-being. These relationships are further elucidated in the sections that follow.

**Level of Family Distress**

The hypothesis that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family distress and psychological maltreatment was tested and found to be significant, $r(173) = .454, p < .05$. In other words, as level of family distress rose, psychological maltreatment was more frequent. The hypothesis that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family distress and symptoms of psychological distress was found to be significant, $r(173) = .365, p < .05$. In other words, as level of family distress rose, more symptoms of psychological distress were reported. The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family distress and subjective well-being was found to be significant, $r(173) = -.271, p < .05$. In other words, as level of family distress rose, subjective well-being declined. The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family distress and autonomy was not significant. The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family distress and positive relations to
others was found to be significant, \( r(173) = -0.297, p < 0.05 \). In other words, as level of family distress rose, the sense of positive relations to others declined. The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family distress and self-acceptance was found to be significant, \( r(173) = -0.326, p < 0.05 \). In other words, as level of family distress rose, the sense of self-acceptance declined. All significant relationships were in the expected direction. See Table 2 for a summary of the correlation coefficients.

**Level of Family Achievement Pressure**

The hypothesis that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family achievement pressure and psychological maltreatment was tested and found to be significant, \( r(173) = 0.190, p < 0.05 \). In other words, as level of family achievement pressure rose, psychological maltreatment was more frequent. The hypothesis that there would be a significant positive relationship between level of family achievement pressure and symptoms of psychological distress was not significant. The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of family achievement pressure and subjective well-being was not significant. The
Table 2
Summary of Correlation Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PM</th>
<th>SPD</th>
<th>SWB</th>
<th>Aut</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Distress</td>
<td>.454</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>-.271</td>
<td>-.114</td>
<td>-.297</td>
<td>-.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Achieve. Pressure</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>-.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psyc. Maltreat. Distress</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>-.106</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>-.196</td>
<td>-.137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symptoms of Psyc. Distress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. PM = psychological maltreatment; SPD = symptoms of psychological distress; SWB = subjective well-being; Aut = autonomy; PR = positive relations with others; SA = self-acceptance.

hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between level of achievement pressure and autonomy was significant, but not in the opposite direction from what was expected, \( r(173) = .184, p < .05 \). In other words, as level of family achievement pressure rose, the sense of autonomy was higher. The hypotheses that there
would be a significant negative relationship between level of family achievement pressure and both positive relations to others and self-acceptance were both not significant. With the exception of the relationship to autonomy, all relationships were found to be in the expected direction. See Table 2 for a summary of the results.

Remaining Hypotheses

The hypothesis that there would be a significant positive relationship between psychological maltreatment and symptoms of psychological distress was found to be significant, $r(175) = .371, p < .05$. In other words, as psychological maltreatment was more frequent, more symptoms of psychological distress were reported. The hypotheses that there would be a significant negative relationship between psychological maltreatment and both subjective well-being and autonomy were both not significant. The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between psychological maltreatment and positive relations to others was significant, $r(175) = - .196, p < .05$. In other words, as psychological maltreatment was more frequent, the sense of positive relations to others declined. The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between psychological maltreatment and self-acceptance approached
significance, \( r(175) = -0.137, p = 0.072 \). In other words, as psychological maltreatment was more frequent, the sense of self-acceptance declined. All relationships were found to be in the expected direction.

The hypothesis that there would be a significant negative relationship between symptoms of psychological distress and level of overall subjective well-being was significant, \( r(175) = -0.411, p < 0.05 \). In other words, as more symptoms of psychological distress were reported, the sense of overall well-being declined. This relationship was found to be in the expected direction. See Table 2 for a summary of the results.

Discussion

The main goal of this study was to examine the relationships between family environment, psychological maltreatment, subjective well-being, and symptoms of psychological distress. Some hypotheses were directly related to previous research, while some were more exploratory in nature.

Level of Family Distress

It was hypothesized that families who were reported to have higher levels of distress (higher in control and conflict) would be related to more frequent psychological
maltreatment by parents, more symptoms of psychological distress, and lower overall well-being in their offspring. It was further hypothesized that higher levels of family distress would also be related more specifically to lower positive relations with others and lower self-acceptance in the offspring. These hypotheses were all supported. A high level of distress in the family environment was thus related to negative outcomes both in the parents' behavior (i.e., increased maltreatment) and their offsprings' psychological status in adulthood. That is, distressed families had parents who engaged in more emotional abuse. The children in these families exhibited more psychological distress, and less sense of psychological well-being, including lower self-acceptance and decreased positive relations with others. This finding is supported by prior research (e.g., Moos & Moos, 1994).

Interestingly, level of family distress was not significantly related to autonomy, thus failing to support this hypothesis. It is possible that high control and conflict, coupled with high psychological maltreatment, may model poor interpersonal and intrapersonal relating, resulting in a lesser ability to relate to others and to oneself, as well as in symptoms of psychological distress. Autonomy may be less affected in that some amount of
control has been associated with fostering the autonomy of offspring (e.g., Baumrind, 1971). That is, children in families that were highly controlling may have reacted to this by asserting their separateness and independence from their highly conflicted families. It is possible that this finding is accurate for a college population (who by being in college are exhibiting resourcefulness and independence) but may not generalize to other populations who may be demoralized or in other ways negatively impacted by conflicted/controlling families. Thus, this family constellation may impact different populations in different ways depending on the child's personal characteristics. What may also be at work are ways of coping, such as mentoring, that to some degree ameliorate the effects of the distressed family. It is also possible that the measure used to assess control is not sensitive enough to the higher levels of control that are associated with more negative outcomes, thus resulting in a ceiling effect. Further, it is possible that combining the factors of control and conflict may mask their independent relationships with the other variables. In the future, it may be useful to either separate the two, or to analyze them differently (e.g., multiple regression, partial correlation) to determine each factor's weight in
relationship to the other variables. It is expected that control and conflict differentially affect psychological outcomes, and it is additionally expected that conflict would contribute more to the negative outcomes. In the future, it may also be useful to evaluate the impact of these factors in different population groups. Family levels of control in different cultures may vary according to expectations and associated outcomes.

Level of Family Achievement Pressure

It was hypothesized that families which exhibited higher levels of achievement pressure (higher in control and achievement orientation) would have parents who would be more likely to engage in psychological maltreating their children and that these children would exhibit more symptoms of psychological distress, and less overall well-being. In addition, that the children in these families would show less autonomy, positive relations with others, and self-acceptance. Interestingly, only the relationship between psychological maltreatment and autonomy was significant, but this relationship was in an unexpected direction - that is, families who engaged in maltreatment had children who were more likely to be autonomous. These findings are interesting for two reasons. First, only one offspring outcome was related. Second, this is opposite the
pattern found in families with higher level of distress, wherein autonomy was the only offspring outcome that was not related. The fact that we sampled a college population may explain this finding. It may be that pressure to achieve, when imposed on those who are competent and able to meet the achievement demands or pressure, may foster a sense of competence that facilitates engagement in activities that bring about a sense of autonomy and independence. Thus, what may be occurring here is a population effect. These are people who have already achieved a certain level of success. It would be helpful for future research to include a sample of less "successful" people and compare the patterns of outcomes in terms of their relation to achievement pressure.

It was expected that self-acceptance would be the outcome negatively related to achievement pressure, since this pressure can leave a person feeling "not good enough". However, perhaps because this was a college population (a population perhaps more suited to "meet" the pressure imposed), the sense of being "not good enough" was not activated - these individuals were likely able to meet enough of the demands to feel okay about themselves. However, because there may have been ongoing pressure, they did not end up feeling "great" about themselves, simply
"good enough". This same explanation may account for the negligible relationship between family achievement pressure and psychological distress and overall well-being. In addition, the differential impact of control versus achievement orientation may need to be sorted out. We have suggested that control is one component of the family environment described that increases the family's risk of engaging in achievement pressure. It is possible that control may be the dimension influencing autonomy rather than achievement orientation per se. In this study, we combined these two constructs into one labeled "family achievement pressure". In the future, it may be useful to separate control and achievement orientation to determine their individual relationships with autonomy, as well as to the other outcomes. In addition, it may be useful to analyze them differently (e.g., multiple regression) to determine each factor's weight in relation to the other variables. It is expected that each component would have a differential effect on psychological outcomes. It is likely that control has the higher impact on negative outcomes. It would be useful to evaluate each component's impact in various groups, groups that differ in levels of success or accomplishments, and different cultural groups. It may be that different cultures respond differently to pressure to
achieve. That is, in some cultures this pressure may not be viewed as negative, even when levels of pressure are high. Since achievement pressure is an exploratory construct at this stage of the research, future research may benefit from a more precise operational definition and a more accurate way of measuring this variable. The current operational definition may not be an accurate reflection of the construct under consideration. Additionally, the control component may be suffering from the same ceiling effect outlined above, which would mask its negative impact at higher levels.

Remaining Relationships

It was hypothesized that higher levels of psychological maltreatment would be significantly related to more symptoms of psychological distress. This was supported in this study. The finding that psychological maltreatment is associated with symptoms of psychological distress is consistent with earlier research which, although it defines psychological maltreatment in differing terms, often finds similar types of outcomes (e.g., O’Hagan, 1995; Barnett et al., 1997). This suggests that psychological maltreatment, regardless of how narrowly or broadly it is defined, very likely impacts children’s psychological adjustment in negative ways and may
contribute significantly to the genesis of psychiatric disorders.

It was also hypothesized that higher levels of psychological maltreatment would be significantly related to lower overall well-being and, more specifically, to lower autonomy, positive relations with others, and self-acceptance. Of these, the relationship to positive relations with others was the only one fully supported by analysis. That is, children who were maltreated had more difficulty forming positive relationships with others. This makes sense in that trust and secure attachments in childhood form templates for relationships in adulthood. If these are disrupted by abuse, the consequences will likely reverberate into adulthood.

The relationship between maltreatment and self-acceptance approached significance. This suggests that maltreatment does impact self-acceptance in negative ways. However, this impact was likely tempered or moderated by other factors. Noting that this is a college population, the potential negative effects of maltreatment may have been moderated by successes and “corrective” input by teachers and others who saw strengths in these college-bound students. It is somewhat surprising that autonomy was unrelated and self-acceptance was only marginally related,
since earlier research points to outcomes such as
dependence and affective problems that suggest these would
be related (e.g., O'Hagan, 1995; Barnett et al., 1997).
Research does support the current finding that
psychological maltreatment was negatively related to
positive relations with others (Egeland et al., 1983;
Barnett et al., 1997). It is possible that psychological
maltreatment impacts only some areas, while others are more
resilient (such as autonomy, possibly), i.e., that some
potential negative effects are more readily mediated than
others. For example, positive relations with others
reflects attachment, which is a part of one’s psychological
make-up formed very early in life. It is possible that
attachment problems are more difficult to overcome when
psychological maltreatment has taken place than are
autonomy or self-acceptance. Future research in the area of
psychological maltreatment may benefit from exploring not
only which outcomes are associated with this form of abuse,
but also which outcomes are more readily treated when
damage has occurred in this way. Future research in this
area may also benefit from separating the impact of
mother’s psychological maltreatment towards her children
from father’s. It may be that children are impacted
differentially according to which parent engages in this
type of abuse. It may also be that a gender effect would be in place. That is, do girls differ in their outcomes depending on whether the abuse took place by their mothers or fathers, and do boys differ in the same respect?

Finally, it was hypothesized that more symptoms of psychological distress would be significantly related to lower levels of overall well-being. This hypothesis was supported by this study. As mentioned earlier, it was a distinction of this study to assess both symptoms of psychological distress and subjective well-being, since most studies measure only symptoms. The usefulness of using both measures was threefold. First, it allowed for the assessment of two different kinds of outcomes - one more clinical and objective, and one more general and subjective. This allowed for each to demonstrate its own pattern of association with other variables, since each one was not related in the same way as the other. Second, this study allowed for their direct examination in relation to each other. Both measures were found to be related to each other, which is expected based on the idea that these measures both reflect psychological factors that can be impacted by the environment. Finally, this study’s demonstration of both similarity and distinction between the two measures supports well-being as a legitimate
measure of outcome, and also demonstrates the benefit of using both measures.

**Final Comments**

One pattern that emerges is the distinction of the outcome of autonomy. It did not appear to relate to family environment in the same way, generally, as the other components of well-being. It is possible that this outcome is more resilient than the others, or that a more complex relationship underlies the ones examined here.

A potential limitation of this study (mentioned earlier) is that the majority of respondents were female. It is possible that females may be affected differently than males by the same environment/factors. Future research would benefit from a more balanced gender ratio when examining similar relationships, as well as examining the different patterns of association of each gender. Another limitation is that the respondents were all college students, presumably a somewhat more resilient and successful group. Future research with a variety of population groups, both in level of success and in cultural background, would help clarify further the findings of this study.

Finally, it must be recognized that the use of a correlational design necessarily limits the inferences
possible from the current study. Since no causality inferences are possible, only the relationships between the variables may be discussed. Potential causal relationships described above are speculation only. Future research may determine the causal nature of some of the relationships described here.
CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the present study was to conduct an examination of the relationships between family environment, psychological maltreatment, subjective well-being and psychological distress in adults. Examination of the literature suggested certain family environments may be more at risk of engaging in psychological maltreatment than others. It also suggested that psychological maltreatment may have a harmful impact on a person's subjective sense of well-being, which in turn may negatively impact a person's vulnerability toward psychological symptoms of distress. A sample of 175 male and female college students participated in the study.

The analyses demonstrated several significant relationships and a number of non-significant relationships. Generally, a family's level of distress was associated with several negative outcomes. Specifically, level of family distress was associated with psychological maltreatment by parents, and more symptoms of psychological distress and lower well-being in their offspring. Additionally, level of family distress was associated with
decreased positive relations to others and decreased self-acceptance in the offspring.

In addition, a family's level of achievement pressure was associated with one negative outcome and one positive outcome. Specifically, level of family achievement pressure was associated with psychological maltreatment by parents, and with a higher sense of autonomy in their offspring.

Psychological maltreatment was associated with more symptoms of psychological distress and with decreased positive relations to others. Additionally, there was an apparent trend in that psychological maltreatment appears related to decreased self-acceptance. Finally, symptoms of psychological distress was associated with a decreased overall subjective well-being.

There are several possible explanations for these results. These include results supported by prior research and those not supported by prior research. Detailed discussion of the results is outlined above. The discussion leads to several recommendations. First, as mentioned above, future research may benefit from splitting the constructs of level of family distress and level of family achievement pressure into their respective component parts to examine each factor's independent relationship to outcome variables. Alternatively, analysis such as multiple
regression may shed more light into which factor is more
directly involved in those relationships.

Next, it is recommended that the construct of
achievement pressure continue to be explored in future
research. It is also recommended that this research more
precisely operationally define the construct, and more
accurately measure it as well.

Next, it is recommended that future research examine
not only the outcomes associated with psychological
maltreatment, but also which of those factors are more
resilient/readily treated when damaged by this form of
abuse. Additionally, the current study’s demonstration of
the differential patterns of association between symptoms
of psychological distress and subjective well-being
suggests that using both measures better informs the
examination of these outcomes in research. Finally, larger
and more varied samples including men and women who are not
college students will clarify the impact of families in
different population groups.

The general implications derived from the current
study are very relevant to the clinical setting. A better
understanding of psychological maltreatment is important in
treating both the individual and the family. Having
additional understanding of the family dynamics that may be
associated with psychological maltreatment is of great use in the therapeutic setting, whether in helping the family that fits that model, or in helping the individual overcome childhood wounds. Additionally, it may be very useful to have further insight into the impact of psychological maltreatment; it may be helpful to know where the impact is greatest: in subjective well-being or in psychological symptoms. Further understanding in this area will help determine an appropriate course of treatment. The general findings of the current study, in addition to prior research reviewed, suggest that it may be helpful to educate parents about psychological abuse. They may benefit from knowing its forms and its impact so that they can better monitor their own behavior towards their children. Additionally, it may be helpful to suggest to parents that pressuring their children to achieve may not be in the child's best interest when this pressure becomes unrealistic or extreme. They may benefit from knowing that this pressure may induce stress in their child and possibly result in other negative outcomes, such as psychological symptoms. Overall, these elements have implications in clinical treatment by suggesting where to look when family problems, psychological maltreatment and/or achievement pressure are the presenting problems of clients.
APPENDIX A:

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE
Instructions: Please respond to the following statements with your family of origin (the family you grew up with) in mind. To what extent are these statements true of the family you grew up in? There are no right or wrong answers, we would like to know how you see/saw your family. Please circle the number that best applies:

1 = almost never  
2 = sometimes  
3 = often  
4 = almost always

<p>|   | 1. Family members really help and support one another. | 2. Family members often keep their feelings to themselves. | 3. We fight a lot in our family. | 4. We don't do things on our own very often in our family. | 5. We feel it is important to be the best at whatever you do. | 6. We often talk about political and social problems | 7. We spend most weekends and evenings at home. | 8. Family members attend church, synagogue, or Sunday School fairly often. | 9. Activities in our family are pretty carefully planned. | 10. Family members are rarely ordered around. | 11. We often seem to be killing time at home. | 12. We say anything we want to around home. | 13. Family members rarely become openly angry. | 14. In our family, we are strongly encouraged to be independent. | 15. Getting ahead in life is very important in our family. | 16. We rarely go to lectures, plays or concerts. | 17. Friends often come over for dinner or to visit. | 18. We don't say prayers in our family. | 19. We are generally very neat and orderly. | 20. There are very few rules to follow in our family. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>
1 = almost never  2 = sometimes  3 = often  4 = almost always

21. We put a lot of energy into what we do at home.  
   1  2  3  4

22. It’s hard to “blow off steam” at home without upsetting somebody.  
   1  2  3  4

23. Family members sometimes get so angry they throw things.  
   1  2  3  4

24. We think things out for ourselves in our family.  
   1  2  3  4

25. How much money a person makes is not very important to us.  
   1  2  3  4

26. Learning about new and different things is very important to us.  
   1  2  3  4

27. Nobody in our family is active in sports, Little League, bowling, etc.  
   1  2  3  4

28. We often talk about the religious meaning of Christmas, Passover, or other holidays.  
   1  2  3  4

29. It’s often hard to find things when you need them in our household.  
   1  2  3  4

30. There is one family member who makes most of the decisions.  
   1  2  3  4

31. There is a feeling of togetherness in our family.  
   1  2  3  4

32. We tell each other about our personal problems.  
   1  2  3  4

33. Family members hardly ever lose their tempers.  
   1  2  3  4

34. We come and go as we want to in our family.  
   1  2  3  4

35. We believe in competition and “may the best man win”.  
   1  2  3  4

36. We are not that interested in cultural activities.  
   1  2  3  4

37. We often go to movies, sports events, camping, etc.  
   1  2  3  4

38. We don’t believe in heaven or hell  
   1  2  3  4

39. Being on time is very important in our family.  
   1  2  3  4
<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<td>2=sometimes</td>
<td>3=often</td>
<td>4=almost always</td>
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<tr>
<td>40. There are a set of ways of doing things at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>41. We rarely volunteer when something has to be done at home.</td>
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<tr>
<td>42. If we feel like doing something on the spur of the moment we often just pick up and go.</td>
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<tr>
<td>43. Family members often criticize each other.</td>
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<tr>
<td>44. There is very little privacy in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>45. We always strive to do things just a little better the next time.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>46. We rarely have intellectual discussions.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>47. Everyone in our family has a hobby or two.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>48. Family members have strict ideas about what is right and wrong.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>49. People change their minds often in our family.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50. There is a strong emphasis on following rules in our family.</td>
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<tr>
<td>51. Family members really back each other up.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>52. Someone usually gets upset if you complain in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>53. Family members sometimes hit each other.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Family members almost always rely on themselves when a problem comes up.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Family members rarely worry about job promotions, school grades, etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Someone in our family plays a musical instrument.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Family members are not very involved in recreational activities outside work or school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. We believe there are some things you just have to take on faith.</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Family members make sure their rooms are neat.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1=almost never</td>
<td>2=sometimes</td>
<td>3=often</td>
<td>4=almost always</td>
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<tr>
<td>60.</td>
<td>Everyone has an equal say in family decisions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61.</td>
<td>There is very little group spirit in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62.</td>
<td>Money and paying bills is openly talked about in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63.</td>
<td>If there’s a disagreement in our family, we try hard to smooth things over and keep the peace.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>64.</td>
<td>Family members strongly encourage each other to stand up for their rights.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.</td>
<td>In our family, we don’t try that hard to succeed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>Family members often go to the library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>Family members sometimes attend courses or take lessons for some hobby or interest (outside of school).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>68.</td>
<td>In our family each person has different ideas about what is right and wrong.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.</td>
<td>Each person’s duties are clearly defined in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>70.</td>
<td>We can do whatever we want to in our family.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.</td>
<td>We really get along well with each other.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.</td>
<td>We are usually careful about what we say to each other.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.</td>
<td>Family members often try to one-up or out-do each other.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.</td>
<td>It’s hard to be by yourself without hurting someone’s feelings in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.</td>
<td>“Work before play” is the rule in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.</td>
<td>Watching T.V. is more important than reading in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.</td>
<td>Family members go out a lot.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78.</td>
<td>The Bible is a very important book in our home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.</td>
<td>Money is not handled very carefully in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>80.</td>
<td>Rules are pretty inflexible in our household.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1=almost never</td>
<td>2=sometimes</td>
<td>3=often</td>
<td>4=almost always</td>
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<tr>
<td>81.</td>
<td>There is plenty of time and attention for everyone in our family.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.</td>
<td>There are a lot of spontaneous discussions in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.</td>
<td>In our family, we believe you don't ever get anywhere by raising your voice.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84.</td>
<td>We are not really encouraged to speak up for ourselves in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85.</td>
<td>Family members are often compared with others as to how well they are doing at work or school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86.</td>
<td>Family members really like music, art and literature.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.</td>
<td>Our main form of entertainment is watching T.V. or listening to the radio.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>88.</td>
<td>Family members believe that if you sin you will be punished.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>89.</td>
<td>Dishes are usually done immediately after eating.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.</td>
<td>You can't get away with much in our family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B:

PSYCHOLOGICAL MALTREATMENT SCALE
Verbal arguments and punishment can range from quiet disagreement to yelling, insulting, and more severe behaviors. When you were 16 or younger, how often did the following happen to you in the average year? Answer for your mother or stepmother or foster mother, and for your father, stepfather or foster father using the following code:

- **0** = never
- **1** = once a year
- **2** = twice a year
- **3** = 3-5 times a year
- **4** = 4-10 times a year
- **5** = 11-20 times a year
- **6** = more than 20 times a year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>Father</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yell at you</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Insult you</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Criticize you</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Try to make you feel guilty</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ridicule or humiliate you</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Embarrass you in front of others</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Make you feel like you were a bad person</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
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APPENDIX C:

SCALES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING
Please respond to each of the following items by circling the number that most closely corresponds to what you believe is accurate for you, on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

1 = strongly disagree  
2 = somewhat disagree  
3 = slightly disagree  
4 = slightly agree  
5 = somewhat agree  
6 = strongly agree

1. Sometimes I change the way I act or think to be more like those around me.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

2. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

3. I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Most people see me as loving and affectionate  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

5. I feel good when I think of what I've done in the past and what I hope to do in the future.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

6. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

7. I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

8. The demands of everyday life often get me down.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

9. In general, I feel that I continue to learn more about myself as time goes by.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

10. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

11. I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6

12. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6

13. My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6
Please respond to each of the following items by circling the number that most closely corresponds to what you believe is accurate for you, on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

1 = strongly disagree  
2 = somewhat disagree  
3 = slightly disagree  
4 = slightly agree  
5 = somewhat agree  
6 = strongly agree

14. I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

15. I am the kind of person who likes to give new things a try.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

16. I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

17. I tend to focus on the present, because the future nearly always brings me problems.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

18. I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

19. I tend to worry about what other people think of me.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

20. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

21. I don’t want to try new ways of doing things – my life is fine the way it is.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

22. I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or close friends.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

23. I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

24. Given the opportunity, there are many things about myself that I would change.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

25. Being happy with myself is more important to me than having others approve of me.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

26. I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6

27. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.  
   1  2  3  4  5  6
Please respond to each of the following items by circling the number that most closely corresponds to what you believe is accurate for you, on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>It is important to me to be a good listener when close friends talk to me about their problems.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>I like most aspects of my personality</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>If I were unhappy with my living situation, I would take effective steps to change it.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>When I think about it, I haven’t really improved much as a person over the years.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>I don’t have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>I don’t have a good sense of what it is I’m trying to accomplish in life.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>I made some mistakes in the past, but I feel that all in all everything has worked out for the best.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>People rarely talk me into doing things I don’t want to do</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>I generally do a good job of taking care of my personal finances and affairs.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>In my view, people of every age are able to continue growing and developing.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>I feel like I get a lot out of my friendships</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>I used to set goals for myself, but that now seems like a waste of time.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please respond to each of the following items by circling the number that most closely corresponds to what you believe is accurate for you, on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

1 = strongly disagree  
2 = somewhat disagree  
3 = slightly disagree  
4 = slightly agree  
5 = somewhat agree  
6 = strongly agree

43. It is more important to me to (fit in) with others than to stand alone on my principles.  

44. I find it stressful that I can't keep up with all of the things that I have to do each day.

45. With time, I have gained a lot of insight that has made me a stronger, more capable person.

46. It seems to me that most other people have more friends than I do.

47. I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.

48. For the most part, I am proud of who I am and the life I lead.

49. I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.

50. I am good at juggling my time so that I can fit everything in that needs to get done.

51. I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.

52. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.

53. I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself.

54. I envy many people for the lives they lead.

55. It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.

56. My daily life is busy, but I derive a sense of satisfaction from keeping up with everything.
Please respond to each of the following items by circling the number that most closely corresponds to what you believe is accurate for you, on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

1 = strongly disagree  
2 = somewhat disagree  
3 = slightly disagree  
4 = slightly agree  
5 = somewhat agree  
6 = strongly agree

57. I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

58. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

59. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

60. My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

61. I often change my mind about decisions if my friends or family disagree.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

62. I get frustrated when trying to plan my daily activities because I never accomplish the things I set out to do.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

63. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

64. I often feel like I’m on the outside looking in when it comes to friendships.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

65. I sometimes feel as if I have done all there is to do in life.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

66. Many days I wake up feeling discouraged about how I have lived my life.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

67. I am not the kind of person who gives in to social pressures to think or act in certain ways.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

68. My efforts to find the kinds of activities and relationships that I need have been quite successful.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

69. I enjoy seeing how my views have changed and matured over the years.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

70. I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6
Please respond to each of the following items by circling the number that most closely corresponds to what you believe is accurate for you, on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = strongly disagree</td>
<td>2 = somewhat disagree</td>
<td>3 = slightly disagree</td>
<td>4 = slightly agree</td>
<td>5 = somewhat agree</td>
<td>6 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. My aims in life have been more a source of satisfaction than frustration to me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72. The past had its ups and downs, but in general, I wouldn’t want to change it</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. I am concerned about how other people evaluate the choices I have made in my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76. I find it difficult to really open up when I talk with others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. I find it satisfying to think about what I have accomplished in life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78. When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80. I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81. There is truth to the saying that you can’t teach an old dog new tricks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82. My friends and I sympathize with each others’ problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83. In the final analysis, I’m not so sure that my life adds up to much</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84. Everyone has their weaknesses, but I seem to have more than my share</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please respond to each of the following items by circling the number that most closely corresponds to what you believe is accurate for you, on a scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>somewhat disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>slightly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>slightly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>somewhat agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

85. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.  

1  2  3  4  5  6
APPENDIX D:

SYMPTOM CHECKLIST 90, REVISED
Here is a list of things people report experiencing. Please circle how often you have experienced each of the following in the last three months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW OFTEN DID YOU:</th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have headaches</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Feel nervous or shaky inside</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Unable to get rid of bad thoughts or ideas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Suffer from fainting or dizziness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Feeling outside of your body</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Experience loss of sexual interest or pleasure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Feel critical of others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Have bad dreams</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Experience difficulty speaking when you are excited</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Have trouble remembering things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Worry about sloppiness or carelessness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Not feeling like your real self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Feel easily annoyed or irritable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Suffer from pains in the heart or chest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Suffer from itching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Feeling slowed down or low in energy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Have thoughts of ending your life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. &quot;Spacing Out&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Sweating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Trembling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Feel confused</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Have poor appetite</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW OFTEN DID YOU:</td>
<td>Not At All</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Very Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Cry easily</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Losing touch with reality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Feel shy or uneasy with the opposite sex</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Have feelings of being trapped or caught</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Feel suddenly scared for no reason</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Have temper outbursts you could not control</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Suffer from constipation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Watching yourself from far away</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Blame yourself for things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Feeling blocked or stymied in getting things done</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Feeling lonely</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Suffer from pains in the lower part of your back</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Feeling blue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Worry or stew about things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Feel no interest in things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Feel fearful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Get your feelings easily hurt</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Have to ask others what you should do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Feel that others do not understand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Feel that people are unfriendly or dislike you</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Having to do things very slowly to be sure that you are doing them right</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Feel your heart pounding or racing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Experience nausea or upset stomach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
HOW OFTEN DID YOU:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46. Feel inferior to others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Suffer from sore muscles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Suffer from loose bowels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Have to check and double check what you do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Have difficulty making decisions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Want to be alone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Have trouble getting your breath</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Hot or cold spells</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Having to avoid certain places or activities because they frighten you</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Your mind going blank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Numbness or tingling in parts of your body</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. A lump in your throat</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Feeling hopeless about the future</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Trouble concentrating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Weakness in parts of your body</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Feeling tense or keyed up</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Heavy feelings in your arms or legs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E:

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE
PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR RESPONSES ARE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. PLEASE TRY TO ANSWER AS MANY QUESTIONS AS POSSIBLE TO THE BEST OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

1. Your sex (circle one)  a. male b. female

2. Your age at last birthday

3. Your marital status?
   1. Single (never married)
   2. Married
   3. Separated
   4. Divorced
   5. Widowed

4. When you were age 12, what was the highest educational level (grade) of:
   1. your father
   2. your mother

5. At age 12, what was your family's yearly income (your best estimate). Please circle the number which applies:
   1. $5,000/yr or less ($416/mo or less)
   2. $5,000/yr to $9,999/yr ($417/mo to $832/mo)
   3. $10,000/yr to $14,999/yr ($833/mo to $1249/mo)
   4. $15,000/yr to $19,999/yr ($1250/mo to $1666/mo)
   5. $20,000/yr to $29,999/yr ($1667/mo to $2499/mo)
   6. $30,000/yr to $50,999/yr ($2500/mo to $4166/mo)
   7. $50,000/yr or more ($4167/mo or more)

6. At age 12, which of the following best describes the neighborhood in which you lived?
   1. Urban poor (e.g., mainly low-income dwellings, high unemployment, etc.)
   2. Stable working-class (e.g., mainly small, relatively inexpensive private homes)
   3. Transitional working-class (e.g., combination of low-income dwellings, small private homes, etc.)
   4. Stable middle-class (e.g., medium size and medium priced homes, educated residents)
   5. Upper middle-class or better (e.g., large, expensive homes rather affluent neighbors)

7. At age 12, which of the following best described your family's social status? (please circle)
   1. Unemployed
   2. Unskilled laborer
   3. Skilled, blue collar worker
   4. Skilled, white collar worker (e.g., sales, clerical, service jobs, etc.)
   5. Manager
   6. Professional (e.g., nurse, teacher)
   7. Executive, high-income Professional

8. Which of the following best describes your birth family's racial background? (please circle)
   1. Afro-American
   2. Latino
   3. White
   4. Asian
   5. Other _________ (please specify)
APPENDIX F:

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Childhood Experiences and Current Adjustment in College Students

I am volunteering to participate as a subject in this study. I understand that the purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of early childhood experiences and childhood family environment on later adjustment in college students. I understand that I will be asked to complete a paper and pencil questionnaire which will include questions about any childhood stressors (family death, major illness, natural disaster, physical abuse or assault, sexual abuse or assault) I may have experienced. I will also be asked questions about my psychological health, drug use, how I feel about myself and to what I attribute some of the events in my life. I am aware that some of the questions will be personal and while I may feel uncomfortable, they represent minimal risk to me.

I understand my name will NOT be included on the survey itself and that my ANONYMITY WILL BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES. I also understand that my participation in this study is voluntary, that all my questions will be answered, that I may refuse to answer any questions at any time, and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This questionnaire will take 60-90 minutes to complete.

I understand that all information collected in this study will be treated as anonymous, with no details released to anyone outside the research staff, and that the data will be reported in summary form. I understand that I may derive no specific benefit from participation in this study, except perhaps from feeling that I have contributed to the development of knowledge about childhood experiences and how they may affect later adjustment. I hereby allow this research project to publish the results of the study in which I am participating. These results will be reported in group form only.

This study has been approved by CSUSB’s Department of Psychology Institutional Review Board and is being conducted by Faith H. McClure, Ph.D., & M. Jean Peacock, Ph.D., Psychology Department, California State University, San Bernardino, (909) 880-5598/880-5579 I may contact Professors McClure or Peacock at any time with my questions, comments, or concerns. If I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may also contact the CSUSB Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, AD 128, (909) 880-5027.

By placing an “X” on the line below I am acknowledging that I freely consent to participate and that I am at least 18 years old.

Place Check Mark here

Date
APPENDIX G:

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT
DEBRIEFING

Thank you for participating in this study. As indicated in the informed consent form, the purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between childhood experiences, family environment, assumptions people have about themselves and events in their life, and current adjustment. It is hoped that the results of this study will help us gain an increased understanding of how these variables are related. We are, in particular, interested how they either increase or decrease the likelihood of good functioning in adulthood. We are also interested in finding out if childhood experiences and their impact differ in men and women and in people of different ethnic backgrounds.

If you have had a stressful childhood experience and would like to talk to a counselor or join a support group, there are several available local resources. These include CSUSB’s Student Counseling Center (housed in the Health Center, 880-5040), the Psychology Department’s Community Counseling Center (housed in the trailers on the north side of campus, 880-5569), San Bernardino County’s Department of Mental Health (387-7053) and Riverside County’s Department of Mental Health (358-4500). Information about local support groups may also be obtained from the California Self-Help Center, toll free (800) 222-link.

The results of this project will be available Spring 2001. If you have any questions about this research project or would like to find out what the results are when completed, please contact:

Faith H. McClure, Ph.D. CSUSB, Psychology Dept (Jack Brown 238) Phone: 880-5598

OR

M. Jean Peacock CSUSB, Psychology Dept (Jack Brown 224) Phone: 880-5579

Thank you.
REFERENCES


