2015

The Long-Term Impact of Divorce on College Student Autonomy

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Walden University
2015

Abstract

The Long-Term Impact of Divorce on College Student Autonomy

by

Amy Carrigan-Smith

MS, Case Western Reserve University, 1988

BA, Heidelberg University, 1980

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Walden University

May 2015

Abstract

This research study examined autonomy in young adult college students who grew up in intact households with 2 biological parents, compared to young adult college students who grew up in nonintact households without 2 biological parents due to divorce, separation, single parenthood, or death. The current literature lacks research regarding the impact of growing up in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence for young adults. In recent years, there have been fewer young adults who lived in intact households during their childhood and adolescent years. Arnett's developmental theory is that the major task during young adulthood is developing decision-making skills and accepting oneself. Healthy relationships in early adult life emerge from emotional bonding with early caregivers. The 128 participants in this study were college-aged students, ages 18–24 years, who were enrolled in higher education in a midsize city in the Midwestern United States. In this between-group causal comparative analysis of survey data, the Worthington Autonomy Scale was used to determine whether there were any differences in subdivisions of autonomy in adult college students. College students who lived in intact households during childhood or adolescence had higher levels of autonomy and perceived higher household socioeconomic status when compared to students growing up in nonintact households, with no differences in autonomy based on living with a same-sex or opposite sex parent. This research will increase awareness of the potential for decreased autonomy in college students who lived in nonintact households prior to entering college and may prompt the development of programs and support groups to address autonomy for young adult college students.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated in the memory of my mother, Pheriba (Phebe) Agerter, who always said, “You never stop learning, Amy.” In my mother’s professional career, she never had the opportunity to pursue her degree any further because she was always supporting “her girls” with our needs, both personally and professionally. Thank you, Momma, for everything! I will always love you and Dad forever … until we are together again, I will talk to you in my prayers.

Acknowledgments

This is to acknowledge the contributions of many individuals without whom this study would not have been completed. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to my colleagues Dr. Rolf Daniel, Dr. John Brinkman, Dr. Victor Kutsenok, and Ms. Kathleen Lotter.

My deepest thanks are extended to the members of my doctoral committee, Dr. Jay Greiner, Dr. Tracy Masiello, and Dr. Donna Heretick, for all of their advisement and wonderful support. Most of all, I thank my daughter, Abby, and my husband, Alan, for their patience and support through this learning process.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Marriage is one of the most important transitions in the course of an individual's life, yet many marriages end in divorce (Huston, Caughlin, Houts, & Smith, 2001), and divorce has become epidemic in U.S. culture. According to the National Center of Health Statistics (2009), there were 2,077,000 marriages in the United States during 2009 (National Center of Health Statistics, 2009). Almost 7% of the population married and 3% divorced in 2009. Current research indicates that living with both parents during childhood or adolescence has advantages. According to Santrock (2014), research has indicated that children of divorce experience greater difficulty in adjustment compared to children who have not experienced a divorced family. Adjustment problems are greater when children experience multiple divorces. Such problems include, but are not limited to, academic difficulty, delinquency, anxiety, depression, decreased social responsibility, troubled relationships, failure to finish high school, drug abuse, and earlier-than-normal sexual activity. Children of divorce also tend to display lower self-esteem (Santrock, 2014).

The long-term sequelae of stress related to living in a nonintact household seem less clear. The current literature lacks research regarding the impact on young adults of growing up in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence. Pedro-Carroll (2011) suggested that living in a nonintact home may affect the transition into young adulthood.

There are many factors that impact children of divorce's long-term adjustment (Pedro-Carroll, 2001). According to Amato (1999), less education, less income, and higher unemployment rates were experienced by young adults who grew up in a nonintact household. In addition, these same young adults experienced multiple sexual partners, entered parenthood earlier, and had more failed marriages compared to young adults who grew up in an intact household (Amato, 1999). Wallerstein and Corbin (1999) suggested that the increased incidence of divorce among young adults who grew up in nonintact households was due to exposure to their own parents' marital discord and a lack of parental role models in spousal relationships.

Compared to previous years, Cohen (2003) found young adults in the 20th century delaying autonomy and individuation. The pathway of early adulthood generally includes a series of transitions such as moving out of the family home, completing high school/and or college, finding employment, securing a longer term relationship, getting married, and becoming a parent (Kiesling, 2008). Furstenberg, Rumbaut, and Settersten (2005) found that these transitions into adulthood have lengthened and are no longer predictable. According to Arnett (2004), approximately 30% of early adults in the United States reside with one or both parents. According to Cohen, Kasen, Chen, Hartmark, and Garden (2003), many of these young adults are not leaving the household to seek independent living, and those that do live independently may return to their family home for a brief stay due to financial issues. Cohen et al. found that young adult women in particular are taking longer to enter a professional occupation.

Sirvanli-Ozen (2005) reported that young adults who came from nonintact homes during their childhood or adolescent years experienced less security in their own relationships. In addition, Sirvanli-Ozen found that living in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence had a more negative impact on relationships for women than for men with the same backgrounds.

From a more positive point of view, Lambert (2007) found that young adults who grew up in nonintact households during childhood or adolescence had a higher level of resiliency, felt closer to their family, and better understood effective and ineffective relationships.

Problem Statement

The current literature lacks research regarding the impact of living in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence on young adults. A review of the literature indicated that experiencing a divorce has minimal effects on children (Laumann_Billings & Emery, 2000), but some research has indicated that memories of parents' divorce can be long lasting and devastating.

Anderson, Worthington, Anderson, and Jennings (1994) defined *autonomy* as a process by which individuals evaluate their emotions, behaviors, values, and dependence on others by reflecting on how they see themselves in relation to others. If this process has failed, the cause may be the experience of the person's family of origin. Parents who have unhappy marriages sometimes turn to their children for emotional satisfaction and become overly dependent on them. Parents who encourage dependency needs that become demanding and excessive, even into adulthood, are interfering with their

children's ability to function as effective adults. The consequence of this dependency is prolonged adolescence, and the opposite extreme from overdependence is detachment from parents (Anderson et al., 1994).

Wallerstein and Lewis (2004) reported differences between college students who came from intact families and those who came from single-parent and/or divorced families. Thirty percent of the students from nonintact families who enrolled in college continued to receive partial or full financial support from their parents, compared to 90% of college students from intact families, and this was true for undergraduate- and graduate-level students (Wallerstain & Lewis, 2004). College students who came from divorced and/or single-parent households receiving financial support for their education tended to receive this assistance only for their freshman and sophomore years. The majority of these students' remaining higher education years usually ended abruptly, and they eventually dropped out of college due to lack of financial support (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

In the United States, high school students from intact families enter college at a higher rate (92%) than high school students from nonintact families (80%; Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Students from nonintact households who do enroll in college have a higher dropout rate due to the increased burden of college expenses compared to students coming from intact households (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Many students who come from nonintact households have to take on extra work to cover additional expenses or attend college part time (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Graduation rates are higher (90%) for students who resided in an intact household during childhood or adolescence

compared to students who resided in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence (57%). Wallerstein and Lewis (2004) also found that there were fewer students from nonintact households enrolled in disciplines such as the sciences due to their rigorous programs.

University counseling services have indicated that many students who come from nonintact households have sought out therapy during their first 2 years of college (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). These college students express a multitude of problems such as failed relationships, concerns about their parents, or current parental separation. Special courses and support groups, according to Wallerstein and Lewis (2004), might prove successful in exploring attitudes, stereotypes, challenges, and barriers for this special college student population.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine whether young adult college students who lived in nonintact households during their childhood or adolescent years displayed differences in autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) when compared to young adult college students who lived in intact households during their childhood or adolescent years. The second purpose of this study was to examine whether young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in nonintact households with the same-sex parent displayed decreased levels of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in nonintact households with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years. The third purpose of this study was to examine whether there were

differences in perceived socioeconomic status (SES) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household prior to college admission and young adult college students living in a nonintact household prior to college admission.

Cohen's (2003) research indicated that some of the transitions into young adulthood have been delayed compared to earlier generations. College students are extending their educational years and entering their professional careers much later. Marriages are occurring later in life, and the marriage rate has decreased. Because of the postponement of marriage as well as the increase in singlehood, there has been an increase in the number of adults who have chosen not to become parents (Cohen, 2003).

According to Amato and Booth (2001), SES and marital problems can be linked to a child's academic achievement. Often, parents who are experiencing marital discord are not available to assist with homework due to increased outside employment.

Nature of the Study

This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional approach, using a survey design to collect data from the participants. Demographic data were collected by asking participants to indicate their gender, age bracket, SES, and family of origin (primary rearing during childhood and/or adolescent years). The outcome variable was autonomy, which included the four constructs of family loyalty, value, emotional, and behavioral, as measured by the Worthington Autonomy Scale (WAS; Anderson et al., 1994). *Family loyalty autonomy* is defined as being independent from the family's interdependence (Anderson, 1994). *Value autonomy* is the ability to make conscientious decisions (Anderson, 1994). *Emotional autonomy* is the ability to be absent of emotional

dependence on parents. *Behavioral autonomy* is the ability to display actions without consulting with one's parents for guidance (Feldman & Wood, 1994). The participants were traditional-age (18-24 years) college students enrolled in a 4-year university in the Midwest.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and hypotheses for this study are presented below.

Research Question 1: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 1: There are no differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Alternative Hypothesis 1: There are differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or

adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 2: There are no differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Alternative Hypothesis 2: There are differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Research Question 3: What is the difference in perceived socioeconomic status (SES) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 3: There are no differences in perceived SES for young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood

or adolescent years in comparison to young adults living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years.

Alternative Hypothesis 3: There are differences in perceived SES for young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years in comparison to young adults living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years.

Theoretical Base

The following theories of development will be discussed: Arnett's Theory, Erikson's Theory, Bowlby's Theory, the Ethological Theory, the Cross Cultural Attachment Theory, the Social Cognitive Theory, the Ecological Theory, the Self Determination Theory, and the Transactional Theory of Separation.

Arnett's Theory

Arnett (2000) developed a theory of development for ages 18-25 years. Arnett explained that *emerging adulthood* occurs between adolescence and adulthood. This period refers to the time when the person is no longer a dependent (i.e., is no longer a child) yet has not entered the world where adult responsibilities begin. This is the time of independent exploration for directions in adulthood (Arnett, 2000).

According to Arnett (2000), marriage and parenthood are often postponed until the late 20s. More than half of U.S. high school students go on to college, continuing to depend on their parents for some financial support during their partial independence. The other half of this group move into independent living accompanied with full-time work.

Approximately two-thirds will cohabitate with a significant other during early adulthood (Arnett, 2000).

Arnett (2000) identified the major task during the emerging adult stage as accepting more responsibility for oneself as well as making independent decisions. Additionally, identity achievement continues to develop (Arnett, 2000). Arnett found that those emerging adults who experienced close proximity geographically to their parents were less close with their parents and experienced poorer psychological development (Arnett, 2000).

Erikson's Theory

In his work on the eight stages of the life span, Erikson proposed that individuals go through distinct, universal stages of development (Hopkins, 2000). Each of these stages confronts the individual with a crisis that must be resolved. If the crisis is resolved, the development of the individual will occur in a healthier manner (Hopkins, 2000).

Stage 1 of Erikson's psychosocial development is *trust versus mistrust*, which occurs during the first 12 months of life. If trust is established between the infant and the caregiver, the individual will easily transition into the next stage, *autonomy versus shame and doubt* (1 to 3 years). If the infant experiences emotional or physical punishment, the child will develop a sense of shame and doubt (Mossler, 2011).

Erikson's third stage occurs during the preschool years and is *initiative versus guilt*. During this time, preschoolers expand their social world, taking increased responsibility for their bodies, behavior, toys, and so forth. If the child is irresponsible and is made to feel anxious, feelings of guilt may develop (Hopkins, 2000).

The fourth stage of development occurs during the grade school years and is *industry versus inferiority*. This stage involves mastering knowledge and intellectual skills and entails the highest level of enthusiasm toward learning new things. If children develop a sense of inferiority, they may feel that they are incompetent and unproductive (Hopkins, 2000).

The fifth stage occurs during the adolescent or teen years and is the *identity versus identity confusion stage*. During this stage, the adolescent is challenged by new roles and adult statuses. If these new roles are established in a healthy manner, the adolescent will have a positive identity. If the adolescent experiences too much parental control or is unable to explore adequate roles, the adolescent will develop a confused identity (Hopkins, 2000).

Intimacy versus isolation occurs during the early adulthood stage, in which the young adult is forming intimate relationships. If these relationships prove to be positive, intimacy will be achieved. If these relationships are negative, a feeling of isolation will develop, setting the stage for future relationships to be difficult (Hopkins, 2000).

The seventh stage of Erikson's theory is *generativity versus stagnation*. This occurs during the middle adult years, when the middle adult places emphasis on how to help the younger generation to thrive. If middle adults feel that they were unsuccessful in promoting generativity, they will feel a sense of stagnation (Hopkins, 2000).

The last stage occurs in late adulthood and is referred to as *integrity versus despair*. During this stage, people reflect on their past. If they have a positive feeling of

success and accomplishment, integrity will prevail. If their past stages have been negative, people will experience a sense of despair (Hopkins, 2000).

Attachment Theory

Lopez, Melendez, and Rice (2000) referred to Bowlby's attachment theory in evaluating emotional bonding with primary caregivers and how it relates to adult intimate relationships. If a child is exposed to a positive experience with caregivers, the child is more likely to experience secure adult relationships. In contrast, if a child is exposed to an environment of neglect, intrusiveness, and emotional coldness, the child is more likely to develop an insecure adult orientation (Lopez et al., 2000).

Ethological Theory

Lorenz (1965) demonstrated through his research with graylag geese that behavior is influenced by biology, referred to as *ethological theory*. This theory is related to evolution and indicates there is a critical period in an individual's life when certain exposures must occur. Lorenz separated eggs laid by one goose into two groups. The first group he transferred back to the mother goose, and the second group he placed in an incubator. When the eggs hatched under the incubator, the goslings were only exposed to Lorenz. Later, when Lorenz placed them back with the mother, the goslings would not attach to their mother. This demonstrated a critical or sensitive period referred to as *imprinting* (Lorenz, 1965). Imprinting is innate learning that occurs within a limited period of time that involves attachment to the first moving object, as seen in the goslings (Lorenz, 1965).

Cross-Cultural Attachment Theory

According to Lopez, Melendez, and Rice (2000), there are important cross-cultural differences in how college students value their relationships with their parents, which affect the application of attachment theory. These researchers found that Black college students valued their relationships with their parents more than White college students did. There was an even higher level of value assigned to the relationship between Black college students and their mothers as compared to White college students and their mothers. In addition, Lopez, Melendez, and Rice reported that Black college students experienced lower levels of social adjustment and had less emotional support from their fathers than White college students did (Lopez et al., 2000).

Social Cognitive Theory

Watson and Tharp (2007) reviewed social cognitive theory. This theory indicates that behaviors are learned through social interactions within the environment. Behaviors are gained through observational learning and how cognitive processes are impacted by the environment (Watson & Tharp, 2007).

Ecological Theory

Bronfenbrenner (2004) explored environmental systems and how they interface with human development. He identified five systems: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. The *microsystem* is the environment and the family. The *mesosystem* is the relationship between all of the parts of the microsystem. If children feel rejected, they have negative experiences with relationships. The *exosystem* is described as links to social settings that could be

disrupted if the child transfers to another environment due to the separation of the parents. The *macrosystem* involves the culture that is passed on from generation to generation. The last system is the *chronosystem*. This system contains environmental events and transitions in life (Bronfenbrenner, 2004).

Self-Determination Theory

Friendly and Grolnick (2009) focused their research using self-determination theory (SDT). SDT identifies three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Hollifield & Conger, 2014). According to Friendly and Grolnick, if a person grows up in a nonintact household, the parents may become more controlling and interrupt the existing level of autonomy the child has already achieved.

To develop autonomy, Zhang and Fuligni (2006) contended, an adolescent must receive appropriate adult reactions. Behavior autonomy involves adolescents' ability to independently govern their own behaviors. Some researchers have considered emotional autonomy a normative life event that occurs when adolescents detach from their parents (Olivia & Parra, 2009). Others have expressed that this detachment is not the norm, considering it the consequence of negative family relationships. Research has concluded that adolescent boys and girls need to develop themselves as autonomous individuals and keep positive relationships with others, including their parents (Olivia & Parra, 2009).

Transactional Theory of Separation

According to Worthington (1988), autonomy is a metaconstruct consisting of emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral constructs or subdimensions, and psychological maturity consists of autonomy, social responsibility, and interpersonal

competence. These three concepts have been based on emotional, behavioral, and value autonomy (Worthington et al., 1988). *Family loyalty autonomy* is defined as being independent from the family's connection (Anderson, 1994). *Value autonomy* is the ability to make conscientious decisions (Anderson, 1994). *Emotional autonomy* is the ability to be absent of emotional dependence on parents. Anderson (1994) explained through the transactional theory of separation that parents held their children through a binding process to be closely connected with the family for autonomy. The affective and cognitive processes interface with emotional, behavioral, and value autonomy (Anderson, 1994).

Furstenburg (2001) stated that children who grew up in nonintact households experienced less parenting as well as less quality time with their parents. Their parents displayed a more permissive parenting style, lacking the involvement in their children's regulation and control. Furstenburg further explained that because of lack of financial resources, parents in nonintact households were not able to provide financial assistance for advanced education.

Operational Definitions

Autonomy: Independence or freedom. More specifically, *autonomy* can be defined as practicing adult roles and responsibilities. There are four aspects of autonomy: behavioral, emotional, family loyalty, and value loyalty (Anderson et al., 1994). Worthington (1998) defined autonomy as the quality of being self-governing, with this definition being sensitive to social and cultural factors contributing to apparent discrepancies in findings in gender and autonomy.

Behavioral autonomy: Involves becoming independent and free enough to act on one's own without excessive dependence on others for guidance (Anderson et al., 1994).

Divorce: Permanent termination of a marriage (Anderson et al., 1994).

Emotional autonomy: Becoming free of childish emotional dependence on parents (Anderson et al., 1994).

Family loyalty autonomy: Being independent from the family's connection (Anderson, 1994).

Intact family. Family in which both biological parents reside in the same household with their offspring (Anderson et al., 1994).

Nonintact family: Family in which there is only one biological parent residing in the same household with his or her offspring (Anderson et al., 1994).

Separation: Defined as a married couple living in separate households and contemplating ending the marriage through divorce (Anderson et al., 1994).

Single parenthood: May result from death of a spouse, divorce, separation, abandonment, or choice (Anderson et al., 1994).

Value autonomy: The ability to make conscientious decisions (Anderson, 1994).

Limitations and Scope of Study

One limitation of this study was that the sample group consisted of students who had received a high school diploma; the sample therefore did not represent the population that dropped out of school or chose not to further an academic education. Another limitation was that the sample was drawn from a midsize city located in the Midwest; the findings may not be appropriate to generalize to areas with larger or smaller populations.

Another limitation was that the 4-year institution that participants attended included students who were not from the geographic area in which the institution was located. Geographic origin would be less of a variable in a community college in which most students live near the institution and attend because of convenience. In addition, the participants were 30% Catholic and 70% non-Catholics, enrolled in a university which is church related. The gender ratio of the university is 70% female and 30% male; thus, there is the possibility of a gender-biased outcome. Finally, the 4-year institution is a private university that has a higher tuition cost compared to public institutions. Grants and scholarships are received by approximately 40% of the students at this institution, compared to approximately 60% at public institutions. This could have affected the sample group, as these students may not have experienced financial hardships. For those who do experience financial hardship at the college, resources are available for assistance.

The research design for this study was based on between-group causal comparative analyses. A survey method was used to gather information from the sample population through the use of questionnaires with items on participants' gender, age bracket, ethnicity, SES, and family of origin.

The obligation to analyze and report research fairly and accurately was met, and the welfare and dignity of the participants were preserved. I sought to minimize any discomfort and risk involved in the study through measures such as the guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity. Risk associated with participation was minimal to nonexistent. Students were not penalized if they decided not to participate.

Random variables were uncontrolled, such as differences among the participants such as degree majors, religion, and race. Variables such as personality and research conditions such as the course in which the survey was administered and the professor implementing the survey could limit the consistency of the study's results.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to scientific knowledge of the effects of divorce because it demonstrates the sequelae of relationships in the early adult developmental stage, whereas most previous studies concentrated on the sequelae of relationships of children and adolescents.

The potential for social change created by this study is significant. Educators and school counselors in high schools could develop specific programs to help build self-esteem for their students who suffer from parental divorce. Tools for success in areas such as autonomy, financial planning, educational aspirations, and relationships could be developed or enhanced to assist high school students affected by divorce. Demographic planners for the future could benefit from this study in calculating needs for a dwindling population if divorce continues to increase and the increase in childless couples and individuals. College administrators could develop programs to assist their students in setting realistic, attainable goals for completion of their degrees in a timely manner as well as curricula for successful financial planning and autonomy. In addition, college administrators may develop programs to help foster independent living success.

Summary

A good deal of research establishes the significance of the impact of single parenting on childhood development, but minimal research has been conducted on the long-term sequelae of the young adult college student, as cited in the theoretical bases of this study. Much of the research in this area has concentrated on problematic behavior during divorce proceedings, and the majority of the outcomes that have been addressed have been objective indexes of maladjustment in children, not young adults. Common patterns that have been identified in college students who come from divorced households and drop out of college have been cited.

Chapter 2 contains a review of the existing literature comparing the developmental stages of early, middle, and adolescent childhood for children residing in intact households with those of children residing in nonintact households. The chapter begins with past and current research on parent-child attachment that does not rule out the possibility that children always do better when raised by both biological parents in the same household. Additional topics covered in the review include the impact of divorce; absent fathers; socioeconomic impacts of divorce; behavioral, emotional, and theoretical constructs of divorce; and differences between sons and daughters.

In addition, the literature review explores life transformations of those affected by single-parent households. Studies have found that of high school seniors in the United States, 92% of seniors from intact households pursue higher education, compared to 80% of seniors from single-parent households (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). The literature review continues with a discussion of the limited resources that may result from the

impact of divorce during the childhood/adolescent years. The chapter ends with implications of past research and its influence on this research.

Chapter 3 contains a description of the methodology used to study the research questions. The research design for this study was based on between-group causal comparative analyses of survey data. The chapter includes descriptions of the sample population, procedures, ethical considerations, measures, and analyses of the data. In Chapter 4, I describe the results of the study in descriptive and inferential format as well as with tables. Investigations of assumptions as they relate to descriptive and inferential analysis are discussed, along with ethical considerations. In Chapter 5, I explore further interpretations of the findings. Additionally, I discuss the limitations of this study as well as directions for further research. The chapter concludes with implications for social change and recommendations for action.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review established the need for continued research on the effects of nonintact households on young adults. Many studies have indicated the negative effects of growing up in a household where the parents divorced or living with a single parent for children and adolescents compared to children and adolescents who grow up in intact households. Amato (2001) found that compared to children growing up in intact households, children growing up in nonintact households experienced more problems in school, became sexually active earlier, and had higher rates of depression, juvenile delinquency, and use of illicit drugs. Those children or adolescents who lost a parent through divorce usually experienced less attachment with the noncustodial parent. If the child or adolescent of divorce experienced increased attachment with the noncustodial parent, adjustment was more positive (Amato, 2001).

The literature indicates that living in a nonintact household during the child or adolescent years has a negative impact on the early adulthood stages of development. Early adults who experienced nonintact households during their growing years have been found to have poor psychological development, financial problems (often working in lower income jobs), and marital problems (Arnett, 2000).

Literature Search

The theoretical framework of this dissertation addresses the family structure and how it influences child development through the impact of family processes. A search of the literature was conducted through electronic psychology and medical databases such

as Academic Search Premier, Primary Search, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS, MEDLINE, ERIC, ProQuest, and CINAHL. The list of search terms used to conduct the literature search included *autonomy*, *emotional autonomy*, *divorce*, *single parenthood*, *adjustment*, and *college students*. Articles reviewed for this study were obtained digitally as well as traditionally through existing print versions of professional journals.

Theoretical Framework

Attachment occurs when infants develop bonds with their mothers (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). This attachment functions as a survival mechanism to keep children near their parents, on whom they depend for survival. Bowlby (1988) viewed parents as providing a secure environment for their children where they allow them to build up their confidence to reach out into the world but let them know that when they return, they will feel welcomed. If the child feels distressed or frightened, the child will be comforted. Additionally, parents create an environment for their children that is encouraging, and parents intervene when necessary (Bowlby, 1988). The development of a secure attachment between infant and parent provides a basis for emotional health and coping in later life. Attachment also facilitates cognitive development in childhood, leading to self-confidence to explore the world. The developmental experience of secure attachment also promotes healthier love relationships in adulthood (Bowlby, 1988).

Lopez, Melendez, and Rice (2000) referred to Bowlby's (1988) attachment theory in evaluating emotional bonding with primary caregivers and how it relates to adult intimate relationships. If children are exposed to positive experiences with their

caregivers, they will experience secure adult relationships more often. In contrast, if children are exposed to an environment of neglect, intrusiveness, and emotional coldness, they will be more likely to develop an insecure adult orientation (Lopez et al., 2000).

Bronfenbrenner (2004) explored environmental systems and how they interface with human development. Bronfenbrenner identified five systems: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. The *microsystem* is composed of the environment and the family. The *mesosystem* is the relationship between all of the parts of the microsystem. If children feel rejected, they have negative experiences with relationships. The *exosystem* is described as links to social settings, which could be disrupted if the child transfers to another environment due to the separation of the parents. The *macrosystem* involves the culture that is passed on from generation to generation. The last system is the *chronosystem*. This system contains environmental events and transitions in life (Bronfenbrenner, 2004).

Sharte and Cole (2006) explored the effect of changing relationship status and potential divorce on attachment for recent college graduates. The researchers found that those recent graduates whose parents had separated reported higher levels of distress as compared to college graduates whose parents' marriage was intact.

Friendly and Grolnick (2009) focused their research using self-determination theory (SDT). SDT identifies three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. *Autonomy* involves a person feeling independent and having the ability to choose *Competence* is experienced when people feel that they have had an impact on their environment. Finally, *relatedness* is present when people are satisfied with their

social connections (Hollifield & Conger, 2014). According to Friendly and Grolnick, in a nonintact household, some parents may become more controlling and interrupt the existing level of autonomy the child has already achieved.

Ryab and Deci (2000) proposed that self-motivation is enhanced when competence, autonomy, and relatedness are achieved in accordance with SDT. If these three psychological needs have been met, a person will perform more persistently, will be more creative, and will experience improved mental health. In contrast, if these psychological needs have not been met, self-motivation will decrease.

Ryan and Deci (2000) suggested that interpersonal attachment to parents and supportive individuals helps people develop from less mature external motivation to more internalized motivation. As the individual's motivation becomes more autonomous, it does not necessarily become more independent of other people.

Erikson (1984) was one of the most influential theorists of personality development. Erikson believed that the psychosocial development of the personality lasted the entire life of a person. He felt that people's inner instincts and drives were a result of interaction with culture and social demands. The main basis of development is the sense of one's identity. People must develop their own concepts of themselves, along with sets of personal values and goals. If this process is not experienced or is interrupted, Erikson contended, a person will become confused, and the sense of identity will be disrupted.

In Erikson's (1984) theory of development, Stage 4 builds on identity with the development of intimacy. Intimacy is the ability to fuse one's identity with someone

else's without fear that one will lose something oneself. For those whose identities are weak or unformed, relationships will remain shallow, and a sense of isolation or loneliness may be experienced.

Erikson (1968) believed that identity versus identity confusion is the major conflict of adolescence. In early adulthood, this stage should have been achieved, leading to the sixth stage of development, intimacy versus isolation. Intimacy is defined as finding oneself while losing oneself in another person, or committing to another person. If identity is not developed during adolescence, then the sixth developmental stage will result in isolation. Early adulthood involves balancing intimacy and commitment as well as independence and freedom. Young adults who have not effectively developed autonomy from their parents may have difficulty in interpersonal relationships as well as careers.

Arnett (2004) wrote about the emerging adult group in the late 1990s. *Emerging adulthood* refers to the time it takes adolescents to become full-fledged adults. In today's world, adolescents are not graduating from high school, entering the workforce, marrying, and becoming parents in the same pattern as in the past. All of these stepping stones have been delayed approximately 4 to 5 years.

According to Arnett (2004), there are five major tasks for the emerging adult. *Identity exploration* involves looking at the possibilities for one's life in a variety of areas such as love and work. In what ways will emerging adults be like their parents, and in what ways will they be different? Another task is *positive instability*, whereby young people find their way by trial and error. This is exemplified through changing majors in

college, selecting various living arrangements, choosing various partners, and so forth (Arnett, 2004). Arnett's third task is focusing on the self. During this time, people express more of their emotions than at any other time in life. They are caught between parental supervision and reaching out into the world of work, independent living, relationships, and procreation. The fourth task is *feeling in between*, having one foot on the side of being dependent on one's parents and one foot on the side of being independent of one's parents. The last task is *imagining possibilities*. Those who grew up in an environment that was difficult due to experiences such as poverty, abuse, parental breakup, single parenthood, latchkey, and so forth may make decisions to avoid repeating these experiences in their adulthood, with these decisions affecting potential relationships and parenthood (Arnett, 2004).

Pedro-Carroll (2001) found three commonalities in experiences of divorce. First, divorce is not a single event. There are many transitions that occur within the family as well as developmental factors for children. Second, divorce involves change. Finally, the changes that occur involve economics, environment, peers, and family relationships (Pedro-Carroll, 2001). The effects of these changes are not experienced equally among family members. One member of the family may see the divorce as positive, whereas another member may feel it as a traumatic loss. Children vary in adjustment over time, but the highest level of adjustment occurs at the beginning of the divorce (Pedro-Carroll, 2001).

Furstenburg (2001) stated that parents who divorced were unable to provide adequate levels of physical and emotional supervision for their children due to increased

stress associated with being single parents. When a child resides in an intact household, there is a larger network of individuals to intervene in the child's life (Furstenburg, 2001).

According to Lopez, Melendez, and Rice (2000), there are cross-cultural differences in the application of attachment theory related to differences in how college students value their relationships with their parents. These researchers found that Black college students valued their relationships with their parents more than White college students did. There was an even higher value given to the relationship between Black college students and their mothers compared to White college students and their mothers. In addition, Lopez, Melendez, and Rice reported that Black college students experienced lower levels of social adjustment and had less emotional support from their fathers (Lopez et al., 2000). Lopez, Melendez, and Rice also reported in that Hispanic families, there was a high level of family loyalty and strong traditional gender roles. College students from minority backgrounds depend more on their families for support in adjusting to college life (Lopez et al., 2000).

Absent Fathers

According to Krohn and Bogan (2001), an *absent father* is defined as a man who does not have a significant role in his child's development due to his absence through divorce, death, or abandonment. These researchers examined the effects of a father's absence during his daughter's development and college attendance (Krohn & Bogan, 2001).

Krohn and Bogan (2001) indicated that the amount of contact a girl has with her father impacts her development. The researchers found that adolescent girls experiencing little contact with their fathers experienced difficulty in maintaining intimate relationships. These girls would often end their relationships abruptly or become sexually promiscuous (Krohn & Bogan, 2001). If a daughter loses contact with her father before the age of 7 years, she experiences a decrease in her broader social environment and relationships outside of her family. Females tend to be more focused on their family and close relationships when they experience abandonment by their father (Krohn & Bogan, 2001). If the daughter loses her father through death, she could have a more positive concept of her father. Krohn and Bogan found that girls who lose their fathers before the age of 5 years "shy away from physical contact with males and rarely smile" (p. 591).

According to Lamb (1997), studies have revealed that among people of lower SES, family instability and financial stress lead to divorce. In addition, if the father abandons his child because of the divorce the child's cognitive functioning could decrease. Problem-solving skills are impaired due to the existence of fewer potential role models for the child.

Hans (2008) found that females who did not have a father figure had more difficulties when they entered college. The cost of higher education typically is not affordable for the single mother. In addition, if there is a stressful relationship between the mother and the biological father, there is less chance for the father to assist with tuition (Hans, 2008). Krohn and Bogan (2008) explained that daughters who do not have a father present in their lives are more likely to enter the workforce than to enter college.

In comparison, sons who do not have a father present are more likely to go to college. In addition, women enter the workforce to gain financial independence from men (Krohm & Bogan, 2008).

Historically, according to Elium and Elium (1994), women were felt to be inferior at math and careers focusing on math were dominated with males in the work world. This historical belief has been found to be a myth. This trend continues to prevail today, however, possibly due to teachers in the classroom still subscribing to this myth. Elium and Elium suggested that women may be more likely to enter professional disciplines typically dominated by males if they have received support from their fathers. The more support a daughter receives from her father academically, the higher the likelihood is that she will feel comfortable pursuing a professional discipline dominated by men (Elium & Elium, 1994).

Krohn and Bogan (2001) stressed that father-daughter relationships are of upmost importance. Their research indicated that daughters who grew up in nonintact households were more likely to marry in their teen years, become teen parents, and mother their children as single parents than daughters from intact households were. Teenage mothers who do marry are also more likely to have their marriages end in divorce (Krohn & Bogan, 2001).

Cartwright (2008) reported that the majority of the stress that children and adolescents experience when their parents divorce is related to their fathers. They found that adult children often blamed the circumstances of their parents' divorce on their fathers' actions. These adult children also expressed sadness when their fathers were not

more involved in their lives. These same adult children also felt that their fathers never loved them (Cartwright, 2008).

Stamps, Booth, and King (2009) examined differences in noncustodial fathers' relational investments in their sons and daughters. Past research had conflicting and inconclusive results regarding the differences between noncustodial fathers with their sons and daughters. Stamps et al. provided more definite findings concerning the differences between daughters and sons in relation to nonresident fathering and adolescent well-being. Their study produced results displaying equal involvement of the nonresident father with their daughters and sons. Sons felt significantly closer to their fathers than daughters did. Sons were more involved in sports and overnight stays, which could have contributed to more shared interests with their fathers. Daughters, however, were found to process their internal feelings better (Stamps et al., 2009).

Another important finding from this study was that sons had better relationships with their resident mothers than daughters did (Stamps et al., 2009). Typically, sons felt that their mothers displayed more warmth, loving behaviors, and better communication compared to their fathers. The researchers also indicated that daughters during of aadolescence are distancing themselves from their mothers and that sons may have a lower standard of the definition of closeness (Stamps et al., 2009).

How Family Relationships Affect Children

Glen (1998) found one third of marriages were positive after 16 years. This research cited relationship development following the marriage as well as previous experience before the marriage.

Amato and Rogers (1997) found that the timing of life transitions, relationships, and well-being effected the tenure of a marriage. Premarital sex resulting in pregnancy during adolescence could negatively affect a marriage. Some adolescence from nonintact homes may seek marriage or cohabitation as an escape, leading to unhappy relationships (Amato & Rogers, 1997).

According to O'Leary and Cascardi (1998), children of divorce who were exposed to violence between their parents may experience physical abuse or may be the abuser in their own relationships (O'Leary & Cascardi, 1998). Amato and Booth (1997) indicated that their research has found that children of divorce experience less marital happiness, and are more likely to divorce. These researchers have also found that if there is no distress with the parents prior to the divorce, the children do not display unhappy marriages of their own (Amato & Booth, 1997).

Caspi and Elder (1988) found children who experienced parental conflict displayed behavior problems as a child and as an adult. Sons who experienced fathers with no marital problems displayed more positive interaction in their own marriages (Caspi & Elder, 1988). In contrast, sons who experienced mothers with no marital problems displayed more negative interaction in their own marriages. Daughters reported no differences (Caspi & Elder, 1988).

Conger, Cui, Bryant, and Elder (2000) researched 193 families and found that when young adolescents were expose to a warm and supportive environment, they replicated these behaviors in their own relationships as adults. In contrast, if these young

adolescents experienced cold and nonsupportive environments, they displayed poorer relationship satisfaction (Conger et al., 2000).

Hetherington (1999) found that full biological siblings whom are raised in stepfamilies tend to be less close than those raised in intact homes. Boys tend to be more distanced from their siblings and this distancing can be carried into adulthood (Hetherington, 1999).

Most children whose parents remarry will experience a half sibling or step sibling. These new siblings have the potential to cause disruption and changed ranking within the family status. Overall, most step siblings do get along reasonably well due to their relationships being more casual and less intense. Half siblings and full siblings appear to be more intense and have the same kind of relationships than those of full or half siblings. They have fewer positive and fewer extremely negative interactions (Anderson, 1999).

Amato and Booth (1991) researched the effects of relationships between children and parents following a divorce. Children who maintain a close relationship with their parents, whether it be the custodial or noncustodial parent, did not experience problems when compared with children who came from intact households (Amato & Booth, 1991).

Lansford (2009) reported that half of the marriages in the United States who had offspring would result in a divorce. All of those children experiencing a break-up of their parents' marriages would experience negative developmental outcomes. Some of these negative outcomes are higher levels of inappropriate behaviors, poor academic performance, and poor social relationships. Lansford also indicated that these children of divorce would experience long term effects in social, emotional, and psychological

functioning. Lansford reported that those children and adolescents that experienced an intact household would only experience 10% of the above identified negative developmental outcomes (Lansford, 2009).

The timing of the divorce impacts the developmental outcome at which the child experiences their parent's divorce. Younger children are more focused on abandonment, blame themselves, and/or less likely to seek assistance from outside the family such as counseling services (Lansford, 2009). In contrast, adolescents are in a developmental stage where identity development, academic achievement, and romantic relationships may be affected (Lansford, 2009).

In previous studies, Lansford (2009) explained that researchers did not look at the time between when the parents divorced and when the researchers did their assessment. Lansford recommended that it would be important to compare research in relation to times between divorce and assessment (Lanford, 2009).

Parenting conflict often increases during predivorce resulting in decreased family cohesion. Marital conflict can increase depression, anxiety, and stress on the parent resulting in poor parenting skills (Lansford, 2009).

Amato and Afifi (2006) found that parental divorce conflict resulted in adolescents having feelings of having to choose which parent to support and this contributed to the adolescents' depression and deviance. If there was no conflict between the postdivorced parents, adolescents were less likely to experience the feelings of having to choose between their parents, depression, and deviance (Amato & Affifi, 2006).

Parents should never expect their children to submit to allegiance, forcing them to choose one parent over the other (Amato & Afifi, 2006).

Parents who displayed overt conflict to each other during their child rearing years whom did not divorce experienced negative outcomes when their children became adults. Their children visited less often and had less of an emotional tie compared to parents who did not display overt conflict during their child rearing years (Amato & Afifi, 2006).

Amato and Afifi (2006) also identified three options which produced stress for children who experienced the feeling of being caught between their parents' postdivorce. Children who try to maintain equal relationships with both parents who are in conflict after their divorce may experience an aversive state of dissonance. The second option is siding with one parent resulting in losing the support of the out casted parent. In addition, it causes conflict with the out casted parent's extended family. Guilt feeling may develop with the child due to the abandonment of the out casted parent. The final option is rejecting both divorced parents resulting in a substantial loss of close relationships with both parents (Amato & Afifi, 2006).

Socioeconomic Impact of Divorce

Pryor and Rogers (2001) indicated that families who are intact are different from families that are nonintact. Some of the indicators of divorce, according to Pryor and Rogers, are lower levels of education which is related with lower work incomes. Also, the researchers found that marrying at an early age results more often in a divorce. Children whose parents have divorced are more likely to have experienced poverty or a decline in their standard of living than children whose families are stable. Children's

economic status decreases after their parents' divorce. Most children live with their mother, and the woman's standard of living declines by an average of 27% postdivorce (Peterson, 1996). Because of this, the children lose the security of their lifestyle they once were used to. Examples of this adjustment to lower income might be moving to a smaller house, often in a different neighborhood, or even in a different school district. The child may have to give up extracurricular activities such as dance lessons. Some children may need to get a part time job to help support their family (Peterson, 1996).

Amato (1988) found that lower vocational aspirations and achievement are often a result of changed financial status of the family who experiences a divorce (Amato, 1988). Adolescents in single parent households have a lower level of academic achievement therefore leading to a lower income as adults. The percentage of children from two parent families who graduated from college and went on to do graduate work was almost double that of single parent families (Krein, 1986).

Amato and Booth (1997) identified SES as an indicator with the child's ability to excel academically. Financial stress increases parental discord thus distracting parents' availability for assistance with homework and encouragement for educational achievement. The long term effects could negatively impact the future of the child's potential earnings (Amato & Booth, 1997).

Sun and Li (2002) found that those families who were experiencing parental discord prior to the divorce, the children and adolescents felt a decline in parental trust, income, and money saved for college about three years before the actual discord. One year before the divorce, the income continued to decrease much faster (Sun & Li, 2002).

Emotional Impact of Divorce

Immediate emotional reactions to parents divorcing are well documented. Some of these reactions might be shock and disbelief if the adolescent has not realized the extent of the marital problems. Another reaction might be fear, anxiety, and insecurity about the future. The most common reactions among adolescents are anger and hostility toward the parent that caused the divorce, if identified (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Another reaction is self-blame and guilt feeling that they are the cause of the divorce and that is why the (noncustodial) parent is leaving. Also, a common behavior is to hide the pre divorce period from their peers (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

Postdivorce finds the adolescent having difficulty adjusting to the absence of one parent, which could lead to a period of mourning and grief, not similar to the mourning grieving process related to the loss of a parent through death. Feelings of sadness, dejection, and even depression can be commonly experienced by the adolescent (Burns & Dunlop, 1999).

After the divorce, parents may begin to develop new relationships such as dating and become emotionally involved with someone not identified as the adolescent's parent. This can produce jealousy and resentfulness towards this intruder because they have to share their parent. If the parent should remarry, the adolescents are confronted with more adjustments (Burns & Dunlop, 1999).

Burns and Dunlop (1999) found that these negative emotions do not last. Three years postdivorce, most of the adolescents expressed that their feelings of sadness and shock greatly decreased and were replaced with feelings of relief and gladness that the

conflict (parents' divorce) had ended. Ten years after the divorce, the gladness and relief continued to increase, but still many adolescents expressed anger toward one of their parents, usually the father (Burns & Dunlop, 1999).

Wallerstein (1991) did a 15 year longitudinal study of children who came from divorced families and found that almost half of the children who were entering young adulthood experienced feelings of worry, underachievement, anger, and loss of self-worth. These young adults often practiced inappropriate behaviors such as engaging in multiple and impulsive relationships, and experienced divorces in their marriages (Wallerstein, 1991). Cherlin and Furstenberg (1989) felt that this study was invalid because of the sample size, there was no control group, and the participants were already seeking clinical assistance (Cherlin & Furstenburg, 1989).

Zill, Morrison, and Coiro (1993) did a similar study and found that among 18 to 22 year olds who resided in a nonintact household during their child and adolescent years experienced poorer relationships with their fathers than their mothers. Twenty-five percent did not complete high school, and almost half engaged in psychological services (Zill, et al., 1993). Riggio (2001) found that relationships with siblings seem to be affected when an adolescent experiences divorce in their family (Riggio, 2001).

Overall, Zill et al., (1993) research found similar results compared to Wallerstein (1991). Their findings confirmed that children and adolescents whose parents' divorce are at an increased risk of lower academic performance, more likely to engage in delinquency, get along less well with their peers, engage in more precocious sexual activity, and more likely to use drugs (Zill et al., 1993).

Amato (2001) performed a meta-analysis of divorce outcomes and found children who lived in nonintact households scored lower on measures of academic performance, appropriate conduct, psychological adjustment, perception of the self, and social relations (Amato, 2001).

Amato and Booth (2001) found that there was almost double the impact of children requiring psychological counseling from nonintact households compared to those children residing in intact households. The researchers did site that the higher level of counseling services for those children residing in nonintact households could be the results of court ordered counseling. (Amato & Booth, 2001). Amato and Booth (1997) also felt that divorce could sometimes be seen as an improvement if the children were subjected to high levels of conflict prior to the divorce. They also found that 70 % of predivorce conflict is not high and those children coming from these households may have a more difficult time adjusting to a divorce (Amato & Booth, 1997).

Pedro-Carroll (2001) found parents who are experiencing a divorce were not able to provide the emotional support for their children compared to parents who were married. According to Pedro-Carroll, a mother who was experiencing a divorce could improve the impact of stress on her children if she would be more attentive to her children's emotional needs and provide a more positive environment (Pedro-Carroll, 2001).

Cognitive psychologists have identified adolescence as the developmental period in which personal memories are most dense. Parrish and Dostal (1988) demonstrated that parental divorce has a detrimental effect on the self-concept, self- esteem, and self-image

of children. Research has continued to confirm the relationship between parental divorce and lower self-concepts or self-evaluations. Fifth grade children from both divorced and intact families had self-concept scores that were within the normal expected range, but the self-concept scores of children from divorced families were lower than those of intact families (Beer, 1989). Similar findings occurred with Studer (1993).

Wadsby and Svedin (1993) did research on self-image. Their findings found no significance between children from intact families compared to children from nonintact families.

In a study by Caldavella, Christensen, Young, and Densley (2011), reported that there were fewer absences and tardiness from students who resided in an intact household compared to students who resided in a nonintact household. The researchers also found higher academic performance and higher teacher ratings for behavior with students who resided in intact households. Adolescents who came from nonintact households whose mothers displayed lower levels of depression, had higher levels of education, and minimal contact with their ex-spouses, displayed higher academic performance (Caldavella et al., 2011).

Mustonen, Huurre, Kiviruusu, Haukkala, and Aro (2011) reported that females have a higher level of negative impact when their parents' divorce compared to males when their parents' divorce, evidenced in intimate relationships in adulthood. In most cases when a divorce occurs, the mother is the major caregiver of the former couple's offspring. Through gender identification, daughters adopt similar beliefs that of their mothers' emotions of failed marriages. These daughters would have established a

preconception of marriage which would instill distrust, promote negative couple communication, and so forth (Mustonen et al., 2011).

Behavioral Impact of Divorce

Gottman and Gottman (1999) indicated that conflicted marriages with potential for reconciliation posed risks for children due to the fact of uncertainty and instability. Once their parents have decided not to divorce, the children may fear that their parents may change their mind later, and proceed with the divorce (Gottman & Gottman, 1999). Couples in marriages that are in trouble may wait approximately six years before they seek professional clinical intervention (Gottman & Gottman, 1999).

There is minimal research regarding college students and alcohol use in reference to growing up in an intact or nonintact household during their child or adolescent years. In a study done by Billingham, Wilson, and Gross (1999), household family membership was examined to see if the structure was a variable in college student drinking. The findings of this research found that that there was no noticeable differences in levels of consumption between college students who come from intact households versus nonintact households. However, college students who come from nonintact households were more likely to drive after they had consume alcohol, were not aware that they were intoxicated when driving, and continued to drink while driving (Billingham & et al., 1999).

In a longitudinal study done by Needle, Su, and Doherty (1990), adolescents from 508 families found that those whose parents were divorcing were found to have greater overall drug involvement. In another study by Flewelling and Bauman (1990), 2,102 adolescents (ages 12 to 14) and their mothers was used to assess the relationship between

family structure and experience with cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and sexual intercourse. The results showed higher levels of experience from adolescents from single parent households. Jenkins and Zunguze (1998) reported that drug use is more likely to come from homes in which parents have remarried compared to those families who remained single, or never divorced.

Thomas, Farrell, and Barnes (1996) found a correlation between father absences and delinquency. Those adolescents who came from homes with the father absent had a higher frequency of delinquency. Those children who come from intact families are less likely to be arrested and put in jail, and mothers of adolescents coming from homes of absent fathers have fewer resources to fall back upon when their children experience delinquent behavior (Thomas et al., 1996). It could be the family conflict that caused the disruption, but it has been found that fathers who are cold, rejecting, punitive, neglectful, and mistrusting produce children who are more delinquent (Thomas et al., 1996). Another factor to be considered is that hard to handle children may have been a factor in the marital break-up, so once the divorce has occurred, these children usually continue to display psychological problems (Thomas et al., 1996).

The influence of divorce extends into adulthood according to Amato and Keith (1991). These researchers found those adults who grew up in an intact home during their child or adolescent years were more likely to attend college. Those adults who grew up in nonintact households were less likely to attend college. In addition, the adults who grew up in nonintact households were more likely to cohabitate without marriage, to have children at an early age, and suffer from mental health issues (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Amato and DeBoer (2001) found that those who were the children of divorce were twice as likely of getting divorced themselves compared to those who came from intact families. Further findings showed that the children of parents who had low levels of marital satisfaction but did not divorce, were not at such risk. The risk of divorce for young adults who experienced a divorce in their childhood was most likely if one's parents showed a low level of marital satisfaction prior to their divorce (Amato & DeBoer, 2001). One explanation to support these findings is the social learning theory. Children tend to model their behavior after that of their parents, imitating parental behavior that is detrimental to successful marriage and prone to divorce. Another explanation is that when children who have experienced a divorce during their childhood marry, they are more apprehensive about the marriage as well as show lower commitment to their marriage. They also tend to be more hesitant about marriage, often claiming that they will never marry (Glenn & Kramer, 1987). Lastly, children from divorced families marry earlier because of a possible emotional need or to escape from an unpleasant home situation. Marriages that occur at a younger age have also been related to failure (Booth & Edwards, 1985).

Researchers Richmond and Stocker (2007) evaluated differences in appraisals of marital discord of children and adolescents. Their findings explained that as children aged, self-blame decreased, and this change is attributed toward cognitive development differences in adolescence as well as socialization patterns (Richmond & Stocker, 2007). As the child emerges into adolescence, less time is spent with the family and more time

with peers offering opportunities for positive experiences diluting the negative experience of a parental divorce (Richmond & Stocker, 2007).

Single-Parent Families

According to the U.S. Bureau of Census (2000), it was reported that almost one-third of children in the United States will grow up in a nonintact household. This number increases for children who are minorities. Almost 60% of African American children and 35% of Hispanic children will grow up in a nonintact household (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000).

There are very few single parent households resulting from the death of a parent. Most single-parent households occur because either no spouse was ever present (the mother never married), the spouses have divorced, or the spouse is absent. In most single-parent households, the mother is the single parent (Lehman, Lee, & Escalante, 2004).

Silverberg-Koerner, Wallace, Jacobs-Lehan, Lee and Escalante (2004) found in their research, divorced mothers often talk to their daughters about sensitive topics such as financial concerns, anger, complaints, and so forth regarding the divorce, shifting boundaries regarding mother daughter relationships and disclosing personal concerns. According to the researchers, this may increase problems with the adolescent's emotional well-being, and structural family systems theorists find this behavior not surprising and feel the mothers are putting their daughters at risk (Silverberg-Koerner et al., 2004)).

According to Silverberg-Koerner et al., (2004), there is minimal research regarding confidant relationships between mothers and their sons. These findings did indicate that adolescent sons are exposed to sensitive maternal information at the same

level as daughters during the first two years after the divorce. The information shared by their divorced mothers involved financial concerns and anger issues with the ex-husband (Silverberg-Koerner et al., 2004).

Equal experiences between both sexes were expressed by sons and daughters regarding emotional or behavioral adjustment. Silverberg-Koerner et al., found that most of the adolescents (both sexes) had asked their mothers to stop with the disclosures and the majority who had mothers who were self-disclosing described their mothers as annoying. Some of these adolescents even felt that the disclosures were very sensitive within the parent-child relationship (Silverberg-Koerner et al., 2004).

In this same study by Silverberg-Koerner et al., (2004), when the mothers spoke negatively about their children's father, the daughters often agreed more with the mother, whereas the sons were less agreeable. Silverberg-Koerner et al., found that the mothers shared more with their daughters about financial concerns than with their sons (Silverberg-Koerner et al., 2004).

Wallerstein and Lewis (2004) completed a 25 year study on the effects of divorce and how it impacted the child's developmental transitions into adulthood. The memories of the divorce were still present describing feelings of loneliness and anger toward their parents for divorcing. If one of their parents abandoned them or there was violence, their memories were very distinct. Some of the participants did report faded memories when their father was forced to leave. These same participants expressed that they would never repeat this behavior in their own relationships (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

Describing their childhood, many of these adult children claimed their childhood ended the day their parents divorced. This was felt through the increased responsibility, especially with older siblings, when they took on the parenting of their younger siblings. This was often times coupled with taking care of their needy parents. These adult children were not necessarily complaining, but expressed a feeling of being proud with themselves because they were helpful to their family (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

Adult children who grew up in nonintact households reported that they had less playtime, involvement in extracurricular activities, and minimal exposure to enrichment programs. The decreased involvement was due to financial issues, parents' availability, and custody schedules. (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

Wallerstein and Lewis (2004) reported that adolescents and children from nonintact homes described their parents as displaying a more permissive parenting style. The research found that 20% of girls from nonintact homes had their first sexual experience before 14 years of age and over half (both sexes) engaged sexually with multiple partners, explaining their behavior was often based on the need for attention (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). In the comparison group (those from intact families), most had curfews; stricter rules; and greater supervision. There was minimal difference in alcohol and drug use in high school and college which differs from previous research findings (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

None of the adult children who experienced divorce when they were a child could recall parents talking to them about college together or separately (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). There were less young adults (30%) who resided in a nonintact household

reporting that they received full or consistent partial support from their parents if they did further their academic endeavors whether it be college or graduate school. College students from nonintact households had a higher drop-out rate usually occurring in the freshman and sophomore years. (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). The divorced parents who did support their children in higher education were mostly professionals: physicians, attorneys, businessmen/women, teachers, nurses, or social workers (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

Overall, in the United States, 92% of high school seniors further their academic careers, and of the adult children who experienced divorce during childhood, only 80% go on to college (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Another identified factor was that these adult children would combine full-time work in combination with their college studies and also would skip semesters to earn money to pay for their education. Matriculation resulted in only 57% of the adult children from divorced families completing their undergraduate degree compared to 90% of adult children from intact families (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Outcomes of those who did complete their undergraduate degree reported success in the workplace, and they attributed this to the exposure of increased responsibility at a younger age as well as social skills developed to assist getting along with difficult people (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Those adult children of divorce that did not further their education, typically worked at less desirable jobs and low paying jobs, but were self-supporting (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

In a study of 131 California students whose parents divorced in the early 70's found major differences which began at college admission (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

On the average, 92% of students graduating from high school in the United States go on to college but only 80% of kids coming from a divorced family will go on to college. This increased when combined with outside employment. Only 57% of kids who come from a divorced family earned a bachelor's degree as compared to 90% from an intact family (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Also, there were limitations to the disciplines of degrees due to financial demands for tuition (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

Impact of Divorce on Young Adults

Amato (1994) found that if a mother remarried within a few years after her divorce, there were less consequences for the mother's children. In contrast, if a child experienced problems in self-confidence, relationships, academics, vocational accomplishments, and so forth, before the divorce, the problems could worsen (Amato, 1994).

D'Onofrio, Turkheimer, Emery, Heath, Madden, Slutske, and Martin (2006) found when children experienced a parental divorce in late adolescence or early adulthood, the effect was more substantial compared to a parental divorce that occurred during their younger years. This hypothesis supports that correlated factors to parental divorce contributed to increased maladjustment in adults (D'Onofrio et al., 2006).

Genetic confounds were also explored with twins separated at birth when adoptive non biological parents divorced during their adolescent years. The outcome displayed similar results of emotional problems, earlier participation in sexual intercourse, lower educational attainment, increased drug usage, as well as increased cohabitation (D'Onofrio et al., 2006).

Krogas and Snarey (1995) found that college students who grew up in nonintact households were more understanding of others as well as respectful of other people's opinions compared to those students who came from intact families. In addition, the researchers found young adults from nonintact families were more mature, expressed a better understanding of the consequences of divorce, displayed more mature attitudes in reference to love and marriage, and displayed level headed attitudes regarding love and marriage and the consequences of divorce (Krogas & Snarey, 1995).

Ackerman (1996) found that sons of mothers who did not remarry after a divorce tended to display more involvement with their mothers. In doing so, this negatively affected the son's social and psychological development outside of the family. Amato (1996) explains that the son was feeling the new role of protector for his mother. In the clinical field, therapists find that their males who come from a divorced family often times refuse to talk about their mother in negative terms. Ackerman (1996) conducted a survey with 400 male college graduates and found that those who had difficulty relating with people and were extremely angry had poor relationships with their divorced fathers. On the other side, this identified group had an extremely close relationship with their mothers. In addition, sons were more often pulled in to the conflict with their parents during the predivorce time (Ackerman, 1996).

Research by Lonsdale, Cherlin, and Kiernan (1995) found that mothers who did not marry within a few years after divorce did have a negative effect on their college age children. Both male and female college students reported poorer grades, lack of career

direction, low self-confidence, and emotional disorders. These college students also reported difficulty in establishing long term relationships (Lonsdale et al., 1995).

Amato, Rezac, and Booth (1995) explained that the standard of living contributes to the decline when the mother does not remarry. Young adult children were more likely to ask to borrow money from their mother if she did remarry, but less likely if she stayed single (Amato et al., 1995). When the mother remarried, she often resided in a better house, in a better neighborhood, and had more shared adult supervision. (Amato et al., 1995).

When a mother does have a boyfriend, many young adults feel uncomfortable, unsettled, or feel embarrassed. Most young adults feel more negative when their mother has a boyfriend compared to fathers' girlfriends (Amato et al., 1995).

Arditti (1992) and Pettys (1993) found that fathers who did not pay child support were fathers who were poorly educated and had a low income job. On the other hand, some young adults have resented their father if he has gained financial status since the divorce, but overall when a divorce occurs, the father does not gain financial status.

Cohen, Kasen, and Chen (2003) points out that few college students fail to thank their fathers for any financial support because they feel it was a legal obligation no matter what the father had to risk. In addition, the college student can increase their distance from their father when the mandated support ends due to the young adult age. This is also accelerated when the father is unable to contribute to such things as college, cars, and weddings (Cohen et al., 2003).

Legal barriers can often interfere with college students heightened negative feelings toward their father. Farrell (1994) explained that in the majority of the states in the United States, custody is placed with the mother, often fostering feelings from the children that their father did not want them (Farrell, 1994).

Thomson and Roberts (2009) conducted research on how college students coming from a nonintact home compared to college students coming from an intact home. Overall, there were minimal differences found on locus of control, interpersonal trust, or assertiveness (Thomson & Roberts, 2009). But what did differ in this study were the responses to the open ended questions. College students from divorced parents indicated they had more difficulty committing to a relationship due to trust issues. Also the college students from divorced parents felt more independent compared to their peers from nondivorced parents (Thomson & Roberts, 2009).

A study conducted by Bulduc, Caron, and Logue (2007) focused on students whose parents divorced while they were in college, and these students felt they had a closer relationship with their mothers and a negative relationship with their fathers. These findings were similar to other studies concluding that daughters are more empathetic toward their mothers (Buldoc et al., 2007). The study also looked at holiday visits and most of the students expressed stress regarding their visits being divided into two different households and some even chose not to visit either parent during the holidays (Buldoc et al., 2007). No student reported spending their holiday visit with their father only. And students also reported that due to the divorce, many no longer had an identified bedroom and stayed in a guestroom resulting from the divorced parents' relocations

(Buldoc et al., 2007). Some even reported there was no room in their divorced parents' new living accommodations (Buldoc et al., 2007).

Another area in this study looked at relationships and commitments. Many expressed fear in a potential or existing relationship as well as feeling unprepared for marriage (Buldoc et al., 2007). Some questioned if they would marry, would the marriage be short lived. The majority of the college students agreed that if they did experience a divorce in their marriage, they would include their own children in the discussion of the divorce as well as not arguing with their ex-spouse after the divorce (Buldoc et al., 2007).

Impact of Past Research on Present Research

Nielson's (1999) research reflected that there is no negative effect on young adults who lived in a nonintact household. Nielson further stated that when a mother remarried within a few years after her divorce, most children experienced little negative impact. If these children had problems prior to the divorce, it would continue after the divorce (Nielson, 1999).

Nielson (1999) reported that mothers share their anger more with their sons regarding their ex-husbands, than with their daughters. Nielsen felt that there should be more emphasis placed on the young adults who have recently experienced their parents' divorce or a recent remarriage. Help should be offered to these young adults because their parents may still display unhappiness, depression, and could be overly dependent on their adult children. Nielson concluded that when the divorce occurs much earlier in the child's life, there is less risk with adjustment to the divorce (Nielsen, 1999).

Kelly and Emery (2003) found that parental divorce has been seen as having a major impact on behavioral and emotional problems with children and adolescents. Previous years, the public felt that people who divorced were unacceptable members of the society and those who were married families were described as being model family environments. Kelly and Emery's research found that intact families do not always offer a happy environment for parents or for children and that the majority of children from nonintact families are emotionally well adjusted (Kelly & Emery, 2003).

Summary

The current review of literature focused on the areas of attachment, divorce theories; absent fathers; relationships; socioeconomics, behavioral and emotional impacts of divorce, single parent families; sexual activity; life transformations; and young adulthood. Research continues to explore more factors associated with the outcomes of divorce in childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. The purpose of this study was to examine autonomy in young adult college students who grew up in an intact household compared to a nonintact household using the Worthington Autonomy Scale. Previous research has demonstrated the effects of children experiencing a household separation and divorce during the developmental stages of early childhood through adolescence. The current literature lacks in research regarding the impact of young adults whom grew up in a nonintact household when they were children or adolescents. Pedro-Carroll (2011) felt that living in a nonintact home may affect the transition into young adulthood (Pedro-Carroll, 2011).

The four constructs of autonomy which will be measured include emotional, family loyalty, behavioral, and value. The participants will be traditional college aged students, ages 18 – 24 years, enrolled in higher education in a midsize city in the Midwest of the United States. These results will contribute to the existing literature and enhance social change initiatives through increased understanding of families, separation and divorce, and the prevention of potential negative effects, thereby improving the well-being of young adults who have experienced a household separation or divorce during their childhood or adolescence.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

One purpose of this study was to determine whether young adult college students who lived in nonintact households during their childhood or adolescent years displayed differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) when compared to young adult college students who lived in intact households during their childhood or adolescent years. A second purpose of this study was to determine whether young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who lived in nonintact households with the same-sex parent during childhood or adolescence displayed differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who lived in nonintact households with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years. A third purpose of this study was to determine whether there were differences in perceived SES between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who lived in intact households prior to college admission and young adult college students who lived in nonintact households prior to college admission. The independent variable was the status of the household during childhood/adolescence (intact, nonintact). The outcome variables were the subdimensions of autonomy (behavioral, emotional, family loyalty, and behavior).

Research Design

The long-term sequelae of stresses related to living in a single-parent household are not clear. Much research has been conducted on the effects of divorce during the developmental stages of early childhood through adolescence, but minimal research has

been conducted on this topic as it relates to the early adult years. In this study, I sought to better understand how stresses of living in a nonintact household may impact the transition to adulthood. Specifically, I examined levels of autonomy (emotional, value, family loyalty, and behavioral) in young adult college students (18-24 years of age) who came from intact versus nonintact households. I also examined differences in autonomy based on family of origin (the primary rearing parent during childhood/adolescence). Gender was not an independent variable due to the gender ratio within the university (30% male, 70% female).

The research design for this study was a between-group causal comparative analysis of survey data. A survey research method was used to gather information from the population through the use of a demographic questionnaire and the Worthington Autonomy Scale (WAS). The demographic survey contained items concerning participants' gender, age, SES, and family of origin. The WAS is a 40-item self-report survey identifying four central dimensions of autonomy: behavioral, emotional, value, and family loyalty. Survey research uses several basic research procedures to obtain information from people in their natural environment by posing specific questions—in this case, to measure levels of autonomy. The variable of autonomy was not manipulated. A MANOVA analysis was used to evaluate the differences in the four levels of autonomy between the two groups. A Mann-Whitney U analysis was used to evaluate the differences in perceived SES between college students from intact households versus nonintact households.

Participants

The participants for this study were a convenience sample of male and female college students (ages 18–24 years) from a private Catholic university in the state of Indiana. Permission was provided by the Catholic university's institutional review board (see Appendix B). Participants were drawn from this setting for the following reasons: (a) they were an accessible population; (b) they were of an age to provide informed consent; (c) they were presumed to have experienced a variety of life events both positive and negative in nature; (d) their educational background provided them with the necessary reading comprehension skills to complete the questionnaires; and (e) the student population at the university was diverse in ethnic background, SES, degree attainment opportunity, and geographic etiology. Students attending general education college courses such as psychology, sociology, history, science, religion, and freshman orientation at the university were invited to participate in the study. Courses that I taught at the university were not included among the courses from which participants were drawn. The university's gender ratio is 30% male and 70% female.

A multivariate analysis was used to compare the means using a two-tailed test. A post hoc power analysis was conducted using the software package G*Power 3.0 (Faul & Erdfelder, 1992) and had a result of 0.8014596. The planned effect size was .5, and the planned power was .80. G power indicated a minimum sample size of 64 in each group (intact families and nonintact families), for a total of 128 participants.

Testing Instruments

The testing instruments used for this study were a demographic survey (which I developed) and the Worthington Autonomy Scale (Anderson et al., 1994). Each testing instrument is explained in detail in the following sections.

Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic information was collected using the Demographic Form (Appendix D). This questionnaire was developed by me and members of my dissertation committee and solicited information regarding the participant's age, gender, perceived socioeconomic status, and family of origin (primary rearing during childhood and/or adolescent years).

The Worthington Autonomy Scale (WAS)

The WAS is a 40-item self-response questionnaire with response options ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 4 (*strongly disagree*) identifying four central dimensions of autonomy: behavioral, emotional, value, and family loyalty. The WAS is based on the constructs of theorists Gilligan (1982) and Miller (1976). The WAS was designed through a four-step procedure measuring construct, content, and predictive validity. The first step involved a panel of 11 licensed clinical psychologists categorizing and rating 45 concepts related to the four constructs of autonomy. The concepts were selected because they were referred to frequently in the literature and were found to be reliable in previous instruments to measure autonomy. As a result of a Q-sort methodology, 19 of the 45 concepts were retained.

A new panel of experts (eight doctoral-degreed counseling professionals with interest in autonomy) was used to develop valid statements to establish their content validity and eliminate unnecessary items. Ninety-one of 191 statements were found to be useable in the preliminary WAS.

For validation purposes, Anderson et al. (1994) used a multiracial sample of 281 participants between the ages of 18 and 80 years. Several principal component analyses were performed, and 40 statements for the final WAS were established. The internal consistency of each item and each subscale was measured to determine the reliability of the scale. The internal consistency computed with Cronbach's alpha ranged from .68 to .90 for the Total WAS. The separate subscales were as follows: family loyalty (.83); value (.75); emotional (.68); and behavioral (.73). Family loyalty is reflected in Questions 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, 33, and 37. Value autonomy is reflected in Questions 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 34, and 38. Emotional autonomy is reflected in Questions 3, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, 31, 35, and 39. Behavioral autonomy is reflected in Questions 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, and 40 (Anderson et al., 1994). Positive statements are scored as they are: 1 = 1, 2 = 2, and so forth. Negative statements are scored the opposite of what they are: 1 = 4, 2 = 3, and so forth. The 10 negative statements are the following: 2, 4, 9, 14, 16, 19, 23, 25, 29, and 30. The remaining 30 statements are positive. Lower scores indicate more autonomy in each subscale; higher scores indicate less autonomy in each subscale (Anderson, 1994).

The highest possible score for the WAS on the 4-point Likert scale is 160, and the lowest possible score is 40. Higher scores are predictive of higher autonomy (Anderson et al., 1994).

The final stage involved the predictive validity and support to measure the strength of the construct validity of the scale. The WAS was administered to 60 participants, who were suggested by family therapists as highly autonomous or nonautonomous. The means of the autonomous group were significantly higher than those of the comparison group of nonautonomous participants ($F = 66.27$, $p < .001$). Spearman-Brown and Guttman split-half analysis conveyed a reliability coefficient of .91 for the Total WAS (Worthington, 1988).

Procedure

A proposal was submitted to Walden University's Institutional Review Board as well as the participating university's review board for approval before any data collection occurred. Copies of the approval forms are provided in Appendices A and B.

The demographic survey and the WAS were distributed by me, and the students were instructed to complete them outside of the classroom. The questions were listed in a fixed order for all respondents. The survey began with an introduction explaining its purpose, and items fell into two main categories: demographics of the students and content statements. The content statements were related to participants' autonomy in relation to their family; participants responded to these items on a 4-point Likert scale. A copy of the instrument is provided in Appendix E.

A letter of invitation to participate in the survey was given by me to the students in each of the selected courses to explain the study and to answer any questions. College credit hours earned by the participants were not a variable because the courses selected for this study were entry-level general education courses for all students at the university. The letter of invitation included background information concerning the survey, provided a description of the demographic questionnaire and content questions (WAS), and addressed confidentiality, the voluntary nature of the study, and risks and benefits of the study. A copy of the letter of invitation is provided in Appendix C. A copy of the demographic questionnaire is provided in Appendix D, and a copy of the content questions (WAS) is provided in Appendix E.

The survey began with an introduction explaining its purpose and the two main categories of items it contained: demographic questions concerning the students and content statements focused on the four constructs of autonomy. Statements were listed in a fixed order for all respondents.

An email address was provided so that any additional questions regarding participation could be directed to me. All students within the university have access to email via computers within their instructional buildings, computer labs, dormitory labs, and the university's library.

Students who were in agreement with the conditions for participation in the survey completed a coded packet of forms that included an instrumentation sheet for completing all enclosed forms as well as a designated completion date for returning the information to me. Statement of consent was implied through the submission of the

survey to me. The survey was completed by the students outside of my presence, and a self-addressed stamped envelope addressed to me to return the completed forms was included in the packet.

All course instructors and students invited to participate in the survey will be provided with this study's results through a summary letter provided to all classroom instructors to be shared with their students at the conclusion of the study. The IRB at the university where the survey was conducted will be provided the results of the survey at the conclusion of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 1: There are no differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Alternative Hypothesis 1: There are differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Analysis 1: To examine Hypothesis 1, a MANOVA analysis was used to compare the results for autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) between intact households and nonintact households.

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 2: There are no differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Alternative Hypothesis 2: There are differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Analysis 2: To examine Hypothesis 2, a MANOVA analysis was used to compare the results for autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) between students from nonintact households with the same-sex parent and students from nonintact households with the opposite-sex parent.

Research Question 3: : What is the difference in perceived socioeconomic status (SES) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 3: There are no differences in perceived SES for young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years in comparison to young adults living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years.

Alternative Hypothesis 3: There are differences in perceived SES for young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years in comparison to young adults living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years.

Analysis 3: To examine Hypothesis 3, a Mann-Whitney U analysis was used to compare the results for perceived SES between students from intact households and students from nonintact households.

Protection of Participants' Rights

This survey was submitted to Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) as well as the participants' university's IRB for approval. Careful consideration was given to the nature of this study and its possible effects on the participants. The letter of invitation form was distributed to all potential participants discussing the procedures for participation in the survey, confidentiality issues, the voluntary nature of the survey, the risks and benefits of participating in the survey, as well as a way to contact me with individual questions regarding the survey.

It was clearly stated in the letter of invitation that all records in this study would remain confidential and that only I would have access to those records. Potential participants were notified that they were free to withdraw from the survey at any time during the process without academic consequence. There were no physical risks or benefits for participation in the survey. Participants were notified that there is no obligation to complete any part of the survey in which they feel uncomfortable. Informed consent was obtained when I received the completed demographic questionnaire and content questions (WAS) from the students which signified that the participant agreed and understood the conditions of the study. There were no signatures which protected the confidentiality of the participants.

Summary

Chapter 3 began with research design for this study. The participants were described as well as the number of participants. A description of the Worthington Autonomy Scale and the demographic survey was presented. The process for data

collection and analysis was explained. The chapter concluded with the participants' rights. Chapter 4 describes the results of the study in descriptive and inferential formats. Chapter 5 explores further interpretations of the findings.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In Chapter 4, the results of this study are presented in descriptive and inferential format as well as with tables. The results portion of Chapter 4 is divided into five sections: (a) research questions and hypotheses, (b) population and demographic findings, (c) instrumentation, (d) investigations of assumptions as they relate to descriptive and inferential analysis, and (e) ethical considerations. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results.

One purpose of this study was to determine whether young adult college students who lived in nonintact households during their childhood or adolescent years displayed decreased levels of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) when compared to young adult college students who lived in intact households during their childhood or adolescent years. A second purpose of this study was to determine whether young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in nonintact households with the same-sex parent displayed decreased levels of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in nonintact households with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years. A third purpose of this study was to determine whether there were differences in young adult college students' perceived SES (ages 18–24 years) between those living in an intact household prior to college admission and those living in a nonintact household prior to college admission. The participants were traditional college-

aged students (ages 18–24 years) enrolled in higher education in a midsize city in the Midwestern United States.

A comprehensive review of the literature led to an identification of a gap in the literature that the research addressed. A survey was created to gather information on participants' demographics (gender, age, perceived SES, and family of origin); see Appendix D. The Worthington Autonomy Scale (WAS) was used to measure autonomy's four subdimensions; see Appendix E.

A one-way MANOVA analysis was used to evaluate the differences in the four levels of autonomy between the two groups for Research Questions 1 and 2. The basic assumption of parametric statistics, which are necessary to use MANOVA and other statistical analyses of this study, were found to satisfy homogeneity, variance, and normal distributions. The data were analyzed using SPSS for Windows, Statistics 19 for all descriptive and inferential analyses. Means and standard deviations for the Worthington Autonomy Scale (WAS) are presented in Tables 3 and 8. The three research questions addressed in this study and their associated statistical hypotheses were as follows:

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and hypotheses for this study are presented below.

Research Question 1: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 1: There are no differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Alternative Hypothesis 1: There are differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 2: There are no differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Alternative Hypothesis 2: There are differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages

18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Research Question 3: What is the difference in perceived socioeconomic status (SES) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 3: There are no differences in perceived SES for young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years in comparison to young adults living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years.

Alternative Hypothesis 3: There are differences in perceived SES for young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years in comparison to young adults living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years.

Characteristics of the Sample

The population for this study consisted of male and female college students (ages 18–24 years) from a private Catholic university in the state of Indiana. Participants were selected from this site for the following reasons: (a) they were an accessible population; (b) they were of an age to provide informed consent; (c) they were presumed to have

experienced a variety of life events both positive and negative in nature; (d) their educational background provided them with the necessary reading comprehension skills to complete the questionnaires; and (e) the university's student population was diverse in ethnic background, SES, degree attainment opportunity, and geographic etiology. The university's gender ratio is 30% male and 70% female.

The participants included 64 students from intact families, defined as families in which both biological parents are residing in the same household with their offspring, and 64 students from nonintact families, defined as families in which there is only one biological parent residing in the same household with his or her offspring. I recruited students for the study by visiting 11 classrooms at the university and inviting a total of 383 students to participate. The first 64 students who returned surveys that represented intact families and the first 64 students who returned surveys that represented nonintact families were selected as the participants for the study. Initially, there were 175 returns (46%). There were 120 participants from intact households and 55 participants from nonintact households. Due to not meeting the minimum of 64 participants from nonintact households, I sent an email to the classroom instructors asking them to remind their students to submit their packets. This request produced 30 additional returns, giving me the additional nine participants from nonintact households to meet the required sample size. There were a total of 205 surveys returned (54%). Seventy-seven of the returns were not used because the criteria for intact households had already been met. A post hoc power analysis was conducted using the software package GPower (Faul & Erdfelder,

1992). Based on the preliminary approved proposal, the sample size required was 128 participants.

All data collected and analyzed during this study were reviewed multiple times for accuracy of participation, completeness of individual questionnaires and surveys (WAS), scoring, and interpretation. I provided honest and accurate results in the formal reporting of all findings.

Demographics of the 128 participants were as follows: 24 male (15 intact households/9 nonintact households; 19%); 104 female (49 intact households/55 nonintact households; 81%); 80 between the ages of 18 and 19 years (38 intact households/42 nonintact households; 62%); 37 between the ages of 20 and 21 years (20 intact households/17 nonintact households; 29%); and 11 between the ages of 22 and 24 years (6 intact households/5 nonintact households; 9%). As selected, one-half of the participants self-reported residing with both biological parents (64; heterosexual), and one-half reported residing with one biological parent due to divorce or separation (51) or single parenting (13). Fifty participants self-reported that they had resided with the same-sex parent, and 14 self-reported that they had resided with the opposite-sex parent. The self-perceived SES demographics were as follows: lower income—21 (4 intact households/17 nonintact households); middle income—94 (51 intact households/43 nonintact households); and upper income—13 (9 intact households/4 nonintact households).

The Worthington Autonomy Scale (WAS; Anderson et al., 1994) was used to measure autonomy in this study. Using a 4-point Likert scale, family loyalty is reflected

in Questions 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, 33, and 37. Value autonomy is reflected in Questions 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 34, and 38. Emotional autonomy is reflected in Questions 3, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, 31, 35, and 39. Behavioral autonomy is reflected in Questions 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, and 40. The mean of family loyalty autonomy self-reported from the intact household group was 3.1. The nonintact household group self-reported a mean for family loyalty autonomy of 2.6. The mean of value autonomy self-reported from the intact household group was 3.1. The nonintact household group self-reported a mean for value autonomy of 2.5. The mean of emotional autonomy self-reported from the intact household group was 3.1. The nonintact household group self-reported a mean for emotional autonomy of 2.5. The mean of behavioral autonomy self-reported from the intact household group was 3.2. The nonintact household group self-reported a mean for behavioral autonomy of 2.5.

Instrumentation

The Worthington Autonomy Scale (WAS; Anderson et al., 1994) was used to measure autonomy in this study. The WAS is a 40- item self-response questionnaire ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 4 (*strongly disagree*) identifying four central dimensions of autonomy: behavioral, emotional, value, and family loyalty. Mean values of the dependent variables were used for the four subscales in conducting the data analysis.

Descriptive and Inferential Statistical Analysis for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years)

living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 1: There are no differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Alternative Hypothesis 1: There are differences in levels of autonomy (emotional, family, loyalty, value, and behavioral) between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who experienced intact households during childhood or adolescence and those who experienced nonintact households during childhood or adolescence.

Results of the Descriptive Analysis for Research Question 1

A MANOVA analysis was used to determine whether there was a difference between the means of the two groups—young adult college students who lived in an intact household during childhood or adolescence and young college students who lived in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence—for Research Question 1.

A one-way MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate main effect for family of orientation, Wilks's Lambda = .685, F (4, 123.000) = 14.15, $p < .001$, partial η^2 = .315. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was confirmed. The above findings are reflected in Table 1.

Table 1

Multivariate Statistics of Autonomy Derived From the Study Data for Research Question 1

Effect		Value	*F*	Hypothesis *df*	Error *df*	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Intercept	Wilks's Lambda	.021	1416.189	4.000	123.000	< .001	.979
HS*	Wilks's Lambda	.685	14.152	4.000	123.000	<.001	.315

Note. HS = household status.

Box's test of equality of covariance matrices tested the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variable are equal across all groups.

The above findings are reflected in Table 2.

Table 2

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices for Research Question 1

Box's *M*	20.561
F	1.986
df1	10
df2	75901.195
Sig.	.031

The results of this study indicate statistically significant between-group difference for the overall constructs of autonomy of young adult college students living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years. Those young adult college students living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years displayed higher levels of family, emotional, behavioral, and value autonomy. The above findings are reflected in Table 3.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Autonomy (Intact vs. Nonintact Homes) on Subscales of Autonomy for All Respondents for Research Question 1

Household status		Mean	Standard deviation	*N*
Family:	Intact	30.5625	4.72035	64
	Nonintact	25.7031	4.90765	64
	Total	28.1328	5.38059	128
Emotional:	Intact	30.9688	3.77110	64
	Nonintact	25.5781	5.03261	64
	Total	28.2734	5.19041	128
Behavioral:	Intact	31.0156	4.19558	64
	Nonintact	24.9062	5.49088	64
	Total	27.9609	5.75265	128
Value:	Intact	30.5000	4.29470	64
	Nonintact	24.6094	4.93326	64
	Total	27.5547	5.47407	128

The 95% confidence interval is reflected in Table 4 and includes each of the dependent variables of family, emotional, behavioral, and value.

Table 4

Confidence Interval for Table 3 for Research Question 1

Dependent variable		Mean	Std. error	95% confidence interval	
				Lower bound	Upper bound
Family:	Intact	30.563	.602	29.371	31.754
	Nonintact	25.703	.602	24.512	26.894
Emotional:	Intact	30.969	.556	29.869	32.069
	Nonintact	25.578	.556	24.478	26.678
Behavioral:	Intact	31.016	.611	29.807	32.224
	Nonintact	24.906	.611	23.698	26.115
Value:	Intact	30.500	.578	29.356	31.644
	NonIntact	24.609	.578	23.465	25.753

Results of the Inferential Analysis for Research Question 1

The results of this study find that there are statistically significant differences in the four constructs of autonomy of young adult college students living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years. Those young adult college students living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years displayed higher levels of family, emotional, behavior, and value autonomy. The above findings are reflected in Table 5.

Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected because there are differences in autonomy between young adult college students living in intact and nonintact households during their childhood or adolescent years.

Table 5

Univariate Tests of Between-Group Effects of Household Status (Intact vs. Nonintact Homes) on Subscales of Autonomy for All Respondents for Research Question 1

Tests of Between-Group Effects

Source	DV	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	Partial ETA Squared
Corrected Model	Family	755.633[a]	1	755.633	32.594	< .001	.206
	Emotional	929.883[b]	1	929.883	47.025	< .001	.272
	Behavior	1194.383[c]	1	1194.383	50.024	< .001	.284
	Value	1110.383[d]	1	1110.383	51.909	<.001	.292
Intercept	Family	101306.258	1	101306.258	4369.774	< .001	.972
	Emotional	102321.570	1	102321.570	5174.503	< .001	.976
	Behavior	100072.195	1	100072.195	4191.266	< .001	.971
	Value	97185.383	1	97185.383	4543.337	< .001	.973
House-	Family	755.633	1	755.633	32.594	< .001	.206
hold	Emotional	929.883	1	929.883	47.025	< .001	.272
Status	Behavior	1194.383	1	1194.383	50.024	< .001	.284
	Value	1110.383	1	1110.383	51.909	< .001	.292
Error	Family	2921.109	126	23.183			
	Emotional	2491.547	126	19.774			
	Behavior	3008.422	126	23.876			
	Value	2695.234	126	21.391			
Total	Family	104983.000	128				
	Emotional	105743.000	128				
	Behavior	104275.000	128				
	Value	100991.000	128				

(table continues)

Source	DV	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	Partial ETA Squared
Corrected Total	Family	3676.742	127				
	Emotional	3421.430	127				
	Behavior	4202.805	127				
	Value	3805.617	127				

a. R Squared = .206 (Adjusted R Squared = .199)

b. R Squared = .272 (Adjusted R Squared = .266)

c. R Squared = .284 (Adjusted R Squared = .279)

d. R Squared = .292 (Adjusted R Squared = .286)

Descriptive and Inferential Statistical Analysis for Research Question 2

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavior) of young adult college students (ages 18 – 24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same sex parent compared to young adult college students (ages 18 – 24 years) living in a nonintact household with opposite sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 2: There are no differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavior) of young adult college students (ages 18 – 24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same sex parent compared to young adult college students (ages 18 – 24 years) living in a nonintact household with opposite sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Alternative Hypothesis 2: There are differences in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavior) of young adult college students (ages 18

– 24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same sex parent compared to young adult college students (ages 18 – 24 years) living in a nonintact household with opposite sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years.

Results of the Descriptive Analysis for Research Question 2

A MANOVA analysis was used to evaluate the size of the difference between the means of the two groups; young adult college students living with same sex parent and young adult college students living with opposite sex parent for research question two. Post hoc tests were not performed for the family of orientation because there are less than three groups.

A one-way MANOVA revealed there was no significant multivariate main effect on autonomy living with the same sex parent or the opposite sex parent, Wilks' Lambda = .962, F (4, 59.000) = .575, $p < .0005$, partial $\eta^2 = .038$. This the null hypothesis was accepted. The above findings are reflected in Table 6.

Table 6

Multivariate Statistics of Autonomy Derived From the Study Data for Research Question 2

Effect		Value	*F*	Hypothesis *df*	Error *df*	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Wilks' Lambda	.048	293.279	4.000	59.000	< .001	.952
Lives w/	Wilks' Lambda	.962	.575	4.000	59.000	.682	.038

In Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices, tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups. There were no significant differences between living with the same sex parent or the opposite sex parent. The above findings are reflected in Table 7.

Table 7

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices for Research Question 2

Box's M	19.202
F	1.671
df1	10
df2	2131.557
Sig.	.082

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics of Autonomy (Same/Opposite Sex) on Subscales of Autonomy for All Respondents for Research Question 2

Rating		Mean	Standard Deviation	*N*
Family:	Same Sex	25.8235	5.03470	51
	Opposite sex	25.2308	4.53052	13
	Total	25.7031	4.90765	64
Emotional:	Same Sex	25.6471	5.33600	51
	Opposite Sex	25.3077	3.77237	13
	Total	25.5781	5.03261	64
Value:	Same Sex	24.8431	5.15896	51
	Opposite Sex	24.8431	3.96620	13
	Total	24.6094	4.93326	64
Behavior:	Same Sex	25.1961	5.98672	51
	Opposite Sex	23.7692	2.68185	13
	Total	24.9062	5.49088	64

The ninety-five percent confidence interval for research question 2 is reflected in Table 9. The data is reported for the dependent variables of family, emotional, behavior and value and for same sex and opposite sex parents.

Table 9

Confidence Interval for Table 8 for Research Question 2

				95% Confidence Interval	
	Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Family:	Same Sex	25.824	.692	24.440	27.207
	Opp-Sex	25.231	1.370	22.491	27.970
Emotional:	Same Sex	25.647	.710	24.228	27.067
	Opp-Sex	25.308	1.406	22.496	28.119
Behavior:	Same Sex	24.843	.693	23.457	26.229
	Opp-Sex	23.692	1.373	20.948	26.437
Value:	Same Sex	25.196	.771	23.655	26.737
	Opp-Sex	23.769	1.527	20.718	26.821

Results of the Inferential Analysis for Research Question 2

The results of this study find that there are no statistical differences in the four constructs of autonomy of young adult college students living with the same sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students living with the opposite sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years. The above findings are reflected in Table 10.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted because there are no differences in autonomy for students who lived with the same sex or opposite sex parent during the childhood or adolescent years.

Table 10

Univariate Tests of Between-Group Effects of Household Status (Same Sex /Opposite Sex) on Subscales of Autonomy

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects							
Source	DV	Type III Sum Of Squares	*df*	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	Partial ETA Squared
Corrected Model	Family	3.640[a]	1	3.640	.149	.701	.002
	Emotion	1.193[b]	1	1.193	.046	.830	.001
	Value	13.720[c]	1	13.720	.560	.457	.009
	Behavior	21.091[d]	1	21.091	.696	.407	.011
Intercept	Family	27002.140	1	27002.140	1105.973	< .001	.947
	Emotion	26896.943	1	26896.943	1045.907	< .001	.944
	Value	24403.943	1	24403.943	995.723	< .001	.941
	Behavior	24837.653	1	24837.653	819.835	< .001	.930
Lives with	Family	3.640	1	3.640	.149	.701	.002
	Emotion	1.193	1	1.193	.046	.830	.001
	Value	13.720	1	13.720	.560	. 457	.009
	Behavior	21.091	1	21.091	.696	.407	.011
Error	Family	1513.719	62	24.415			
	Emotion	1594.416	62	25.716			
	Value	1519.514	62	24.508			
	Behavior	1878.347	62	30.296			
Total	Family	43799.000	64				
	Emotion	43467.000	64				
	Value	40293.000	64				
	Behavior	41600.000	64				
Corrected Total	Family	1517.359	63				
	Emotion	1595.609	63				
	Behavior	1533.234	63				
	Value	1899.437	63				

a. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.014)

b. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.015)

c. R Squared = .009 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)

d. R Squared = .011 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)

Descriptive and Inferential Statistical Analysis for Research Question 3

Research Question 3: What is the difference in perceived socioeconomic status (SES) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Null Hypothesis 3: There are no differences in young adult college students (ages 18 – 24 years) living in an intact household's perceived SES in comparison to young adults from nonintact household's perceived SES.

Alternative Hypothesis 3: Young adult college students (ages 18 – 24 years) living in an intact household will display a higher perceived SES in comparison to young adults from nonintact household's perceived SES.

Results of the Descriptive Analysis for Research Question 3

A Mann-Whitney U was used to evaluate the size of the difference between the means of the two groups; intact students' perceived SES and nonintact students' perceived SES.

The results of this study find that there are statistically significant differences in perceived SES of young adult college students living in intact households during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students living in nonintact households during their childhood or adolescent years. Perceived SES is higher in young adult college students living in intact households. The above findings are reflected in Tables 11, 12, and 13.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Intact and Nonintact SES for Research Question 3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	LOW	21	16.4	16.4	16.4
	MIDDLE	94	73.4	73.4	89.8
	UPPER	13	10.2	10.2	100.0
	Total	128	100.0	100.0	

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Intact SES for Research Question 3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	LOW	4	6.3	6.3	6.3
	MIDDLE	52	81.3	81.3	87.3
	UPPER	8	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	64	100.0	100.0	

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Nonintact SES for Research Question 3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	LOW	17	26.6	26.6	26.6
	MIDDLE	42	65.6	65.6	92.2
	UPPER	5	7.8	7.8	100.0
	Total	64	100.0	100.0	

Results of the Inferential Analysis for Research Question 3

The results of this study find that there are statistically significant differences in perceived SES of young adult college students living in intact households during their

childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students living in nonintact households during their childhood or adolescent years. Perceived SES is higher in young adult college students living in intact households. The above findings are reflected in Table 14.

Table 14

Inferential Statistical Analysis for Intact and Nonintact SES for Research Question 3

Tests of Between-Group Effects

Dependent Variable: SES

Source	Type III Sum Of Squares	*df*	Mean Squares	*F*	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	2.000[a]	1	2.000	8.000	.005	.060
Intercept	480.500	1	480.500	1922.000	.005	.938
HS*	2.000	1	2.000	8.000	.005	.938
Error	31.500	126	.250			
Total	514.000	128				
Corrected Total	33.500	127				

*Household Status

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected because there are differences in perceived SES between young adult college students living in intact households and nonintact households during their childhood or adolescent years.

Ethical Considerations

This survey was submitted to Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) as well as the participants' university's IRB for approval. Careful consideration was given to the nature of this study and its possible effects on the participants. The letter of invitation form was distributed to all potential participants discussing the procedures

for participation in the survey, confidentiality issues, the voluntary nature of the survey, the risks and benefits of participating in the survey, as well as a way to contact me with individual questions regarding the survey.

It is clearly stated in the letter of invitation that all records in this study would remain confidential and that only I would have access to those records. Potential participants were notified that they are free to withdraw from the survey at any time during the process without academic consequence. There were no physical risks or benefits for participation in the survey. Participants were notified that there is no obligation to complete any part of the survey in which they feel uncomfortable. Informed consent was obtained when I received the completed demographic questionnaire and content questions (WAS) from the students which signified that the participant agreed and understood the conditions of the study. There were no signatures required which protected the confidentiality of the participant.

Summary

Chapter 4 began with research questions and hypotheses. Following the report of demographics, instrumentation and investigations of assumptions were defined. Tests of the hypotheses were explained as well as ethical considerations were presented and discussed. The null hypotheses for Research Question 1 and Research Question 3 were rejected and the null hypothesis for Research Question 2 was accepted. Chapter 5 will present a discussion of the results as well as implications of the findings as it related to the literature review and further research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine autonomy, which includes four constructs (emotional, value, family loyalty, and behavioral), in young adult college students who grew up in an intact household compared to young adult college students who grew up in a nonintact household. Data for this study were collected from a convenience sample of male and female college students (ages 18–24 years) from a private Catholic university in the state of Indiana.

The research questions presented in this study were as follows:

1. What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?
2. What is the difference in the level of autonomy (emotional, family loyalty, value, and behavioral) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years?
3. What is the difference in perceived socioeconomic status (SES) of young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in an intact household during

their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) living in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years?

Based on the results of analysis presented in Chapter 4, the null hypothesis was rejected for Research Question 1. The null hypothesis was accepted for Research Question 2. The null hypothesis was rejected for Research Question 3. In relation to Research Question 1, young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who lived in an intact household during their childhood or adolescent years displayed higher levels of autonomy compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who lived in a nonintact household during their childhood or adolescent years. In relation to Research Question 2, there was no significant difference between young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who lived in a nonintact household with the same-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years compared to young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) who lived in a nonintact household with the opposite-sex parent during their childhood or adolescent years. In relation to Research Question 3, young adult college students (ages 18–24 years) from intact households displayed higher perceived SES in comparison to young adults from nonintact households.

Interpretation of Findings

The literature in this study supported the need to continue research on the impact on young adults of residing in nonintact households during childhood or adolescence. Much of the literature reviewed for this study supported the notion that children and adolescents who reside in a nonintact home experience adjustment problems during their

younger years that continue into their young adult years (Amato, 2001). The studies reflected that growing up in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence increases the chances that a child will have academic problems, engage earlier in sexual activity, experience more bouts of depression, be identified as a juvenile delinquent, and use illicit drugs compared to a child who grows up in an intact household. Divorce often results in reduced attachment to the noncustodial parent (Amato, 2001). Recent literature has indicated that the effects of single-parent households continue into the early adulthood stage of development, with negative outcomes such as poorer psychological adjustment, lower socioeconomic attainment, and greater marital instability than are found in adults experiencing their earlier years in an intact family (Arnett, 2000). Sharte and Cole (2006) explored the effect of changing relationship status and potential divorce on attachment in recent college graduates. The researchers found that those recent graduates whose parents were separated reported higher levels of distress as compared to college graduates whose parents' marriage was intact (Scharte & Cole, 2006).

None of the above-mentioned research ruled out the possibility that children always do better when raised by both biological parents in the same household. The impact of a child experiencing single parenthood is not invariably negative or positive. The outcome of residing in a single-parent household depends on economic status, the amount of time that the parent spends with the child, and the stress in the household (Davies et al., 2002). Single-parent households headed by mothers, in contrast to stereotypes, can be financially secure due to the increase of women entering the workforce. The proportion of births to single mothers has had the greatest increase in

middle-class professional women (Coley & Chase, 1998). Some single-parent families develop a strong extended family that has a protective function for the children. These extended families often help single and divorced mothers with financial, emotional, and child care support (Coley & Chase, 1998). If a household is experiencing high levels of parental conflict, there may be greater calm for the children when the parents separate (Coley & Chase, 1998).

Further Interpretation of Findings

The results of this study are consistent with existing literature that predicts lower levels of autonomy in young adult college students who resided in nonintact households during their childhood/adolescent years compared to young adult college students who resided in intact households during their childhood/adolescent years.

Recent literature indicates that the effects of single-parent households continue into the early adulthood stage of development, with negative outcomes such as poorer psychological adjustment, poorer financial security, and more marital discord than are found in adults experiencing their earlier years in an intact family (Arnett, 2000). According to Shaver and Hazan (1993), people who experienced positive relationships between their parents described themselves as secure in their adult attachment orientation. Those people who described negative relationships between their parents described themselves as unsecure in their adult attachment orientation (Shaver & Hazan, 1993).

Kilman et al. (2006) conducted research with female college students coming from intact and nonintact households and found outcomes similar to those of this study.

Female college students from nonintact households had lower self-esteem and rated both of their parents more negatively than their counterparts from intact households (Kilman et al., 2006).

Stamps et al. (2009) examined the difference between noncustodial fathers' relational investment with their sons and daughters. Past research has indicated conflicting and inconclusive results regarding the difference between noncustodial fathers' relational investment with their sons and daughters. These researchers provided more definite findings concerning differences between daughters and sons in relation to nonresident fathering and adolescent well-being (Stamps et al., 2009). Their study produced results displaying equal involvement of nonresident fathers with their sons and daughters. Sons felt significantly closer to their fathers than daughters reported feeling. Sons were more involved in sports and overnight stays, which could have contributed to more shared interests with their fathers. Daughters, however, were found to process their internal feelings better (Stamps et al., 2009).

Another important finding from the Stamps et al. (2009) study was that sons had better relationships with their resident mothers than daughters did. Typically, sons felt that their mothers displayed more warmth, loving behaviors, and better communication. The researchers also indicated that daughters during adolescence are distancing themselves from their mothers and that sons may have a lower standard for the definition of closeness (Stamps et al., 2009).

Mustonen, Huurre, Kiviruusu, Haukkala, and Aro (2011) reported that daughters experienced a higher level of negative impact when their parents divorced compared to

sons, as evidenced in intimate relationships in adulthood. These daughters had established a preconception of marriage that had instilled distrust, promoted negative couple communication, and so forth (Mustonen et al., 2011).

Thomson and Roberts (2009) conducted research on college students coming from nonintact homes compared to college students coming from intact homes. Overall, there were minimal differences found in locus of control, interpersonal trust, and assertiveness (Thomson & Roberts, 2009). What did differ in the study were the responses to the open-ended questions. College students with divorced parents indicated that they were less trusting and less willing to commit to a relationship (Thomson & Roberts, 2009).

There have been many changes in the traditional family in the past 50 years. Amato et al. (2007) contended that in recent years, divorce, rather than death, has become the typical ending point of a marriage. In addition, there is more acceptance today of singlehood and cohabitation, as well as a decrease in remarriages (Amato et al., 2007). The majority of people who are divorced are parents, and most of these are single mothers, but there has been an increase in the number of single fathers who have full custody of their children. Most of these single parents feel that their role as a parent comes first and their role as a single parent comes second (Knox & Corte, 2007). Juby et al. (2007) found that fathers who maintain a close relationship with their children from the beginning of a separation will continue the same behavior in the future. Those fathers who do not maintain the relationship with their children after a separation will tend to display minimal involvement in the future (Juby et al., 2007).

Segal-Engelchin and Wozner (2005) claimed that 56% of custodial mothers receive child support from the biological father of the children and that the financial support is often inadequate and/or undependable. Because of this, mothers may need to find work and sometimes need to secure second jobs to support their children's needs (Segal-Engelchin & Wozner, 2005).

Bock (2000) indicated that in his research, the majority of single mothers who chose to not be married to the biological fathers of their children were more psychologically mature, older, financially independent, and politically aware. These single mothers' self-concepts were above average compared to single mothers who were not single by choice (Bock, 2000).

The majority of the participants in the current study who had lived in a nonintact household described themselves as having lower and middle SES; very few described themselves as having higher SES.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study may have been impacted by a few limitations. The participants were from a Midwestern university supported through Catholic traditional values. General education courses were targeted in the data collection effort; the presence of entry-level freshmen or sophomores may have impacted the level of maturity or development within the sample. Traditional modes of lecture delivery were used in the classrooms in which data were collected, excluding other forms of lecture delivery such as an online format.

The results of the present study did show many correlations among the constructs of the WAS. However, in reference to Research Question 2, a more homogeneous group would have been more desirable. There were 64 participants labeled as residing in a nonintact household, and of the 64 participants, 51 were female and 13 were male. A more equal distribution of males and females would increase the reliability of the outcome. As stated in Chapter 3, the sex ratio of the student population of this university was approximately 30% male and 70% female, which was reflected in the sample.

Finally, as with all correlational research, only relationships between variables and not causation can be determined.

Directions for Future Research

Although this research confirmed previous studies on the effects of a family separation during childhood on young adults, additional research is recommended to further explore the differences in autonomy between young adults from intact and nonintact families. Future questions to be explored include but are not limited to the following: Are there differences in the constructs of autonomy (family loyalty, behavioral, emotional, and value) between males and females living in intact households and nonintact households? Which of the four constructs of autonomy are rated the highest and lowest for young adults from intact households? Which of the four constructs of autonomy are rated the highest and lowest for young adults from nonintact households? Does SES impact autonomy for young adults from intact households? Does SES moderate the association between family of orientation and autonomy? Does SES impact autonomy for young adults from nonintact households? Is there a difference in autonomy

between different age groups of young adults from intact households? Is there a difference in autonomy between different age groups of young adults from nonintact households? Further exploration of these questions would identify weaknesses in the two groups (intact and nonintact households). This would assist college counselors in providing a focus on the special needs of this student population. In addition, support programs on college campuses could be designed to reflect the identified needs, thereby promoting student success. All of these questions can be extracted from the data collected for this study.

The following questions for future research would require additional data not gathered for this study: Is there a difference in autonomy based on the number of years a young adult lived in a nonintact household? Is there a difference in autonomy for young adults from intact households who attend a university with a larger student population than the university in this study? Is there a difference in autonomy for young adults from nonintact households who attend a university with a larger student population than the university in this study? Is there a difference in autonomy for young adults from intact households attending a university that is not religiously affiliated? Is there a difference in autonomy for young adults from nonintact households attending a university that is not religiously affiliated?

Implications for Social Change and Recommendations for Action

The long-term sequelae of stress related to living in a single-parent household seem less clear. The current literature lacks research regarding the impact on young adults of growing up in a nonintact household during childhood or adolescence. Pedro-

Carroll (2011) posited that living in a nonintact home may affect the transition into young adulthood. According to Amato and Booth (2001), children and adolescents from nonintact households receive almost twice as much psychological counseling compared to children and adolescents from intact households. Amato and Booth explained that some of the psychological counseling may be court ordered for children and adolescents who experience parental break-ups. The childhood experience of parental divorce or living in a single-parent household may impact the transition into and through the college years (Pedro-Carroll, 2011). Amato and DeBoer (2001) found that children of divorce were twice as likely to get divorced themselves compared to those who came from intact families.

For an increasing number of people, marriage or cohabitation is not the answer for a successful, contented life. For some, living alone, with or without children, is consciously chosen. People who choose this path view marriage as too restrictive and may focus on the high rates of divorce and marital strife (Byrne, 2000).

Across the nation, 92% of high school seniors from intact families go on to college, compared to only 80% of high school seniors from nonintact families go on to college (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). College students coming from divorced and/or single-parent households dropped out of college more often over time due to the need to combine full-time work with their college studies (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Some students enroll in alternating semesters to allow themselves to concentrate more on their studies (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). Completion of a bachelor's degree was achieved by 90% of students from intact families, compared to 57% of students of nonintact families

(Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). These college students also reported that due to failure to matriculate, many settled for careers that were second or third in choice and were eliminated from the disciplines of science or other demanding degree programs (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004).

University counseling services have indicated that many of their students who came from nonintact households have sought out therapy during their first two years of college (Wallerstein & Lewis, 2004). These college students expressed a multitude of problems such as failed relationships, concerns about their parents, or those currently experiencing a parental separation. Special courses and support groups according to Wallerstein and Lewis (2004) might prove successful in exploring attitudes, stereotypes, challenges, and barriers for this special college student population. This research will increase the awareness of college personnel of the potential impact of decreased autonomy of college students living in a nonintact household prior to entering college.

Summary of the Study

This study focused on the autonomy in young adult college students who grew up in an intact household compared to a nonintact household. Previous research has demonstrated the effects of children experiencing a household separation and divorce during the developmental stages of early childhood through adolescence. However, there remains an important gap in the current literature regarding the impact on children of divorce as they develop into young adulthood. The findings in this study do contribute to an area of study in which research is lacking in regards to the young adult college student.

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Appendix A: Approval From Walden University's Institutional Review Board

Walden University's IRB approval #09-04-13-0094299

Appendix B: Approval From the Institutional Review Board at the Study Site

University of Saint Francis
Institutional Review Board
Human Subjects Review Committee/ACUC/IBC

Institutional Review Board Approval Form

Protocol Number: 12-HSRC-16

Review by (circle one): HSRC ACUC IBC

Date Reviewed: 4/30/13

Principal Investigator: Amy Carrigan

Protocol Title: The Long Term Impact of Divorce on College Student Autonomy

Study Site(s):

Items submitted for review:
- ☑ Initial protocol
- ☐ Abstract
- ☑ Informed Consent Form (if applicable)
- ☐ Approval letter from outside institution
- ☐ Other – explain

Type of Review:
- ☐ Full Review
- ✓ Expedited Review
- ☐ Exempt Review

Approval:
- ☐ Approval granted on 30 Apr 2013
- ☐ Approval granted on _____ for a period of _____ or until _____
- ☐ Conditional approval* granted on _____
- ☐ Not approved*
- ☐ Other

*Comments:_____

Upon completion of the study you are required to submit the attached Study Closure Form to the IRB.

The committee performing this review is duly constituted and operates in accordance and compliance with local and federal regulations and guidelines.

Warren Pryor	[signature]	6 May 2013
Printed Name (Chair or designee)	Signature	Date

IRB Committee Approval Form sjo 4/30/2013

Appendix C: Letter of Invitation

The Long-Term Impact of Nonintact Families

On College Student Autonomy

You are invited to participate in a research study of autonomy on the young adult college student. You were selected as a potential participant in this study because you are a college student between the ages of 18-24 years. This researcher asks that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study. This study is being conducted by Amy Carrigan, a doctoral candidate at Walden University. This researcher, Amy Carrigan, is also an assistant professor at the University X in the Department of Psychology and Counseling and this study is separate from the role as assistant professor at the university.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the effects of family living arrangements prior to the college years and how it affects autonomy in the young adult college student. These results will contribute to the existing literature and enhance social change initiatives through increased understanding of families, separation and divorce, and the prevention of potential negative effects.

Procedures: If you agree to participate in this survey please place your completed demographic questionnaire and content questions in the self-addressed stamped envelope to this researcher by_____. If you do not agree to participate in the survey, please dispose of the packet and all of its contents. The demographic questionnaire consists of your age bracket, gender, socio-economic status, and family of origin. The content questions consists of forty questions regarding autonomy (autonomy is independence or

freedom; more specifically, autonomy can be defined as practicing adult roles and responsibilities). You should be able to complete the survey in 10-15 minutes. This survey will be completed outside of the classroom.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report that might be published, this researcher will not include any information that will make it possible to identify the participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Your participation in the study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time during the process of completing the survey. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your relationship with the university in any way. If you decide to withdraw your participation you may do so without affecting your relationship with the university. There is no compensation (thank you gifts, reimbursement, etc.) for participating in this study.

Risks of being in the Study: There are no physical risks to participating in the survey. Emotional upset while completing the survey might be a possibility. Participants are not obligated to complete any parts of the survey with which they are not comfortable. If you should experience emotional upset, contact the Office of Student Life at XXXXX for confidential counseling.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Amy Carrigan. She can be reached by email at amy.carrigan@waldenu.edu. The researcher's advisor is Dr. Jay Greiner who can be reached by email at jay.greiner@waldenu.edu. For questions about

their rights as participants, please contact the institutional review board for Walden University by email at irb@waldenu.edu.

The results of this study will be given to the classroom instructor to be disseminated to all of the students in the class at the conclusion of the survey.

Statement of Consent: In order to protect privacy, signatures are not being collected. Through submission of my completed survey to this researcher, I am implying consent to participate in this study.

**You, the participant, may keep this form for your records.

Appendix D: Demographic Questionnaire

Completion of the demographic questionnaire is significant for determining the influence of variety of factors on the results of this study. All of these records will remain confidential. Any reports that may be published will not include any identifying information of the participants of this study. Please check the appropriate line.

Gender:

_____ Male

_____ Female

Age bracket:

_____ 18 - 19 years

_____ 20 - 21 years

_____22 – 24 years

Social economic status:

During my child/adolescent years, I would consider myself growing up in what level of socio-economic status:

_____ lower income

_____ middle income

_____ upper income

Family of origin:

Who were you predominantly reared by during your childhood or adolescent years?

_____ Both biological parents residing in the same household (heterosexual)

_____ Both biological parents residing in the same household (homosexual)

_____ One biological parent residing in the same household (resulting from divorce or separation)

Mother_____

Father _____

_____One biological parent residing in same household (resulting from single parenting)

Mother_____

Father _____

_____One biological parent residing in same household (resulting from death)

Mother_____

Father _____

_____ Other, please specify _____

Appendix E: Worthington Autonomy Scale

***Directions**:* This scale is designed to measure levels of autonomy. Autonomy is the way individuals govern themselves. The statements about your "family" ALWAYS mean the family with which you spent most of your childhood. Answer the questions about your family "as you remember it."

Since each person is unique, there are no right or wrong answers. Just try to be as honest with yourself as possible. *Please respond to every statement.*

In reading the following statements, apply them to yourself and circle the rating that best fits you.

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE with the statement.
2 = DISAGREE with the statement.
3 = AGREE with the statement.
4 = STRONGLY AGREE with the statement.

Please circle one

1. My parents always encouraged me to set my own goals - 1 2 3 4

2. I allow others to influence my ideas about what is right or wrong - 1 2 3 4

3. I can be close to someone and give them space at the same time - 1 2 3 4

4. I don't take time to do things for myself - 1 2 3 4

5. Individual privacy was taught and respected in the family in which I grew up - 1 2 3 4

6. I have a definite plan for my life - 1 2 3 4

7. I have learned to disagree with others and still like them - 1 2 3 4

8. I try to eat foods that are good for me - 1 2 3 4

9. After I became an adult, I was torn between my love for my parents and my love for my friends and/or spouse – 1 2 3 4

10. I would hold to my religious beliefs even if my

family and friends did not approve - 1 2 3 4

11. I trust most people - 1 2 3 4

12. I accept responsibility for my own mistakes -1 2 3 4

13. I enjoy spending some of my free time with my parents even after I became an adult – 1 2 3 4

14. I am not comfortable with my sexual role - 1 2 3 4

15. I believe that marriage should be for life - 1 2 3 4

16. I don't spend my money wisely - 1 2 3 4

17. My parents and I could discuss almost anything after I was grown up - 1 2 3 4

18. I can see my good and bad points realistically - 1 2 3 4

19. I find it difficult to thank others for what they do for me - 1 2 3 4

20. I like to pay my own way when I go out with others - 1 2 3 4

21. I could disagree with my parents without fear of rejection after I became an adult - 1 2 3 4

22. If I was ordered to do something I thought was morally wrong, I would quit my job - 1 2 3 4

23. I avoid being with others by working too much or staying busy - 1 2 3 4

24. I can always find interesting things to do with my time – 1 2 3 4

25. In the family in which I grew up, we didn't knock on the door before entering another person's room - 1 2 3 4

26. I choose my own friends and/or mate, rather than having someone else choose them for me - 1 2 3 4

27. I have a genuine concern for other people's problems - 1 2 3 4

28. Health matters are important to me - 1 2 3 4

29. I was caught in the middle when my parents argued - 1 2 3 4

30. I feel uncomfortable exploring religious attitudes that are new to me - 1 2 3 4

31. The more I trust others, the more trustworthy they become - 1 2 3 4

32. I apologize for my part of an argument even if the other person doesn't - 1 2 3 4

33. After I became an adult, I felt like I was with good friends when I was with my parents - 1 2 3 4

34. I don't feel that I have to be good at something just because I am male or female - 1 2 3 4

35. My friends and family can count on me in a crisis - 1 2 3 4

36. I try to find the best bargains when I shop - 1 2 3 4

37. My parents and I learned to respect each other by the time I was grown up - 1 2 3 4

38. I have something valuable to offer others - 1 2 3 4

39. I try to be honest with people even if it may be painful to me or them - 1 2 3 4

40. I assume my share of household responsibilities when I live with others - 1 2 3 4

Appendix F: Email Instrument Permission (WAS)

Worthington Scale
Ruth [rags_4@verizon.net]
You forwarded this message on 10/28/2012 10:24 PM.
Sent: Thursday, October 25, 2012 3:37 PM
To: Carrigan, Amy Jo

Yes, you have my permission to use the scale. Good luck in your research.

RE: Ruth Anderson - Worthington Autonomy Scale
Jennings, Glen [GJennings@mail.twu.edu]
You forwarded this message on 10/28/2012 10:25 PM.
Sent: Wednesday, October 24, 2012 9:18 PM
To: Carrigan, Amy Jo
Dear Amy:

I forward your request to Dr. Ruth Anderson. I hope she responds but in case she doesn't I will give you permission to use the Worthington Autonomy Scale as I did the statistics advising on the dissertation and the instrument development. Good luck on your research.

Respectfully,

Glen Jennings

gjennings@twu.edu

940-898-2695

From: Carrigan, Amy Jo [mailto:ACARRIGAN@sf.edu]
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2012 8:32 AM
To: Jennings, Glen
Subject: Ruth Anderson - Worthington Autonomy Scale

Hello Dr. Jennings.

My name is Amy Carrigan and I am an assistant professor at the University XXX . I am pursuing my doctorate at Walden University and am completing my IRB application. In my dissertation I would like to use the Worthington Autonomy Scale as one of my testing instruments and the article

from 1994 instructs me to contact Ruth Anderson at Texas Woman's University.

I contacted your university and spoke with Dr. Karen Petty and she referred me to you since you co-authored the article and also may still have contact with Dr. Ruth Anderson.

If you can be of assistance, I would greatly appreciate it. If you have further questions, either email me or I can be contacted at 260.438.6592.

Thanks so much.

Amy Carrigan

Appendix G: Completion of Certificate

Certificate of Completion
The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Amy Carrigan-Smith** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".
Date of completion: 10/21/2012
Certification Number: 1033651