ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS

WITH PARENTS

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Problem

The relationship between children and their parents influences
the child's attitude about decision making and social relationships in
his later life (Luckey, 1960). One must keep in mind, however, the
crucial issue is not the situation in reality, but the perceptions of
the situation as understood by the child. Because the child will
react as if his definition of the situation is accurate, for him it
becomes reality.

With the importance understood of the effect of parent-child
interaction on the development and future orientation of the child,
many more studies are needed to further unravel the intertwining bits
of information about children and their relationships with their
parents. Perhaps some common assumptions regarding the differences
supposed to exist between parental treatment of male and female child-
ren can be either dispelled or supported by data. Parents may become
concerned about their methods of child rearing and effects on the
child and are not satisfied by reading some popular suppositions about
such effects. Additional data needs to be added to the collection of
knowledge concerning the existence of differences in parental treat-
ment of the attitudes toward male and female children.

Several studies have concentrated on such differences as per-

ceived by young children (Breznitz, 1965; Schvaneveldt, 1970), and by older children (Kagan, 1956; Duvall, 1969). But this study will attempt to add another step in regard to the gradation of the ages of the child, and determine perceptions of the older adolescents about their relationships with their parents. If the future of these adolescents is our concern, then we must be aware of their latest attitudes as they reach adulthood.

Purpose

Much work has been done in studying the relationships between parents and their children, with emphasis on the differences in parental treatment of sons and daughters. The purpose of this study is to determine if these differences become more clear as the children become teenagers and high school students.

The main differences under consideration are in the areas of affection given by the parents to the child, the amount of shared activity between parents and children, discipline of children, aid given the children in the form of advice, and the degree of love given the child by the parents. All of these areas are reported only as perceptions by the child of the situation.

Emphasis will be on the adolescent's perception of the behavior of his parents. So attention will be given to interaction between family members and interpretation of that interaction.

The following purposes will be examined:

1. General Purpose: to investigate the relationships between parents and their adolescent children as perceived by teenage children, and determine if differences are present

between perceived parent-daughter and perceived parent-son relationships.

2. Specific Purposes: to examine the relationship of:

   a. sex of child to love for mothers and fathers

   b. sex of child to ratings of mothers and fathers

   c. sex of child to shared activities with mothers and fathers

   d. sex of child to perceptions of punitiveness of mothers and fathers

   e. sex of child to perceptions of aid given by mothers and fathers

   f. child's outlook on life to his perceptions of parents' love for him

   g. child's outlook on life to the degree of positive reinforcement he believes he receives from parents.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be examined. They are stated in a directional manner due to the support for such statements from the review of literature.

Hypothesis One: Adolescents will express a greater degree of love and a higher rating for the parent of the same sex.

Hypothesis Two: Adolescents will indicate a greater degree of shared activities with the parent of the same sex.

Hypothesis Three: Adolescents will think of the same-sex parent

as being more punitive than the opposite-sex
parent.

Hypothesis Four: The female adolescent will receive more help
with problems from parents than the male
adolescent will receive from parents.

Hypothesis Five: The more pleased the adolescent thinks the
parent is with him, the more positive will be
his outlook on life.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction to Symbolic Interactionism

The Symbol

The basis for the theoretical approach, symbolic interactionism, originated in present theoretical approaches from a combination of the interactional and situational approaches as set forth by Christensen (1964). The original interactional framework as used in the family began with E. W. Burgess who described the family as a unit of interacting personalities. The interactional theory is concerned with the internal processes which include such things as communication problems. The situationalist views the family as a social situation affecting the behavior of the family members. Shelton Stryker managed to combine the interactional and situational approaches for research in the family (Christensen, 1964) into symbolic interactionism, which includes perceptions and evaluations as well as parental role expectations (Broderick, 1971).

Symbolic interactionism approaches the meaning and the relationship and interaction of people by the use of a social symbol that they share before they share each other and before they have subjective creative meaning. The symbol brings people together. The results are shared meaning or symbolic interaction meaning. This framework is

"alive" because the meaning is at the human level in a social context.

The understanding of society is taken from the opposite viewpoint of structural functionalism. The emphasis is on the person instead of on the system (Blumer, 1969, p. 83).

> Sociological thought rarely recognizes or treats
> human societies as composed of individuals. Instead,
> they assume human beings to be merely organisms with
> some kind of organization, responding to forces which
> play upon them. Generally, although not exclusively,
> these forces are lodged in the make-up of the society,
> as in the case of the social system, social structure,
> culture, status position, social role, custom, insti-
> tution, collective representation, social situation,
> social norm and values...incidentially, the self is
> not being brought into the picture by introducing
> such items as organized drives, motives, attitudes,
> feelings, internalized social factors, or psychologi-
> cal components. These factors play on the individual
> and fail to recognize that the individuals have selves...

From the standpoint of symbolic interactionism, social organization is a framework inside of which people develop their actions. The above mentioned structural features only set conditions for action, but do not determine action. People do not act toward the structure, but toward the social situations (Blumer, 1969).

The Self and Role

To understand symbolic interactionism, it is necessary to also understand the basic unit, the self. A person responds to himself as he responds to other persons--by naming, defining and classifying himself. So one's self is the way one describes to himself his relationship to other people in a social process. The next step is role-taking which includes the anticipation of the responses of others involved with the self in some social relationship.

Through the learning of a culture men are able to predict each

other's behavior most of the time and gauge their own behavior to the predicted behavior of others. These predictions are based on expectations for behavior implied in the common meanings and values. A society can be said to exist only when this proposition is true (Rose, 1962). In this sense, society is more than a collection of individuals: it is a collection of individuals with a culture, which has been learned by symbolic communication from other individuals. There is no need to talk of a "group mind" to explain social behavior, or to talk of a "tendency" for society to have a functional integration.

The popular conception of cause and effect is essentially "an anthropomorphic projection to the universe of the notion of responsible agency, an impression that emerges from unique human experiences" (Shibutani, 1961, p. 24). Shibutani regards events as manifestations of functioning systems, one operating within another. So instead of a search for the causes of behavior, the things men do are accounted for in terms of the properties of the "five functional units": act, meaning, role, person and group.

The Generic Model

According to Cohen (1968) the value of the symbolic interactionism approach has four main points. First, many conditions of social life result from the consequences of action. So as soon as one actor must take into account the actions of another, he is no longer master of his own destination. Secondly, social structures and systems are the products and conditions of interaction, so reification of the system is avoided. Thirdly, the interactionism approach explains social systems in terms of solidarity and cohesion instead of coercion and conflict. The fourth point is if social systems are systems of inter-

action, then change must result from the conditions and processes of interaction itself.

Activity is organized, in part, on the basis of how each person defines himself and how he is defined by others, so from the symbolic interactionism position, the continual relating of self to others in joint activity is viewed as the generic feature of human conduct. Symbolic interactionism theory indicates the self-definitions of greatest significance are those made by the person himself (Sernoll, 1969). The self is acquired and maintained in symbolic interaction with others, and is a reflection of the social system in which it is acquired and maintained.

Sorokin (1966, p. 420) writes of meaningful interaction as the basic process of society: "The most generic model of any sociocultural phenomenon is the meaningful-symbolic-interaction of two or more individuals." Interaction includes any event by which one person influences the overt actions or state of mind of the other. If such an influence is absent, no sociocultural interaction is possible. Sorokin (1966) also noted the personality, social system and cultural systems were made totally as the result of interacting human beings.

This generic model of sociocultural phenomena is based upon the meaningful interaction of two or more individuals and includes three components, personality, society, and culture, which cannot exist without all being present (Chapman, 1972). For the interaction process between the parts or between a part and the whole to maintain a balance, no part can be artificially elevated. This type of departure occurs when interaction between two or more individuals is reduced to a one-way directive. In this case, the techniques of manipulation have

dominated over symbolic two-way interaction.

Meaning From Interaction

The interactionist approach is characterized by the contention that human nature and the social order are products of communication (Shibutani, 1971). Behavior is more than a response to environmental or sensory cues, expression of needs, or a production solely from cultural patterns. The direction taken by a person's conduct is produced by the give-and-take of interdependent people who are adjusting to one another. Personality develops and is reaffirmed from day to day as interaction takes place.

As a social-psychological theory, symbolic interactionism is concerned with the various aspects of the relationship between the person and society, and with socialization and personality organization. Symbolic interactionism assumes that there are valid principles of human behavior which are the product of social interaction. This behavior cannot be inferred from the study of non-human forms. Humans do not respond to the environment as physically given, but to an environment which is interpreted through symbolic processes. Men can produce their own symbols and can respond to their own internal symbolic productions. Therefore, the researcher must see the world from the point of view of the subject of his research. The subject's perceptions become quite important.

It must be kept in mind that every social act involves at least two persons who take each other into account in the process of satisfying needs. For people to communicate meaning must be shared to some degree in the symbols used.

According to Blumer (1969) symbolic interactionism recognizes
social interaction to be of vital importance because it is a process
that forms human conduct instead of being merely a means or a setting
for the expression or release of human conduct. This approach sees a
human society as people engaged in living. These people are caught up
in a vast process of interaction in which they have to fit their develop-
ing actions to one another (Blumer, 1969). This process of interaction
consists of making indications to others of what to do and in interpret-
ing the indications as made by others.

The term symbolic interactionism refers to the peculiar and dis-
tinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings
who interpret each other as actions instead of merely reacting to them.
This response is based on the meaning which the people involved in this
transaction attach to such actions.

Chapman (1972) indicates two "whole" persons in reciprocal inter-
action mediated by a cultural symbol of some kind from a social system,
the dyad, out of symbolic interaction. If interaction between the
people is to be maintained, responsible social action must be worked
out between the people themselves. Chapman also indicates the cultural
symbol is no greater in power than either person in the dyad and neither
person is greater in power than the other. However, power may take
place if domination was achieved by mutual agreement with the under-
standing that such power may not always be given. In this case, the
social influence is earned out of social or symbolic action. In social
symbolic interaction each person is allowed to retain his whole being,
but along with his concept of himself, he incorporates his symbolic
interpretation of the other person. This differs from mechanistic

interaction in that the person does not react simply and directly to a command given by his "superior," but he first thinks about the command and decides if the "superior" has the right to command and he also decides if he wishes to obey. This is dependent on his perception of the situation.

An act is social to the extent that two or more persons are free to evaluate the meaning of the social symbol and to act upon this meaning. According to Chapman (1973b, p. 1), "To the extent that there is a lack of reciprocity of meaning, there exists the basis for deception." In social interaction the social bond costs each person something in order to maintain the bond. Each person becomes somewhat subordinate to the other and to the social bond. There can exist, instead of social symbolic interaction, a "conned episode" (Chapman, 1973b) in which one person becomes captive by another to only serve the motives of the captor. Goffman (1959, p. 3) seems to encourage such manipulation:

> Regardless of the particular objective which the individual has in mind and of his motive for having this objective, it will be in his interest to control the conduct of others, especially their responsive treatment of his. This control is achieved largely by influencing the definition of the situation which others come to formulate, and he can influence this definition by expressing himself in such a way as to give them the kind of impression that will lead to their acting voluntarily in accordance with his own plan.

Where deceitful and feigned appearance is accepted in good faith as social meaning, the social relationship is reduced to a one-way exploitative captivity of one actor by another and "social" symbolic interaction is gone, replaced by mock symbolic interaction which is mechanistic (Chapman, 1973b).

Early Developers of Symbolic Interactionism

Cooley was one of the first sociologists who identified himself with symbolic interactionism. Cooley considered the self to be defined and developed in social interaction as the product of the "looking glass self." That is to say, the social reference for the self takes the form of a somewhat definite imagination of how one's self appears to a particular person. The elements on the self-idea which make up the social self include the imagination of our appearance to the other person, the imagination of his judgment of that appearance, and some sort of reaction to that judgment (Cooley, 1902).

Symbolic interactionism places the accent on attitude and meaning. Everything, Cooley insisted, depended on interpretation (Martindale, 1960). If the imaginations people have of one another are the ultimate facts of society, then sociological investigation will be realistic only if these imaginations are taken into account. So Cooley thought the "systematic autobiography" was the best method to obtain data.

W. I. Thomas understood the individual as a product of interaction. For an individual to become a social personality, he must learn social meanings of objects as well as the ability to adapt to the demands of the society. However, this adapting to the society is to be done by conscious reflection, not reflextive reaction as in conditioning (Martindale, 1960).

G. H. Mead took the gesture as the transitional link to language from action. Thus, the gesture works with language to produce the self in the environment of on-going social action. The mutually understood gesture is the significant symbol. Meaning is placed in this symbol for present and future activity.

The theory of symbolic interaction as set forth by Mead (1934) focuses on the "sign given" which has to do with responsible meaning as a basis of the social bond. To focus upon the "sign given off" as in the dramaturgical model of Goffman, is movement from a bargaining position where bargaining is done in good faith to a framework of deceit with no social guidelines. To exalt either the "I" component as in the dramaturgical model, or the "me" component as in structuralism erodes the reciprocity that is essential for the formation and maintenance of the social bond. Both extreme approaches are alike in that they are only deceitful appearances of social symbolic interaction (Chapman, 1973b).

Mead realized the human being has a self so he can act toward himself as he might act toward others, and be the object of his own actions (Blumer, 1969). So if the individual can act toward himself, he can make indications to himself of things in his surroundings and guide his actions by what he observes and interprets. Mead recognized the formation of action by the individual takes place in a social setting. For group action to occur, each individual aligns his action to the action of others by understanding the meaning of their acts. Mead saw this as taking the role of others so the individual could better understand the intention of others and pattern his behavior to be compatible.

Blumer (1969) summarized the essential features of Mead's analysis of the bases of symbolic interaction: (1) human society is made up of individuals who have selves, (2) individual action is a construction and not a release, and (3) group action comes about when individuals align their own actions after they take into account each

other's actions.

To Piaget society was composed of the sum of social relations which are divided into relations of constraint and relations of cooperation. Constraint comes from the outside norms and rules, whereas cooperation comes from the consciousness of ideal norms and arises between equals or is "ordered by spontaneous pursuit of the good and autonomous rationality, which are the fruits of reciprocity" (Piaget, 1951, p. 4).

According to C. Wright Mills, symbols include the signs, emblems, ceremonies, language and music which sustain the order. Mills dealt with roles in symbolic interaction, but he was not the first sociologist to do so. Mead discovered the role as the unit element of institutions, Znaniecki formulated the idea of institutions as authoritatively instituted role groupings, and Spencer introduced the idea of institutional systems. The sociology of motivation was a new contribution to symbolic interactionism by Mills (Martindale, 1960). To Mills, an adequate theory of motivation assumes that people are going to what they would do any way. One must then develop a "vocabulary of motives" for social strategy to win over other people to one's own ideas. This suggestion of the use of deceit, by Mills, is in direct contradiction to the notions of "social" symbolic interaction as set forth by Chapman and Sorokin.

Symbolic Interactionism and the Family

Early Researchers in the Family

Although most students of sociology may be familiar with general theorists of symbolic interactionism, they may not be aware of the early exponents of this framework in the study of the family.

Burgess proposed that the family be studied as a "unity of interacting personalities." He moved away from the institutional approach of studying the family and focused on the relationship between personalities (Kiser, 1969).

Willard Waller felt that the family tends to be a more or less closed system of social interaction. Even though family events are related to variables outside the family, they can frequently be explained by reference to other family events. So Waller considered the family to be a "partially closed system" (Christensen, 1964).

Ruben Hill elaborated on the ideas of Waller, but he changed the view of the family from a unity of interacting personalities to that of an arena of interacting personalities (Kiser, 1969).

Symbolic Interactionism and Family Research

Rose (1962) has suggested three methodological characteristics of symbolic interaction: (1) the tendency to focus on the level of common experience, (2) the assumption that human behavior and social life are in constant flux, and (3) the assumption that all social objects of study are interpreted by the individual and have social meanings. So the investigator must view the world from the perspective of the people he is studying. The concern is with perceptions of reality of the subject being observed, not reality as defined by an outside observer (such as the researcher).

Social symbolic interaction between parents and children allows for more input into decisions from both the parents and the children than does the mechanistic symbolic interaction approach. Symbolic interactionism relies heavily on perceptions of the situation, which is one of the major points to be examined in this study of the differences

between the perceived relationships of male adolescents and female adolescents with their parents.

The principle focus of efforts deriving from the conceptual framework of symbolic interactionism is with interpersonal relations within the family, treated as a relatively closed system. One part of this focus is concerned with the parent-child relationship and attachment of offspring to their parents (Christenson, 1964). Examples of this emphasis are found in studies by Lu (1953) who examined parent-child authority patterns as they relate to conflict and affection, and Carter (1954) who raised the question of whether experiences shared with parents or relationships with parents relate more closely to feelings about the self. Videbeck (1960) found that self conceptions are learned. The child's self rating was positively correlated with the approval he received from his parents.

As part of symbolic interactionism, family situations to be kept in mind include affectional and subjectual relationships, and family patterns and external factors. The subtypes of affectional relationships range from excess of affection to frank rejection of the child by the parents (Christenson, 1964).

This study will make use of the symbolic interaction approach because the perceptions of children about their relationships with parents will be of major importance. Emphasis will not be on quibbling over the exact nature of the relationships, but in trying to observe and understand the situation as viewed by the children. If a child has defined his relationship with his parents in a particular way, he will react as if his definition is true, so for him it becomes true. It matters not, for this study, whether his definition is "truth," for

the concern is with his attitudes and resulting behavior.

Limitations of Symbolic Interactionism

Helmut Wagner classified the types of social theory into three divisions (Chapman, 1973a): (1) positive social theory (human ecology, structural functionalism, behaviorism), (2) interpretive sociologies (symbolic interactionism among others), and (3) evaluative social theories (sociology of knowledge, conflict theory, reform theory). There is a danger of imposing a utopian system in the positive sociology theories, a danger of falsely stating the convictions of people in the evaluative social theories, and a danger of not interpreting the individual's values correctly in the interpretive social theories (symbolic interactionism). The sociologist must remain "value-neutral" so as not to produce some ideology which does not truly represent the data (Chapman, 1973a).

One of the outcomes of symbolic interactionism was to link personality and social structure. The central assumptions of the theory include the following: man must be studied on his own level, behavior must always be considered in reference to the larger society, the human being is both an actor and a reactor, and human development comes about from socialization. Other assumptions relevant to research in the family include: interpersonal relationships are fundamental in understanding the family, studies should emphasize process and not equilibrium, and attitudes toward the self and others influence one's behavior. The focus of family research includes parent-child relationships at various stages of the life cycle, and husband-wife relationships (Kiser, 1969).

The weaknesses of the symbolic interaction framework are: (1) neglecting the study of the family as a part of the total social configuration, (2) generalizations which may only apply to specific and unique situations, (3) institutional or cultural patterns may be neglected, (4) followers of symbolic interaction often depend on empirical data from other frameworks, and (5) definitions and concepts are not precise (Kiser, 1969).

Keeping in mind the shortcomings of the symbolic interactionism approach, Lindesmith (1968, p. 11) has pointed out:

> ...the symbolic interactionist view as it was formulated by George H. Mead and other founding fathers was not so much a body of specific testable theory as it was a general orientation or image of man. All scientific enterprises originate from this kind of broad quasiphilosophical position or set of assumptions.

Symbolic interactionism does not pretend to cover the entire range of human behavior, but focuses upon the interaction element in human behavior and upon a limited range of the social structure (Christensen, 1964).

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review Supporting the Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

A closer affective tie and expression of love has been found
between parents and children of the same sex:

Hypothesis One: Adolescents will express a greater degree of

love and a higher rating (from poor to excel-

lent) for the parent of the same sex.

A stronger feeling of love is indicated between children and
parents of the same sex, than between children and parents of the oppo-
site sex. Donald Allen (1969) scored verbal responses from college
students about their parents. One of the classifications of coded
scores was affective-neutral. A close affective tie was found between
subjects and parents of the same sex. Leo Droppleman (1963) found
emotional type of behavior was reported by boys and girls as applicable
to the same sexed parent. Detached type behavior was reported by boys
and girls as applicable to the opposite sexed parent. Droppleman found
a closer affective tie between children and parents of the same sex.

Hypothesis Two

Another finding has been that parents tend to share activities

more with children of the same sex. The results of this study will indicate whether or not there is a difference in the degree of shared activities between sons and each parent and between daughters and each parent:

Hypothesis Two: Adolescents will indicate a greater degree of shared activities with the parent of the same sex.

John Earle (1967) studied shared activities and communication between parents and children. The central concern of his analysis was adolescent perception of the interaction, sentiment and authority which occur in children's relationships with parents. From his study, Earle found the closer the adolescents perceived their relationships with their parents (degrees of love), the higher level of communication and working together on various projects or sharing of activities they perceived with their parents. It is indicated from the studies of Allen and Droppleman the child perceives more love coming from the parent of the same sex. Since Earle found a higher degree of shared activities between the child and the parent from whom he expresses the greater degree of love, it follows that the child will have a greater degree of shared activities with the parent of the same sex.

Hypothesis Three

As children grow older, they tend to think of the parent of the same sex as more punitive. The father is no longer thought of as the sole family disciplinarian, and the mother takes over the discipline of the female child:

Hypothesis Three: Adolescents will think of the same-sexed

parent as being more punitive than the

opposite-sexed parent.

From various studies the findings indicate that the parent of the same sex as the child will be more punitive toward the child and more severe in discipline than the parent of the opposite sex of the child. Shlome Breznitz (1965) found that girls did not always perceive the father as the most instrumental and the most likely to discipline them. Boys were more likely to perceive the father as the parent who disci- plined them instead of the mother who disciplined them. But the boys at the same time perceived the fathers as more kind, which would sup- port the findings of Allen and Droppleman. Jay Schvaneveldt (1970) observed that female subjects mentioned discipline from the mother more frequently than did males. Jerome Kagan (1956) found as children grow older they think of the parent of the same sex as more dominant and punitive, though when the children were younger, both boys and girls thought of the father as more punitive. Evelyn Duvall (1969) agreed with the findings of Kagan that parents of the same sex as their older children (age 12-14) are more likely to discipline those children than is the other parent.

Hypothesis Four

There has been an indication of more aid being given to female children by both parents than that given to male children by either parent. This study will compare help with problems given to male children and help given female children from the viewpoint of the child.

Hypothesis Four: The female adolescent will receive more help with problems from parents than the male

child will receive from parents.

Females tend to receive more help from both parents in everyday problems than do males, and females feel closer to both parents in sentiment than do males. Leo Droppleman (1963) found, over all, girls reported more affection from both parents than did boys, who reported more negative treatment from both parents than did girls. John Earle (1967) found in almost every case the relationship between parents and daughters was rated higher than between parents and sons in communication, shared activities, sentiment and help given. As a possible explanation for his findings, Earle thought perhaps males would be less likely to turn to their parents for counsel when personal problems arise.

From the previous studies the sentiment and aid given to children by parents seems to be in a definite order of intensity:

TABLE I

AID AND SENTIMENT GIVEN CHILDREN

BY PARENTS

			(Child-Parent)
Intensity of Aid	high	4	female-mother
		3	female-father
		2	male-father
	low	1	male-mother

Hypothesis Five

Another finding has indicated a high correlation between degrees of love a child believes his parents have for him and his outlook on life. This study will compare the child's ratings of the love the parents have for him and his outlook on life:

Hypothesis Five: The more pleased the adolescent thinks the parent is with him, the more positive will be his outlook on life.

With the findings pointing to an overall stronger relationship between females and parents than between males and parents, one might wonder about the ill effects on the male child from receiving less attention. Several studies have indicated a rather high correlation between lack of love as perceived by the child from his parents and his degree of depression and negative outlook. However, these studies did not factor out the sex of the child. Morris Rosenberg (1963) observed that with clear parental indifference toward the child, the child's feelings of self-esteem will be low. Rosenberg found the child with a chastising parent had a higher self-esteem than a child whose parents ignored him altogether. Indifference to the child, as perceived by the child, was measured by lack of love and failure to give him encouragement. Rosenberg said the feeling that one is important to a significant other is probably essential to the development of a feeling of self worth. Richard Jenkins (1967-70) took data from child guidance clinics and found if the mother or father was critical, distant, and overtly rejecting of the child, the child may be restless and depressed or show chronic anxiety. G. E. Swanson (1950) did similar research and found in cases of high scores of satisfaction of children

with their parents and the attention given them by their parents, they showed less general frustration than did children who were not satisfied with their parents or satisfied with attention given them by the parents.

Review Related to Parent-Child Interaction

Several other studies have been done in family relations which pertain to perceptions of role and perceptions of the parent-child relationship. These studies do not either directly support or refute the hypotheses of this study, but they may help the reader get a broader understanding of the related area and have a better frame of reference for understanding the results of this study.

Concerning roles in the family, Parson and Bales (1955, p. 23):

> The fundamental explanation of the allocation of roles between biological sexes lies in the fact that the bearing and early nursing of children establishes a strong presumptive primacy of the relation of the mother to the small child and this in turn establishes a presumption that the man, who is exempted from these biological functions, should specialize in the alternative instrumental direction.

The organization of the family is represented by Parson's (1955) paradigm:

TABLE II

BASIC ROLE STRUCTURE OF THE

NUCLEAR FAMILY

	Instrumental	Expressive
High authority	father	mother
Low authority	son or mother	daughter or father

Jerome Kagan (1960) supports Parsons' hypotheses that the mother role is predominantly nurturant while the paternal role is characterized by instrumental skills and competence. He also said children's perceptions may have been more influenced by mass media stereotypes than from actual behavior toward the child from the parents. This generalized perception may have then been transferred to the parents from the children.

Herbert Otto (1966) implied from his research that children begin to internalize at an early age what they think are appropriate role patterns for mothers and fathers. When asked to list their strengths, both the male and female teenagers listed first "getting along with others," but the next highest strength listed by males was "interest in new ideas" (instrumental) and the next highest strength listed by females was "capacity for empathy" (expressive).

Other studies seem to contradict Parsons' findings in relation to instrumental and expressive roles. However, they appear to stop only at Parsons' introduction and apply that to their own research. If researchers who come to these opposite conclusions would read further in Parsons' works and with more precise comprehension, they would discover the type research they are doing applies to the one "exception to the rule" that Parsons makes:

> The wife, in spite of her more expressive role in the family as a whole, in her role of mother to specific children must--for the parent (mother) child subsystem-- take the predominately instrumental role (1955, p. 152).

Jerome Kagan (1961) found the child's labels describing each parent will influence not only his reactions to the parents, but also his behavior with parent substitute figures. The young child is taught that the father is more punitive than is the mother. The father should

be feared more, is more dominating, and less nurturant. Young girls described the father as more punitive as compared to the mother, than did young boys. Perhaps the young boy has to repress some of his fear of the father due to his newly found identification with the father.

Charles Bowerman (1964) observed boys were more likely to see fathers as dominant and girls were more likely to see mothers as dominant. However, the perceptions were not always accurate. Less than a fourth of the older adolescents in mother-dominated homes reported that their mothers were autocratic or authoritarian. High scholastic performance among high school boys was most frequent when the father was seen as more powerful in family decision making, along with being democratic in parent-child relations. This only held if the parents had a good working relationship without total dominance by the father over the mother. The children perceived either parent as giving more emotional support to the child if the parents worked with each other. If a particular parent was either very autocratic to the spouse or very submissive to the spouse, the child did not perceive that parent as a source of emotional support.

Joan Aldous (1956) found mothers did not think of excessive affection giving in positive terms. Before her study was undertaken, it was presumed that only fathers had negative feelings about showing a great deal of affection to their children. Children of these mothers perceived them as being in control of the family and low in affection.

There seems to be a much higher level of sentiment and communication between parents and teen-aged children than is implied by the mass media. Frederick Elkin (1955) found in many respects, the continuity of socialization for adolescents is far more striking than the dis-

continuity. Much joint participation in activities between parents
and their adolescent children was found, as well as a high rate of
children seeking the guidance of their parents.

Ruth Conner (1958) found that members of the same family have
different conceptions of what constitutes "good" mother, father, or
child roles. Most agreement was found between husband and wife, next
between mother and child, and least agreement between father and child.
Both the fathers and mothers thought of the ideal parent as more
expressive, whereas the children (especially males) thought of the
ideal parents as more traditional and instrumental. The children also
thought of the ideal child as more traditional and rigid and less
expressive than did the parents.

According to John Earle (1967) a "good" parent was one to whom
his child felt close and on whom he depended for advice and guidance.
As perceived authority (decision making) increased, perceived sentiment
and communication tended to remain the same, unless there was a low
degree of communication in the first place, then sentiment decreased
as expressed by the child for the parent. Adolescents with equali-
tarian or democratic parents were not any more likely to report close-
ness to them or say they more frequently sought advice from them than
did those from authoritarian or very permissive homes.

Earle's findings did support the idea that the perceiver tends
to maintain a consistent orientation toward the object of his percep-
tion. Thus, a person's positive sentiment to another is linked, in the
mind of the perceiver, with frequent communication between them, regard-
less of the authority structure. But if strong authority is coupled
with low communication, it will have a negative effect on parent-child
sentiment.

Glen Elder (1968) found from the data on parental authority in five nations, a pronounced upward trend toward democratic parent-youth relations over the past 40 years appeared in the urbanized societies of the USA, Great Britain, and West Germany. The parents are becoming more permissive and less punitive, and more are expecting their children to make their own decisions. This would bring about more communication between parents and their children. And the child would learn how to make decisions based on a greater awareness of what the parents expect.

In opposition to Elder, Kathleen Torres (1970) did not come to such an optimistic conclusion. In her study, communication was defined operationally in terms of the presence of agreement between high school children and their parents concerning the child's behavior and the parents' mode of punishment. The results indicated that the parents knew less than the child imagined they knew about his behavior. The child underestimated the severity of the punishment which his parents would employ if they knew he had engaged in such behavior. Where there is agreement, and communication, fewer children participated in delinquent behavior.

CHAPTER IV

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Collection of Data

As a part of the Logan County Youth Study project funded by the
U. S. Department of Agriculture under Grant Number 716-15-35, 1967-
1970 (Reed, 1969), high school students in the tenth, eleventh, and
twelfth grades were examined to determine, among other factors, the
parent-child relationship.

The population of this study consisted of all sophomore, junior,
and senior students enrolled in the six public high schools in Logan
County during the 1967-68 academic year. Logan County was selected
for the study after careful analysis of the overall Economic Develop-
ment plan for the county and other school census data relevant to each
high school (Reed, 1969). The county demonstrated various social and
demographic characteristics that were of interest to the research team.
The six high schools were small enough to conduct a survey of the
population.

In December of 1967, the President of Langston University wrote
letters to the superintendents of the six high schools informing them
of the objectives of the study and requesting their cooperation. By
the end of December, approvals from the superintendents as well as
from the principals of the respective schools were obtained. In the

meantime, schedules were worked out for administering the questionnaire
to the students at the schools.

Description of the Instruments

The student questionnaire was designed to obtain data of areas
which would elicit pertinent information on family relationships and
other factors which were not analyzed in this study. The first section
included questions concerning general background information such as
the student's age, sex, grade level, overall grade point average during
the last two academic semesters.

The second section consisted of scales used to measure data
pertaining to the student's perception of his student role. The third
section consisted of scales used to measure family role relationships
and evaluations.

Pilot Test

The questionnaires were pilot tested at Cushing High School in
Cushing, Oklahoma. This school in Payne County was selected for pre-
testing due to its closeness to Logan County in location as well as in
cultural, social, and economic features. Thirty-six senior students
from two classes in English and their parents were selected for pre-
testing. The student questionnaire was administered on January 16,
1968 and the parents' questionnaires were mailed to them on the same
day. They were requested to return the completed questionnaires within
one week.

To provide additional motivation for the prompt return of

parental questionnaires, the research project paid fifty cents to the child per parental set of questionnaires returned to the school within one week. A fifty-two per cent return on the parents' questionnaires was achieved. The completed questionnaires were picked up from the high school by members of the research team. The returned questionnaires were closely studied, and after making necessary corrections and changes, the questionnaires were reproduced and prepared for administering them to the population of Logan County (Reed, 1969).

<div align="center">Administering the Instrument</div>

The questionnaires were three-part, with identical questions appropriate for each student and his mother and father. The questionnaires for parents were mailed to each parent to be returned in sealed envelopes by children for credit--50 cents for each questionnaire returned.

The student questionnaire was administered by prescribed teachers or counselors in each school according to a predetermined time schedule (Reed, 1969). The student's regular classroom teacher was designated to administer the questionnaire because the research team felt that the students would respond better to them than to a research "stranger." Also, members of the research team met with the teachers before the questionnaires were administered in order to have specific, common, written instructions for the administering of the instrument (Reed, 1969). So, a standard procedure was developed and used at each of the high schools. The questionnaire was completed by all tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students present in the school on the day the questionnaire was administered with the exception of two students who

refused to complete the questionnaire.

Statistical Treatment

The completed questionnaires obtained from the students were assembled and the data were organized (for this study only the student questionnaires were used). The data collected in the questionnaires were coded on IBM data cards. The coded material was key-punched and verified by student research assistants at Langston University Data Processing Center (Reed, 1969).

The computer programs were developed with assistance from graduate students in the Computer Science Department of Oklahoma State University and Dr. Donald Allen. Computer programs were developed or modified for t-test, Pearson-r, and to tabulate the data in order to apply the computer program for Chi Square, developed by Dr. Donald Allen.

The statistical treatments of the data were classified as parametric and nonparametric. In several cases, in order to double check the results and to look at the specific data in various relationships, both Chi Square measures and t-test values were computed. The Chi Square test was applied when the relationship between two nominal levels was desired, and the t-test was applied to determine the difference of means in order to determine, for the most part, the differences in parental treatment or attitudes to male and female children, or the differences in attitude toward a particular sex of child by mothers and fathers. Pearson-r was used to correlate attention given to the child by the parent and the child's outlook on life. The significant value required in order to reject the hypotheses was set at the .05 level.

However, trends and possible discrepancies in the data were noted whether the hypotheses were rejected or not. In this manner more information may be obtained or used for further study, which may have been ignored if the data were dismissed entirely just because the significance level was not reached.

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS

Hypothesis One--Love and Ratings

of Parents

.The questions used were "Which of the following best describes
your love for your parents?" and "How do you rate your parents?" A
Chi Square test was applied to determine the difference of responses
pertaining to each parent.

TABLE III

BOYS' LOVE OF PARENTS

Love	n=302	
	Mother	Father
Unlimited	72	74
Very strong	39	42
Strong	25	30
Not very strong	6	9
Weak	2	3

x^2=0.75   p=0.943

There was no difference between love expressed by the male for

his mother or for his father (Table III). However, a very great amount of love was expressed for both parents, with few parents of either sex listed as receiving little love from the son. However, the males tended to rate more parents in the middle score ranges than did the females, who rated both mothers and fathers even higher (Table IV).

TABLE IV

GIRLS' LOVE OF PARENTS

Love	n=338	
	Mother	Father
Unlimited	96	84
Very strong	45	44
Strong	21	27
Not very strong	5	8
Weak	2	6

x^2=4.25   p=0.374

There was a very small difference in love expressed by the female for the mothers and fathers with more positive feelings toward the mothers and more negative feelings toward the fathers, but those small differences are not at all significant (Table IV). The females rated most mothers and fathers very high, however.

TABLE V

BOYS' RATING OF PARENTS

Ratings	n=288	
	Mother	Father
Excellent	88	82
Good	38	37
Average	13	17
Below average	2	5
Poor	3	3

$X^2 = 2.04$ $p = 0.73$

There was no difference in the male's rating of the mothers and the fathers (Table V), but very high ratings were given to both parents. However, the males tended to rate mothers slightly higher than fathers, but the difference was not significant at all.

TABLE VI

GIRLS' RATING OF PARENTS

Ratings	n=343	
	Mother	Father
Excellent	110	90
Good	43	42
Average	20	27
Below average	3	4
Poor	0	4

$X^2 = 6.97$ $p = 0.137$

There was a small difference in the female's rating of the mother as compared with the father (Table VI), and more mothers were rated higher with more fathers being rated lower. The differences were not significant. None of the mothers were rated poor, the lowest rating, so even though the results were not significant, there was a slightly higher rating by females of mothers than of fathers.

The data in Tables III - VI seem to fall in a pattern of descending frequency. That is, both boys and girls indicated more mothers as well as fathers in the highest category in the degree of love for the parents as well as in the ratings of the parents. In all four tables the second highest frequency was in the second category, and the third highest frequency was in the third category.

Poisson analysis attempts to determine the rates of transition from one category to another. Contagious Poisson is a measure for the change rates as well as the additional likelihood of change occurring due to "contagion" from other people or elements in the same category at the same time. In this analysis the basic rate of change or rate of transition is called "alpha," and "beta" is the label for the influence of one person carrying out the action and influencing others in a large population to follow.

Predicted rates are calculated and a Chi Square measure is used to determine if the predicted rates are similar to the observed rates. If the Chi Square value is low and the probability of the difference being by chance high, then the data fit the change rates of Contagious Poisson.

The following formulas are utilized in calculating the Contagious Poisson change rates:

TABLE VII

POISSON DISTRIBUTION OF LOVE OF PARENTS BY CHILDREN

| | Love of Mother | | | | Love of Father | | | |
| | Boys | | Girls | | Boys | | Girls | |
	Observed	Predicted	Observed	Predicted	Observed	Predicted	Observed	Predicted
Unlimited	72	68.6	96	93.9	74	69.3	84	80.1
Very strong	39	47.3	45	50.0	42	52.8	44	52.1
Strong	25	19.5	21	17.9	30	24.0	27	23.4
Not very strong	6	6.3	5	5.3	9	8.4	8	8.9
Weak	2	1.7	2	1.4	3	2.5	6	3.1

$X^2 = 2.585$
$p = .633$

$X^2 = .805$
$p = .936$

$X^2 = 3.286$
$p = .514$

$X^2 = 3.397$
$p = .504$

TABLE VIII

POISSON DISTRIBUTION OF RATINGS OF PARENTS BY CHILDREN

| | Rating of Mother | | | | Rating of Father | | | |
| | Boys | | Girls | | Boys | | Girls | |
	Observed	Predicted	Observed	Predicted	Observed	Predicted	Observed	Predicted
Excellent	88	88.1	110	107.1	82	80.2	90	86.6
Good	38	37.6	43	50.6	37	40.7	42	50.5
Average	13	12.7	20	14.4	17	15.5	27	20.1
Below Average	2	3.9	3	3.2	5	5.2	4	6.8
Poor	3	1.2	0	0.6	3	1.7	4	2.1

$x^2 = 2.005$ $x^2 = 2.851$ $x^2 = .750$ $x^2 = 5.007$
$p = .723$ $p = .586$ $p = .943$ $p = .284$

$$\text{Mean} = \hat{M} = \Sigma i p^{\prime} \qquad \qquad \text{Variance} = \hat{\sigma}^2 = \Sigma i^2 p^{\prime} - \hat{M}^2$$

$$\text{Beta} = \beta = \ln\frac{\hat{\sigma}^2}{\hat{M}} \qquad \qquad \text{Alpha} = \alpha = \frac{\hat{M}^2}{\hat{\sigma}^2 - \hat{M}}$$

$$p_i = \frac{\alpha(\alpha+\beta)\ldots[\alpha \ (i-1)\beta]e^{-\alpha t}(1-e^{-\beta t})^{i^{\prime}}}{i!\beta^i}$$

From the data in the tables pertaining to love and ratings

(Tables III - VI) of boys and girls for mothers and fathers, the

results indicate a very good fit with the Contagious Poisson analysis,

which indicates a distinct pattern of movement from one rating to the

next (Tables VII and VIII).

Hypothesis One: Adolescents will express a greater degree of love
and a higher rating for the parent of the same
sex--was not significantly supported by the data.
Males showed no difference at all and rated both
parents on love lower than did the females. The
females rated the mothers higher but the results
were not significant. The males rated the
parents from poor to excellent about equally as
divided between mothers and fathers, and their
general ratings were lower than those given by
females to both parents. The females rated the
mothers higher than the fathers but the results
were not significant.

Hypothesis Two--Shared Activities

With Parents

The questions used were the list of activities given for the

child to check each one as to whether he participated in that activity

with the mother and/or father. A possible score range was 0-11. A

t-test was run to determine the differences of means between a child's

activity with his mother and activity with his father. To double

check the results, a Chi Square test was also run associating

female's activities with each parent and male's activities with each parent.

TABLE IX

SHARED ACTIVITIES BETWEEN BOYS AND PARENTS

Activity Score	n=286	
	Mother	Father
9-11	25	32
7-8	44	45
5-6	39	41
3-4	30	18
0-2	5	7

$X^2=4.25$ $p=0.374$

There was no difference between activities shared by males and mothers and males and fathers (Table IX). However, the males indicated fewer activities shared with either parent, contrary to the expected high degree of sharing with the father. The males did indicate more mothers in the lower number of activities shared category than fathers, so males do participate in more activities with fathers than with mothers and not a lot with either parent. The results were not significantly different.

TABLE X

SHARED ACTIVITIES BETWEEN GIRLS

AND PARENTS

Activity Score	n=351	
	Mother	Father
9-11	68	23
7-8	58	40
5-6	37	58
3-4	14	35
0-2	3	15

$\chi^2 = 47.0$ $p = 0.001$

There was a highly significant association between female's shared activities with the parent and the sex of the parent (Table X). The females indicated a very high degree of shared activity with the mothers and a relatively low degree of shared activity with the fathers. The most noticeable difference was in the areas or degrees of activity shared. The females indicated most of the mothers in the highest category, but most of the fathers in the middle category. These results strongly support the hypothesis indicating more shared activities between females and the seme-sexed parent.

TABLE XI

BOYS' ACTIVITIES WITH PARENTS

	n=144	
	Mother	Father
Mean score	6.2	6.5

t-value = -1.2   p=.25

There is no difference between the boys' degree of shared activity with the mothers and fathers as measured by the t-test (Table XI), if differences are thought of in terms of whether or not they reach .05 probability by chance. There is a small degree of difference with the boys having more activity with their fathers than with their mothers, but only at the .25 level.

TABLE XII

GIRLS' ACTIVITY WITH PARENTS

	n=172	
	Mother	Father
Mean score	7.4	5.5

t-value = 7.1   p=.001

There is a very great difference between the activities shared between girls and mothers than between girls and fathers (Table XII). The girls share many more activities with the mother, as was anticipated by the hypothesis, but the results indicate an even stronger

preference for activity with the mother from daughters than was anti-
cipated.

From the above tables (XI - XII), the following summary and mean
scores are arranged for comparison:

TABLE XIII

MEAN SCORES OF SHARED ACTIVITY WITH PARENTS

Girls-Mothers = 7.4

Boys-Fathers = 6.5

Boys-Mothers = 6.2

Girls-Fathers = 5.5

From a possible score range of 0-11, all of the mean scores fell
in the upper half of possible scores, so on the average, the males and
females indicated a substantial amount of shared activity with both
parents (Table XIII). The girls indicated more shared activity with
mothers than any other child-parent combination. But the girls also
indicated less shared activity with fathers than any other child-parent
combination. The hypothesis was generally supported, but not at a
significant level, because girls and boys each indicated more shared
activity between themselves and the same-sexed parent. The difference
was significant for girls but not for boys, as measured by the t-test,
and by the Chi Square test.

Hypothesis Two: Adolescents will indicate a greater degree of
                    shared activities with the parents of the same
                    sex--was significantly supported for females but
                    not for males. However, males did indicate a

slightly higher degree of shared activities
with the father, as expected, but the levels
were not significant.

Hypothesis Three--Reaction of Parent to

Misbehavior of Child

The questions used were "If you do something your parent con-
siders wrong, how does he react?" and "If you do something seriously
wrong, how does your parent punish you?" These questions were on a
one-to-five scale, but were combined to better understand the child's
perception of the situation.

TABLE XIV

REACTION OF PARENTS TO MISBEHAVIOR OF SONS

| | n=270 | |
Reaction	Mother	Father
Very strong-hit	15	27
Strong-restrict	53	67
Moderate-scold	53	37
Mild-sulk	7	8
No reaction	2	1

$x^2=7.46$ p=.15

There was no significant relationship between the reaction of the
mother to the son's misbehavior and the reaction of the father to the
misbehavior of the son (Table XIV). However, the sons reported more
fathers in the ranges of severe reactions (hit and restrict) than

mothers. The sons also reported more mothers than fathers who would only scold the child when he misbehaved.

TABLE XV

REACTION OF PARENTS TO MISBEHAVIOR OF

DAUGHTERS

Reaction	n=340	
	Mother	Father
Very strong-hit	18	26
Strong-restrict	65	78
Moderate-scold	81	58
Mild-sulk	4	4
No reaction	2	4

X^2=7.08   p=.20

There was no significant difference between the reaction of the father to the misbehavior of the daughter and the reaction of the mother to the misbehavior of the daughter (Table XV). However, the results indicated a trend which was unexpected. The hypothesis indicated mothers would discipline daughters more severely than fathers would, but teen-aged girls reported in this sample more severe reactions from the fathers. No indication is made of the frequency of the reactions. It might be the case that the mothers may discipline the daughters more frequently than the fathers, which would be in line with the review of literature, and perhaps the fathers disciplined much less often, but more severely when they do. From these data there is no way

of knowing the frequency, only the degree of reaction to misbehavior.

Hypothesis Three: Adolescents will think of the same-sexed parent
                     as being more punitive than the opposite-sexed
                     parent--was not significantly supported by the
                     data. However, boys did report a little stronger
                     discipline from the fathers which would be in line
                     with the idea of the hypothesis, but girls indi-
                     cated stronger reactions also from fathers, which
                     is in the opposite direction.

Hypothesis Four--Aid Given the Child by

the Parents

The questions used were those on parental aid to the child. All

five areas of aid were combined to produce a score range of 5-25. The

areas of aid included help with money problems, help with personal pro-

blems, help with school problems, help in making decisions, and help

when in trouble. A t-test was used to determine the difference of

means of the several possible combinations of type aid. A Chi Square

test was also applied to determine the association between sex of the

child and sex of the parent in terms of aid given the child.

TABLE XVI

AID GIVEN BY MOTHERS TO CHILDREN

	n=171 Daughters	n=144 Sons
Mean score	17.7	15.4

t-value = 4.3   p=0.001

Daughters receive a significantly greater amount of aid from

mothers than do sons (Table XVI), and the hypothesis is strongly supported for daughters receiving more aid from the same-sexed parent.

TABLE XVII

AID GIVEN BY PARENTS TO OPPOSITE SEX

CHILDREN

	n=171 Father-Daughter	n=144 Mother-Son
Mean score	14.7	15.4

t-value = -1.3   p=.22

There is no significant difference between aid given by fathers to daughters and aid given by mothers to sons (Table XVII). However, there is a slightly higher degree of aid given by fathers to daughters than by mothers to sons, which would be expected from the review of literature which reports closer family ties with female children than with male children, and in general more help given the female by parents.

TABLE XVIII

AID GIVEN BY PARENTS TO SAME SEX CHILDREN

	n=171 Mother-Daughter	n=144 Father-Son
Mean score	17.7	14.8

t-value = 5.2   p=0.001

Daughters receive a significantly greater degree of aid from mothers than sons do from fathers (Table XVIII). This supports the hypothesis indicating more aid being given to daughters, in general, than to sons. However, this result only supports the hypothesis in favor of mothers giving more aid to daughters.

TABLE XIX

AID GIVEN BY FATHERS TO CHILDREN

	n=171 Daughters	n=144 Sons
Mean scores	14.7	14.8

t-value = -0.2   p=.25

There is no significant difference between aid given by fathers to sons and aid given by fathers to daughters (Table XIX). The fathers give a slightly larger degree of aid to sons, but only about three-fourths of the time, otherwise, the difference does not exist.

TABLE XX

AID GIVEN BY PARENTS TO SONS

	n=144	
	Mothers	Fathers
Mean scores	15.4	14.8

t-value = 1.1   p=.28

There is no significant difference between aid given sons by either mothers or fathers (Table XX). However, mothers give sons slightly more aid than do fathers, but the difference will occur by chance more than one quarter of the time, so the hypothesis is not supported for fathers giving more aid to sons than do mothers.

TABLE XXI

AID GIVEN BY PARENTS TO DAUGHTERS

	n=171	
	Mother	Father
Mean scores	17.7	14.7

t-value = 5.2   p=0.001

There is a highly significant difference between aid given the daughter by the mother and aid given the daughter by the father (Table XXI). The mother gives the daughter much more aid than does the father, as perceived by the daughter, so the hypothesis is strongly supported but only for mothers giving aid to daughters, and not for fathers giving aid to daughters.

TABLE XXII

MEAN SCORES OF AID GIVEN CHILDREN

BY PARENTS

Mother-Daughter	= 17.7
Mother-Son	= 15.4
Father-Son	= 14.8
Father-Daughter	= 14.7

From the above rankings, it is indicated that the mother gives more aid to both daughters and sons than does the father. The father gives about equal aid to sons and to daughters (Table XXII). The father gives a more nearly equal amount of aid to both sons and daughters than does the mother. The mother seems to favor the daughter over the son, but she still gives the son more aid than the father gives either the son or the daughter.

TABLE XXIII

AID FROM MOTHER TO CHILD

Aid	n=308	
	Daughter	Son
A great deal	43	11
Considerable amount	64	57
Average amount	38	41
A little	18	21
Almost none	7	8

$X^2 = 16.63$ $p = 0.003$

Mothers give significantly more aid to daughters than to sons, as perceived by the child (Table XXIII). However, sons reported most of the mothers as giving a considerable amount of aid, and most of the daughters also reported more mothers in that same category. Many more sons put mothers in the lower categories as compared to daughters, and many more daughters put more mothers in the highest category, so as compared to sons, the results were very highly significant.

TABLE XXIV

AID FROM FATHER TO CHILD

	n-308	
	Daughter	Son
A great deal	19	13
Considerable amount	62	44
Average amount	37	47
A little	30	23
Almost none	22	11

X^2=6.71   p=0.152

There is no significant difference in the aid given daughters and sons from the father (Table XXIV). However, more daughters than sons reported a great deal of aid from the father, as well as almost no help from the father. So fathers aid to daughters, as perceived by the daughters, seems to vary more and to more extremes than fathers' aid to sons.

A better understanding of aid given the child by the parents can be seen in the following tables of the specific types of aid given the child (Tables XXV - XXVI).

TABLE XXV

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AID FROM FATHERS

IN SOLVING PROBLEMS

| | N = 115 Males, 137 Females | | | | |
	None	Little	Average amount	Considerable amount	Great deal
Money*					
Male	11.3	12.2	40.0	22.6	13.9
Female	5.1	17.5	27.7	23.4	26.3
Personal*					
Male	11.3	17.4	29.5	20.9	20.9
Female	21.9	20.4	33.6	13.9	10.2
School*					
Male	16.5	24.4	34.8	14.7	9.6
Female	12.4	20.4	23.4	27.0	16.8
Decisions					
Male	7.0	13.1	39.1	21.7	19.1
Female	9.5	18.9	28.5	24.8	18.3
Trouble					
Male	4.4	5.2	27.8	20.9	41.7
Female	5.1	9.5	19.0	22.6	43.8

*Exceeds significance level of .05, x^2

TABLE XXVI

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AID FROM MOTHERS

IN SOLVING PROBLEMS

| | N = 115 Males, 137 Females | | | | |
	None	Little	Average amount	Considerable amount	Great deal
Money*					
Male	11.3	24.4	34.8	16.5	13.4
Female	3.7	10.2	31.4	27.7	27.0
Personal					
Male	10.4	13.0	29.6	27.8	19.1
Female	5.1	10.9	25.6	27.7	30.7
School					
Male	12.2	20.0	33.9	19.1	14.0
Female	6.6	17.5	28.5	24.1	23.5
Decisions					
Male	6.1	16.5	34.8	28.7	13.9
Female	6.6	13.0	24.1	32.1	24.1
Trouble					
Male	4.4	7.8	26.9	20.9	40.0
Female	2.9	5.8	14.6	25.6	51.1

*Exceeds significance level of .05, X^2

According to Table XXV, in solving money probelms, daughters reported significantly more aid from fathers than did sons (X^2 = 11.67, p=.02), which was in agreement with the hypothesis. In solving personal problems sons reported significantly more aid from fathers than did daughters (X^2 = 11.23, p=.02), which was in opposition to the hypothesis of daughters receiving more aid from both parents than sons. In solving school-related problems daughters reported significantly more aid from fathers than did sons (X^2 = 11.55, p=.02) which did support the hypothesis. In solving problems related to decision making (X^2 = 4.25, p=.38) and when in trouble (X^2=3.87, p=.57) the females reported a wider range of responses for fathers' help than did sons which could indicate a trend for sons to generally seek an average amount of help from fathers in decision making and when in trouble, and for daughters to have a wider range of relationships with the father, from little involvement to a great deal.

According to Table XXVI, daughters reported significantly more aid from mothers than did sons in solving money problems (X^2=22.22, p=.001) which strongly supports the hypothesis of daughters receiving more aid from parents than do sons. There was a trend for daughters to also receive more aid from mothers in solving personal problems (X^2= 6.22, p=.18), in solving school problems (X^2=6.03, p=.19), in making decisions (X^2=6.55, p=.16), and when in trouble (X^2= +7.70, p=.10); but none of the results were significant at the .05 level. The trend was in the direction of the hypothesis of daughters receiving more aid from parents, but strongly indicated for mothers and daughters and only mildly indicated for fathers and daughters.

Hypothesis Four: The female adolescent will receive more help with
problems from parents than the male child will
receive from parents--was not entirely supported
for fathers but was highly supported for mothers.
Fathers gave a little more help to sons than to
daughters in solving personal problems.

Hypothesis Five--Parental Love for

the Child

The questions used were "How much love do your parents have for

you?" and "If you do something very well, how do your parents react?"

and "What is your outlook on life?" Each question is rated on a five-

point range of possible responses. The last question will be correlated

with the responses on each of the first two questions with a Pearson

Product Moment correlation computed. With possible scores on each

item from one to five, each mean will fall somewhere between these

two numbers.

TABLE XXVII

PARENTAL LOVE FOR CHILD AND HIS OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Outlook		n	r
Son	Maternal love	131	.003
Son	Paternal love	131	.0098
Daughter	Maternal love	163	.0098
Daughter	Paternal love	163	.0105

TABLE XXVIII

PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR CHILD AND HIS OUTLOOK

ON LIFE

Outlook			n	r
Son	Maternal support		131	.0031
Son	Paternal support		131	.0114
Daughter	Maternal support		162	.0049
Daughter	Paternal support		162	.0007

From the above tables (XXVII - XXVIII) it is indicated that there is no relationship between the love of either parent for the child and the child's outlook on life. There is also no relationship at all, from these data, between the reaction of either parent to the child's good behavior and the child's outlook on life. These findings do not support the hypothesis or the review of literature which indicates relationships between child's positive outlook on life.

The data do point up some interesting, though not significant, findings, which are illustrated in the following summary tables:

TABLE XXIX

MEAN SCORES OF OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Girls' mean = 3.77

Boys' mean = 3.59

The above mean scores (Table XXIX) were taken from a possible five-point range. A score of 1 indicates always unhappy, a score of 2 indicates mostly unhappy, a score of 3 indicates half and half, a score of 4 indicates mostly happy, and a score of 5 indicates always happy. Both the girls and the boys indicated, for the most part, scores of being mostly happy. This may be a result of the sample being high school students who have already passed the identification crisis and feel relatively stable. If that is the case, they may be well past the stage of having their personalities affected by the behavior toward them of their parents. This might explain the findings which do not support the review of literature.

TABLE XXX

MEAN SCORES OF LOVE OF PARENTS FOR CHILDREN

Mother-Daughter = 4.45

Mother-Son = 4.41

Father-Daughter = 4.31

Father-Son = 4.29

The above mean scores (Table XXX) do not differ significantly from each other as indicated from previous discussion. However, the indication of mothers expressing more love for both children than fathers express fo- both children (as perceived by the child) would be congruent with the instrumental-expressive dichotomy as set forth by Parsons (1955). These results are almost in the same order as those found in the computations of the love of the children for the

parents (Tables III - IV), which indicate more love expressed by the daughter toward the mother, followed by love expressed by the son for the mother, followed by the love expressed by the daughter to the father, and finally the love expressed by the son to the father. In these findings the order of the son-mother relationship and the daughter-father relationship is reversed from that in Table XXX. But, in both the feelings of love for the parent and perceptions of love the parent has for the child, the mother-daughter relationship rates highest, and the father-son relationship rates lowest. The above mean scores came from a possible score of one to five, weak to unlimited amounts of love.

TABLE XXXI

MEAN SCORES OF PARENTAL REACTION TO

CHILD'S GOOD BEHAVIOR

Mother-Daughter	= 3.79
Mother-Son	= 3.77
Father-Son	= 3.54
Father-Daughter	= 3.51

The above mean scores were taken from a possible score range of one to five, critical to enthusiastic. As the results indicate (Table XXXI), the children reported most of the parents as reacting either pleased-score three, or complimentary-score four, to their good behavior. Few parents were reported as responding very enthusiastically to the child's good behavior. Perhaps the results may be

influenced by the age of the sample, 16-18 years. By the time child-

ren become teen-agers, it is possible the parents no longer feel a need

to congratulate them on every good deed, and take such good behavior

for granted.

Hypothesis Five: The more pleased the child thinks the parent is
with him, the more positive will be his outlook
on life--was not supoorted at all by the data.
In fact, the sample, both boys and girls, seemed
to maintain a relatively good outlook on life
regardless of the attitude of the parents toward
them.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research was to examine the relationships between parents and their adolescent children as perceived by the children. Several problems were under consideration. First, what is the relationship between sex of the child and his or her degree of love or ratings of the parents? Second, what is the relationship between sex of the child and the degree of shared activities with the parents? Third, does either the male or female child perceive the parents as being more punitive? Fourth, is the sex of the child related to the degree of aid given by the parents? And, fifth, is there a relationship between the child's outlook on life and the degree of positive reinforcement he believes he receives from parents?

Methods and Procedures

This research was part of a larger project, the Logan County Youth Study, conducted by Langston University in cooperation with Oklahoma State University.

The population of the study was made up of all the sophomore, junior and senior students enrolled in the six public high schools in Logan County during the 1967-68 academic year. These students were

used in this particular study because the perceived relationship between parents and their younger children has been the topic of much research, but few studies have shown the perceptions of older teenagers in relation to parent-child relationships.

The data collected in the questionnaires were coded on IBM data cards, and computer programs for t-test, Chi Square, and Pearson-r were used. More than one measure was applied to some groupings of the data in order to double check the results or to measure it as compiled in relationships. For example, if a difference of means was desired, a t-test was computed; but, if the association between two nominal levels was desired, the Chi Square test was computed.

Summary of Findings

Hypothesis One

There was no difference between love expressed by the male for his mother or for his father. The males tended to rate more mothers and fathers in the middle score ranges than did the females who rated both mothers and fathers very high. Females expressed a very small difference in love between the fathers and the mothers but the results were not significant. Females also noted a little higher rating for the mothers than for the fathers in the area of love for the parents.

There was no significant difference in the male's rating of the mothers and the fathers, but the males did tend to rate mothers slightly higher than fathers. There was a small difference in the female's rating of the mother as compared with the father, with more mothers being rated higher, but the results were not significant. However, non of the mothers were rated in the lowest scale but some

fathers were rated in the lowest scale.

Hypothesis Two

There was no significant difference between activities shared by males and mothers and males and fathers. However, the males indicated fewer activities with mothers than did the females, and more activities with fathers than did the females. Males did participate in more activities with fathers but only to a minor degree. There was a highly significant association between female's shared activities with the parents and the sex of the parent, with a very high degree of shared activity with the mother. The females indicated most of the mothers in the highest category of shared activities, but most of the fathers in the middle range of shared activities. The girls indicated more shared activity with mothers than any other parent-child combination, but the girls also indicated less shared activity with fathers than any other parent-child combination.

Hypothesis Three

There was no significant relationship between the reaction of the mother to the son's misbehavior and the reaction of the father to the son's misbehavior. The sons did report more fathers in the range of severe reactions than mothers and more mothers in the range of mild reactions. There was also no significant difference between the reaction of the father to the misbehavior of the daughter and the reaction of the mother to the misbehavior of the daughter. An unexpected trend was discovered; fathers discipline daughters more severely than mothers do to a slight degree.

Hypothesis Four

Daughters receive a significantly greater amount of aid from mothers than do sons. However, both sons and daughters reported most mothers in the next to highest category of aid given. There is no significant difference in the aid given daughters and sons from the fathers. However, more daughters than sons reported the greatest amount of help from the father as well as the least amount of help from the father. The sons reported most fathers in the same general category, in the middle. Contrary to the expected findings, the mothers gave more aid to the sons than the fathers did to daughters. It was expected that fathers and mothers would both give more aid to daughters than to sons, but fathers aided sons more with personal problems than did mothers.

Hypothesis Five

There is no relationship between the love of either parent for the child and the child's outlook on life. There is also no relationship at all, from this data, between the reaction of either parent to the child's good behavior and the child's outlook on life. These findings do not support the hypothesis or the review of literature which indicates strong relationships between positive attitudes of parents toward their children and the child's positive outlook on life. Both the boys and girls indicated, for the most part, scores of being mostly happy. This may be a result of the sample being made up of high school upper classmen who have already passed the identification crisis and feel relatively stable. If that is the case, they may be past the stage of having their feelings about themselves affected by

their parents' behavior toward them. Mothers express more love for both sons and daughters than do fathers, as perceived by the children, but the differences are not significant.

Conclusions

The results could be applied to other populations of a similar make up of Logan County, Oklahoma. Contrary to the expectation, Logan County residents are not primarily rural and low income. The income range is rather wide, the children in the sample came from families of farmers, school teachers, and professional people, as well as from physical laborers. The sample could not be considered upper middle class, but neither could it be considered lower class in relation to income and education of the family.

Although none of the hypotheses were supported completely, parts of various hypotheses were significantly supported. Strong indications were made for females sharing more activities with mothers and receiving more aid from mothers than was found in any other parent-child combination.

The findings indicate the older teen-agers are not as influenced by their parents as are younger children, which are the subject of much of the review of literature. Perhaps the differences in parental treatment of male and female children become less as the child grows into adulthood because neither parent is directly assisting the child as he once may have. The population of the sample was large enough so that significant differences would be indicated if they existed. Of course, that is not an indication that other studies should not be done on the relationship of the older teen-ager and his family. Perhaps

if a different instrument was used, the results would not have been
the same. It would have been interesting to start a longitudinal
study on this sample of information and note the changes as the group
passed through developmental stages. Some of the difficulties
encountered stemed from using secondary data.

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APPENDIX

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. SEX   Male_____   Female_____

2. PLEASE INDICATE THOSE ACTIVITIES IN THE FOLLOWING LIST WHICH YOU
   DO WITH YOUR MOTHER AND/OR YOUR FATHER.

	MOTHER	FATHER
Eat Meals at Home	_____	_____
Have Confidential Talks	_____	_____
Play Games	_____	_____
Social Events	_____	_____
Go to Movies	_____	_____
Church Activities	_____	_____
Watch Television	_____	_____
Do Housework	_____	_____
Do Yardwork	_____	_____
Do Chores	_____	_____
Help Parents in Occupation	_____	_____

3. IN THE FOLLOWING KINDS OF PROBLEMS, HOW MUCH HELP DO YOU GET FROM
   YOUR PARENTS?

	(1) None	(2) A Little	(3) Average Amount	(4) Consider-able Amount	(5) A Great Deal
HELP WITH MONEY PROBLEMS?					
Mother	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Father	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
HELP WITH PERSONAL PROBLEMS?					
Mother	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Father	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
HELP WITH SCHOOL PROBLEMS?					
Mother	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Father	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
HELP IN MAKING DECISION?					
Mother	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Father	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
HELP WHEN YOU ARE IN TROUBLE?					
Mother	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Father	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

4. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR LOVE FOR YOUR PARENTS?

	Weak (1)	Not Very Strong (2)	Strong (3)	Very Strong (4)	Unlimited (5)
Mother	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Father	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. HOW MUCH LOVE DO YOU THINK YOUR APRENTS HAVE FOR YOU?

	Weak (1)	Not Very Strong (2)	Strong (3)	Very Strong (4)	Unlimited (5)
Mother	___	___	___	___	___
Father	___	___	___	___	___

6. HOW DO YOU RATE YOUR PARENTS?

	Poor	Below Average	Average	Good	Excellent
Mother	___	___	___	___	___
Father	___	___	___	___	___

7. IF YOU DO SOMETHING YOUR PARENT CONSIDERS WRONG, HOW DOES HE REACT?

	No Reaction (1)	Midly (2)	Moderately (3)	Strongly (4)	Very Strongly (5)
Mother	___	___	___	___	___
Father	___	___	___	___	___

8. IF YOU DO SOMETHING SERIOUSLY WRONG, HOW DOES YOUR PARENT PUNISH YOU?

	Do Nothing (1)	Sulk (2)	Scold (3)	Restrict (4)	Slap or Hit (5)
Mother	___	___	___	___	___
Father	___	___	___	___	___

9. WHEN YOU DO SOMETHING VERY WELL, HOW DOES YOUR PARENT REACT?

	Critical (1)	Indifferent (2)	Pleased (3)	Complimentary (4)	Enthusiastic (5)
Mother	___	___	___	___	___
Father	___	___	___	___	___

10. OUTLOOK ON LIFE (1) Always unhappy____ (2) Mostly unhappy____
    (3) Half and half____ (4) Mostly happy____ (5) Always happy____

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