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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED PARENTING  
STYLES AND ADOLESCENT LOCUS OF CONTROL  
AND SELF-CONCEPT

by

Lisa Ann McClun

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Psychology

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1993

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Ken Merrell, who has given a great deal of time and energy to help me with this thesis. His encouragement and advice were needed and used. Also, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Keith Checketts and Dr. Elwin Nielsen, for their time, advice, and encouragement given for this project. Lastly, I would like to thank my husband, Nathan McClun, who gave me the initial motivation to pursue this goal and for all the support he has given me to reach it.

Lisa Ann McClun

## CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	ii
LIST OF TABLES .....	iv
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	5
Locus of Control .....	6
Self-Concept .....	10
Parenting Styles .....	11
III. METHOD .....	18
Subjects .....	18
Instruments .....	18
Procedure .....	24
IV. RESULTS .....	26
V. DISCUSSION .....	31
Relationship to Prior Research .....	36
Limitations of This Study .....	38
Recommendations for Future Research .....	40
REFERENCES .....	42
APPENDIX .....	46

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Definitions of Parenting Styles and Related Adolescent Behaviors .....	13
2	Group Differences on the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale for Children Based on the Perceived Parenting Styles, with ANOVA Results .....	27
3	Group Differences on the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents Based on Perceived Parenting Styles, with ANOVA Results .....	28
4	Correlation Coefficients between Locus of Control Scores and Self-Perception Scores for the Entire Subject Group (N = 198), Listed by SPPA Subscales .....	30

## ABSTRACT

The Relationship Between Perceived Parenting Styles  
and Adolescent Locus of Control  
and Self-Concept

by

Lisa Ann McClun

Utah State University, 1993

Major Professor: Dr. Kenneth W. Merrell  
Department: Psychology

Relationships between adolescents' perceptions of their parents' responsiveness and demandingness, adolescents' locus of control orientation, and adolescents' self-concept ratings were investigated. Subjects included 198 students from a middle school in northern Utah. Subjects were given the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale for Children, the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents, and the Perceived Parenting Style Survey.

Results indicated that subjects who perceived their parents as being authoritative had significantly ( $p < .001$ ) more internal locus of control scores than subjects who reported either the permissive or authoritarian styles. Also, self-concept scores were significantly higher ( $p < .001$ ) for the authoritative group than the authoritarian group on the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents subscales of Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, Physical Appearance, Behavioral Conduct, Close Friendship, and Global Self-

Worth. The permissive group reported significantly lower scores ( $p < .05$ ) on the subscales of Scholastic Competence and Behavioral Conduct. There was also a significant negative correlation ( $p < .001$ ) between locus of control scores and the subscale scores on the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents.

Although there were some limitations in the study methodology, the significant differences found between the groups indicated that the authoritative parenting style positively correlates with higher self-concept and internal locus of control, while the authoritarian parenting style negatively correlates with self-concept and internal locus of control.

(63 pages)

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Locus of control orientation and self-concept ratings reported by adolescent subjects have been shown to be significantly related to social behavior, scholastic achievement, drug-use, depression, and delinquency (Rotter, 1954, 1966; Harter, 1991). Therefore, understanding the major factors influencing the development of locus of control and self-concept is crucial to understanding an individual's behavior and can be valuable in creating techniques for changing inappropriate behavior.

Locus of control orientation is used to refer to an individual's perception of his or her own efficacy, and whether or not that individual believes he or she has the power to carry out the behavior required by a particular situation (Bandura, 1978). When an individual has an internal orientation, the power to execute the necessary behavior is perceived as being contingent upon that individual. An external orientation indicates that the individual perceives him- or herself as being powerless to execute the necessary behavior, as that power is directed by an external source.

A relationship has been established between locus of control orientation and aspects of self-concept (often referred to as self-esteem) through empirical research (Abraham & Christopherson, 1984; Gordon, 1977). Self-concept has been defined by Harter (1991) as an individual's perception of the combination of different aspects of the self. Appraisals of physical appearance, intellectual abilities, emotional stability, social skills, and other areas combine to create an individual's overall perception of self. Adolescence presents a crucial stage in the process of development of self-



concept. Brought about by changes inherent in moving from childhood to adulthood, a discontinuous process of self-concept development is experienced by individuals passing into and through adolescence. Social role changes, higher expectations of responsibility, independence, intellectual performance, physical development, and family role changes each contribute to a time of discontinuity that is reflected by the adolescent through new behaviors.

The self-concept evolves with these changes and has been shown in various studies to be related to intellectual, emotional, and social behaviors (Gordon, 1977; Patton, 1991; Penny & Robinson, 1986; Sohlberg, 1989; Stivers, 1990). The relationship between external control, low self-concept, undesirable behaviors, and emotional status indicates a need to understand how to influence the development of internal locus of control as well as a higher self-concept perception in adolescents.

With the transitions of social, school, and family roles that take place in adolescence, an investigation of the possible influences on the development of locus of control and self-concept is critical. In this study, the role of the parents in the adolescent developmental period was investigated. Focusing on the parenting behaviors of demandingness and responsiveness, this study examined the relationship between these parenting behaviors and the locus of control and self-concept of 13-, 14-, and 15-year-olds.

Previous studies have indicated a relationship between certain parenting behaviors and locus of control as well as self-concept. However, none have investigated the relationship between all three variables.

There are three general categories of parenting styles, based on different levels of demandingness and responsiveness, which are hypothesized to

have a significant relationship to the development of self-concept and locus of control. Baumrind (1966) labeled these categories as: (a) permissive, (b) authoritative, and (c) authoritarian, and will be defined and discussed further in the Review of the Literature chapter. The specific definitions used for demandingness and responsiveness in context for defining the parenting styles are (a) demandingness is ". . . the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys" (Baumrind, 1991, p 61); (b) responsiveness is ". . . the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands" (Baumrind, 1991, p 61 & 62).

A review of the literature presented by Baumrind (1966) suggested that the permissive and authoritarian parenting styles may inhibit the child from initiating social interaction, while the authoritarian style alone may inhibit the creative development of the child, may generate passivity and dependence, may decrease self-assertiveness, and may even provoke rebellion in adolescence. The authoritative style may, on the other hand, generate behavior that is well socialized and autonomous.

In this study, adolescent subjects, ages 13 to 15, were administered the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale for Children (NSIECSC) (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973), the Perceived Parenting Styles Survey (PPSS), and the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA) (Harter, 1988). These instruments were used to investigate the relationship between the parenting behaviors of demandingness and responsiveness and adolescent locus of control and self-concept. The hypothesis was made that subjects who

rate their parent(s) as being authoritative would have lower mean scores on the NSIECSC, which would indicate a more internal locus of control, and would have higher mean scores on the scales of the SPPA than subjects who reported either Permissive or Authoritarian parenting styles.

Another hypothesis was made that subjects reporting the Permissive style would have significantly higher external mean scores on the NSIECSC and lower scores on the SPPA scales than subjects reporting the Authoritarian style. Within the remainder of this thesis, the literature relevant to the research problem is reviewed, the method is explained, the results are presented, and a discussion of the study is given.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Of the published studies that have investigated the attributes of adolescent locus of control, self-concept, and their relationships with parental antecedents, none have specifically addressed the behaviors of demandingness and responsiveness. Baumrind (1991), through a review of the research on parenting styles and adolescent behaviors, observed:

Adolescents' personal commitment to courses of thought and action that depart from early, more stable and secure patterns is facilitated by commensurate accommodations to their changing status by parents...adolescents are most likely to be "optimally competent" when parents are both highly demanding and highly responsive. (p 61)

One study has explored the relationship between locus of control, self-concept and the parental behaviors of nurturance, punishment and discipline. In the investigation, Halpin, Halpin, and Whiddon (1980) reported statistically significant positive relationships between internal locus of control and nurturance, and self-esteem and nurturance for a subject group of 141 males and females, ranging in age from 12 to 18. External punishment, such as spanking or grounding, had a significant negative correlation with self-esteem ( $p < .0001$ ), but no significant relationship to locus of control. Also, a significant positive relationship between principled discipline and self-esteem was reported ( $p < .001$ ).

The data reported in Halpin et al.'s research suggested that there may be an important relationship between forms of discipline and self-esteem. Given the lack of research reported on the specific parental behaviors of demandingness and responsiveness and their relationship to adolescent locus

of control and self-concept, a brief description of each aspect will be given along with related research that establishes the importance of this investigation.

### Locus of Control

Social learning theory, originally introduced by Rotter (1954, 1966), explains behavior as a learned process, involving expectancies and cognitive meaning based on experiences and observations. Perceived control is an important variable in determining behavior within the context of a given situation. As defined in the introduction, internal locus of control indicates that an individual perceives events as being contingent upon his or her own behavior. An external locus of control indicates that an individual feels little or no control over events, and feels that he or she is in the control of a powerful other person or force.

Numerous studies have been conducted in which researchers have examined the antecedents of locus of control. Most of the investigated constructs have been related to easily operationalized variables such as school achievement, depression, and delinquency (Hagborg, Masella, Palladino, & Shepardson, 1991; McCauley, Mitchell, Burke, & Moss, 1988; Parrott & Strongman, 1984; Shaw & Scott, 1991; Sohlberg, 1989; Van-Boxtel & Monks, 1992). In each study, a statistically significant relationship was established between locus of control and the measured variables. An external orientation is negatively related to school achievement, and positively related to depression and delinquency ( $p < .05$ ).

Studies that have investigated the relationship between adolescent locus of control and parental antecedents have been impeded by the obstacle of accurately measuring parental behaviors. Some studies have used

observation and interviews, while others have relied on self-report measures. Another approach has been to measure adolescents' perceptions of parent behaviors. Each technique has provided researchers with useful information that, on a general level, has produced similar results.

Katkovsky, Crandall, and Good (1967) reported on a 2-year longitudinal study produced by the Fels Research Institute (FRI) which provided data that supported Rotter's (1966) hypothesis that parenting behaviors and locus of control were significantly related. Specifically, Rotter theorized that consistency in discipline and treatment by the parents would correlate positively with an internal locus of control in the child and that inconsistency would be associated with an external locus of control.

The Katkovsky et al. study included observation and interviews with the mothers of 41 children, ages 6 to 12. The results indicated that children's internal locus of control, as measured by the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire (IAR) (Crandall, Katkovsky, & Crandall, 1965), is positively correlated to approval and affection by the mother ( $p < .05$ ). External scores on the IAR were positively correlated with coerciveness and punitiveness ( $p < .05$ ).

In their discussion, Katkovsky et al. stated that children's internal locus of control is related to the degree to which parents are protective, nurturant, approving, and nonrejecting. Support and positive relationships are reported as the most significant behaviors in fostering a child's internal locus of control.

Using retrospective perception of parental behaviors reported by undergraduates, MacDonald (1971) found an internal locus of control related to high nurturance, low protectiveness ( $p < .05$ ) and, for males, paternal use of

physical punishment ( $p < .05$ ). An external locus of control was significantly correlated to maternal affective punishment for males ( $p < .05$ ).

Further evidence was furnished by the results of data collected by Nowicki and Schneewind (1982). Subjects, ages 12 and 18, came from two different cultures, American and German. Both groups had very similar profiles. Internal scores on the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973) were significantly, positively related to family cohesion and expressiveness, as well as low conflict ( $p < .05$ ).

Tzuriel and Haywood (1985) reported a positive relationship between internal locus of control and attention, especially by the father ( $p < .01$ ). Internal motivation, defined as seeking satisfaction through responsibility, achievement, challenge, and learning, was shown to have a positive relationship with internal locus of control ( $p < .01$ ). Subjects who reported high internal motivation also reported more success on the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire ( $p < .05$ ).

A self-report measure for parents regarding their parenting behaviors used by Davis and Phares (1969) resulted in data that supported the hypotheses that: (a) parents who attempt to exert a great deal of control over a child's behavior and who are directive and restrictive will tend to develop in the child a belief of externality, and (b) a child who is allowed relative autonomy within the family setting will have the opportunity to test and experience the consequences of his or her own behavior and therefore will develop a belief of internal control.

Davis and Phares' hypothesis that the parent's locus of control orientation would be positively correlated to the child's orientation was not supported in their investigation, as parent and child locus of control scores

were not similar. Nowicki and Segal (1974) were also unable to support their hypothesis that a child's locus of control orientation would be significantly correlated to that of his or her parent's.

In a more recent study using German subjects, Krampen (1989) noted that research shows children's perceptions of parental behavior correlated higher with their locus of control scores than parent's answers. Krampen criticized earlier studies for not using behavior-oriented indicators of child-rearing styles, and suggested more direct and observable variables, specifically reinforcement and punishment practices. Also, he pointed out problems associated with using retrospective methods.

To amend these problems, Krampen conducted a longitudinal study in which he collected data from mothers and their adolescent children. The mothers' practices of reinforcement and punishment were the measured variables. Adolescents' locus of control scores were measured twice at 10-month intervals and then correlated to scores on the Family Diagnostic Test System (Schneewind, Beckmann, & Hecht-Jackl, 1985), a behaviorally oriented measure.

Krampen's study indicated that internal locus of control scores correlated significantly with high levels of emotional warmth and contingent reinforcement of positive behavior on the child's part ( $p < .01$ ). Chance scores (related to external orientation) correlated with physical punishment, withdrawal of love, and low levels of emotional warmth and contingency reinforcement ( $p < .05$ ). The factor of powerful others (also related to external orientation) correlated with limited praise based on social comparisons, material reinforcement, and noncontingent public praise ( $p < .01$ ).



In summary, evidence is given in support of the theory that parental antecedents of nurturance correlate significantly with orientation of locus of control. Krampen discussed the need for longitudinal studies with adolescents and their parents to assess the relationship among these variables more accurately. Currently, this challenge has not been met, leaving the question open for further investigation.

### Self-Concept

Harter (1990) has defined self-concept as an individual's perception of the combination of different aspects of the self. Appraisals of physical appearance, intellectual abilities, emotional stability, social skills, and other areas combine to create an individual's overall perception of self.

Adolescence presents a crucial stage in the process of the development of the self-concept. Brought about by changes inherent in moving from childhood to adulthood, a discontinuous process of self-concept development is experienced by individuals passing into and through adolescence. Social role changes, higher expectations of responsibility and independence, intellectual development, physical changes, and family role changes each make the stage of adolescence a time of experimentation for new behaviors (Harter, 1990).

There have been many studies that have investigated the relationship of adolescent self-concept and behaviors of school achievement, depression, delinquency, and drug use. However, few studies have addressed the relationship between adolescent self-concept and parenting styles. Gordon (1977) reported data identifying a relationship between high self-esteem and internal locus of control. Various measures of achievement by a group of fourth graders were found to correlate with scores on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers & Harris, 1969) and the Nowicki-

Strickland Locus of Control scale for Children (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973). A significant negative correlation ( $p < .01$ ) was found between high self-esteem and external locus of control scores. Achievement, as measured by GPA, language achievement, and math achievement, had small, yet significant associations with both locus of control and self-esteem.

There have been relatively few studies conducted that have investigated the relationship of self-concept and parental antecedents. Buri (1989) reported a significant relationship ( $p < .01$ ) between current self-esteem and perceived parental nurturance during childhood in a sample of undergraduates. However, Buri's study was retrospective, with most subjects living outside of the home and not in constant contact with parents.

Abraham and Christopherson (1984) used measures of perceived competence in a study of middle school children that can be related to self-concept. The investigators' examination of the relationships between perceived competence, parental antecedents, and locus of control yielded data that described a significant correlation ( $p < .001$ ) between competence and locus of control in the specific areas of cognitive competence, social competence, and general self-worth. A relationship between parental behaviors and self-concept in children was reported through the results which show that supporting behaviors by parents strengthen a child's desire to be like his or her parent.

Additional evidence supporting the relationship between self-concept and parental antecedents will be provided in the section on parenting styles.

### Parenting Styles

Many definitions have been given for categories of parental behaviors relative to child-rearing. Most of the research on antecedents of parental

behavior has focused on nurturance behaviors. Many of these studies have been criticized for methodological weaknesses (e.g., Krampen, 1989). Use of indirect, nonbehaviorally oriented indications of parenting styles is potentially vulnerable to self-report effects. Using the concepts of demandingness and responsiveness addresses this criticism by using behavioral definitions and more accurate operationalization. The following studies offer categories of parenting styles that are based on direct, behavioral indications. A summary of definitions and authors can be found in Table 1.

In a review of the literature on consequences of parental discipline, Becker (1964) defined parenting styles along two continua: (a) restrictive to permissive, and (b) hostile to warm. Becker related the categories harbored within the four possible quadrants to the facilitation of certain behaviors in children. In Becker's synopsis, he indicated that permissive-warm parenting styles of discipline are related to well-adjusted, socially competent adolescents. Child-rearing that incorporated any type of hostility was related to social incompetence and the inhibition of creative development.

The different categories of parenting styles in Becker's review were based mainly on disciplinary behaviors practiced by the parents. Baumrind (1966, 1978, 1991) identified three categories of parenting styles based on parents' commitment and balance of demandingness and responsiveness. The three categories are (a) authoritarian, (b) permissive, and (c) authoritative. These categories have also been used by Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiberman, Roberts, and Fraleigh (1987).

Table 1

Definitions of Parenting Styles and Related Adolescent Behaviors

Author (Date)	Label	Definition	Related Adolescent Behaviors/Attributes
Becker (1964)	Warm-restrictive	Overprotective, calm detachment, organized, effective	Submissive, dependent, polite, neat, obedient, minimal aggression, not friendly or creative, compliant
	Warm-Permissive	Indulgent, democratic	Active, socially outgoing, creative, independent, successfully aggressive
	Hostile-Restrictive	Rigid, controlling, authoritarian (Hostile-neurotic)	Socially withdrawn, neurotic problems, quarrelsome with peers, maximal self-aggression
	Hostile-permissive	Anxious emotional involvement, neglecting, anxious-neurotic	Delinquent, noncompliant, maximal aggression
Baumrind (1966, 1971, 1978, 1991)	Authoritarian	Highly restrictive, highly demanding, punitive discipline, value conformity above individuality	Unfriendly, uncooperative, uninterested, delinquent
	Permissive	Nonrestrictive, very responsive, acceptant, allows child to be self-regulated and free from restraint	Highly aggressive, independent
	Authoritative	Fairly restrictive, responsive, explains policy, equalitarian	Friendly, leader, trusting, optimistic, socially competent, responsible

Table 1

Author (Date)	Label	Definition	Related Adolescent Behaviors/ Attributes
Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiberman, Roberts, & Fraleigh (1987)	Authoritarian	Absolute standards, emphasize obedience and authority, discourages verbal give and take	Lower academic achievement (GPA) than permissive and authoritative groups ( $p < .001$ )
	Permissive	Tolerant, accepting of child's actions, minimal amount of punishment, allows self-regulation	Lower academic achievement (GPA) than authoritative ( $p < .01$ )
	Authoritative	Expects child to be mature, sets clear, reasonable standards, firm enforcement of rules, encourages independence and individuality	Higher academic achievement (GPA) than authoritarian and permissive groups ( $p < .05$ )
Kelly & Goodwin (1983)	Autocratic	Rarely allows child to express views on subjects regarding child's behavior or permits child to regulate behavior	50% accepted parental power 50% rejected parental power
	Permissive	Child has more influence in decisions which concern them than do the parents	32% accepted parental power 68% rejected parental power
	Democratic	Child encouraged to participate in discussions relevant to child's behavior, although parents approve final decision	68% accepted parental power 32% rejected parental power
Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts (1989)	Authoritative	Refer to Dornbusch et al. (1987)	Academic success healthy autonomy, healthy work attitude

Baumrind (1966) presented a report on the literature that investigated the effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. Her review summary resulted in eight propositions concerning the effects of parental disciplinary practices, categorized as authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Baumrind suggested, through these eight propositions, that authoritarian and permissive parenting may inhibit the child from initiating social interaction, that authoritarian parenting may inhibit the creative development of the child, may generate passivity and dependence, may decrease self-assertiveness, and may even provoke rebellion in adolescence. Authoritative parenting, on the other hand, may generate behavior that is well socialized and autonomous. The empirical testing of these propositions has yet to be done on a comprehensive level.

In a review of the relationship between parenting styles and social competence in children, Baumrind (1978) discussed the relationship found by Rosenberg (1965), who indicated that low parental involvement may be associated with negative behaviors in adolescence (such as low self-esteem) even more than parental harshness. Therefore, a permissive parenting style should show a higher correlation with negative behaviors than would an authoritarian style. This hypothesis, however, was not supported by the results of this present investigation.

Baumrind (1978) also reported research which indicated a relationship between authoritarian parenting styles and antisocial aggression, an external locus of control orientation, noncompliance, and feelings of alienation. Many of the researchers reported that irrational use of power, harsh treatment, and punitive discipline may be behaviors which influence negative attributes in adolescents.

Dornbusch et al. (1987) studied the relationship between adolescents' GPA and parenting styles. Questionnaires were given to 7,836 high school students asking for background characteristics, self-reported grades, perceptions of parental attitudes and behaviors, and family communication patterns. From this information, Dornbusch et al. reported the following results: authoritarian and permissive parenting was negatively correlated to GPA ( $p < .001$ ), and authoritative parenting was positively correlated to GPA ( $p < .001$ ).

Kelly and Goodwin (1983) adopted the patterns of parenting styles suggested by Baldwin (1945). They presented three types of parental control: (a) autocratic, (b) democratic, and (c) permissive. These labels correspond to Baumrind's (1966, 1971, 1978, 1991) categories of authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive, respectively. In Kelly and Goodwin's (1983) study, 100 students were given an eight-item questionnaire, in which the students' perception of their parents' control was assessed. The authors reported data which supported their hypotheses that adolescents from democratic homes react more positively to parental power than those from permissive or autocratic homes.

Steinberg, Elmen, and Mounts (1989) reported data that further supported the evidence reported by Baumrind (1966, 1971, 1978, 1991) and Dornbusch et al. (1987). These researchers reported a strong correlation between authoritative parenting styles and development of positive behaviors in adolescents. Focusing on the factors of psychosocial maturity and academic success, Steinberg et al. studied 120 families and their adolescent firstborn. A strong, positive correlation was reported between authoritative

parenting and both GPA and psychological maturity ( $p < .0001$  and  $p < .001$ , respectively).

The data reported by Steinberg et al. (1989) and others empirically support the hypothesis that authoritative parenting style is related to positive, well adjusted behavior in adolescence. This hypothesis was investigated in additional detail in the present study.



## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### Subjects

Subjects included 198 students from South Cache Middle School in Hyrum, Utah, who were enrolled in eighth or ninth grade. Subjects' ages ranged from 13 to 16, with 114 males and 84 females participating. The sample included 191 Caucasian students, 5 Hispanic students, and 2 Native American students.

A sample pool of 260 students was selected from English classes, and their parents were sent a letter requesting permission to participate. The letter stated that if the parents did not want their child to participate, the letter should be returned within 14 days of receiving it. Twelve parental responses were received. A total of 233 students was then administered the instruments. Of these, 35 were not used due to being incomplete or having inconsistent results on the different forms of the Perceived Parenting Style Survey (PPSS).

Subjects in this sample were generally from middle to lower middle class socioeconomic status families, and predominately members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints. The population of the communities from which the subjects were drawn is approximately 11,500. Farming, manufacturing, and meat packing are the main sources of industry for the area.

#### Instruments

Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale for Children. To assess the locus of control orientation of the subjects, the Nowicki-Strickland

Internal-External Control Scale for Children (NSIECSC) (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973) was administered. The authors of this instrument sought to extend the research on locus of control to children by creating an instrument that gives reliable and valid data, and would provide researchers with a better way to describe the relationships surrounding children's locus of control.

Based on the adult locus of control scale created by Rotter (1966), Nowicki and Strickland developed a 40-item self-report test in which the subject answered "yes" or "no" to each item, appropriate for children from grades three through nine. "The items describe reinforcement situations across interpersonal and motivational areas such as affiliation, achievement and dependency" (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973, p 149).

Statements are worded so that responses indicating an external orientation to locus of control receive a score of "1" and items indicating an internal orientation receive a score of "0." Thus, higher scores are indicative of external locus of control. Normative data were collected with a group of 1,017 children from four different communities. The group ranged in grade level from 3rd to 12th and most of the sample was Caucasian (Lefcourt, 1991). The data were reported by grade and gender. For males in the eighth grade,  $M = 14.7$ ,  $SD = 4.4$ ; males in the ninth grade,  $M = 13.8$ ,  $SD = 4.1$ ; females in the eighth grade,  $M = 12.3$ ,  $SD = 3.6$ , females in the ninth grade,  $M = 12.3$ ,  $SD = 3.8$ .

An example of an external item (scored as a "1" if answered "yes") is: "Do you believe that most problems will solve themselves if you just don't fool with them?" An example of an internal item (scored as a "0" if answered "yes") is: "Do you believe that if somebody studies hard enough he or she can pass any subject?" A copy of the NSIECSC is found in the Appendix.

To measure reliability and validity, the authors of the NSIECSC administered the instrument orally to a sample of 1,017 children in grades 3 through 12. Estimates of internal consistency reliability using the split-half method are (a) .63 for grades 3 - 5, (b) .68 for grades 6 - 8, (c) .74 for grades 9 - 11, and (d) .81 for grade 12 (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973). A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .64 was also obtained. Test-retest reliabilities have been measured by Nowicki and Duke (1974) and Nowicki and Roundtree (1971), and have varied from .63 over a 9-month interval with 3rd through 6th graders, to .76 over a 5-week interval for 12th graders.

Criterion-related validity of the NSIECSC was tested by Nowicki and Strickland (1973) using the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire (Crandall, Katkovsky & Crandall, 1965), another locus of control measure. Two groups of children were included in the study: (a) 182 third graders, and (b) 171 seventh graders. Significant correlations were found between the two measures. The Bailer-Cromwell Scale (Bailer, 1961), an intellectual achievement measure, has been found to correlate with the NSIECSC at  $r = .41$  with a sample of 29 children, ages 9 - 11 years (Lefcourt, 1991). Also, the NSIECSC has been found to be associated with scores on many achievement-related tasks, including the SAT, CTEB, CAT, and grade point average. In general, those with an external locus of control score were found to have lower achievement scores than those with an internal locus of control score.

Lefcourt (1991) reported that the NSIECSC is one of the better measures of locus of control for children based on careful development, adequate internal consistency and temporal stability, the solid reputation of the

researchers, and its encouraging data relevant to divergent and convergent validity.

The Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents. The Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA) (Harter, 1988) is a multidimensional scale designed to assess the perceived competence or adequacy of adolescents in specific domains. There are nine different subscales measuring: (a) scholastic competence, (b) athletic competence, (c) physical appearance, (d) social acceptance, (e) behavioral conduct, (f) job competence, (g) close friendship, (h) romantic appeal, and (i) global self-worth. This multidimensional approach to self-concept allows a more accurate description of the adolescent's feelings of competence and adequacy due to the different areas presented (Harter, 1988).

The SPPA contains 45 items, in a structured alternative format. Subjects are given a choice between two statements and then are asked to decide whether the statement is "Sort of true for me" or "Really true for me." An example of an item is:

Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me		Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish their body was different	BUT	Other teenagers like their body the way it is
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SPPA items were designed to remove the tendency for socially desirable answers through the use of a structured alternative format. The two-choice format gives the subject the perception that half of the adolescents view themselves in one way and the other half views themselves in the other way. Therefore, the subject does not have to legitimize the answer he or she chooses. See Appendix for a copy of the SPPA.

Scoring for the SPPA is done on a four-point scale, with "4" indicating a "most adequate" perception for that area. A mean for each subscale is calculated, for a total of nine scores to make up the profile for each subject.

A total of 652 subjects (325 boys and 327 girls), 90% Caucasian, representing grades 8 through 11, was used to provide reliability and normative data. Four sample groups for the SPPA were drawn from lower middle class to middle class neighborhoods in Colorado. Internal consistency reliability coefficients are provided for nine subscales, and ranged from .74 to .93, which represents acceptable internal consistency. Subscale means ranged between 2.4 for romantic appeal and 3.3 for close friendship for an average of 2.9, which is above the midpoint of the scale. Standard deviations fall between .50 and .75, representing considerable variation among individuals (Harter, 1988).

Criterion-related evidence for the validity of the SPPA has been provided in a comparison between the Reynolds Child Depression Scale (Reynolds, 1989) and the global self-worth subscale of the children's version of the SPPA (Crosbie-Burnett, 1988). A correlation of  $r = -.49$  ( $p < .001$ ) was reported for this comparison. Another criterion validity study of the SPPA was conducted by Cedeno (1993), who found significant positive correlation ( $p < .05$  and higher) between the SPPA and teacher ratings of social-behavioral competence, as measured by the School Social Behavior Scales (Merrell, 1993) with a group of middle school students.

Perceived Parenting-Styles Survey. Based on the behavioral definitions of the three parenting styles introduced by Baumrind (1966, 1971, 1978, 1991), the Perceived Parenting-Styles Survey (PPSS) was developed by the investigator for use in this study. Although there is extensive theory on

the parental behaviors of demandingness and responsiveness, there is not a published instrument to measure adolescent perception of their parents' behaviors in these areas. Two forms of the PPSS were presented to subjects. First, 18 statements, 6 statements for each parenting style, were presented in random order and subjects were directed to mark all sentences that most closely described their parents' behaviors. Second, a simple, forced-choice form was presented that groups the six statements identifying the different parenting styles into three separate boxes. Subjects were directed to read all the statements in the three boxes and mark the box that most closely described the behaviors of their parent(s).

The forms are titled, "What My Parent(s) Are Like." An example of one of the statements from the Permissive category is: "My parents allow me to do almost anything I want to do." Copies of both forms of the Perceived Parenting-Styles Survey are included in the Appendix.

Consistency data on the PPSS were collected using 25 ninth grade students from the study. The two forms of the PPSS were given at an 11-day interval. Twenty-three of the 25 students (92%) marked the same statements on the random statement form, while 100% of the students marked the same box on the forced-choice form at the two time intervals. These consistency data showed that subjects were marking statements that applied to their parents' behaviors in a consistent manner.

Possible limitations to this instrument include no prior normative data and the possibility of a social desirability response set, as well as the fact that it is only measuring the adolescents' perception of parenting style. These limitations will be discussed further in the Discussion chapter.

## Procedure

Subjects were chosen through enrollment in English classes. A letter was given to the English department asking for class time to administer the instruments. Because of the year-round education system, there were teachers and students that were off-track during the time of testing. Therefore, three of the seven English teachers were not able to participate. From the remaining four teachers, class rosters were taken and each student's parents were sent a letter asking permission for their child to participate. Those students whose parents requested that their child not participate were given another activity, assigned by the teacher, during the time of testing. After the time limit for the permission letters was over, a schedule was made with the English teachers regarding the best time for them and the investigator to administer the instruments. From this schedule, the sample group was formed. Although equal gender representation was planned, absences and other factors led to unbalanced gender representation (57% male, 43% female).

Subjects were given the NSIECSC, PPSS - Form 1, SPPA, and the PPSS - Form 2 during their regularly scheduled English class. Class group size ranged from 13 to 33, with a total of 11 classes and 233 students participating. The measures were administered over the course of one week.

The regular classroom teacher was asked to stay in the room during the administration to help maintain order. The investigator then gave the subjects a brief description of the study, describing the surveys as a way to help school counselors better understand how adolescents are feeling about themselves and about their parents. It was stressed that no one would be identified and that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers. Then, the

instruments were handed out and subjects were instructed to write their age and "F" for female or "M" for male at the top of the first page. After this step, the directions for each measurement were read. The author used the same directions for each subject group. For the NSIECSC, it was directed that subjects circle "yes" or "no" according to how they felt most of the time. For the PPSS - Form 1, subjects were instructed to read the statements and mark those that most closely described their parent or parents. The directions for the SPPA were read directly from the Harter Self-Perception Profile Manual (Harter, 1988). Finally, the subjects were instructed for the PPSS - Form 2 by asking them to read the three groups of statements and to mark the letter in the box that most closely described their parent or parents.

After the directions were read, the investigator asked for any questions and then told subjects to begin. Subjects averaged 25 minutes to complete the instruments. When a subject completed the instruments, he or she was instructed to turn the papers upside-down and to raise a hand. The author then took the papers and put them into an envelope to assure the student of confidentiality.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The hypotheses tested in this study were (a) subjects who perceive their parents as being authoritative would have lower mean scores on the NSIECSC and higher mean scores on the SPPA subscales than subjects who perceive their parents as being permissive or authoritarian, and (b) subjects who perceive their parents as being permissive will have higher mean scores on the NSIECSC and lower mean scores on the SPPA subscales than the authoritarian group. A number of statistical procedures were used to test these hypotheses. These procedures and findings will be presented in this chapter.

The results of the PPSS were as follows: 15 subjects (7.6%) reported the permissive parenting style, 38 subjects (19.2%) reported the authoritarian style, and 145 subjects (73.2%) reported the authoritative style. Both forms of the PPSS were scored and those that did not report the same parenting style on both forms were not used in the data analysis (26 were not consistent on the two forms of the PPSS).

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to assess the differences in locus of control scores for the different perceived parenting style groups. The mean score for the permissive group was 17.33 with a standard deviation of 4.88. Mean score for the authoritative group was 13.30 with a standard deviation of 4.50. The authoritarian group had a mean score of 19.87 with a standard deviation of 4.91. A significant group effect was found in this analysis ( $F [2,195] = 32.89, p < .0001$ ). Following the ANOVA procedure, a series of Scheffe' multiple range comparisons were conducted,

giving support for the first hypothesis. The authoritative group had a significantly lower mean score than the permissive group ( $p < .05$ ), and the authoritarian group ( $p < .001$ ). Contrary to the second hypothesis, however, the permissive group did not have a significantly higher mean score than the authoritarian group. Descriptive statistics by group on the locus of control scores are presented in Table 2, along with ANOVA results.

A one-way ANOVA and post-hoc tests were also used to assess the differences between mean scores on the subscales of the SPPA for the different parenting style groups. The SPPA mean scores and standard deviations for each of the three study groups, along with ANOVA and Scheffe' post-hoc test results, are presented in Table 3.

Table 2

Group Differences on the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale for Children Based on Perceived Parenting Styles, with ANOVA Results

Permissive		Authoritative		Authoritarian		F (2,195)
(n = 15)		(n = 145)		(n=38)		
M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
17.33	4.88	13.30	4.50	19.87	4.91	32.89*

\*  $p < .0001$ .

Table 3

Group Differences on the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents Based on Perceived Parenting Styles, with ANOVA Results

	PERMISSIVE		AUTHORITATIVE		AUTHORITARIAN		<i>F</i> (2,195)
	(n = 15)		(n = 145)		(n = 38)		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
SC	2.25 <sup>a</sup>	.82	2.90 <sup>b</sup>	.73	2.21 <sup>a</sup>	.72	16.25 <sup>*</sup>
SA	2.97	.61	3.06 <sup>a</sup>	.61	2.77 <sup>b</sup>	.70	3.22 <sup>***</sup>
AC	2.64	.81	2.94	.74	2.75	.86	1.71 n.s.
PA	2.29	.99	2.63 <sup>a</sup>	.75	2.07 <sup>b</sup>	.78	8.83 <sup>**</sup>
JC	2.99	.57	3.13	.55	2.91	.54	2.58 n.s.
RA	2.69	.81	2.54	.64	2.41	.58	1.20 n.s.
BC	2.19 <sup>a</sup>	.58	2.94 <sup>b</sup>	.62	2.36 <sup>a</sup>	.55	21.69 <sup>*</sup>
CF	3.13	.68	3.21 <sup>a</sup>	.69	2.67 <sup>b</sup>	.75	8.74 <sup>**</sup>
GSW	2.69	.72	3.11 <sup>a</sup>	.67	2.43 <sup>b</sup>	.70	16.14 <sup>*</sup>

**Note.** Pairs of mean scores with different superscript letters are significantly different from each other at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>a</sup> Denotes no statistical significant difference from the other mean scores.

<sup>b</sup> Denotes statistical significance between the means with superscript "a".

\*  $p < .0001$

\*\*  $p < .001$

\*\*\*  $p < .01$

n.s. = not significant

**Table Key for SPPA Scores:**

SC = Scholastic Competence  
 SA = Social Acceptance  
 AC = Athletic Competence  
 PA = Physical Appearance  
 JC = Job Competence  
 RA = Romantic Appeal  
 BC = Behavioral Conduct  
 CF = Close Friendship  
 GSW = Global Self-Worth

Congruent with the first hypothesis, the authoritative group had significantly higher self-perception mean scores on several of the SPPA subscales in comparison to the authoritarian group. These specific subscales included: Social Competence, Social Acceptance, Physical Appearance, Behavioral Conduct, Close Friendship, and Global Self-Worth. The authoritative group was found to have higher self-perception scores than the permissive group on only two SPPA subscales, namely Scholastic Competence and Behavioral Conduct.

The second hypothesis was not supported by the self-concept findings, as no significant differences were found between mean scores for the permissive group and mean scores for the authoritarian group on any of the SPPA scores.

Of secondary interest for this investigation was the relationship between locus of control and self-concept of the subjects. In order to further investigate this relationship, Pearson product-moment correlations were computed between the scores of the NSIECSC and the SPPA for the entire group.

Significant negative correlations ( $p < .01$ ) were found for each subscale, indicating that as locus of control becomes more external, self-perception scores decrease. The correlation coefficients from this analysis are presented in Table 4.

The mean  $r$  value for all correlations in this matrix was  $-.31$ , which is also significant ( $p < .01$ ). For the Global Self-Worth subscale, which is the scale that measures the general feelings of self-worth of the adolescent,  $r^2 = .21$ , indicating that 21% of the variance between these measures is accounted for in this analysis.

Table 4

Correlation Coefficients between Locus of Control Scores and Self-Perception Scores for the Entire Subject Group ( $N = 198$ ), Listed by SPPA Subscales

<u>SPPA Subscales</u>	<u><i>r</i> values</u>	<u><i>p</i> values</u>
Social Competence	-.44	<.001
Social Acceptance	-.24	<.001
Athletic Competence	-.17	<.01
Physical Appearance	-.32	<.001
Job Competence	-.24	<.001
Romantic Appeal	-.25	<.001
Behavioral Conduct	-.36	<.001
Close Friendship	-.31	<.001
Global Self-Worth	-.46	<.001

## CHAPTER V

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this investigation indicated that subjects who perceived their parents as authoritative had a more internal locus of control orientation and a more positive self-concept than subjects who perceived their parents as either permissive or authoritarian. These results also indicated that subjects who perceived their parents as authoritarian had the most external locus of control orientation and the poorest self-concept of the three groups. Of interest, it was found that significantly more subjects perceived their parents as being authoritative rather than permissive or authoritarian. It was also found that a significant negative relationship exists between the NSIECSC and the SPPA, indicating that external locus of control is related to poorer self-concept.

Consistent with the literature and past research, this study indicated a relationship between parenting behaviors and locus of control orientation as well as self-concept. Specifically, in this study, the behaviors of demandingness and responsiveness were investigated, and the results indicated that medium levels of demandingness and high levels of responsiveness are most closely related to development of an internal control orientation and a competent self-concept. Baumrind (1966, 1971, 1978, 1991) speculated that this relationship exists; however, these specific variables had not been experimentally examined until this study.

The differences found between the perceived parenting style groups and subjects' locus of control and self-concept scores may be explained in regard to the amount of autonomy encouraged or discouraged, the amount of

restrictions used, the level of parental expectations that are perceived by the adolescent, and the degree to which the adolescent's requests or demands of the parents are met (Baumrind, 1966, 1971, 1978, 1991).

The authoritative parenting style encourages autonomy through behaviors such as: giving the adolescent opportunities to make decisions, opportunities to participate in activities outside the home, and opportunities to discuss issues, set rules, and define punishments with parents. Restrictions within the authoritative style are generally judged to be fair and rational by the adolescent, as are punishments given for inappropriate behavior, since the adolescent has the opportunity to have discussed these. The expectations of authoritative parents are perceived as being realistic and the adolescent feels that parents are supportive of the actions the adolescent takes to fulfill those expectations. The demands or requests made by authoritative parents are perceived as being reasonable, and may encourage the adolescent to ask for what he or she wants, knowing that it will be granted if it is reasonable.

The permissive parenting style encourages or demands autonomy by giving the adolescent almost complete control of all decisions made by him or her. Very few, if any, rules are set. Little or no restriction is placed on the adolescent, and punishments are very lenient if they are given at all. The adolescent perceives the parents as having minimal expectations of him or her and feels little support for activities in which he or she participates. Requests or demands made by the adolescent are perceived as almost always being met, and may encourage the adolescent to make unreasonable requests.

With authoritarian style parenting, autonomy is discouraged as parents are perceived as controlling most of the decisions made for the adolescent. Very little, if any, discussion is allowed in regard to the adolescent's rules or

punishments. The adolescent perceives many restrictions placed on him or her by the authoritarian parent, which are often perceived as being unreasonable. Expectations are perceived by the adolescent as being unrealistic, often discouraging activity for fear of failing to meet the expectation. Responsiveness to the adolescent's requests is perceived as being low and he or she is discouraged from making any demands.

With these descriptions of the adolescent's perceptions in regard to the different parenting styles, the relationship between these perceptions and locus of control orientation and self-concept level can be examined. When an adolescent perceives him- or herself as being in control of decisions he or she can make, autonomy is developed. If the outcome of the decision is what the adolescent expected, the adolescent may begin to develop a sense of internal control. This may also give adolescents an opportunity to experience success, which is related to the development of a more positive self-concept (Harter, 1991).

In the two parenting style groups that encourage autonomy, a more internal locus of control score on the NSIECSC was found, as well as higher self-concept scores on the SPPA subscales. For subjects reporting the authoritarian style, the most external locus of control scores as well as the lowest self-concept scores were found, indicating that a sense of autonomy may be strongly related to internal locus of control and the development of a more competent self-concept.

In regard to restrictiveness, again a control issue is present. When the adolescent perceives him- or herself as being reasonably restricted by the parents, or when the adolescent was given the opportunity to discuss the restrictions, a sense of internal control may be developed. If the adolescent



perceives him- or herself as being able to behave appropriately without many restrictions, a sense of competence may be developed, adding to a more competent self-concept. Those subjects reporting the permissive style perceived their parents as being very unrestrictive; therefore, the adolescent may perceive him- or herself to be in complete control, thus developing a more internal orientation. An adolescent who perceives his or her parents as authoritarian perceives a high level of restriction that may inhibit feelings of internal control. Also, little or no chance is given for the adolescent to practice behaving without being told how to behave, so there may be little opportunity for the adolescent to develop a feeling of competence, which relates to a less competent self-concept.

When expectations are perceived as being realistic and when parents are perceived as being supportive and encouraging, competence is more likely to be developed. When little or no opportunity is given to meet perceived parental expectations, through unrealistic expectations or no encouragement to meet the expectations, adolescents are not given the opportunity to experience competence and therefore self-concepts tend to be poorer.

The perceived reasonable responsiveness of the authoritative parents may provide reinforcement for internal locus of control. By responding to reasonable requests or demands of their children, parents provide the adolescent with an opportunity to practice using power as well as learning how to make reasonable requests and demands. Also, this reasonable responsiveness may provide the adolescent with reassurance that the parents care about him or her and this perception could influence the development of a more competent self-concept.

When almost every request or demand of the adolescent is met or attempted to be met, as in the permissive style, the adolescent may develop an internal orientation. However, there is a chance that such an orientation is inappropriate for all situations, as in authority situations outside of the home. This speculation needs further investigation, as the assessment measures were not analyzed in this study to accurately describe this possible relationship.

In the authoritarian style, the adolescent perceives the parents as meeting few or none of the requests, and is limited to making very few demands. This may inhibit the sense of internal control adolescents feel when they believe they are incapable of having the power to receive what they ask for or need. Also, the perceived competence of the adolescent may be hindered as the adolescent may perceive the parents as not caring enough to respond to his or her requests.

Finally, the results showing the negative relationship between external locus of control and self-perception indicated that external control orientation is related to a less competent self-concept. This relationship may be influenced by the number of opportunities the adolescent is given to use his or her own power to influence the outcome of a situation. If the adolescent is given many opportunities to practice autonomy, the adolescent will be able to experience using his or her power to influence the outcome. When the adolescent experiences a successful outcome, the level of competence will most likely increase. If the adolescent is not given many opportunities to practice autonomy, he or she will not have as many opportunities to experience success and therefore the level of competence of that adolescent may not increase, leaving him or her with a low self-concept. Given that

poorer self-concept has been linked with various psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression (Harter, 1990), these results have practical implication. Adolescents who have an external locus of control may be at increased risk of developing these problems, and may need careful monitoring and support.

The results from this study provide increased support for the theory that parental behaviors do influence adolescent locus of control orientation and level of self-concept. Generally, the behaviors that are most closely related to an adolescent's internal control orientation and competent self-concept include: allowing the adolescent to develop autonomy, using reasonable restrictions that the adolescent is allowed to discuss with the parents, encouraging the adolescent to reach the realistic expectations that parents have for him or her, and using reasonable responsiveness to meet the adolescent's requests or demands.

#### Relationship to Prior Research

The findings in this study were generally consistent with the results of prior research which has investigated the relationship between parenting behaviors and locus of control, as well as those studies that have investigated the relationship between parenting behaviors and self-concept. However, there are some differences between the results of this study and prior research in regard to the relationships found between permissive parenting styles and adolescent locus of control and self-concept. These similarities and differences will be discussed in this section.

Like the findings of this study, which indicated that adolescents who perceive their parents as being authoritarian have significantly more external

scores, Katkovsky et al. (1967) reported a significant, positive relationship between external scores on the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire and parental coerciveness and punitiveness as assessed through observation and interviews with both parents and children. In 1969, Davis and Phares also found that parents who attempt to exert a great deal of control over a child's behavior and who are directive and restrictive will tend to develop in the child a belief of externality. In a review of the research findings on authoritarian behaviors in parenting, Baumrind (1978) found that a relationship exists between the authoritarian style (defined by irrational use of power, harsh treatment, and punitive discipline) and antisocial aggression, external orientation, noncompliance, and feelings of alienation.

Similar findings regarding the authoritative parenting style and self-perception were found in Baumrind's (1991) report on the longitudinal investigation completed by the Family Socialization and Developmental Competence Program, which studied the relationship between parenting style and adolescent competence and substance abuse. The results from this longitudinal investigation indicated a strong relationship between the authoritative parenting style and a high competence level. Observation and interviews at three different times (when children were ages 4, 9 and 15) with both children and parents provided the measure for parenting style. Competence was measured by maturational status, nutritional status, and social, cognitive, and emotional functioning. Baumrind reported that these high competence levels may be related to the adolescents' perception of their parents as being loving and influential.

Unlike the findings in this study in regard to permissive parenting, Rosenberg (1965) reported that adolescents who perceived their parents as

being very permissive had lower self-esteem than the other types of parenting styles. This finding was not supported in the present study, as the permissive parenting group had self-perception scores that were not significantly lower than the authoritarian group, and only two subscales were significantly lower than the authoritative group

### Limitations of This Study

Although this investigation has many merits that will help in understanding the relationship between parenting behaviors, adolescent locus of control, and self-concept, there are some limitations that need to be addressed, namely, the limitations of the Perceived Parenting Style Survey, the unbalanced parenting group representation, the similarities of the sample group, and the unidimensional assessment used.

Limitations of the PPSS were largely due to the fact that this study was the initial use for this measure. Currently, there is not another measure for adolescents' perception of parenting styles that could be used for the purposes of this investigation. Previous research was dependent on interviews and observational techniques to collect the data regarding parenting styles. For the purposes of this study, these techniques were not practical; therefore, a paper and pencil method was developed that measures the adolescent's perception of his or her parent's behaviors in regard to demandingness and responsiveness.

The results of this investigation indicate that the instrument may not be free from a socially desirable response set. The statements used were very obvious as to the different types of parenting, which may have influenced the subjects to report what they thought was the better parenting style. Also, this instrument measured the adolescent's perception and did not consider the

parents' perceptions of their behaviors in regard to parenting. The PPSS is quite subjective. Perhaps a more objective measure would provide information that is more consistent with actual parenting behavior.

The unequal sizes of the parenting style groups also presented a possible limitation, in that group means testing is difficult when there are small numbers in one or more groups. However, the statistical analysis used for the post-hoc analysis (the Sheffe' method) is appropriate for unequal groups and is a very conservative approach. The significant findings are representative of the sample used, inasmuch as the measures are accurate. If the parenting style groups had had more balanced representation, the group differences may have been even greater. This limitation presents the possibility that a Type II error was made, suggesting that there may be significant differences that exist that were not found in the analysis.

Similarities of the sample group may also present a limitation to generalizing the findings of this study to populations that have higher representation of minority groups. This sample was 99% Caucasian, taken from an area with a dominant religion, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints. Also, although not reported in the data, many of the subjects were from two-parent homes. It is possible that a more racially, culturally, and geographically diverse sample would provide somewhat different results. The results of this study, however, have merit in that variables such as cultural differences and single-parent homes did not influence the results as much as they would with a more diversified sample.

One last limitation is that a single method of assessment was used (self-report), and a single source was assessed (adolescents), possibly giving subjective and somewhat biased results. However, this limitation can be a

starting point for further research on the relationship between parenting style and adolescent locus of control and self-concept.

### Recommendations for Future Research

As stated in the section on limitations, a multimethod, multisource assessment would be advantageous for further investigating the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent locus of control and self-concept. The interview and observation techniques used in prior research (Baumrind, 1991; Rosenberg, 1965) could help to provide a more objective assessment of parenting behaviors and adolescent behaviors. Through assessing the actual behavior and perceptions of both parents and adolescents, a more accurate assessment may be made.

The results of this study indicated that a relationship exists between perceived parenting styles and locus of control and self-concept. This empirical information provides a firm starting point for further investigating the specific variables influencing this relationship. Research investigating the interactions of parents and adolescents that have been categorized as authoritative could be useful for teaching other parents and adolescents specific behaviors that would enhance the development of an internal locus of control as well as a more competent self-concept.

Research could also be done on the development of specific parent-training models for parents with adolescent children that are at risk either socially, academically, or emotionally. This could be expanded from single family training to group training that could take place in juvenile detention centers or possibly in school settings.

If the research in this area continues, an understanding of the specific behaviors that influence development of adolescent internal locus of control

and competent self-concept could be attained. The relationships between internal locus of control, competent self-concept, and appropriate behaviors and achievement have been established. Now, an understanding of the factors that influence the development of such attributes will prove to be very useful in helping parents and adolescents improve appropriate behaviors.



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APPENDIX

## INTERNAL-EXTERNAL CONTROL SCALE

Circle the answer that is **MOST** like you.

1. Do you believe that most problems will solve themselves if you just don't fool with them?     **yes**                     **no**
2. Do you believe that you can stop yourself from catching a cold?  
   **yes**                             **no**
3. Are some kids just born lucky?  
   **yes**                             **no**
4. Most of the time do you feel that getting good grades means a great deal to you?  
   **yes**                             **no**
5. Are you often blamed for things that just aren't your fault?  
   **yes**                             **no**
6. Do you believe that if somebody studies hard enough he/she can pass any subject?  
   **yes**                             **no**
7. Do you feel that most of the time it doesn't pay to try hard because things never turn out right anyway?  
   **yes**                             **no**
8. Do you feel that if things start out well in the morning that it's going to be a good day no matter what you do?  
   **yes**                             **no**
9. Do you feel that most of the time parents listen to what their children have to say?  
   **yes**                             **no**
10. Do you believe that wishing can make good things happen?  
   **yes**                             **no**
11. When you get punished does it usually seem it's for no good reason at all?  
   **yes**                             **no**
12. Most of the time do you find it hard to change a friend's (mind) opinion?  
   **yes**                             **no**
13. Do you think that cheering more than luck helps a team to win?  
   **yes**                             **no**
14. Do you feel that it's nearly impossible to change your parent's mind about anything?  
   **yes**                             **no**
15. Do you believe that your parents should allow you to make most of your own decisions?     **yes**                             **no**







**WHAT MY PARENT(S) ARE LIKE (Form 1)**

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES AND PUT AN "X" NEXT TO THOSE THAT DESCRIBE YOUR PARENT(S). PLEASE MARK AS MANY AS APPLY.

I am not allowed to talk back to my parent(s).

My parent(s) has/have expectations for me that are realistic.

My parent(s) is/are willing to listen to my ideas and viewpoints.

I am expected to make all my own decisions.

If I disagree with my parent(s), I am not allowed to discuss it with them.

My parent(s) allow me to do almost anything I want to do.

My parent(s) encourage me to do things I am interested in and support the activities I participate in.

My parent(s) feel that I must obey them.

My parent(s) rarely give me rules.

My parent(s) give me just about everything I ask them for.

My parent(s) is/are reasonable about discipline, and listen to my reasons if I have broken a rule.

When I ask for things, my parent(s) will help me, but they don't always give me everything.

Whatever my parent(s) say is right and I am expected to accept it.

My parent(s) rarely punish or discipline me.

My parent(s) do not allow me to make my own decisions very often.

My parent(s)' punishments are harsh and often unjust.

My parent(s) and I discuss decisions that I have to make, and usually let me make the final decision.

My parent(s) do not usually tell me if my choices are right or wrong.

# What I Am Like

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me	
a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like to go to movies in their spare time	BUT	Other teenagers would rather go to sports events.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are just as smart as others their age	BUT	Other teenagers aren't so sure and wonder if they are as smart.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers find it hard to make friends	BUT	For other teenagers it's pretty easy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do very well at all kinds of sports	BUT	Other teenagers don't feel that they are very good when it comes to sports.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are not happy with the way they look	BUT	Other teenagers are happy with the way they look.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are ready to do well at a part-time job	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are not quite ready to handle a part-time job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that if they are romantically interested in someone, that person will like them back	BUT	Other teenagers worry that when they like someone romantically, that person won't like them back.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually do the right thing	BUT	Other teenagers often don't do what they know is right.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are able to make really close friends	BUT	Other teenagers find it hard to make really close friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are often disappointed with themselves	BUT	Other teenagers are pretty pleased with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are pretty slow in finishing their school work	BUT	Other teenagers can do their school work more quickly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers have a lot of friends	BUT	Other teenagers don't have very many friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think they could do well at just about any new athletic activity	BUT	Other teenagers are afraid they might not do well at a new athletic activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me	
13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish their body was different	BUT	Other teenagers like their body the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they don't have enough skills to do well at a job	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they do have enough skills to do a job well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are not dating the people they are really attracted to	BUT	Other teenagers are dating those people they are attracted to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers often get in trouble for the things they do	BUT	Other teenagers usually don't do things that get them in trouble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do have a close friend they can share secrets with	BUT	Other teenagers do not have a really close friend they can share secrets with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't like the way they are leading their life	BUT	Other teenagers do like the way they are leading their life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do very well at their classwork	BUT	Other teenagers don't do very well at their classwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are very hard to like	BUT	Other teenagers are really easy to like.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are better than others their age at sports	BUT	Other teenagers don't feel they can play as well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish their physical appearance was different	BUT	Other teenagers like their physical appearance the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel they are old enough to get and keep a paying job	BUT	Other teenagers do not feel they are old enough, yet, to really handle a job well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that people their age will be romantically attracted to them	BUT	Other teenagers worry about whether people their age will be attracted to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel really good about the way they act	BUT	Other teenagers don't feel that good about the way they often act	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish they had a really close friend to share things with	BUT	Other teenagers do have a close friend to share things with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are happy with themselves most of the time	BUT	Other teenagers are often not happy with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers have trouble figuring out the answers in school	BUT	Other teenagers almost always can figure out the answers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me	
28.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are popular with others their age	BUT	Other teenagers are not very popular.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't do well at new outdoor games	BUT	Other teenagers are good at new games right away.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think that they are good looking	BUT	Other teenagers think that they are not very good looking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel like they could do better at work they do for pay	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are doing really well at work they do for pay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are fun and interesting on a date	BUT	Other teenagers wonder about how fun and interesting they are on a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do things they know they shouldn't do	BUT	Other teenagers hardly ever do things they know they shouldn't do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers find it hard to make friends they can really trust	BUT	Other teenagers are able to make close friends they can really trust.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like the kind of person they are	BUT	Other teenagers often wish they were someone else.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are pretty intelligent	BUT	Other teenagers question whether they are intelligent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are socially accepted	BUT	Other teenagers wished that more people their age accepted them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do not feel that they are very athletic	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are very athletic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers really like their looks	BUT	Other teenagers wish they looked different.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are really able to handle the work on a paying job	BUT	Other teenagers wonder if they are really doing as good a job at work as they should be doing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually don't go out with the people they would really like to date	BUT	Other teenagers do go out with the people they really want to date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually act the way they know they are supposed to	BUT	Other teenagers often don't act the way they are supposed to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't have a friend that is close enough to share really personal thoughts with	BUT	Other teenagers do have a close friend that they can share personal thoughts and feelings with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are very happy being the way they are	BUT	Other teenagers wish they were different.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## WHAT MY PARENT(S) ARE LIKE

## FORM 2

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES AND MAKE A CHECK MARK NEXT TO THE GROUP OF SENTENCES THAT MOST CLOSELY DESCRIBES YOUR PARENT(S).

- \_\_\_ A. My parent(s) allow me to do almost anything I want to do.  
My parent(s) give me just about everything I ask them for.  
I am expected to make all my own decisions.  
My parent(s) do not usually tell me if my choices are right or wrong.  
My parent(s) rarely give me rules.  
My parent(s) rarely punish or discipline me.

- \_\_\_ B. My parent(s) is/are willing to listen to my ideas and viewpoints.  
My parent(s) is/are reasonable about discipline, and listen to my reasons if I have broken a rule.  
My parent(s) and I discuss decisions that I have to make, and usually let me make the final decision.  
My parent(s) have expectations for me that are realistic.  
My parent(s) encourage me to do things I am interested in and support the activities I participate in.  
When I ask for things, my parent(s) will help me, but they don't always give me everything.

- \_\_\_ C. My parent(s) feel that I must obey them.  
My parent(s) do not allow me to make my own decisions very often.  
If I disagree with my parent(s), I am not allowed to discuss it with them.  
Whatever my parent(s) say is right and I am expected to accept it.  
I am not allowed to talk back to my parent(s).  
My parent(s) punishments are harsh and often unjust.



## UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY . LOGAN, UTAH

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PARK  
1780 North Research Park Way, Suite 104  
North Logan, Utah 84321  
(801) 750-6924

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Kenneth W. Merrell  
Lisa Ann McClun

FROM: Sydney Peterson *SP*

DATE: July 13, 1993

SUBJECT: Proposal titled, "The Relationship between Parenting  
Styles, Locus of Control and Self-Concept in  
Adolescence"

The above referenced proposal has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions, please call me at 750-6924.