"Raising Daughters and Loving Sons": Gender, African-American Maternal Parenting Styles, and Identity Formation

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“RAISING DAUGHTERS AND LOVING SONS”: GENDER, AFRICAN-AMERICAN
MATERNAL PARENTING STYLES, AND IDENTITY FORMATION

By

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive study investigated whether emerging adults’ gender differentially impacted perceptions of mother (figure’s) parenting style and subsequently identity formation in African American undergraduates. To assess whether association existed between the categorical variables of gender and mother (figure) parenting style (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) and to determine statistical significance, chi-square difference tests were conducted. To assess whether association existed between the variables of gender, mother parenting style, and identity status and determine statistical significance, frequencies and correlations were compared. Results revealed no significant differences in perceptions of mother (figures’) parenting style based on gender; however, there were other specific differences noted. Emerging adults in this sample who perceived of their mother (figures) as Authoritative were more likely Undifferentiated in identity status; females in this status were more likely than males to perceive of their parenting as Authoritarian. The findings of this study appear to have implications for developing parent education in African American families and interventions for young adults who may be experiencing identity confusion.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Parenting generally refers to all of the interactions between parents and their children that include the parents’ expression of attitudes, values, interests, beliefs, and caretaking (Williams & Williams, 1979). Childrearing practices do not just appear, they are the products of those parents’ attitudes, values, and personal qualities. Examinations of parenting have utilized a typological approach wherein the effects of the main dimensions of parenting behavior are aggregated to form parenting styles (Bean, Bush, McKenry, & Wilson, 2003). However, beyond general parenting patterns and behaviors, it is important to investigate parenting in culturally diverse contexts and if these typologies translate to minority group parenting. Authoritarian parenting practices have been found, in many studies, to be more common among ethnic minorities and not having as negative consequences on child outcomes typically found with European American children raised within the same parenting style (Steinberg, Blatt-Eisengart, and Cauffman, 2006). Amato and Fowler (2002) found that parental practices can benefit or harm outcomes in offspring across various contexts. That is, consequences of diverse parenting styles differ with family context and may not necessarily be indicated for every child. In terms of diversity, these typologies, and their associated outcomes, there is mixed evidence in the literature as to whether these typologies hold up with minorities.

Current parenting research includes two additional global dimensions, responsiveness and demandingness which are a part of a variable oriented approach in the literature (McGroder, 2000). Bean, et al. noted that these dimensions, having been integrated into the original styles of Baumrind and produced in a circumplex model, yield constructs which the current parenting literature utilizes: authoritative (high on both demandingness and responsiveness), authoritarian (high on demandingness and low on responsiveness), indulgent (low on demandingness, high on responsiveness), and indifferent (low on demandingness, low on responsiveness). These four typologies have been utilized to examine the association between parent-child relations and developmental outcomes with the majority culture. The optimal combination of high demandingness and responsiveness positively impacting adolescent health outcomes, emotional outcomes, academic outcomes, and development has been noted repeatedly among the Caucasian
middle-class (Baumrind, 1978; Darling & Steinberg, 1993); however, there has been some evidence that authoritative parenting is associated with various positive outcomes, among adolescents regardless of race or ethnicity (Radziszewska, Richardson, Dent, & Flay, 1996).

**Parenting Patterns and Styles in African Americans**

Important new insights into variations in family and adolescent development in this area of family studies have been noted (Smetana, Campione-Barr, & Metzger, 2006). Strict parental control, assessed in terms of parent-unilateral decision-making, has been associated with lower deviance in African American adolescents (Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Steinberg, 1996). Further, the parent-unilateral decision-making in early and middle adolescence, combined with the tendency of parents to allow for increased autonomy in late adolescence, has predicted healthy development in late adolescence in the middle-class (Smetana, Campione-Barr, & Daddis, 2004). Jackson-Newsom et al. (2008) in their study of using Baumrind’s (1971) parenting typology and perceptions of mother warmth found that some practices (parental decision-making) predicted perceptions of warmth among ethnic groups similarly. Mother reports of more harsh discipline predicted lower perceived warmth across ethnicity, but were more pervasive in European American youth than in African American youth. On the other hand, African American parents’ use of stringent modes of management has been adaptive in nature to the demands of environment and proves protective in terms of adolescent outcomes (Murry, Bynum, Brody, Willert, & Stephens, 2001). Varying levels of control do impact adolescent academic achievement and problem behaviors differently and is a function of neighborhood effect rather than parenting. The current pattern has thus begun the process of redefining and broadening views about characteristics that constitute African American family functioning and impact offspring outcomes both positively and negatively.

However, extant research of African American parenting and developmental outcomes has primarily been comparative (Arbona & Power, 2003; Bean et al., 2003; Bynum & Kotchick, 2006; Hill et al., 2004; Steinberg et al., 2006). The focus of researchers has been to identify and understand differences or similarities across groups. This practice and focus limits our actual understanding of the population under examination as it does not capture the diversity within group of African American families and what may be important to these families. Particular dimensions of within-group diversity could give a clearer picture to our understanding of the meanings of differences and similarities in parenting behavior (Bynum & Kotchick; Coley,
2003) and gender (Jeynes, 2005; Mandara & Pikes, 2008) and may be shown to impact developmental outcomes.

Differences in parenting styles, particularly in terms of control can influence identity development by either encouraging or hindering a distinctly individuated self from parents. Those youth having experienced a parenting style which was high on both demandingness and responsiveness (authoritative) may be more self-reliant and individuated than authoritarian or permissively reared youth (Baumrind, 1991). On the opposite end of the parenting style spectrum, European American adolescents perceived psychological control as interfering with their sense of personal identity and feelings of self-control (Barber, 2002). When parents attempted to control adolescents through manipulative and psychologically intrusive methods, it appears to have been at a cost to adolescents’ sense of self-control or agency. It will prove informative to explore this particular influence with African Americans, parenting styles, and their identity formation.

**Identity Formation**

Since Erikson’s seminal work on psychosocial development, the main task of adolescence has been that of identity development (Erikson, 1968). Identity formation is characterized as a dynamic, adaptive developmental process which is life-long with continuous changes in the degree of exploration and commitment to one’s values and beliefs (Erikson, 1968). This process then can be identified as a multifaceted task which becomes most important during late adolescence into adulthood. While this process does peak during adolescence, the greatest gains are made during the college years (Adams, Ryan, Hoffman, Dobson, and Nielsen, 1985), and the identity process continues to be re-examined during the individual’s life in relation to changes in social and environmental circumstances. The task in this period is to develop a stable and coherent identity (Beyer & Cok, 2008) as a result of interactions with and resolving challenges to one’s identity.

This course of development lays the foundation for the individual’s integration into society and adulthood. While some persons may arrive at a clear and distinct identity, others may not be as successful at negotiating this task of resolution. Kroger (2004) has noted how Erickson acknowledged that these differences can be attributed to the process of person-context interactions in this psychosocial perspective of emerging adult development. Erickson stressed in his psychosocial approach, the society and people surrounding adolescents influence them in the
shaping of their identities through support and recognition. Further as Grotevant and Cooper (1998) put forth in their model of identity, “security in adolescents’ relationship with their parents will be most predictive of adolescents’ abilities to explore their sense of self, identity, and the future.” (p.6). In that same vein, others have found that involved, supportive parents and family environment has been positively associated with a coherent sense of self and identity (Mullis, Brailsford, & Mullis, 2003). Identity development in context, namely the context of parenting in late adolescence and emerging adulthood has been shown by researchers to be interlinked, and that parents continue to influence their developing offspring (Crocetti, Rubini, and Meeus, 2008).

In terms of concept relatedness and operationalization of identity formation, Marcia (1966) in his examination of Erikson’s work defined two dimensions of identity formation, commitment and exploration which were then delineated out to four identity statuses. Each of these statuses represents a level of exploration (high or low) against a level of commitment (high or low). Identity achievement is characterized by exploration and commitment, moratorium is exploration without commitment, foreclosure is commitments without exploration, and diffusion is lack of both exploration and commitment. Thus, Marcia’s identity achievement is comparable to Erikson’s concept of identity resolution whereas identity diffusion corresponds to Erikson’s identity confusion (Sneed, Schwartz, & Cross, 2006). These dimensions of commitment and exploration operate in various domains, including the interpersonal domain of family, friends, dating, gender roles, and recreation. Use of these identity statuses in research with minority samples, as evidenced by Schwartz and Montgomery’s (2002) work examining factor structures of measures based on these statuses, were shown consistent as in European American samples. This then may add to our understanding of Erikson’s developmental theory being universal in nature.

Identity Formation and Diverse Groups

The area of autonomy and relatedness is considered a central task in identity development in American culture (Phinney, Kim-Jo, Osorio, & Vilhjalmsdottir, 2005) among adolescents and young adults. During this time, young people are to maintain both a sense of self as an individual and in relation to their families and/or significant others (Grotevant & Cooper, 1998). There is a transformation made by the young person from accepting and complying with parental unilateral authority to equality (Phinney, et al.). It is in this area of parent-adolescent relationships that
conflict may occur and where researchers have noted difference among ethnic groups. While European American families emphasize independence and autonomy, other cultural groups emphasize interdependence, parental respect, and deference to parents (McAdoo, 1997; Hill, 2001).

As ethnic minority young people adhere to the expected interdependence and expectation of respect and deference to parents, autonomy in identity development is less emphasized in these young people when compared to European American young people (Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002). There has however, been little research actually conducted regarding autonomy and relatedness among emerging adult - parental relationships from minority cultures. This area remains to be explored as an addition to the developmental literature. The question at hand is: What is the relationship, if any, between perceptions of mothers’ parenting style and identity formation in African American males and females? The present study will examine this question.

**Background to the Study**

A recent critical review by the author of the literature noted that the focus of researchers had been to identify and understand differences or similarities in parenting and its impact on adolescent development across cultural groups. While many focus on social class as a proxy for diversity, which has consistently been found to confound with race in these comparative studies, other dimensions, namely understanding within-group differences in African American families can contribute to the developmental literature.

Several researchers point to the psychosocial development of African American adolescents being significantly impacted by parenting behaviors such as monitoring, behavioral, psychological control (Bronte-Tinkew, 2006; Galambos et al., 2003; Jackson-Newsom et al., 2008), and engagement in school activities (Hill et al., 2004; Jeynes, 2005). Further, gender (Bynum & Kotchick, 2006; Coley, 2003; Daddis & Smetana, 2005) and family structure (Krishnakumar et al., 2003) has been shown to be predictive of outcomes of psychosocial adjustment in the parent-adolescent relationship. In light of these findings, it remains important for researchers to conduct research with families of color, particularly in the area of male and female development and parenting’s impact developmentally.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The researcher in this descriptive study aimed to empirically examine the African American folk saying, “African American mothers love their sons and raise their daughters.” The
researcher aimed to further explore whether child’s gender was differentially associated with parenting style used and the child’s identity formation. Previous qualitative work (Telesford & Murray, 2008) has focused on this mother-child dyad in terms of age and gender of the child in an observational study, whereby dyads discussed a topic on which they disagreed and were videotaped. The degree of warmth and control exhibited by the mothers was assessed as well as how the children in these dyads behaved with their mothers. With a focus on gender differences, the researchers noted that adolescent male participants were perceived by their mothers to be less challenging and stubborn than adolescent female participants; however, mothers were more guiding and comfortable in their observed behaviors with their daughters. While this differed from the African American saying regarding differences in parenting based on gender, the researchers noted that there were age and developmental differences in the manner in which children and mothers interacted with each other.

One of the limitations noted in this study was that no self-reported data regarding actual life occurrences in parent-child interactions was collected. The current study addressed and generated new knowledge regarding emerging adults’ perceptions of parenting occurrences in the rearing relationships they had with their mother (figure’s). Further, in light of the continued importance of parenting through the life course, particularly as it relates to minority emerging adults this study and its outcomes fills a gap in developmental literature. Parenting style may be dependent on gender or it may be independent of gender. That is, there may be relationship between parental authority type, gender, and identity status commitment of emerging adults.

The parenting occurrences of interest in this study focused on the parenting style typology of Baumrind (1971). Additionally, the identity exploration in this present study was conceptualized by using Marcia’s (1966) identity status model. These typologies and statuses have been utilized to examine the association between parent-child relations and developmental outcomes with the majority culture and were utilized in this dissertation project. In the present instance the instrument utilized, assessing perceptions of parenting focused on the aforementioned typologies and identity statuses, was given to African American undergraduate emerging adults. The perceived maternal parenting style and identity status of these emerging adults would be explored to investigate the African American folk saying, “African American mothers love their sons and raise their daughters.” In the setting of a Historically Black College and University
(HBCU) this study gave a cross-sectional view of this population’s within-group differences regarding parenting and emerging adult development.

**Research Questions**

The study was guided by two research questions relevant to family environment variables (Mandara & Murray, 2002) of parent-child interactions, namely parenting styles among African American families. These research questions were:

1. Are there gender differences in African American offspring perspective on mothering parenting style and;
2. Is there association between perceptions of mother’s parenting style and identity formation in African American males and females?

**Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested (See figure1):

H1. Female emerging adults would be more likely to perceive the parenting style of their mother (figure’s) as authoritarian.

H2. Female emerging adults with perceptions of their mother (figures) having an authoritarian parenting style would more likely be in identity moratorium or to be identity foreclosed.

H3. Male emerging adults would be more likely to perceive of their mother (figure’s) parenting style as permissive and be more likely in the identity diffused status.

H4. If both males and females perceived of their mother (figure) parenting style as authoritative they would more likely be in the achievement identity status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Parental Style</th>
<th>Identity Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>Moratorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>Foreclosed</td>
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*Fig.1 Hypothesis in this study*
 Operational Definitions

Emerging Adult – a distinct developmental period for young people between the ages of 18 to 25 years old. This period is different from adolescence and adulthood, as many young people by the age of 18 are transitioning out of high school and moving away from home. This period is characterized by change and increased identity exploration that occurs prior to the adoption of adult roles and responsibilities (Arnett, 2000). This constantly changing time is also characterized by autonomy and demographic changes in work, worldview, and education.

1. Exploration- See Identity Moratorium
2. Familial context – includes the relationships with one’s mother (figure) or any female adult relative
3. Identity Achieved/Achieved – is an identity status characterized by an individual who has little to no possible beliefs, values, or possibilities and adopting a personal set of values and beliefs (Marcia, 1966).
4. Identity Diffused/Diffused – is an identity status characterized by an individual who has given little to no consideration of possible beliefs, values, or possibilities and has not committed to a personal set of values and beliefs (Marcia, 1966).
5. Identity Foreclosed/Foreclosed – is characterized by a person who has not considered alternative beliefs, values, or possibilities through exploration but has made identity commitments (Marcia, 1966).
6. Identity Moratorium/ Exploration – is characterized by an individual who is in consideration of possible beliefs, values, or opportunities to adopt, but who has not yet committed to a particular set of beliefs, values, or opportunities (Marcia, 1966).
7. Parent- an adult with familial ties to the emerging adult (i.e. biological parents, grandparents, step-parents, and other extended kin).
8. Parenting Style - any specific behaviors that act individually or together to affect emerging adult outcomes.

 Abbreviations

1. OMEIS Revised – The Revised and modified Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status
2. FAMU – Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University
3. HBCU – Historically Black College or University
Delimitations
1. The sample was limited to African American college student respondents.
2. Only the contextual influence of mother parenting style on individuation in identity formation was explored.

Assumptions
1. The theoretical propositions set forth by Erikson (1968) are appropriate for the explanation of development and associated interaction among African American college students and their mother parents.
2. The participants would interpret questionnaire items in the manner intended by authors.
3. The respondents would answer questions honestly and with their full attention.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

As children shift from childhood to adolescence, there is increased demand for more control over their lives, increased time with peers, and increased physical growth. There are questions of whether and how parenting has an impact on development. While there is increased distancing from the family, parents remain important to adolescents and young adults in their developmental outcomes (Arbona & Power, 2003). Across studies there is uniformity in one point: parenting, its variation across cultures, and the extent to which parenting is successful in meeting the challenges of adolescence may influence adaptation and outcomes (Galambos, Barker, & Almeida, 2003). Parenting has been shown by researchers to make important contribution to and be predictive of psychosocial adjustment, namely self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and problem behaviors (Bynum, & Kotchick, 2006), as well as to academic achievement (Jeynes, 2005), and career and work aspirations (Hill, Castellino, Lansford, Nowlin, Dodge, Bates, & Petit, 2004) of adolescents and young adults.

During this period young people are continuing to define themselves and prepare for their functioning as autonomous, independent adults. The task of identity development, gaining a sense of oneself and one’s future is an ongoing process, but is central during adolescence (Erikson, 1968). While these tasks are normative for young people, Erikson has acknowledged adolescent differences in identity formation being influenced by contexts which surround adolescents and that development is the process of person and context interactions (Kroger, 2004).

Theoretical Perspective

The concept of identity is based in the psychosocial developmental perspective of Erik Erikson (1959; 1968) and James Marcia (1966). While Erikson advanced a theory that focused on the impact of social influences on psychological development over the life-span, Marcia attempted to operationalize Erikson’s theoretical ideas with the identity status paradigm. Erikson (1959) established that identity is formed through exchanges between the individual and the two settings of family and society. Families, particularly parents supply a foundation of emotional attachment, trust, autonomy, and initiative, through the life course, which serve as the basis for
healthy and beneficial interactions with others. There is an understanding and experience of who they are internally through integration of their exchanges with the social world (Erikson, 1968). As the individual matures he/she must be prepared and is expected to adapt to societal changes, in particular in industrialized countries those changes may be historical or technological. Erikson commented on the “prolonged adolescence “of industrial societies (Arnett, 2000) and the status granted to youth to freely role experiment until they find their niche in society (Erikson, 1968).

In these industrial societies the need for higher levels of education and training to perform in professional positions, the extension of marriage and parenthood occurs. Indeed Schwartz and Montgomery (2002) note that currently time with its cultural changes and contexts, greater numbers of youth spend time in university settings prior to marriage, employment, and parenthood. It is therefore, adult society’s shared responsibility to provide function and status, continuity, and validation to facilitate the healthy development and integration of younger generations into adult society (Erikson, 1968).

The identity versus identity confusion stage in Erikson’s psychosocial developmental theory is an involved task of adolescence. During this stage youth must merge their development from all previous characteristics, experiences, and relationships to develop a sense of individuality, take effective steps toward making enduring social decisions, and maintain a sense of continuity between who they were while focusing on who they have the likelihood to become as an adult (Erikson, 1968). In the process of forming a sense of identity, emerging adults are looking to embrace and commit to values and beliefs related to ideals (i.e. religion, philosophy of life, and politics) and occupational pursuits (Erikson, 1968). In addition, one must learn how to be true to self in the presence of those who are most important in their lives.

According to Erikson (1959) successful resolution of the crisis, or temporary instability or confusion of this stage depends on the progress the youth has made through the previous developmental stages. Erikson emphasized that identity is a process of mutual recognition between an adolescent and his/her community. It is a synthesis of identity as a necessary prerequisite to adulthood (Schwartz, Zamboanga, Weisskirch, & Rodriguez, 2009; Cote & Levine, 2002). The adolescent acquires an identity based on their membership in familial, ethnic, and occupational groups. These group or community identities help adolescents define who they are to themselves and others. The adolescent seeks a significant place in the society. The complimentary component supporting the resolution of this stage is the recognition and
acceptance of the individual’s chosen commitments by the community of one’s peers and leaders (Erikson, 1968).

**Marcia’s extension of identity formation.** Marcia extended Erikson’s identity commitment to include exploration as a process, whereby young people evaluate and reflect upon their values and beliefs; they are in “active struggle to make commitments.” (Marcia, 1966, p.552). With the exploration and commitment of the individual being present or absent in process, four categories of identity surface: identity achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion (Marcia, 1966). Identity achievement characterizes an adolescent who has seriously considered and explored his/her choices in terms of beliefs and has made commitments in various domains on his or her terms. Identity diffusion is the status in which youth have made little to no attempt to evaluate their beliefs or make commitments. These individuals are either uninterested in ideological matters or easily abandon choices considered.

Foreclosed youth have made commitments without having explored alternative beliefs or values. This group tends toward becoming what others have intended for them to become from childhood. This group has more possibly taken on the values and beliefs of their parents or other respected individuals than the other status groups. Moratorium indicates the process of exploring different possibilities, youth in this process are in active struggle to make a commitment; however clear or stable commitments have not been made. This group is in struggle with parental wishes, societal demands and, individual capabilities regarding alternatives in beliefs and values.

**Identity formation is dynamic.** Even though youth explore possibilities and make commitments, forming a sense of identity unfolds as possibilities and commitments are revisited and revised throughout the youth’s life. This revisiting that the individual does indicates that identity is not a static process, but is actually a dynamic one. It is important to note that Marcia’s terms and categorizations of individuals may imply that identity is fixed. However, as he found even as adults reached identity achievement they often reentered moratorium and returned to achievement throughout their lives (Stephen, Fraser, and Marcia, 1992). Speaking to the dynamic feature of the identity paradigm, research on Marcia’s statuses has extended from early adolescence to emerging young adulthood.

Erikson recommended that studies of identity include samples of older adolescents, as they are most active in resolving this stage (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1993; Waterman, 1982).
For identity status researchers, college students have been central figures in the research because they are in a social environment where they are expected to make ideological commitments and develop a sense of identity (Marcia, 1993). Researchers (Côte, 2000; Arnett, 2000; Schwartz et al., 2009) have noted that in the past 50 years there has been an individualistic view of the identity process in Western societies which has left many individuals attending universities and prolonging the process of making firm adult commitments into their twenties. This developmental shift in identity status begins in late high school and has a marked change in college students. The number of college youth classified in achieved and moratorium status increases and there is a decrease in foreclosed status. The change noted results in a move toward each of the status categories being more balanced in the distribution of college students than is common in high school students (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1993). This developmental stage of emerging adulthood may then be an important time to study exploration and commitment to adult life (Schwartz, 2006, 2007).

**African American Parenting**

With the changing demographics of the U.S. population becoming more diverse in nature, it is vital that research on parenting reflect this diversity (Le, Ceballo, Chao, Hill, Murry, and Pinderhughes, 2008). Potential differences in parent–child interactions along with cultural differences in parent behaviors, which can have an effect on parent–child relationships and interactions has been shown by recent research (Dixon, Graber, and Brooks-Gunn, 2007). Differing values of interdependence and extended family structure of African Americans could imply variation in parenting style, particularly as it relates to behavioral, psychological control, to include autonomy, and support. Researchers of minority families, particularly African American families, suggest there are ethnic differences in parenting based on cultural beliefs regarding childrearing and what are appropriate and effective childrearing behaviors and goals (Arbona & Power, 2003).

That is, these differences may be common parenting strategies which have different meanings or are based on different parent goals. An examination of the aforementioned work of Jackson-Newsom et al. (2008) indicates that there are differing links between parenting style and perceptions of warmth by adolescents. In a comparative study of Caucasian American and African American adolescents, researchers found no support for behavioral control being negatively related to mother warmth in African American adolescents. Further, this particular
study replicated past research in that authoritarian, parent-centered practices predicted less perceived warmth, but was more pervasive in European American than African American youth. Such findings indicate that authoritarian, parent centered practices are more common in African American families and are interpreted differently by adolescents in these families, pointing to the influence of group norms for certain parenting behaviors.

It is important to note that African American parenting processes include those parent-child interactions which are primarily hierarchical in nature and tend to value harmonious over conflictual relations. Thus in terms of autonomy and identity development in late adolescence and emerging adulthood, with its attendant struggle for individuation from the family, to avoid conflict compliance is favored (Smetana and Gaines, 1999). As noted by Zervides and Knowles (2007) those cultures which are collectivist in functioning tend to adhere to this hierarchical process in their childrearing patterns. This inclusion of African American parents was due to the collectivist values inherent in the extended family structure and focus on conformity and obedience in parent-child relations is congruent with this collectivism (Sudarkasa, 1997).

**African American mothers and daughters.** Mothers have been more likely to be the parent involved in and reporting on parenting in the research of African American populations because they hold such positions of prominence in African American families (Bynum & Kotchick, 2006). The African American mother views her role as extremely important and that it is her role to keep the family together by continuing the legacy of parenting patterns which instill obedience, respect, and strength in her offspring (Boyd-Franklin, 2006). Much of what she does in her parenting and employs in her parenting style is within the societal context of discrimination and may be as some researchers have said “protective” for her children (Johnson & Staples, 2005).

As such, gender neutrality and egalitarian socialization have been noted by some investigators to be the child-rearing norm among African-American parents (Hill, 2001; Scott, 1993). Researchers have pointed out that social class, not necessarily gender impacts parenting patterns among African Americans (Khaleque & Rohner, 2000; Johnson and Staples, 2005)). Johnson and Staples noted African American parents who were second generation and securely middle class promoted egalitarian socialization of both their sons and daughters more strongly than those who had recently become middle class. African American mothers in lower classes have
been perceived as being less accepting and warm; however, social class alone does not account for the adjustment of adolescents.

In recent studies researchers examining dimensions of parenting such as mother-adolescent relationship quality (Bynum & Kotchick), mothers’ support, behavioral and psychological control (Jackson-Newsom et al., 2008), and adolescent outcomes, have found linkages between parenting dimensions and adolescent outcomes as influential. Of noted interest were the differential outcomes between adolescent girls and boys. Older, female adolescents from lower income households had higher depressive symptoms related to poorer parental relationship quality. Better mother-adolescent relationship quality predicted lower depressive symptoms, as this dimension predicted higher self-esteem in boys than in girls and lower delinquent behaviors in boys.

**African American mothers’ gender differences in parenting.** Hill and Zimmerman (1995) report differences in African American parents’ child rearing. In their study of care giving for chronically ill children in low-income African-American families, the researchers found that gender affected mothers’ caregiving. Mothers in this study with chronically ill sons saw their sons as more fragile and helpless than did the mothers of daughters. Thus, mothers of sons were more protective of their sons than they were of their daughters and more involved in extensive care giving, and less likely to be employed during this time.

Power-assertive parenting practices are endorsed more in African American parents than in European American parents (Harrison-Hale, 2002; Hill, 1999) and more so between African American mothers and daughters (Hill, 2001). In terms of socialization it has been noted that African American daughters, from an early age are taught to assume strong roles, be self-reliant and independent (Hill). Researchers (Hill & Zimmerman 1995) of African American families have revealed the tendency of parents, particularly mothers, to have higher expectations of responsibility for daughters than sons, to be more restrictive about the socialization of adolescent girls than boys (Hare & Castenell, 1985), and to be extremely close to and controlling of their daughters (Cauce, Hiraga, Graves, & Gonzales, 1996). Hill, in his research, revealed that it is more probable for parents and elders to discipline their daughters more than their sons.

The socialization practice of teaching and expecting daughters to be strong, self-sufficient, and nurturing while not quite expecting the same from male children fuels such sayings in the African American community of “raising” the daughters, but “loving” the sons and may have its
origins in the racism. Some contend that mothers raise their sons to be docile because of the risks to life and limb that an aggressive African American male is exposed to in society (Johnson & Staples, 2005) and the authoritarian parenting of daughters seems to transmit effortlessly in the African American family (Chen & Kaplan, 2001). Thus, an assertive African American boy may face more barriers to success than an assertive African American girl. In that same vein, other researchers have noted that African American girls also receive messages of suspicion from the larger society but with less mortal outcomes (Cauce, Hiraga, Graves, & Gonzales, 1996).

Although becoming an adult is complicated, Hill Collins (1993) considers raising adolescent African American females as particularly difficult for African American mothers. In her words, “In raising their daughters, Black mothers face a troubling dilemma. To ensure their daughter’s physical survival, they must teach their daughters to fit into systems of oppression” (Hill-Collins, 1993, p. 53). Telesford and Murray (2008) observed that African American mothers were shown to interact in very different ways with their daughters than they did with their sons, yet have similar goals in mind. Again the notion is that mothers were being protective of their children but in varied ways.

Mothers were attempting to protect them from covert and overt societal discrimination. However, researchers have noted that for sons, parenting patterns are those which provide validation and support (Smetana, Abernethy, & Harris, 2000), and explaining how ancestors have dealt with it (King & Mitchell, 1990). In comparison, for daughters, mothers employ parenting patterns which teach them how to handle discrimination by being strong and independent (Hill-Collins, 2001). If, as this researcher has stated parenting influences child outcomes through the life cycle, then these parenting differences and their relationship with gender merit exploration in this particular cultural group and self-development.

**Baumrind’s Typology and Relevance**

Baumrind’s (1971) constructs in this particular typology were focused on parents’ control behaviorally and psychologically (i.e. parental behavioral control, authority, and decision-making). This typology of parenting styles reflects a categorization of parents and their naturally occurring patterns of parenting values, practices, and behaviors (1991). Baumrind’s focus has been one of understanding how parents raised competent children, (Mandara and Murray, 2002) those children who exhibit integrated balance personally and socially (Baumrind, 1996). Findings in the typology-based literature are robust for parent-adolescent relationships that are
defined as authoritative being more predictive of success in school and having more positive psychosocial outcomes (Steinberg, 2006). Despite the recent pattern of investigators focusing on more specific indicators this typology’s use in developmental research with emerging adults remains instructive, as parents continue to impact functioning through this developmental stage.

While these parenting types and this model originated from research populations of younger, middle-class, White children, there is work that has been extended into adolescence questioning whether these types benefit youth (Galambos et al., 2003). As well Steinberg et al. have conducted research testing whether these styles and authoritative parenting in particular, had any effect on the adjustment of ethnically diverse populations of adolescents. In this research, investigators did find that among adjudicated African American adolescents from lower economic status families the authoritarian style (cold, unsupportive, and demanding) of parenting was not as bad in terms of outcomes, he was careful to note that this style was not the best style but was simply not as negative in terms of effect.

Baumrind’s identification of three types of parenting authority styles vary dimensionally, including: the establishment of guidelines and limits as well as explanation and justification of demands and expectations; assertion of control and power and the provision of emotional support (Berzonsky, 2003). Those parents who use the authoritative style tend toward setting clear, firm guidelines; they explain and justify their expectations and demands. They are also open to feedback from youth regarding these expectations. Those parents employing an authoritarian parenting style set definite limits and make demands which are not open for discussion. They make unilateral decisions and use power to reinforce them (Baumrind, 1971). Berzonsky and Baumrind note how these authoritarian practices have been proven to be associated with rigidity in behavioral control, passivity, conformity, and external locus of control. Permissive parenting is characterized by responsiveness, indulgence, with few demands and limited control. This parenting style has been associated with irresponsibility and self-centered motivation (Baumrind).

**Parenting styles and identity formation.** In terms of the aforementioned parenting styles, researchers have established that these practices prove to be facilitative for identity commitments but primarily for European American samples (Grotevant & Cooper, 1985). These populations tend to highly value power sharing and identity exploration, and encourage independence and autonomy with emotional support (Berzonsky, 2003). By contrast, African American populations
tend not to value independence but interdependence along with an authoritarian focus of obedience and compliance; as such exploration of parenting style influence on identity formation will be informative with African American populations as in the present study. Parental styles may play a role in identity development and do so in a differential manner.

**Cultural Application of Erikson and Marcia**

Erikson based his theory of human development, particularly ego identity, on his research with Europeans, Americans, and American Indians in both natural and clinical settings (Côté & Levine, 2002). Côté and Levine have continued to support that Erikson’s propositions are applicable across cultures. Côté and Levine believe that a person of any culture can develop a coherent sense of self provided there is integration within a community via stable commitments and corresponding validation of an individual’s chosen roles.

However, Erikson’s works have been criticized as being Eurocentric, androcentric, and class based (Côté & Levine, 2002). Critics point out that Erikson’s work is focused more on the individualistic mainstream functioning and is in direct contrast to the collectivist focus of many minority cultures, including African Americans (Schwartz and Montgomery, 2002). Because there are few studies directly focused on Erikson’s work to support or refute his propositions on identity (Golden-Thompson, 2006), how then can it be determined that gender, parenting style, and commitments to values and beliefs are significant concerns for African Americans?

Schwartz et al. (2009) have identified the need to address personal identity along with ethnic and cultural identity to examine the extent to which identity development models are applicable to diverse populations. In terms of personal identity, the structure of personal identity has been found to be consistent across ethnic groups (Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett, 2005). These researchers have commented that the importance of personal identity exploration in psychosocial functioning appears to be equal across ethnic groups. In a study with a multi-ethnic sample of White, Black, and Hispanic university students exploring this connection, Schwartz et al. found that lacking a coherent personal identity may create a sense of aimlessness, despair, or lack of purpose while this may not occur due to a lack of a coherent ethnic or cultural identity. This pattern appeared to generalize across ethnic groups. This again, speaks to Erikson’s claim that identity is the fundamental task of adolescence. As noted earlier it is the primary task of emerging adulthood despite ethnicity.
Further, Schwartz and Montgomery (2002) examined the factor structure of several measures (i.e., Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity – EOM-EIS II, Identity Style Inventory, and Ego Identity Process Questionnaire) which were based on Marcia’s model with a multiethnic sample comprised of Hispanic/Latino American, European American, African-American, Asian American, and other students in a metropolitan area of the United States. Identity structures, processes, and outcomes were compared by gender and immigration generation status. The resulting factor structure and intercorrelations between the status categories were as the investigators predicted. The patterns supported the structural consistency of identity development, namely processes and outcomes between genders and across cultural variations. Continued research including racially and ethnically diverse samples is indicated to further evaluate the universality and applicability of Erikson’s and Marcia’s identity development theories.

In light of the expansion of the African American middle and upper classes in the past forty years since the Civil Rights movement, it is informative to evaluate whether this broadening of educational and occupational opportunities has impacted the identity development of college attending emerging adults. While the majority of the literature on African American families has been primarily focused on low-income families (Boyd-Franklin, 2006), this increase in status gives opportunity for a more diverse sample of emerging adults exploring more occupational, ideological, and religious values and beliefs.

**Identity Development and African American Emerging Adults**

There is limited examination by researchers in the identity literature of exploration and commitment processes in African Americans, due in part to the literature. Sneed, Schwartz, and Cross (2006) in a multicultural critique of identity status research which included 57 empirical articles published between 1993 and 2003, argued that non-White ethnic and racial groups had not been adequately represented in the identity literature. The researchers set out to identify the ethnic and/or racial populations indicated in the aforementioned studies. Of the studies reviewed three quarters of the sample populations were predominantly White; or if not ethnically identified then the assumption made regarding samples was generally White in the identity status literature. These researchers noted that currently social scientists and the identity literature in general are not as responsive and relevant to the cultural diversity of the United States. Finally,
they noted that currently there is not racial and socioeconomic diversity in sample populations studied in developmental research.

Of particular note to this researcher, of the 57 aforementioned studies, only three studies found to date had evaluated within group differences on identity status for African Americans (Branch & Booth, 2002; Forbes & Ashton, 1998; Watson & Protinsky, 1991) and two of these are replications of the initial study by Watson and Protinsky. Studies noted were in response to an earlier study by Hauser (1972) who reported that African American middle adolescents were more likely than their White counterparts to be foreclosed (i.e., have accepted an identity chosen for them by someone else) in their identity status. Watson and Protinsky (1991) studied 237 low-income African American high school students using the Ideological subscale of the revised version Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Scale (EOM-EIS II). The researchers found that nearly 80% of students had not yet solidified their identity commitments. Nearly 47% of the sample was classified as transitional. That is, these students scored above the cut-off score on two or more of the four status scale scores. 21% of the sample consisted of moratorium or low-profile moratorium statuses (i.e. actively seeking an identity). Low-profile moratorium youth had scale scores that were below the specified cut-off on each status scale. Only 2% of the sample could be classified as foreclosed.

Forbes and Ashton (1998) conducted a replication study with 49 middle adolescents in Florida on the ideological subscale. These researchers extended Watson and Protinsky by also examining the interpersonal development of African Americans in this particular domain. In this study only 19% of the high school students sampled could be considered transitional. Nineteen percent of the sample was also in the transitional status on interpersonal issues. Exploration of interpersonal issues was most frequent as 68% of the students were either moratorium or low-profile moratoriums (i.e., actively seeking an identity). The remaining 12% were in the achieved (6%), foreclosed (2%), and diffusion (4%) statuses. Overall, the preponderance of the students (60%) was classified in the moratorium or low-profile moratorium statuses.

In Branch and Booth’s replication with 77 African American high school students in the Northeastern United States, they found that most African American middle adolescents were not in foreclosure. In the Forbes and Ashton study 2% of the sample was foreclosed while in this study 15% of the sample was foreclosed. Researchers noted that the majority of students in this sample were in an uncommitted identity status. Further, as in the previous two studies,
investigators reported findings which were age-based. That is, as age increased so too did progress toward identity achievement. The results reported by researchers in these studies give support to Erikson’s (1968) contention that identity resolution does not occur until late adolescence. In light of the dearth of literature regarding within-group studies and using diverse samples, utilizing the identity status model in African American youth, is instructive. Marcia’s model may continue to be useful as exploration and commitment are attended to in the formation of identity, as well as more accurately reflect Erickson’s cross-cultural conceptualization of identity development (Sneed, Schwartz, & Cross, 2006).

**Conclusion**

Parental styles play a role in identity development and may do so in a differential manner. That is, there may be relationship between parental authority type and identity status and commitment of African American emerging adults based on gender. Researchers suggest that parenting styles play a role in the identity formation and commitment of youth (Berzonsky, 2004) and that parent interactions appear to provide the context for identity formation in different forms (Grovetant & Cooper, 1985). Parents lay the foundation by providing an environment where trust, autonomy, and industry thrive (Erikson, 1968). In the body of work regarding parenting styles in the tradition of Baumrind’s typology (1971), researchers give ample evidence that the authoritative parenting style predicts more positive outcomes for European American adolescents. Comparatively, the authoritarian or restrictive parenting style is related to more positive outcomes in African American adolescents. Differences in parenting styles are not limited to cultural context, but are also gender based by ethnicity. Telesford and Murray (2008) noted how African American mothers parent daughters and sons with the same goal in mind, but in a different manner. Mothers tended to rear their offspring with the intent of protecting them; however, doing so by encouraging independence in girls but not so much in boys.

The socialization practice of teaching and expecting daughters to be strong, self-sufficient, and nurturing while not quite expecting the same from male children may have its origins in racism. Some contend that mothers raise their sons to be docile because of the risks to life and limb that an aggressive African American male is exposed to in society (Johnson & Staples, 2005) while raising daughters to be self-reliant to withstand racism. Further, daughters are taught and held to respect and obedience to elders. In so doing, the authoritarian parenting of daughters seems to transmit effortlessly in the African American family (Chen & Kaplan, 2001). These
differences thus challenge research that suggests that African American parents are gender neutral in their parenting and socialization of offspring (Scott, 1993).

In terms of identity development, parental authority style contributes to the way that late adolescents negotiate constructing a sense of identity in terms of identity status (Berzonsky, 2004). Emerging adults must make commitments to ideological values and beliefs as well as reflect upon their abilities and opportunities to find a place in the larger community and society. In terms of personal identity, the structure of personal identity has been found to be consistent across ethnic groups (Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett, 2005). Schwartz et al. have commented that the importance of personal identity exploration in psychosocial functioning appears to be equal across ethnic groups in their study of European, Hispanic, and African American college students. The patterns which emerged supported the structural consistency of identity development, namely processes and outcomes between genders and across cultural variations.

Lacking a coherent personal identity may create a sense of despair or lack of purpose while this may not occur due to a lack of a coherent ethnic or cultural identity (Schwartz et al, 2005). A pattern noted by Sneed, et al in the literature has been that those racial or ethnic identity models actually draw on Erikson’s and/or Marcia’s to some extent (2006). Continued research including racially and ethnically diverse samples is indicated to further evaluate the universality and applicability of Erikson’s and Marcia’s identity development theories. How the process of exploring and committing to ideological ideals proceeds or is influenced by gender and parenting styles in African Americans is an under researched area. This present within-group study was a response to the recommendation of including racially diverse samples in identity formation research (Sneed, et al.). The stated significance of personal identity, impacted by parenting style and gender supports the variables of this project. The purpose of this study was to further explore whether child’s gender differentially impacted parenting style used and subsequently the child’s identity formation.
CHAPTER 3
METHODS

This chapter details the research design and methodology of the study, including a pilot study of proposed study approaches and the survey instrument. An explanation of the sample, measures, and variables of interest selected for the study are provided. Finally, data analyses techniques are outlined. The study was designed to empirically examine the African American folk saying, “Mothers love their sons and raise their daughters”, focusing on self-reported data of parent-child interactions. The purpose of this research was to explore whether perception of mother (figure’s) parenting style was affected by offspring’s gender in African American emerging adults (N = 128). A second purpose was to examine whether there was association between perception of parenting style and offspring’s identity formation status. The research questions under investigation were:

1. Do African American offspring perceive that their mothers parent differently based on the gender of their child?
2. Is there any association between perceptions of mother’s parenting style and identity formation in African American males and females?

Pilot Study

The aims of the pilot study were to test whether the proposed approach of the larger dissertation study has foundational data from which to assess whether there are gender differences in the perceptions of emerging adults, regarding their parents’ parenting style and their own identity status. Another aim was to generate knowledge regarding reliable data collection instruments, analysis procedures, and data from surveys. The purposes of this pilot study were to test the effectiveness of a paper-and-pencil survey and test its reliability, test survey protocols, conduct a trial analysis of data, and make needed changes to the instrument and protocol. Data for the pilot study were collected in July, 2010 during the summer semester of study at a large southeastern university.
The Survey

Undergraduate students in a Family and Child Sciences course were the target of this survey. Students were asked to participate in the survey by their instructor as part of the instructor’s course discussion of parenting; students completed the survey as an assignment and were given point credit for their participation. The survey consisted of 60 items adapted from two validated instruments; namely the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991), the Objective Measure of Identity Status Revised (Adams, 2010), and one open-ended question. The instruments used in this pilot study have been used with emerging adults and have demonstrated high internal consistencies in previous studies (Cronbach’s alphas have ranged from .74 to .88). The Cronbach’s alpha for the present instrument was .71, indicating moderate to good internal consistency. The present survey was designed so that students could respond to questions relative to their perceptions of the two distinct areas of mother parenting style during their childrearing and any gender differences, as well as their current identity status.

One hundred percent of students who received the survey completed it. In all, eighteen undergraduate students in the aforementioned class responded to the survey. Sixty-one percent of the respondents were female (n = 11) while thirty-nine percent were male (n= 7). Respondents were primarily classified as seniors, sixty-seven percent, with a mean age of 22.5 years (sd = 2.6). The remaining respondents were: 5.6 percent freshmen, 11.1 percent sophomore, as well 11.1 juniors. Students responding to the survey reported being raised primarily by the following mother (figures):

- 72% biological mother
- 17% grandmother
- 5.6% adoptive mother
- 5.6% other female non-relative

The present researcher was provided with the opportunity to test strategies and data collection instruments by conducting this pilot study. In conducting this pilot study, the researcher also gained insights into possible confusing elements in the instrument used that would be further investigated in the larger dissertation project.

Findings

Respondents were timed in their completion of the survey and total time taken to complete the survey was 15 minutes, which was less than originally projected by the researcher.
Descriptive statistics, namely frequencies and chi-square tests for significance, were run from the data collected in this study. One finding in the data was that both male and female respondents reported their perceptions of parenting style used in their childhood rearing as authoritarian (83%, n=15) and their identity status as foreclosed (55%; n=10). More females reported their perceptions of parenting style as authoritarian (50%; n= 9). Fewer males (33%, n= 6) in the study reported perceptions of the authoritarian style of mother (figure’s) parenting. More females (54%) scored above the median score of 39 with scores of 41 and greater on the authoritarian parenting style subscale; while fewer males (29%) scored above this median score. In terms of the other parenting styles, 16% (n =3) of all respondents identified that their childhood rearing was authoritative and none reported perceptions of their mother (figure’s) parenting style as permissive.

Of note was the identity status of undifferentiated, a second form of the diffused status whereby persons do not present a clear distinction using the dimensions of exploration and commitment (Adams, 2010), with a reported frequency of 27% (n=5) overall. Finally no respondents identified the style of mothers’ parenting used in their childhood as permissive, nor did they report as being identity achieved. Cross-tabulation contingency analyses were conducted to test for association and statistical significance between the perceptions of parenting style and identity status of female and male undergraduate and were insignificant at the .05 level.

Respondents did not find the open-ended question in the instrument inappropriate, intrusive nor confusing to the survey, feedback from respondents was that it was relevant to the study. The following were responses from various students to the open-ended question “How would you describe the following saying in relation to your childhood parenting: African American mothers love their sons and raise their daughters?” These responses added to the researcher’s knowledge regarding emerging adults’ perceptions of their child rearing by their mother (figures) and their current identity status in the areas of religion, politics, and occupation. It gave a glimpse into respondents’ mother (figures’) parenting style and perceived gender differences or not by their offspring:

“I would say that this is dead on with my experience with parenting my mother and women in the family took care of boys.”

“In my case this statement seems true…My mom made my sister cook and clean while I was at friends’ houses. I was a ‘Momma’s boy’.”
“False. AA mother love all their children, even with their faults.”

“My mother raised me to be a strong woman…and not have to depend on a man…She raised my younger brothers to be successful at school and how to treat a woman with respect.”

**Next Steps**

**Changes to the instrument.** While two respondents stated the last set of questions regarding identity status were redundant, the researcher believed that these questions were important to the aims and goals of the larger project and retained the 24 items as they were. Another concern and change to the instrument was the lack of identifying more specifically maternal parenting in the instructions and/or instrument title. Respondents asked about fathering questions and were informed that the instrument and study were designed and focused to measure maternal parenting style in child rearing. To add clarity, the researcher specifically noted the word “maternal” in the instructions and the title of the instrument as suggested by respondents.

**Collection of data.** In the larger dissertation study the researcher collected data from students enrolled at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), a Historically Black College or University (HBCU). In preparation of the larger study the researcher refined the survey instrument and protocols, recruited participants, collected survey data, and analyzed data.

**Sample**

A convenience sample was utilized to select undergraduates from the population of social work and criminal justice classes at FAMU, an HBCU in the southeastern United States. The intent to utilize a sample from this HBCU was purposeful and focused on the lack of research utilizing African American emerging adult respondents. As such it was presumed by the researcher to be informative to evaluate whether the broadening of educational and occupational opportunities of African Americans in the last 40 years since Civil Rights has impacted the perceptions of parenting and identity development of college attending emerging adults. Among all African Americans enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities, 17 % of these students are enrolled in an HBCU (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006). Utilizing an HBCU campus to gather a varied within-group sample was the focus. This particular college setting presented with a large sample of African American college attending youth and a combination of genders which were primary for this study.
Respondent characteristics and demographics are presented in Table 1. The current sample emanates from a population of HBCU attending African American students enrolled in criminal justice and social work majors. Populations for these two majors according to the Office of Institutional Research (2009) had a larger number of females enrolled than males (7,279 to 4,982). This was expected by the investigator in the social work major; however, the opposite was expected in the criminal justice major, that there would be more male students than female. Of these majors, the university student population characteristics were: criminal justice, 641 undergraduate students with 48.5% male and 51.5% female; social work, 132 undergraduate students with 82% female and 18% male.

The study sample was limited to those students who identified themselves as African American/Black. Because the researcher had access to and collaboration with students and faculty, exclusive sampling of this group allowed for the examination of gender differences within the classes’ population. In this present study, there were more male respondents than female overall (56.3% male, 43.7% female). However, use of this sampling method did limit generalizability to other college attending emerging adults and other settings. A range of ages were represented through the above stated courses.

Maternal parents were female adults identified by the young adult participants as having familial ties to him/her (i.e. biological parents, grandparents, step-parents, and other extended kin). Biological mothers were identified most frequently as primary caregivers (54.7%). Individuals other than respondents’ biological mothers were identified as their maternal caregivers as noted by percentages.

Table 1.

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<th>Sample Demographic Characteristics: Respondents</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gender (%)</td>
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| Age (%) |
| 18 | 24.2 | 15.6 | 8.6 |
| 19 | 17.2 | 12.5 | 4.7 |
Table 1- continued

*Sample Demographic Characteristics: Respondents*

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<td>Other relative</td>
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N= 128

In concern for limiting Type I and Type II error, the sample size estimate was based on each analysis potential to reach power 0.08, as suggested by Cohen (1977) and reject a false null with 95% accuracy. Considering these parameters, the target sample size was estimated to be 124 participants. The questionnaire survey was distributed to a total of 156 students, with fifteen surveys being disqualified due to missing and/or incomplete answers and thirteen surveys not being returned to the investigator. A final sample included 128 participants (56 females and 72 males). All participants were 18 and older with a mean age of 20.5 (s.d. = 2.4), indicated their classification, and were primarily in their junior year of college (35.2%).

**Procedure**

The researcher used a survey questionnaire to avoid potential interviewer bias and give participants greater feelings of anonymity and encouraging open responses to sensitive questions.
(Hoyle, Harris, and Judd, 2002) about African American parenting. The Institutional Review Boards of both Florida State University and FAMU approved requests to conduct this study (see Appendix A).

Professors of social work and criminal justice at FAMU were solicited to allot class time for the distribution and completion of the survey packet. A consent cover letter, survey booklet, and a no. 2 pencil were distributed to the classes. Potential respondents were informed of Institutional Review Board approval of the study, their right to withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty, ensured confidentiality, were provided with an overview of the study, and instructions for completion of the survey packet as noted in the verbal script (Appendix D). Individuals who were not interested in participating were excused after the review of instructions. Data collection was administered in 15 minute sessions. Participants received course credit in exchange for their participation.

**Instrumentation**

Participants responded to a paper-and-pencil questionnaire. The complete instrument was administered in a double-sided booklet consisting of 60 items. To improve participant ease of handling and response rate, items were aligned so that there was one column of questions per page (Dillman, 2007). The packet generally took 15 minutes to complete. Permission was obtained to use each of the measures mentioned below (see Appendix E).

**Parenting Style Measure**

The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) measures parental authority (Buri, 1991) using three subscales based on Baumrind’s (1971) prototype of parental authority: permissive (relatively warm, nondemanding parents); authoritarian (parents who attempt to control their children’s behavior and value unquestioning obedience); authoritative (parents who use firm, clear but flexible and rational means of parenting). The PAQ is a 30-item instrument which measures parental authority retrospectively from the viewpoint of the older adolescent or young adult child and is appropriate for females and males. In this pool of 30 items, 10 items evaluating each parenting type is presented. The 10 item subscales contained a statement referring to a parent’s behaviors or perspectives during the respondents’ rearing. Each statement was rated on a five-point Likert scale with options ranging from 1, *strongly disagree* to 5, *strongly agree.* Sample items on the mother’s version included, “While I was growing up my mother felt that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do”
(Permissive prototype scale), or, “As I was growing up my mother did not allow me to question any decision she made.” (Authoritarian prototype scale).

The PAQ was scored by summing the individual items to comprise the subscale scores. Scores on each subscale ranged from 10 to 50, with high scores representing a greater degree of the parental style measured. The PAQ generated three separate scores for mothers: mothers’ permissiveness, mothers’ authoritativeness, and mothers’ authoritarianism. The PAQ had good internal consistency with alphas that range from .74 to .87 for the subscales (Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Parenting style and Identity status mean scores and standard deviations.

In the current study the following Cronbach’s alpha values for the three maternal scales were: .79 for mother’s authoritarianism, .75 for mother’s authoritativeness, .66 for mother’s permissiveness (Table 2).

Table 2
Comparison of Scale Reliability of the PAQ (Buri, 1991) and OMEIS-R (Adams, 2010)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Current Study</th>
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<th>Original Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PAQ</td>
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<td>6.45</td>
<td>.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>OMEIS-R</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>15.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>.84</td>
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</table>

Identity Status Measure

The newly modified Objective Measure of Identity Status Revised (Adams, 2010) was used to assess identity status in three content areas (politics, religion, occupation). The Objective Measure of Identity Status Revised (OMEIS, Revision 2010) contained 24 items, with 6 items measuring each of the four identity statuses (achieved, foreclosed, moratorium, and diffuse). The
original 24-item Objective Measure of Identity Status (OMEIS) was designed to provide an alternative format to interviewing for assessing Marcia’s (1966) identity status types related to the stated content areas. Due to dating, the original 24-item measure was determined by the researcher to need improvement (Adams, 2010). Researchers reevaluated and modified the original 24-item measure of identity ideologies of politics, religion, and occupation using the modified instrument and items with a sample of 1620 entering university students. Analyses established new reliability and validity estimates of the measure’s items. Sample items on the OMEIS Revised version included, “Religion is confusing to me and I keep searching for views on what is right and wrong for me.” or “It took me time to figure it out, but now I know what I want for a career.”

Researchers’ findings indicated that the OMEIS is an appropriate measure of identity formation for the study of development within a person-context viewpoint (Adams, 2010). The newly modified OMEIS Revised is appropriate for ages 13 to adult and has been shown to have good internal validity with Cronbach alphas at significant levels of internal consistency. For the four identity statuses the following Cronbach alphas were found by Adams: Diffusion (alpha = .88), Foreclosure (alpha = .84), Moratorium (alpha = .91), and Identity Achieved (alpha = .90).

Of the 6 items, two items assessed each content area. Respondents rated the extent to which they 1 strongly agree or 6 strongly disagree with each statement on a six-point Likert scale. To create domain scores for each of the identity statuses, identity status subscales were derived from totaling all six items, across the three content domains into a summated subscale score for diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and identity achievement. Each item was identified under the appropriate identity status subscale that was summed to provide a raw subscale score. Each raw subscale score ranged from a possible low of six to a high of thirty-six. Comparing an individual’s raw scale score to a cutoff score for each status, and the individual was then classified into a single (“pure”) identity status or transitional status. The overall Cronbach’s alpha for this current instrument was .72 (See Table 2 for the reliability coefficients for each subscale).

**Qualitative Question**

The study incorporated a qualitative aspect of reviewed written statements and quotes from participants responding to an open-ended question. Responses were added as a contextual element to the results and discussion in this study. Student participants responded to the open-
ended question: “How would you describe the following saying in relation to your childhood parenting: African American mothers love their sons and raise their daughters?”

**Demographic Form**

The demographic form in the present scale was designed to collect information regarding the participant’s age, gender, and classification, primary female and male caregiver during participants’ childhood and adolescence, and highest grade level of female caregiver. To identify the people who were involved in the participants’ child rearing, several questions were asked to determine the roles of mother and/or mother figures. This allowed the participants to identify and consider all female adults responsible for their rearing when responding to the parenting style and identity formation scales.

**Data Analyses**

The goals of the proposed study were a) to expand the empirical and theoretical discussion regarding African American parenting patterns and identity development in emerging adults by gender, and b) to test whether there is relationship between parenting style in the familial context with identity status by gender. The relationship in familial context tested was mother (figure). The theoretical tenets of Erikson (1968) and the parenting model of Baumrind (1971) guided the hypotheses associated with each research question when possible.

In univariate analysis, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 16 (SSPS; SPSS, Inc., 2007) student and maternal demographic information and any relationships with the major variables of this study were examined via descriptive statistics. To assess whether association existed between the categorical variables of gender and mother parenting style (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) and to determine statistical significance, chi-square analyses were conducted. To test the bivariate relationships indicated in the hypotheses correlations were used to examine whether there was association between parenting style on the self-reported outcome variable of emerging adult identity status.

Further, the scores of mothers on each style perceived by sons and daughters as high or low were compared. This was accomplished by a median-split method to categorize mother (figures) as high or low for each parental authority style. Specifically those parent (figures) that were scored by respondents above the median for authoritarian were categorized as “high authoritarian mother (figures)” and those parents scored by respondents below the median for authoritarian were categorized as “low authoritarian mother (figures)”. Respondents with perceptions scoring
above the median on the authoritative scale were classified as "high authoritative mother (figures)", while those scoring below the median were categorized as "low authoritative mother (figures)". Finally, mother (figures) were categorized into high or low permissive parenting using a similar median-split procedure. Respondents’ answers and quotes from the qualitative question posed at the end of the instrument were added into the text of the discussion section in order to add contextual depth to the results obtained.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to a) explore whether child’s gender differentially impacted perceived parenting style used by mothers and subsequently the child’s identity formation in African American emerging adults. The final sample of this study included 128 participants (56.3% male and 43.8% female) of whom 88.4% were between 18 and 23 years old (mean age of 20.5; \(sd = 2.4\)). The significance levels for all tests were set to \(p = .05\). Due to the descriptive nature of this study, frequencies, percentages, and chi-square statistics are used.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research questions focused on the potential gender differences in perceptions of mothers’ parenting styles. It was hypothesized that there would be associations between the perceptions of parenting style and identity status of female and male undergraduate emerging adults. Hypotheses were examined using histograms and boxplots for outliers and patterns of a normal distribution of scale scores.

Hypotheses. Hypothesis stated that perceptions of mother (figure’s) parenting style would differ between male and female undergraduate emerging adults. That is, emerging adult women would be less likely to perceive the parenting style of their mother (figures) as permissive. Hypothesis two stated that female emerging adults’ perceptions of their mother (figure’s) parenting style as authoritarian would more likely be in moratorium or foreclosed identity statuses. Further, hypothesis three stated that male emerging adults would more likely perceive their mother (figure’s) parenting style as permissive and more likely be in the identity diffused status. Finally, hypothesis four stated that if both males and females perceived their mother (figure’s) parenting style as authoritative they would more likely be in the achieved identity status. The null hypothesis stated that there are no differences in perception of mother (figure’s) parenting styles among African American emerging adults. Cross-tabulations, using the chi-square statistic were performed for the total sample and separately by gender to test for association and statistical significance.
Normality of Data.

The distribution of the data for all variables was examined to identify outliers and assess skewness and kurtosis. The Kolomogorov-Smirnov test of normality was conducted to further assess the distribution of scores for each variable. A non-significant value (p > .05) on this particular test indicated normality. Significant results which indicated violation of the normality assumption found were: authoritarian parenting (p = .010), authoritative parenting (p = .008), diffuse identity status (p = .005), and moratorium identity status (p = .000). Non-significant values were found for the following variables and indicated normality: permissive parenting (p = .065), achieved identity status (p = .068), and foreclosed identity status (p = .032).

An inspection of normality was conducted by examining histograms and box plots of the measures. The skewness value provides an indication of the symmetry of the distribution of scores and the kurtosis value provides an indication of the extent to which a distribution is concentrated around its mean. Positive skew indicated scores clustered to the left of the graph at the low values, because the lower the value, the less likely mother (figure’s) parenting style and respondents’ identity status would be scored in a particular category. Negative skew indicated a clustering of scores at the high end, to the right of the graph. With higher values the more likely mother (figure’s) parenting style and respondents’ identity status would be scored in a particular category. A distribution with positive excess kurtosis has a more acute peak around the mean. In the present data inspection of the histograms revealed that a majority of the scores for any style of parenting and the achieved identity status were negatively skewed. The remainders of the identity statuses were positively skewed. A distribution with negative excess kurtosis has a lower, wider peak around the mean. The skewed data may be attributed to the high occurrence of respondents’ perceptions regarding their mother (figure’s) parenting style as more controlling.

Examination of the box plots of each measure revealed the presence of outliers for only two of the measures. Outliers were examined and found to be reflective of the heterogeneity among respondents’ perceptions, were considered legitimate, and were not removed from analyses.

Description of Gender and Parenting Style. The distribution and cross-tabulation contingency of parenting styles for respondents overall and by gender are presented in Table 3. Results revealed that a larger percentage of males perceived their mother (figure’s) parenting style as authoritative (54.1%), with the larger percentage of females having reported perceptions of their mother (figure’s) parenting style as authoritarian (51.7%). In hypothesis one it was hypothesized
that perception of mother (figure’s) parenting style would differ between male and female undergraduate emerging adults. Hypothesis 1a postulated that female emerging adults would be more likely to perceive the parenting style of their mother (figures) as authoritarian and was partially supported. The chi-square test for this factor, however, was not statistically significant at the .05 level.

Further, females were less likely to perceive of their mother (figures) as permissive in their parenting style. In hypothesis 1b it was postulated that male emerging adults would more likely perceive of their mother (figure’s) parenting style as permissive. Contrary to this hypothesis males were more likely to report perceptions of their mother (figures’) parenting style as Authoritative (See Table 3). Again, the chi-square test for this factor was not statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting (%)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>.645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>.513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 128

Means and standard deviations of parenting style for the total sample (N=128) and by gender are presented in Table 4. Results reveal that males reported perceptions of their mother (figure’s) parenting style used in their child rearing was Authoritative with higher mean scores on the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) for this parenting style (M =37.37; sd = 5.38). Furthermore, males with higher mean scores in this parenting style than females (M = 32.71; sd= 7.67; t (126) = 4.03, p <.001). Mean scores in this instance were significantly different. With higher mean scores (M =24.07; sd = 5.68) than females for the Permissive parenting style, (M= 22.12; sd = 5.86; t (126) = 1.89, p = .06) males were also more likely to perceive their mother (figure’s) parenting style as more permissive than females.
Female respondents had higher mean scores ($M = 36.42; sd = 7.51$) on the PAQ for the Authoritarian parenting style and were more likely to have perceived their mother (figures) as authoritarian than male respondents ($M = 36.42; sd = 7.51; t (126) = -.022, p = .98$).

**Description of Gender and Identity Status.** Among all respondents, the identity status of Undifferentiated was reported most often with 48.4% of the sample scoring at cut-off for this status (Table 5). Fifty percent of males were more likely to report being in the Undifferentiated identity status and 26.3% of males reporting in the Achieved identity status. Of note was that only 8.3% of males minimally reported in the Diffuse identity status. Hypothesis three was not supported in this instance. Among the female respondents, 46.3% reported in the Undifferentiated status and 30.4% of the females in the Achieved status. A Chi-square test was conducted to examine the relation between gender and the Undifferentiated identity status. The test was not significant ($\chi^2 (2, N = 128) = 1.31, p = .518$). In addition, the relation between gender and the Achieved identity status was also not significant, $\chi^2 (2, N = 128) = .008, p = .996$.

Table 5.

**Distribution and Cross-tabulations of Identity Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Status (%)</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>56.3</th>
<th>43.7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosed</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.35</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .001$
Table 5- continued

_Distribution and Cross-tabulations of Identity Status_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Status (%)</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>8.35</td>
<td>10.7</td>
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<td>.121</td>
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<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.518</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 128

Male respondents had higher mean scores than female respondents in all identity statuses other than the Achieved identity status. Females respondents in this status were more likely to be achieved than males. Table 6 reveals that females had higher mean scores (M = 26.37, sd = 5.77) than males in the Achieved identity status (M = 25.95, sd = 5.69; t (126) = -.408, p = .68). Mean scores for the Undifferentiated status, a transitional status, were not applicable due to the scoring protocol of the instrument. Results indicate that males had higher mean scores than females in the other three statuses of Foreclosed (M =16.00, sd = 5.26; t (126) = 1.97, p = .05) Moratorium (M =13.72 sd = 6.21; t (126) = 2.10, p = .04), and Diffuse (M =14.80 sd = 4.49; t (126) = 2.38, p = .02) and were more likely to be foreclosed, diffuse, and uncommitted in their identity than females. All of these mean scores were significantly different.

Table 6.

_Identity Status Means and Standard Deviations_

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Identity Status</th>
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<th>Female (n =56)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M    SD</td>
<td>M    SD</td>
<td>M    SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>26.14 5.70</td>
<td>25.95 5.69</td>
<td>26.37 5.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosed</td>
<td>15.16 5.48</td>
<td>16.00 5.26</td>
<td>14.08 5.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>12.76 5.91</td>
<td>13.72 6.21</td>
<td>11.53 5.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>13.85 4.66</td>
<td>14.80 4.49</td>
<td>12.85 4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>NA    NA</td>
<td>NA    NA</td>
<td>NA    NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p< 0.05
Relationship between Parenting Style and Identity Status. The intercorrelations between parenting styles and identity statuses were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. Several of the statuses and styles were significantly correlated with one another and a summary of findings is presented in Table 7.

Authoritarian parenting and Foreclosed identity status. Significant correlations were found between Authoritarian parenting style and Foreclosed identity status among all respondents (r = .24) and male respondents (r = .35).

Permissive parenting and Moratorium and Diffuse identity statuses. Significant correlations also were found for the Permissive parenting style and two identity statuses. Among all respondents in the Permissive parenting style, Moratorium identity status was significantly correlated (r = .18) as well among males (1.5%) in this parenting style, the Diffuse identity status was correlated (r = .24).

Female respondents, parenting styles, and identity statuses. Hypothesis 2a stated that female emerging adults with perceptions of their mother (figures) having an Authoritarian parenting style would more likely be in the identify Moratorium or Foreclosed identity status. There were no significant correlations observed between any of the parenting styles and identity statuses for females, consequently this hypothesis was not supported.

Parenting style, Achieved and Undifferentiated identity statuses. The distribution of parenting style and the two most frequently occurring statuses in the sample were examined by mean scores and chi-square statistics. While results of the chi-square tests were not significant, higher mean scores in the Authoritarian parenting style in the Achieved identity status overall were observed. Hypothesis four was not supported in this instance. Of further note among genders, males were more likely than females to perceive of their mother (figure’s) parenting style as Authoritative. In the Undifferentiated status, the Authoritative parenting style was most frequent, particularly among males. A summary of findings is presented in Appendix Tables 9 and 10.
### Correlations among Parenting Styles and Identity Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Status</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>Authoritative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosed</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01
Lastly, the scores of mother (figures’) parenting on each style perceived by sons and daughters as high or low were compared. This was accomplished by a median-split to categorize mother (figures) as high or low for each parental authority style. Specifically those respondents who scored their mother (figures) above the median (Md = 37.00; sd = 6.49) for authoritarian were categorized as “high authoritarian mother (figures)” and those mother (figures) scored below the median for authoritarian were categorized as “low authoritarian mother (figures)” Respondents with perceptions of their mother (figures) scoring above the median (Md = 36.00; sd = 6.86) on the authoritative scale were classified as "high authoritative mother(figures)", while those respondent perceptions scoring below the median were categorized as "low authoritative mother (figures)". Finally, mothers (figures) were categorized into high or low permissive parenting using a similar median-split procedure (Md = 23.00; sd = 5.82). Respondents with higher perceptions of their mother (figures) as “high authoritative or authoritarian mother (figures)” were more likely to be in the Undifferentiated identity status. Those respondents reporting their perceptions as “low authoritative or authoritarian mother (figures)” were more likely to be likely to be in the Achieved identity status.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

The aim of this descriptive study was focused on whether child’s gender differentially impacted parenting style used and whether there was association between perceived parenting style and the child’s identity formation. Extant research with ethnically diverse populations has shown that parenting styles have an effect on the adjustment of adolescents in these diverse populations (Steinberg, Blatt-Eisengart, & Cauffman, 2006). The present study adds to this literature by focusing on and exploring this difference in parenting based on gender in the African American mother–child dyad. With this focus the current study added to the body of literature by focusing on within-group differences rather than continuing the practice of identifying and understanding differences or similarities across groups. Particular dimensions of within-group diversity give a clearer picture to our understanding of the meanings of differences and similarities in parenting behavior (Bynum & Kotchick; Coley, 2003) and gender (Jeynes, 2005; Mandara & Pikes, 2008).

Parenting of African American offspring, the focus of this study have been found to be authoritarian, with parent centered practices being more common in African American families (Jackson-Newsome, 2008) and are interpreted differently by adolescents in these families. Using the conceptual and empirical discussions of Baumrind’s (1971) parenting style typology, the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ; Buri, 1991) was used to conceptualize mother (figure’s) parenting style. Despite the recent pattern of investigators focusing on more specific indicators this typology’s use in developmental research with emerging adults remains instructive, as parents continue to impact functioning through this developmental stage.

Of note has been research indicating that these practices occur more so in the parent-child relationship of African American mothers and daughters (Hill, 2001). Researchers (Hill & Zimmerman 1995) of African American families have revealed the tendency of parents, particularly mothers, to have higher expectations of responsibility for daughters than sons and to be more restrictive about the socialization of adolescent girls than boys (Hare & Castenell, 1985). Such research findings point to the influence of group norms for certain parenting behaviors.
The present study builds on previous research which has noted that parenting is influential to child outcomes over the life course specifically in terms of identity formation and commitment of youth (Berzonsky, 2004); these parent-child interactions appear to provide the context for such identity formation (Grovetant & Cooper, 1985). That is, the current study explored whether there was relationship between gender, parental authority type, and identity status of African American emerging adults. Identity exploration in this present study was conceptualized by using Marcia’s (1966) identity status model, based in Erikson’s (1968) psychosocial theory. In doing so, the examination of identity and parenting styles in African American family context was an expansion on the broader body of identity literature that primarily focuses on racial/ethnic identity with this population. Examining identity exploration and commitment has been shown to be foundational to development in emerging adults (Erikson, 1968; Schwartz, Zamboanga, Weisskirch, and Rodriguez, 2009).

**Perceptions of Mother (figure’s) Parenting Style**

Perceptions of mother (figures’) parenting styles and identity formation statuses were compared to determine whether there were quantitative differences between gender groups. In the present study results, respondents’ reported perceptions of their mother (figure’s) parenting style used was Authoritative, these results are distinctive to research which reports the Authoritarian parenting style in African American families with adolescents as the primary parenting style (Hill, 2001; Jeynes, 2005; Jackson-Newsome, 2008; Mandara & Pike, 2008). These findings simultaneously support and build on the research with majority adolescent populations where the Authoritative parenting style has been noted as more frequent and with more positive outcomes (Baumrind, 1991; Barber, 2002). Such findings offer a unique contribution to the parenting literature with African American populations. Of particularly note in this sample, 50% of the respondents reported higher educational attainment of their mother (figures), namely college. This middle-class sample of African American emerging adults’ and subsequent results adds to the literature which has primarily included low-income families in ethnic minority studies and again points to salient within-group differences in parenting.

By gender, results of this study revealed in the sample distribution that male respondents were more likely to report perceptions of their mother (figures’) parenting style as Authoritative with higher and significantly different mean scores than females on the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). Males were also slightly more likely to perceive of their mother (figure’s)
parenting style as more permissive than females; again males had higher mean scores but not significantly different from females. Female respondents were more likely however, to perceive of their mother (figures’) as Authoritarian as hypothesized. Females had a higher mean score than males on the PAQ for this parenting style. The responses of female participants in the present study were congruent with research which indicates that African American girls are parented by their mothers in more power-assertive ways.

Particularly, mothers tend to be more restrictive about the socialization of adolescent girls than boys (Hare & Castenell, 1985), and to be extremely close to and controlling of their daughters (Cauce, Hiraga, Graves, & Gonzales, 1996). One female respondent noted, “I would strongly agree w/this statement. I always felt that as the only girl my mom held me to very strict standards while my brothers were able to do as they wanted” (age 26). Another participant agreed, “In reference to my childhood experience, my mother made me do chores and clean up after my younger brother but my brother didn't have any responsibility all because I was a young lady and those are the things I was supposed to do” (age21). Results in this current study indicated no statistically significant perceived gender differences in the manner in which mother (figures) used control with their children, this is congruent with previous research; however, further examination revealed other subjective differences. Further, the verbal responses of these emerging adults were in contrast to their noted perceptions on the quantitative instrument. These contrasting results can be due to social desirability among respondents’ answers. As the mother (figure) is pivotal in the family, has almost godlike status and mystique in the African American community, respondents answering a questionnaire focused on talking about their mother (figures) in any light other than positive, as sacrificing, and empowering is almost taboo and is at the very least sensitive. In the hierarchal nature of the African American family children are to respect, defer to, and honor parents, particularly mother (figures) and to avoid conflict, compliance is favored (Smetana and Gaines, 1999; Hill, 2001).

Another side to this desirability is what may have occurred in this current study, focusing on and presenting parenting style as either instructive or for the good of the offspring in the African American culture. One respondent noted his perception of his mother (figure) in the following manner: “No parent is perfect, and although my mother made many mistakes trying to raise us, I learned enough to know what I need to do for myself responsibly without her guidance. She respects me for that, and from there our relationship is great” (Male, age 20). Another identified
with the statement of mother (figures) loving their sons and raising their daughters, but qualified his answer, “It was evident that my mother loved me, & still loves me as of now. She cares for me as if I am the only one even though there are three of us “(Male, age 19). A 21 year old female noted, “I believe it because a mother would do anything for her son good or bad and kind of let him do whatever, but not her daughter. It is a certain way the daughter is suppose (sic) to act and things to do.”

Finally, in exploring the differences in written responses among genders it is plausible that mother (figures) do not know how to raise male children and may not have or believe that their male children will meet their expectations of responsibility. Mother (figures) are able to model being an African American woman in terms of identity for her female child, but this is quite difficult if not impossible for her with her male child. Further, performance in meeting expectations is important for daughters over sons in African American families. Mothers of sons may not necessarily expect that their sons can meet their expectations of responsibility (Hill and Zimmerman, 1995). This may occur simply due to difference in gender and gender experiences within the cultural context and functioning in the majority society.

Questions of how a mother is to teach a male to be an African American man while being the opposite gender remains difficult to answer. Several respondents shared this thought in their responses, “To me this means that mothers and their sons have a close bond but she can't teach him to be a man, but a mother can teach (raise) her daughter to become a young lady” (Male, 20). Another agreed by sharing how mothers may not know how to rear male children but with all of the best intentions, “I feel that most women or mothers don't want their boys growing up to be like a "player" or "dead beat". She just wants the best for her son & she wants her daughter to be a reflection of her to society” (Male, 21). A 23 year old female respondent summed up this parenting by stating, “Well only a mother knows how to raise a girl and be a true example. They can raise boys but only a man can help a male child with problems he'll face as he grows up”.

**Identity Formation Status among Genders**

In this descriptive study, the identity status of Undifferentiated, another form of the diffuse status, was most common among both genders, but males were more likely to perceive of themselves in this status than females. Fifty percent of males in this status identified as such. Also of note were the significant mean differences between genders in other identity statuses (Moratorium, Diffuse, and Foreclosed). This gender difference is congruent with previous
research which notes that males tend to diffusion and non-commitment more than females (Schwartz, Adamson, Ferrer-Wreder, Dillon, and Berman, 2006). This pattern is both of concern and adaptive in college attending emerging adults, as an inability to commit or explore multiple alternatives indicates and is associated with identity distress and poor developmental outcomes (Schwartz and Montgomery, 2002). Such distress may in contrast be related to the letting go of former commitments and transitioning to and actually exploring new alternatives and commitments. In this study of African American emerging adults, perceptions of their mother (figures’) parenting as high in control may have impeded this process. As Erikson noted, (1959) adult society has the shared responsibility to provide meaning and status, continuity, and validation to facilitate the healthy development and integration of younger generations into adult society. Previous research has noted that this instability and associated confusion may induce transitory distress while the emerging adult is in this exchange (Schwartz, 2009).

For African American emerging adults this individuation from the family collective may be all the more disconcerting as these young adults are exposed to a wider range of options in the university context. Exposure and subsequent exploration of role models and career choices, ideological concepts, and religion, all of which were measured by the Objective Measure of Identity Status Revised (OMEIS, Revision 2010) are then natural in identity progression and the work of these young adults, as noted by psychosocial theory of development (Erikson, 1968). However, in the African American population religion is most salient and such exposure to differences from one’s family may induce anxiety and confusion. Although there were significant mean differences between genders in the other statuses, respondents in this present study identified themselves in the statuses of Undifferentiated and Achieved, but primarily Undifferentiated. Upon closer examination, the former had a higher percentage male and the latter had a higher percentage female. Females then by contrast may be functioning more adaptively than males.

**Perceptions of Mother’s Parenting Style and Identity Formation Among Genders**

Although differences between genders in perceptions of mother (figure’s) parenting style and identity formation were not statistically significant, there were specific differences and associations noted. Among all respondents in the sample who perceived their mother (figures) as Authoritative, they were also more likely in the Undifferentiated identity status. Males in this status were more likely to follow this pattern when compared to females, who perceived of their
mother (figures) as more Authoritarian. This pattern of responses and results has been noted in the literature (Berzonsky, 2004) where emerging adult participants with both the highest and lowest scores of authoritativeness also perceived of their parents as being relatively high in authoritarianism as well. This pattern revealed that participants may have been responding specifically to the control and supervisory dimension of the Authoritative parenting style in their perceptions. As observed in the present study, females similarly reported these perceptions, “I think this is true...I’m expected to be home by 9, clean, cook” (Female, 18).

**Parenting style, Achieved and Undifferentiated identity statuses.** Previous research has shown that Authoritative parenting provides consistent guidelines, rules, and encourages development of self-control in order to cope effectively with identity exploration and commitment characteristic of the Achieved identity status (Branch & Booth, 2002). In contrast to these findings, respondents in this current sample scored in the Undifferentiated status with an inability to commit. Respondents did so by recounting their perceptions of their Authoritative parenting primarily in the control dimension. This occurrence is evidenced by the higher mean scores on the Authoritarian parenting style scale by respondents. In this present study those respondents in the Achieved status were more likely to perceive of their mother (figure’s) parenting as Authoritarian, males perceived of their mother (figure’s) parenting style as more Authoritative. While these mean scores were higher they were not significantly different and hypothesis four was not supported (Figure 2). Previous research indicates that Authoritarian parenting may contribute to obedience and conformity which have been shown to be associated with the Foreclosed identity status in high school adolescents (Branch & Booth, 2002).

Another unique outcome in this present study was among correlations between parenting style and identity status of this sample and the significant relation among male respondents. That is, males who perceived of their child rearing as Authoritarian also reported their identity as Foreclosed. By contrast, these African American college attending youth did not report normatively conforming only, but also reported being confused and diffuse in their identity. As has been noted by Berzonsky, when emerging adults from Authoritarian, rigid environments are placed in an unstructured, uncontrolled environment such as a university campus; they resort to a diffuse approach. Results in this instance are mixed.

In African American middle-class families the expectations for autonomy and individuation occur later developmentally and later for girls than boys, particularly in the areas of monitoring
and rules. Perhaps females in this current study recalled these particular expectations along with the conflicting expectation for independence and self-reliance early in some areas (household responsibilities, sibling caretaking), but not others. This discrepancy in terms of control in parenting style may then impact these youth in their identity formation in ways that are either not conducive to commitment or commitment without exploration. Having been directed and told what to study, what major to choose, religion to believe in these youth present with indecision regarding more options and not actually knowing the importance of exploration and commitment ideologically, politically, and religiously.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Parental Style</th>
<th>Identity Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>Moratorium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>Foreclosed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diffuse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Study results

Limitations

It is important to consider the limitations of this descriptive study when interpreting the results. First, the scales used had not been principally conducted with an all African American middle-class samples, particularly the Objective Measure of Identity Status Revised (OMEIS-R, 2010). While previous research by Schwartz and Montgomery (2002), examining factor structures based on identity statuses, showed item and scale consistency in minority samples in the earlier version, the Extended Objective Measure of Identity Status (EOM-EIS-II; Bennion and Adams, 1986), this revision had been tested using a predominantly White sample of university students in Canada. The diversity of the sample was indicated in terms of gender and not ethnicity. This difference then would account for the low to moderate item reliability of the scale with this present sample of African American university students. Such low internal consistency was also noted in the Permissive subscale within the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ; Buri, 1991) used with this present sample and their range of experiences and perceptions. Likewise, Buri tested the original scale using 171 college students who were predominantly White and middle-class.
This pattern may speak to the question of whether the yielded results of the permissive parenting subscale in African Americans agreed with each other. While overall scale reliability was satisfactory and dependable, item consistency in one scale and one subscale were moderate at best. Some items may need to be deleted or revised in order to improve internal consistency. Items in the Diffuse and Foreclosed areas were more inconsistent in this present study with reliability coefficients lower than .65; this then remains an issue and focus for future research with minority samples. Such patterns may further speak to gender differences within cultures, as gender norms, values, and interpretations vary and impact results and interpretations of these results.

Again, this has been noted in prior research focused on ethnicity and gender in relation to identity formation. Schwartz and Montgomery noted with a minority sample, the general pattern of gender-related contextual experiences had more of an impact than culture-related experiences in regards to identity outcomes in a sample of largely Hispanic university students. Overall, the researcher knows and is aware that the most objectively measured traits are measured with imperfect instruments; however, to date the instruments used are currently the best available in measuring parental control and identity formation.

Second, the nature of the study was retrospective and self-reported. Memory tends to be reconstructive and questionnaires with objective-type items asking about African American mother (figures’) parenting style in the past have the potential for the drawback of respondents not being willing to admit to the behavior and thus may give socially desirable responses even with the promise of anonymity. Very well-adjusted, self-reliant youth may be biased toward assuming that their parent loved and was reasonable with them. The validity of childhood memories is often called into question because of this reconstruction; however, retrospective measures may form indicators of respondents’ current perceptions and may be useful for understanding development (Henry, Moffitt, Caspi, Langley, & Silva, 1994). What people remember may be influenced by their mood at the time of the reporting. Further, memories of specific concrete childhood events as in parenting control do provide information unrelated to mood and can provide insight into actual experiences during childhood.

The measures used for the current study were based solely on respondents’ report data. Findings should be replicated using reports from multiple family members, i.e. mother (figures) about their own parenting or direct observations of parent-child interactions which will help with
possible issues of same-source bias. This bias only applies to parenting, as self-report is appropriate to gather information about internal and subjective processes such as identity formation.

Results of this descriptive study support and build upon our existing knowledge base of identity development across the life course, particularly where ethnicity, parenting and gender of offspring are concerned. However, study focusing on the parental warmth dimension rather than primarily in the control dimension, as with the present data, may give a clearer picture of parenting style impact on identity status in African American samples. Refining measures would aid in the control of Type II errors in further studies.

Finally, this study was drawn from a cross-section of African American college attending emerging adults; as such results may not be generalizable to noncollegiate African American young adults and adolescents, or other cultural groups. These youth may be impacted quite differently in their identity development in terms of their perceptions of parenting, family relationships, and family interactions. Individuals’ perceptions of their experiences in the domains of family, school, community and the aforementioned socialization influences as noted by Erikson (1968) as influential to identity development are varied and could be further explored. Differences may depend on how closely families and in particular parents, retain and follow cultural traditions of parenting and individuation. Because African Americans vary in these respects, it would be advisable to avoid treating this group as a homogenous monolith.

**Implications**

**Future research.** Despite the limitations this descriptive study filled a gap in the developmental literature by focusing on processes of parenting style and identity formation in a within-group design using an African American emerging adult sample. Although the results of this study have been insignificant for identity exploration with this ethnic group using the OMEIS-R, it is the most widely used and best currently available. This study has generated results regarding utilization of an identity measure using an ethnic minority group, which provides a basis for future investigations regarding validity and reliability of this instrument. Future research with this instrument could benefit by examining factor structures based on identity statuses with minority samples to maintain validity as measures hold similar meanings across and within groups. It would make it less difficult to interpret findings in the study of ethnic variation in family functioning and emerging adult development, namely with African
Americans. Finally, it would be most beneficial if these minority samples would not only include university students, but also those emerging adults who enter the workforce after high school, this would as Schwartz (2005) has noted, give researchers a look at barriers not only attributes to identity development and formation in emerging adults.

In terms of future research it will be important to explore what unique information can be gained from the analysis of parent and offspring reported data. Further research is needed to determine more fully the perceptions of both parent and child regarding any parenting style and parenting style differences by gender and its impact on identity formation. It is important to include parents’ perceptions in order to observe possible differences in the link and association between emerging adult development and remembered perceptions of parenting style. Incorporating multiple-sources will provide a more comprehensive assessment of parenting within cultural context and its impact on identity development. It is also important to continue this line of research with a larger sample of mother (figure) – child dyads. Researchers would then be able to gain a reduction in source bias, be able to utilize multivariate analyses to further explore main and interaction effects between parenting style and gender, and increase validity in results obtained.

Finally, in light of the contrast between respondents’ perceptions and what they indicated was their reality in answers to the open-ended question used in this study, a qualitative study focusing on parenting style differences would be informative. Respondents, whether emerging adults singly or mother-child dyads could be asked by interview or in a focus group qualitative question(s). Content analysis of responses would then give clearer insight into relationship between variables. There could be a more in-depth understanding of any parenting differences and identity outcomes.

**Practical implications.** The findings of this study appear to have implications for developing parent education in African American families and interventions for young adults who may be experiencing identity confusion. Information regarding the differences in how mother (figures) specifically use control with their offspring based on gender can be used in educating African American mother (figures) about how to allow for the freedom of expression of thoughts and feelings during childrearing. This can be taught in the context of also allowing for the maintenance of rules in the home, and those based on developmental age versus gender. Further parents would need to be encouraged to shift in their parenting and be knowledgeable about and
available to their child’s thoughts regarding ideological issues of religion, career, and politics from adolescent and on into emerging adulthood. The results of this study indicated differences in respondents’ perceptions of their mother (figures’) parenting style along the control dimension, as such a focus of balancing demandingness and responsiveness, particularly in the Authoritative style would prove effective and possibly more positive in terms of outcomes.

Parent educators and counselors may want to examine and explore the degree of facilitation of autonomy and the affective relationships between mother (figures) and their daughters in psycho-educational discussions about identity exploration and commitment, particularly as related to choosing a major and career (Lease & Dahlbeck, 2009).

As this study has noted the parenting styles of mother (figures) may specifically impact offspring exploration and commitment in emerging adulthood. Respondents were more likely to identify as being in the Undifferentiated identity status whether their parenting was Authoritative or Authoritarian. This status is another form of diffuse, whereby respondents had particular difficulty in exploring and committing ideologically. Such confusion can be related to distress and negative outcomes for emerging adults. Findings, although qualitative in context and not generalizable, in this study can be used as the first step in examining and developing interventions for African American emerging adults’ identity in terms of transition and individuation. These interventions can be psychosocial in nature keeping in mind population cultural context.

In the instance of college attending African American populations, transition programs can be appropriate venues to incorporate interventions such as those seen on HBCU campuses, where the history of institution and orientation to the university are emphasized. In working with mixed populations related to gender, as in this study, specific aspects of identity alone or in combination with other positive functioning can impact healthy functioning in terms of exploration and commitment. It will be important for these programs to be aware of how parenting and parental control influence decision-making and particularly identity formation.

Summary

The findings of this descriptive study suggest that there were particular similarities and differences in the perceptions of mother (figures’) parenting style and identity status among a population of African American university students. While results did not reveal a statistically significant association between parenting style and gender, a small number of differences were
noted by frequency of higher mean scores of females and their qualitative writing in regards to the Authoritarian parenting style, they were more likely to perceive of their mother (figures) as Authoritarian. Further, an unexpected finding in this study indicated respondents more likely to identify their mother (figures’) parenting style as Authoritative and with the same frequency scoring in their identity status as Undifferentiated rather than Achieved as hypothesized. This was in contrast to what previous research has noted about African American parenting and identity formation. It might be useful for parent educators and counselors to discuss parental control and direction with parent and emerging adult offspring as well as the meaning applied to it by these offspring. In so doing identity distress may be alleviated and exploration may be increased. It would be valuable for impacting parenting and identity development in this minority population.
APPENDIX A
HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL
RE-APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 2/4/2011

To: Wachell McKendrick

Dept.: FAMILY & CHILD SCIENCE

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Re-approval of Use of Human subjects in Research

"RAISING DAUGHTERS AND LOVING SONS": AFRICAN-AMERICAN MATERNAL PARENTING STYLES, GENDER, AND IDENTITY FORMATION

Your request to continue the research project listed above involving human subjects has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee. If your project has not been completed by 2/3/2012, you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the committee.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your renewal request, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this re-approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting of research subjects. You are reminded that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal
Investigator promptly report in writing, any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor are reminded of their responsibility for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in their department. They are advised to review the protocols as often as necessary to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

Cc: Ann Mullis, Advisor
HSC No. 2011.5684
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Brenda Jarmon
College of Arts and Sciences/Department of Social Work
FROM: Gwendolyn Singleton, Ph.D., Chair, Institutional Review Board (IRB)
DATE: April 29, 2010
RE: "African-American Maternal Parenting Styles, Gender, and Identity Formation" (010-25)

The Florida A&M University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved the above name project and no other revisions are necessary. The IRB has not evaluated your project for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by April 29, 2011 you must request a renewed approval for continuation of this project.

You are advised that any changes in the protocol in this project must be resubmitted to the committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

Please ensure in your research that you only utilize the approved and stamped consent form. The institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is FW A00005391.
APPENDIX B
SURVEY INSTRUMENT
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
OF MOTHER (FIGURES)
TABLES OF PARENTING STYLE, ACHIEVED AND
UNDIFFERENTIATED IDENTITY
PART 2: How I Was Raised

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree

Age

5

1 2 3 4 5

2 3 4 5

3 4 5

4 5

1 2 3 4 5

Age
I have thought about it many times and I have always come to the same conclusion. My current occupation is not good for me. I have discussed this with my family and we all agree. I have tried to find a new occupation, but there are so many options and I don't know where to start. I feel like I need to make a change, but I don't know what that change should be.

In the past, I have been offered positions in different fields, but I have turned them down. I have always felt that I am not suited for those jobs. I have thought about going back to school, but I am not sure if that is the right choice for me.

I have also considered starting my own business, but I am not sure if that is feasible. I have a lot of debt and I don't know if I can afford to take that risk. I have talked to my bank about it, but they are not interested in lending me the money.

I have been thinking about this for a long time and I feel like I need to make a decision soon. I don't want to continue in my current occupation, but I don't know what to do instead.

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Table 8

*Sample Demographic Characteristics of Mother (Figures) in Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.1)</td>
<td>(1.6)</td>
<td>(1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21.9)</td>
<td>(12.5)</td>
<td>(9.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/Vocational college</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9.4)</td>
<td>(4.7)</td>
<td>(4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- 2 years college</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25.0)</td>
<td>(13.3)</td>
<td>(11.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 4 years college</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25.0)</td>
<td>(14.1)</td>
<td>(10.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(11.7)</td>
<td>(7.0)</td>
<td>(4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.9)</td>
<td>(3.1)</td>
<td>(.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 128
### Table 9.

**Parenting Style and Identity Achieved Distribution of Emerging Adults**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Male (n=19)</th>
<th>Female (n =17)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>36.41 52.8</td>
<td>36.40 27.8</td>
<td>36.42 25.0</td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>35.34 41.7</td>
<td>37.37 22.2</td>
<td>32.71 19.4</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>23.22 5.6</td>
<td>24.07 2.8</td>
<td>22.13 2.8</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 10.

**Parenting Style and Undifferentiated Identity Status Distribution of Emerging Adults**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Male (n=36)</th>
<th>Female (n =26)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>NA 40.3</td>
<td>NA 23.0</td>
<td>NA 21.2</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>NA 56.4</td>
<td>NA 35.4</td>
<td>NA 20.9</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>NA .032</td>
<td>NA 0</td>
<td>NA .032</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

TABLE – HYPOTHESES
Table 11.

Summary of Hypotheses and Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Statistical Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Perceptions of maternal parenting style will differentiate between</td>
<td>Questionnaire PAQ</td>
<td>Chi-square statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male and female undergraduate emerging adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Female respondents will be less likely to perceive their mother</td>
<td>Questionnaire PAQ</td>
<td>Chi-square statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(figure’s) parenting style as permissive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Female respondents will be less likely to perceive their mother</td>
<td>Questionnaire PAQ</td>
<td>Chi-square statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(figure’s) parenting style as authoritative.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Male respondents will be more likely to perceive their mother</td>
<td>Questionnaire PAQ</td>
<td>Chi-square statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(figure’s) parenting style as permissive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Female emerging adults with perceptions of mother (figure’s)</td>
<td>Questionnaire OMEIS-</td>
<td>Pearson’s Correlations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>authoritarian parenting will be more likely to be in identity</td>
<td>Revised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moratorium or identity foreclosed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Male emerging adults with perceptions of mother (figure’s)</td>
<td>Questionnaire OMEIS-</td>
<td>Pearson’s Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permissive parenting style will be more likely identity diffuse.</td>
<td>Revised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Both male and female emerging adults with perceptions of mother</td>
<td>Questionnaire OMEIS-</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(figure’s) authoritative parenting style will more likely be identity</td>
<td>Revised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achieved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent variable- Gender

Dependent variable – Parenting style
Re/introduce self and say: I am going to hand out the questionnaire packet and review the consent letter and important instructions before you begin.

**HAND OUT QUESTIONNAIRE BATTERY, PENCILS, RESPONSE FORMS, AND CONSENT LETTER**

Good Morning (Afternoon, Evening). My name is Wachell McKendrick. I am a doctoral candidate in the Family Relations Program at Florida State University. I am working with Dr. Brenda Jarmon, professor of social work at FAMU. I am conducting a research study entitled “Parenting and Identity Formation”.

Has anyone already participated in this study? Please come and see me. It is very important that you do not complete the survey again. (If someone has participated say, ‘Come and see me after I have reviewed the instructions with the class. Thank you.’)

On the inside of the first page you will find an informed consent letter. Please follow along while I read the consent letter that describes this research project.

This project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for projects involving human subjects at Florida A & M University and The Florida State University. If you choose to participate in the project, you will be asked questions regarding your feelings about family members who may have raised you and with whom you interact and about yourself.

I am requesting that you complete two questionnaires, which should take about 25 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and you may stop at anytime without prejudice, penalty, or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. All of your responses will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and only group findings will be reported. Survey responses will be separated from consent forms, coded with no personal identifiers, and kept in a locked file cabinet.

While there is no anticipated risk in participating, you may experience anxiety when thinking about your rearing, future, plans, or your relationship with the people in your life. I will be available to talk with you about any emotional discomfort that arises while participating. If you need further assistance, you may go to the FAMU Student Counseling and Assessment Center, Sunshine Manor, 599-3145. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any time.

As a benefit, you may gain an increased awareness regarding your beliefs about your relationships with others and yourself. In addition, you will be providing researchers with valuable insights into young adults’ perceptions of their development, personal relationships and how these relationships are associated with their identity.

Feel free to ask any questions that you may have concerning this research or your participation at this time. Group results will be sent to you upon request. Should questions arise once the study is complete, you may contact myself, Dr. Jarmon, or the IRB Chair listed on your letter. Return of the packet will be considered your consent for participation. Are there any questions? Please keep the cover letter for future reference.

Dear Participant:
My name is Wachell McKendrick, MSW, CAP. I am a doctoral candidate in the Family Relations Program at Florida State University. I am working with Dr. Brenda Jarmon, professor of social work at Florida A&M University. I am conducting a research study entitled “Parenting Styles and Identity Formation”. This project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board for projects involving human subjects at Florida A & M University and The Florida State University. If you choose to participate in the project, you will be asked questions regarding your feelings about your rearing and about yourself.

I am requesting that you complete two questionnaires, which should take about 25 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and you may stop at anytime without prejudice, penalty, or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. All your responses will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and only group findings will be reported. Survey responses will be separated from consent forms, coded with no personal identifiers, and kept in a locked file cabinet.

While there is no anticipated risk in participating, you may experience anxiety when thinking about your rearing or your relationships with the people in your life. I will be available to talk with you about any emotional discomfort that arises while participating. If you need further assistance, you may go to the FAMU Student Counseling and Assessment Center, Sunshine Manor, 599-3145. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any time.
As a benefit, you may gain an increased awareness regarding your perceptions and attitudes about your family relationships and yourself. In addition, you will be providing researchers with valuable insights into young adults’ perceptions of their rearing and how these relationships are associated with identity development.

Feel free to ask any questions that you may have concerning this research or your participation at this time. Group results will be sent to you upon request. Should questions arise once the study is complete, you may contact any of the following individuals:

Wachell McKendrick, MSW, CAP                                    Dr. Brenda Jarmon
Department of Social Work                                         Department of Social Work
Banneker Building B, Rm. 310                                        Banneker Building B, Rm. 310
Tallahassee, FL 32307                                              Tallahassee, FL 32307
850-561-2263

Dr. Gwendolyn Singleton                  Dr. Thomas Jacobson
Chair, IRB Florida A&M University                                      Chair, IRB Florida State University
Division of Research                                                  Division of Research
Office of Animal Care and Regulatory Compliance                    Office of Animal Care and Regulatory Compliance
Room 130 Dyson Building                                              Room 130 Dyson Building
Tallahassee, FL 32307                                                  Tallahassee, FL 32307
850-644-8633
humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu

Return of the packet will be considered your consent to participation. Thank you very much.
Consent for Participation

I ___________________________, consent to be a participant in the research study, “Parenting Styles and Identity Formation.” I have been informed of the purposes, potential risks, and confidentiality procedures of this research. I understand that I will receive class extra credit for my participation.

_______________________________    ________________
Signature         Date

FSU Human Subjects Committee Approved 2/4/11. Void after 2/3/12 HSC# 2011.5684
APPENDIX E

PERMISSIONS FOR USE OF INSTRUMENTS
From "Buri, John R."

Date Wednesday, February 10, 2010 9:07 am

To 'Wachell McKendrick'

Wachell:
Thank you for your interest in the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). Please feel free to use the PAQ for any not-for-profit purposes. You can find scoring and norming information for the PAQ in the following journal articles:


Information about the parents' assessment of their own authority prototype may be found in the Journal of Adolescent Research article.

I wish you the best with your dissertation research as well as the completion of all your other requirements for your doctorate.

John

John R. Buri, Ph.D.
Professor
Department of Psychology
UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

-----Original Message-----
From: Wachell McKendrick
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2010 7:32 PM
To: Buri, John R.
Subject: PAQ permission

Dear Dr. Buri,
My name is Wachell McKendrick and I am a Doctoral Candidate in Family Relations at Florida State University. My dissertation research is a study examining whether maternal parenting style is affected by offspring's gender in African American parent-child(undergraduate) dyads. A second purpose is to examine the relationship between parenting style and child's identity formation in these parent-child dyads.
I want to use the Parental Authority Questionnaire with both the emerging adult and maternal parent. I understand that you have given instructions for rewording the PAQ scale for parents to gather parents' perceptions of their own parenting styles. As such I am requesting permission to use these instruments and appropriate manuals in my research this semester. I am planning to submit to my Institutional Research Board by Feb. 26th and would greatly appreciate your assistance in this matter and in furthering my research.

Sincerely,

Wachell McKendrick

Page 1 of 2
Subject RE: Permissions

From "Gerald R. Adams"

Date Tuesday, February 9, 2010 9:15 pm

To wvd

I am no longer providing the reference manual for the extended version but if you have one you have permission to use it. If you want to use the most recent version of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status, 24 items, there is a new revision. It is available by going to. The newly validated measure has better reliability estimates.

Gerald Adams

> From: wvd
> To: GAdams@uoguelph.ca
> Date: Tue, 9 Feb 2010 20:40:04 -0500
> Subject: Permissions
>
> Dear Dr. Adams,
>
> My name is Wachell McKendrick and I am a Doctoral Candidate in Family Relations at Florida State University. My dissertation research is a study examining whether maternal parenting style is affected by offspring’s gender in African American parent-child (undergraduate) dyads. A second purpose is to examine the relationship between parenting style and child’s identity formation in these parent-child dyads.
>
> I want to use the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity with emerging adult participants. As such I am requesting permission to use the scale and appropriate manuals in my research this semester. I am planning to submit my application to perform research with human subjects to my Institutional Research Board (IRB) by Feb. 26th and would greatly appreciate your assistance in this matter and in furthering my research and academic growth.

> Sincerely,
> Wachell McKendrick
REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Wachell McKendrick, MSW, CAP
The Florida State University
Department of Family and Child Sciences

Education

PhD The Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, 2006 - Present
Major: Family Relations, Certificate in Program Evaluation
Dissertation: “Raising daughters and loving sons”: Gender, maternal parenting styles, and identity formation

MSW Barry University, Miami, Florida, 2001.
Major: Social Work
Certified Addiction Professional (CAP) - Florida Certification Board

B.A. Armstrong Atlantic Southeastern University, Savannah, Georgia, 1981.
Major: Psychology

Additional Education
The Florida State University, June, 1979. Liberal Arts Coursework completed.

Academic Appointments

2006 – 2010 Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, Teaching Assistant
2006 – 2010 Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, Research Assistant
2004 – 2006 Tallahassee Community College, Tallahassee, Florida; Adjunct Instructor
2003 – 2006 Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida; Adjunct Instructor

Professional Activities

• State University System Collaboration, commissioned study The State of Black Florida, Black Legislative Caucus, State of Florida (2009-2010)

• Certified in PREP, Inc. “Within My Reach” curriculum (2006-2009)
• Participant in National Treatment Center Study - University of Georgia’s Center for Research on Behavioral Health (2004-2005)

• Oral Case Examiner - Florida Certification Board (2002-2007)

• Internationally Certified Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor (1996-Present)

• Victim Services Practitioner - State Attorney General's Office (2003-Present)

Referred Publications


Presentations at Professional Conferences


Professional Experience
Assistant Professor – Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, 2010-Present; Tallahassee, Florida 32307.

Adjunct Instructor – Department of Behavioral Sciences. 2004-2006; Tallahassee Community College, Tallahassee, Florida 32307

Field Instructor – College of Social Work. 2003-2006; The Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306.

Adjunct Instructor – Department of Social Work. 2003; Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Tallahassee, Florida 32307.


Corrections Coordinator/ Clinical Supervisor - Spectrum Programs. 2001; Miami, Florida 33126.


Instructor – Comprehensive Training Center. 2000-2001; Davie, Florida


Bicultural Program Coordinator - Department of the Army. 1992-1993; (Relocation Program Coordinator 1991-1992). Fort Bliss, Texas


Substance Abuse Counselor - Department of the Army. 1986-1990. Fort Lewis, Washington and Nuremberg, Germany

Courses Taught:

Graduate
Community Development and Social Work Practice
Human Behavior and the Social Environment I

Undergraduate
Introduction to Social Work
Social Work and Group Practice II
Interviewing and Recording
Chemical Dependency and Social Work
Social Work and the Black Family
Family Development (Breakout Course)
Family Development (Lecture)
Diversity in Families

Professional Memberships

- Florida Certification Board (FCB)
- National Council on Family Relations (NCFR)

Honors and Awards

- Phi Alpha Honor Society – Social Work
- Florida Alcohol and Drug Association Professional of the Year (1996)