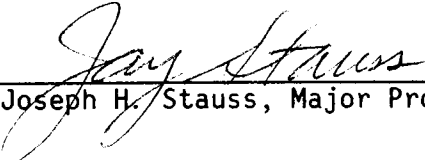
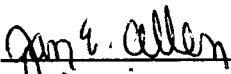
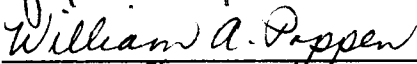
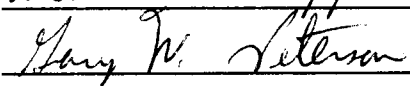


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation by Gloria M. Torres entitled "Perception of Parental Behaviors and Self-esteem: A Study of Puerto Rican Adolescents from Divorced and Intact Families." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommended that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Home Economics.


Joseph H. Stauss, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council


The Graduate School

PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL BEHAVIORS AND SELF-ESTEEM:
A STUDY OF PUERTO RICAN ADOLESCENTS FROM
DIVORCED AND INTACT FAMILIES

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
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Gloria M. Torres

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent to which child-rearing behaviors of Puerto Rican parents predicted the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families. It also attempted to examine if adolescent's self-esteem was determined by the length of time since parent's divorce and by the family's socioeconomic status (measured by father's educational level). The study further examined whether the correlation between school achievement and self-esteem differed depending on the marital status of the family. A final purpose was to determine whether correlations between parental behaviors and self-esteem varied with family status and whether there were parent/adolescent gender differences.

The adolescent's perception of parental behaviors, self-esteem and demographic data were explored by the use of the Parent Behavior Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and a Socio-demographic Data Questionnaire. The data were gathered from four senior high schools located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The sample consisted of 65 males and 37 females from intact families and 42 males and 44 females from divorced families. Pearson Correlation coefficient analysis was used in order to examine the relationships between perceived parental behaviors (support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal) and adolescents self-esteem.

The analysis of the data revealed a significant positive relationship between maternal support and the self-esteem of sons from divorced families. A similar positive relationship was found for

mother/son, mother/daughter and father/son intact-family dyads. The positive influence of induction was significant in relation to adolescent self-esteem within same-sex divorced-family dyads (father/son, mother/daughter). For adolescents from intact-families, there were positive relationships within cross-gender dyads (father/daughter, mother/son) between parental induction and self-esteem.

A significant negative relationship was found between maternal coercion and self-esteem for both sons and daughters from divorced-family dyads. A similar negative relationship was found for all parent/adolescent intact-family dyads. Significant negative relationships also were found between maternal love withdrawal and the self-esteem of daughters from divorced families and this relationship was negatively related for sons from intact-family dyads.

In general, the findings of this study suggested that there were differences between the predictive inductive behaviors and predictive control attempts of Puerto Rican divorced and intact parents and the self-esteem of adolescents.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, the incidence of divorce has been accelerating at an alarming rate. Divorce is now part of the life experience of an ever increasing number of children. Currently, over one million children each year experience the process of divorce with their parents. Children living with one parent numbered 13.7 million in 1982. The mother is the custodial parent in 9 out of 10 cases, and most often the mother is divorced. Only two percent of these children are living with their fathers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983).

Many questions have been raised about the well-being of children reared in the single-parent family, especially about their self-sufficiency and their self-esteem (Raschke & Raschke, 1979; Parish & Taylor, 1979). As the rate of divorce increases and more and more children are raised in single-parent homes, researchers have begun to discover that the consequences of divorce may be quite debilitating to children's normal development (Hetherington, 1976, Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

Although divorce has been the focus of numerous studies, there is a need for additional research. Findings of a practical nature are essential for educators, family life specialists, and parents to provide assistance to children experiencing divorce.

There is a need to study parent-child interaction in different cultures or sub-cultures such as adolescents and families from Puerto

Rico. The roles occupied by parents in different cultures influence the child-rearing techniques they use, the meaning they convey to children, their expectations, and the reactions that children exhibit. Parents from different cultures often use child-rearing techniques that are derived from their unique set of cultural values and role expectations that are believed to be adaptive (Peterson & Rollins, in press).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the child-rearing behaviors of Puerto Rican parents predicted the self-esteem of adolescents differently for intact versus divorced families. Specifically, it investigated the predictive capacity of perceived parental support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal on the self-esteem of adolescents. A secondary focus was to determine if adolescent self-esteem was determined by the length of time since parents' divorce, by the socio-economic standing of the family (measured by the father's educational level) and by the adolescents' school achievement.

Rationale

In recent years the number of children and adolescents from divorced families has risen steadily in the United States. Since 1970, the number of married couples getting divorced has increased at a rate of 10 percent each year (Parish & Taylor, 1979). Bronfenbrenner (1975) noted that one out of four families will become a

single-parent family by the time the parents are 25 years of age or younger. Based on current estimates, the incidence of divorce will continue to rise, not only among young marrieds, but among older couples as well. According to these trends, a significant number of children under 18 years of age will be subjected to the divorce of their natural parents and will most likely grow up without a father in the home (Parish & Taylor, 1979). Glick (1980) predicted that by 1990, one-third of all children will live with divorced parents.

Given these trends, there is a substantial need to broaden our studies concerning the impact of divorce on children living in single-parent homes. Changing life-styles, which have become evident over the past decade, have led to an increasing prevalence of divorced families in Puerto Rico and the United States.

Puerto Rico, although largely Hispanic, Roman Catholic, and conservative in terms of women's roles, has one of the highest divorce rates in the world. In 1980, the United States had the highest divorce rate in the world, 5.19 percent, which was followed by Puerto Rico with 4.77 percent per 1,000 population (United Nations, 1983).

According to the United States Bureau of the Census (1983), the number of divorces granted in Puerto Rico in 1981 was 14,247, which was 4.53 percent more than was granted in 1970. In 1980, 30 percent of all divorces involved children under 18 years of age. Data indicate that in Puerto Rico 343 out of every 1,000 children under 18 years of age have experienced living in a single-parent household (Vital Statistics, 1981).

Rapid changes have occurred in many of the educational, religious, and family systems of Puerto Rico during the last 20 year. Shifts in the island's occupational patterns and in the traditional role of women affected the divorce rate in a number of ways. First, as women became providers, they also assumed a greater decision-making role within the family. Second, as women became wage earners, they tended to become more conscious of the economic implications of being a single-parent, thus increasing their motivation to get a divorce. The shift from home to a factory grouped many women in a single location, thereby easing the problem of communicating the benefits and negative effects of divorce. Given these trends in the traditional role of women, the number of women getting a divorce is increasing continuously. However, there have been no studies investigating the negative or positive impacts of divorce on children of single-parent homes in Puerto Rico.

According to Nieto (1972), the existence of a causal relationship between divorced homes and maladjusted children's personality has not been demonstrated in Puerto Rico. Divorce and separation cannot break the structure of Puerto Rican families because children find support outside the family (Fernandez-Marina, Von Eckart & Maldonado-Sierra, 1969; Nieto, 1972). Whenever grandparents, aunts, uncles or other relatives were available to the adolescents, they found support in coping with difficult parental relationships. Support received from parents/or relatives might compensate for support that was lost during the divorce. These situations may create

conditions that could lead the children of a single-parent home in Puerto Rico to construct a favorable self-esteem.

Researchers no longer see divorce as a unitary, stressful event or as a time-limited crises which has potentially enduring effects on those experiencing it (Caplan, 1961; Felner, Farber, Ginter, Boike & Cowen, 1980). Rather, they increasingly view divorce as being a life transition period, consisting of a process extending over time and having a variety of impacts on family members (Bloom, 1980; Felner, Stolberg & Cowen, 1975; Spanier & Casto, 1979; and Felner, Farber, & Primavera, 1980).

Many studies have assessed the developmental effect of parental separation and divorce on children. Other research has focused on factors which influence adjustment after this disruption. Some studies within the United States have concluded that, at least for Americans, the crisis of divorce is not necessarily detrimental to children and adolescents (Burchinal, 1964; Reinhard, 1977; Lamb, 1977; Magrab, 1978; Kurdek & Siesky, 1980). Others have suggested that the event is a painful experience laden with anger, depression, and a sense of loss and betrayal (Anderson, 1977; Rohrllich, Ranier, Berg-Cross & Berg-Cross, 1977; Sorosky, 1977, and Wallerstein & Kelly, 1974, 1980).

Although research indicates that numerous factors are associated with family disruption, many of the studies have been carried out with small groups of subjects who were not randomly selected (Jacobson, 1978; Lowenstein & Koopman, 1978) or who were obtained from a clinical population (Kalter, 1977; Schoettle & Cantwell, 1980; Wallerstein

and Kelly, 1974). Further, investigators often have been concerned with the characteristics of individuals from disrupted homes, but failed to make comparisons with subjects from intact families (Lowenstein & Koopman, 1978; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1974).

Although research has been done on the effects of divorce on adolescents self-esteem, additional research is needed that examines the perception of parental behaviors such as support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal on the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced families. Research relating to the child-rearing behaviors of parents has included information about the impact of specific parental behaviors on the socialization of children.

Parental support has been found to have a positive relationship with adolescent's self-esteem and school achievement (Rollins and Thomas, 1979). Supportive parental behaviors like physical affection, warmth, encouragement, and the use of praise and approval are very important for the development of self-esteem in children and youth (Peterson and Rollins, in press; Rolling & Thomas, 1979; Gecas, 1971). In a study conducted by Saavedra (1980) on the effects of perceived parental warmth and control on the self-evaluation of Puerto Rican males, it was found that adolescent's positive assessment of self-esteem was significantly related to reported perceptions of parental warmth or acceptance. However, a question not examined was whether parental support predicted the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families differently.

There is also evidence that parental induction is positively related to the self-esteem of children and adolescents, while parental

coercion and love withdrawal are negatively related to the self-esteem of children and adolescents (Coopersmith, 1967; Peterson, Southworth & Peters, 1983). Furthermore, the study by Saavedra (1980) indicated that the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents was negatively related to their perception of parental aggression or indifference. Thus, the present study was designed to examine the nature of the relationship between dimensions of perceived parental control attempts (induction, coercion, and love withdrawal) and the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families.

Most of the studies dealing with relationships between parental child-rearing behaviors and children's self-esteem have directed their attention to the effects of maternal behaviors in intact family settings (Rosenberg, 1979; Gecas, 1971, 1972; Peterson et al., 1983). The present study examined the relationships between the behaviors of mothers and fathers and the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families. The effect of parental behaviors (support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal) on the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families has not been addressed in the previous research. Specifically, no studies exist on the impact of child-rearing behaviors on the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents and there is a need for studies of different cultural groups that address these issues.

Theoretical Framework

The symbolic interaction framework is particularly appropriate for understanding the interrelationship among family members after

divorce. The dramatic role changes which accompany family dissolution or divorce are major sources of divorce-related stress. The ambiguity that surrounds roles in the post-divorce situation complicates these role changes.

The symbolic interaction framework posits that humans live in a symbolic as well as a physical environment. According to this perspective, individuals have the capacity to learn, remember, and communicate symbolically. The communication between individuals and society occurs because humans deal with symbols. These symbols to which humans respond are emergent from the shared interactions of individuals and their environment. In the social environment, this meaning of symbols is derived primarily from observing and participating in the process of symbolic interaction (Burr, Leigh, Day & Constantine, 1979; Stryker, 1980).

From the symbolic interaction perspective, parent-child interactions contribute to the emergence of mutually shared norms and expectations (Peterson & Rollins, in press). As symbols become more complex and organized, expectations for human behavior are communicated among the participants of interaction. Individuals recognize themselves and others as occupants of roles when expectations for behaviors become shared by the participants of the interaction. Roles are integrated sets of social norms which specify how one should or should not behave in any given setting (Peterson and Rollins, in press). The way individuals perceive themselves and how they identify and perform the roles are part of the individual's emerging self (Stryker, 1980).

Mead (1934) saw the self as consisting of the "Me" or social self that develops in relation to society and the "I" as the unpredictable, spontaneous, or unique part of the self. The self is also developed through interaction with others (Mead, 1934).

The development of symbols and the emergence of the self occur primarily through social interaction. A primary source of interaction for children and adolescents is the family and, consequently, for development of the self. After divorce, family members usually experience shifts in their relationships and life-styles. Divorce usually does not terminate interaction. It does create changes in interaction patterns within a family which may influence the development of the self (James, 1979).

Another idea from the symbolic interaction perspective is that the child's self-esteem is a function of the parent's reflected appraisal of the child's inherent worth, which occurs during the course of parent-child interaction (Coopersmith, 1967; Gecas et al., 1974; Mead, 1934; Openshaw et al., 1983). The symbolic interaction process may influence self-esteem at various stages of a child's life (Gecas et al., 1974; Openshaw et al., 1983).

In a family setting, individuals develop the capacity to perform appropriate role behaviors and to evaluate their actions. Parents and adolescents perform roles to the extent that sets of expectations begin to guide or constrain their behaviors (Peterson and Rollins, in press). There is an intense social process through which the ability to share common meanings and to role-take each other is developed (Peterson and Rollins, in press, Stryker, 1980). As individuals

experience the process of role-taking, they increasingly evaluate their own abilities and role enactments from the perspective of others. The process of role-taking, then, involves the capacity to view both the social world and one's self from the perspective of other family members and to anticipate the other's responses (Peterson and Rollins, in press; Stryker, 1980).

Within parent-adolescent relationships, roles that parents take on in relation to their children control the behaviors that they direct toward their children and have influence on the self-esteem of children and adolescents. For example, most parents often use certain child-rearing techniques (warmth, encouragement and comfort) that are consistent with social expectations in order to control the behavior and attitudes of children and adolescents. According to the symbolic interaction perspective, when parents use such behaviors, they are performing the child socializer role. Parental behaviors that communicate expectations and norms for children's behavior may have consequences for the self-esteem of children and adolescents.

The importance of an individual's perception of the situation is another concept of the symbolic interaction framework. This perspective stresses that how an individual perceives a situation or an event is more important to his/her reactions than the objective reality of the situation (Stryker, 1972). For example, the adolescent's perceptions of the parent's actions during separation and divorce are more important than the actual actions in the development of their self-concept. Cooley (19802), for example, indicated that children form images of themselves based on their perceptions of how

people react to them. Children and adolescents validate this impression through interaction with significant others, mainly the parents.

Within the parent-child relationship after divorce, children and youth define the nature of interactive situations, assess their parent's competence, and develop, or fail to develop a willingness to be influenced by parents. The "definition of the situation" by youth may affect the parent's ability to influence their children's behaviors and to fulfill the role of socializing the child.

Model of Parental Behavior and Self-esteem

A model of parental behavior and self-esteem is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. The model represents the relationship between intact (Figure 1) and divorced (Figure 2) families and the adolescent's self-esteem. Children's perceptions of parent's behaviors (parental support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal) are viewed as predicting the self-esteem of adolescents. School achievement, father's education and length of time since parents' divorce are also viewed as predicting the self-esteem of adolescents.

Nominal Definitions

Parental support is behavior, such as a gesture or significant symbol which communicates that a child's "self" and the child's actions are valued by parents (Peterson and Rollins, in press). Parent's support consists of nurturant, accepting, and physically affectionate behaviors that are used within the parent-child relationship.

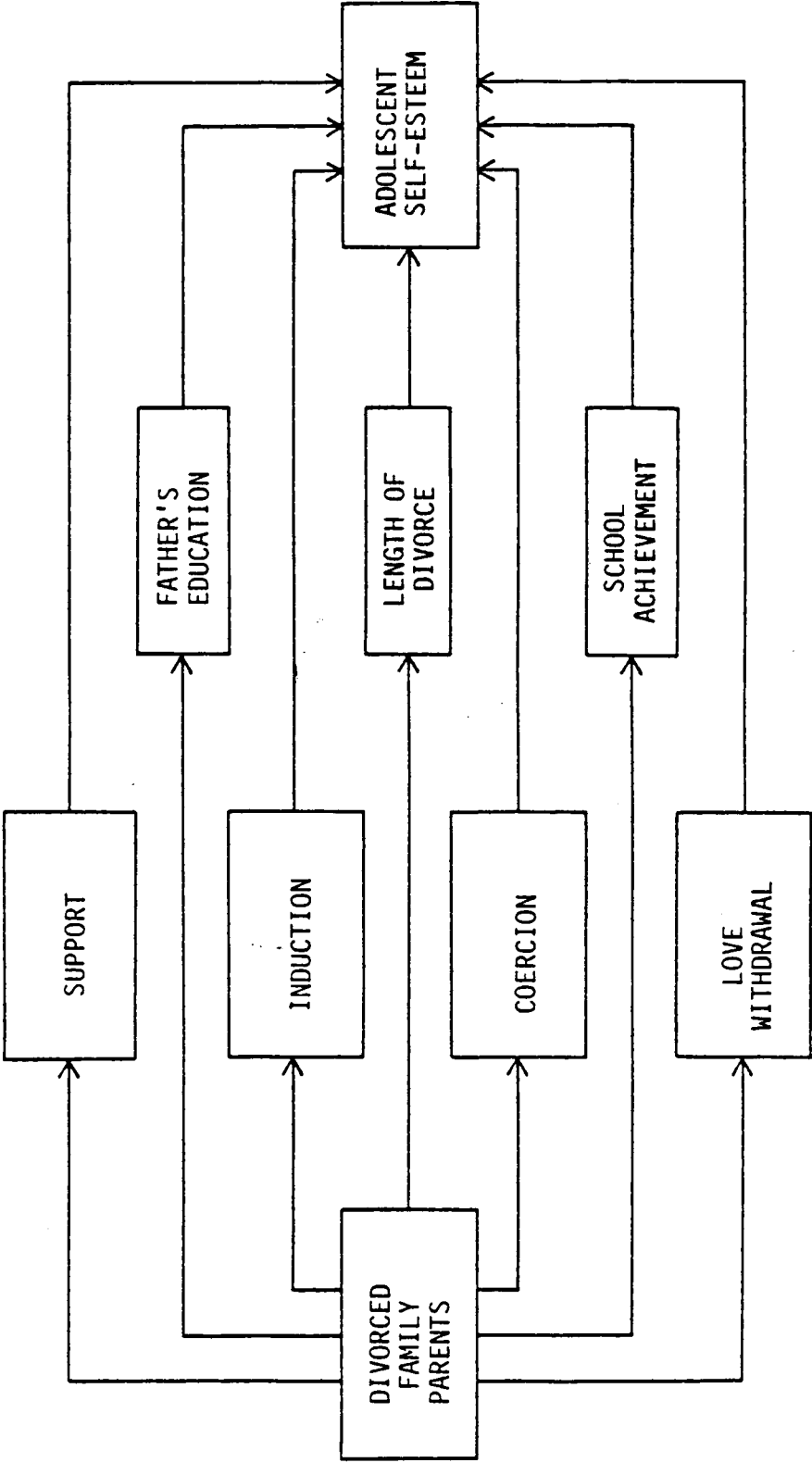


FIGURE 2
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERCEIVED DIVORCED FAMILY PARENTAL
BEHAVIORS AND ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

(Separate models will be analyzed for each parent/adolescent dyad)

Parental induction is a control attempt used by parents that places rational maturity demands on children, including explanation, and making children and adolescents aware of their abilities to evaluate the consequences of their actions for themselves and others (Peterson & Rollins, in press; Openshaw et al., 1983). Parental induction involves sharing the reasons behind child-rearing decisions with the young.

Parental coercion is a control attempt used by parents that involves the direct application of force in an arbitrary manner (Peterson & Rollins, in press; Hoffman, 1975). Parental coercion communicates rejection to the child and low evaluation of the child's self. Arbitrary commands and physical punishment by parents are coercive techniques used to control the behavior of youth.

Parental love withdrawal is a control attempt that threatens to withdraw or temporarily discontinue the relationship between parents and children as a means of influencing their offspring's behavior (Peterson & Rollins, in press).

Self-esteem is the evaluation that individuals make and maintain about themselves as objects (Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg, 1965, 1979; Peterson & Rollins, in press). The self-esteem of individuals are likely to be positive if they consistently think of themselves as successful. If their evaluations of self are predominately unfavorable, they are likely to have a negative self-esteem.

Intact family is a family unit consisting of a father, mother and children living together.

A one parent family is a social group consisting of one parent caring for his/her child(ren). The term is used interchangeably with single-parent family.

Children of divorce are persons between 14 to 18 years of age whose biological or adoptive parents with whom they have been residing have become divorced.

Children of intact families are persons between 14 to 18 years of age whose biological or adoptive parents are married to each other and both of whom live with the child.

Objectives and Hypotheses

The major objective of this study was to investigate the extent to which four parental child-rearing behaviors (parental support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal) predicted the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families. Determining whether the length since parents' divorce, father's education, and school achievement predicted the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families were secondary objectives.

The research hypotheses are as follows:

1. Parental support is positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and this relationship is higher for adolescents from intact families.
2. Parental induction is positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorce and intact families

and this relationship is higher for adolescents from intact families.

3. Parental coercion is negatively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and this relationship is higher for adolescents from divorced families.
4. Parental love withdrawal is negatively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and this relationship is higher for adolescents from divorced families.
5. Length of parents' divorce is positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced families.
6. Father's education is positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and this relationship is higher for adolescents from intact families.
7. School achievement is positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and this relationship is higher for adolescents from intact families.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although researchers have extensively examined child behavior after divorce, there have been few attempts to investigate adolescents' perceptions of parental behaviors in relation to self-esteem. Parents' behaviors play an important role in developing an adolescent's self-esteem. This review of literature focuses on the impact of parental child-rearing behaviors on the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families.

This chapter begins with a general discussion of the literature on the divorce process, followed by a section on the effects of divorce on adolescents. A discussion of the nature of self-esteem is included, followed by separate sections on self-esteem and divorce, and parental behaviors (parental support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal) and its impact on self-esteem. Control variables which also are discussed include father's education, gender of adolescents, age of children, school achievement, and length of parent's divorce.

Children and Divorce

The divorce rate in the United States, particularly divorces involving children, has increased dramatically in the last twelve years (Current Population Reports, 1983). According to the Bureau of the Census (1983), the likelihood of marriage has declined as the divorce rate has increased to record high levels. In 1982, there

were 114 divorced persons for every 1,000 married persons living with their spouses, more than twice the ratio in 1970 (47 per 1000). The proportion of children living with one parent numbered 13.7 million in 1982, two-thirds more than in 1970.

Research on children of divorced families has increased over the past decade as sociologists, psychologists, home economists and other family life specialists search for ways to help this growing population. However, only a few studies exist that have directly examined the perceptions of children about their parent's behaviors as they go through the separation and divorce process. During the divorce process, both parents and children go through transitions involving changes in roles, adjustments to challenges associated with family reorganization and attainment of new life-styles in one-parent families. There is some disagreement reported by the literature about the effects of parental divorce on children.

Hetherington, Cox & Cox (1976, 1978, 1979) carried out one of the most comprehensive longitudinal studies of children and divorced parents. They studied 48 pre-school children, and a matched sample of 48 divorced families with children of the same age and gender. According to Hetherington et al. (1978), both mothers and fathers felt incompetent, lonely, alienated and depressed. They reported that divorced parents made fewer maturity demands, communicated less well, and were less affectionate and more inconsistent in the discipline and control of children. Two years after divorce, the single-parent mothers had gained some personal satisfaction but at the expense of their children's well-being. The children of these

mothers had the most frequent, intense, and enduring signs of emotional disturbances and behavioral problems, both within the school and at home. The parents often failed to recognize their children's needs and distresses. Disruptions in the children's behavior also were attributed to the parent's emotional disturbances.

Wallerstein and Kelly (1974, 1975, 1976, 1979, 1980), in their longitudinal study of divorced families with children ranging in age from one to twenty-two, found that children's responses to divorce were related both to age of the child and length of time since the divorce. According to Wallerstein and Kelly (1980), few children in their study thought that their parents were happily married, yet the overwhelming majority preferred their parents' unhappy marriage to a divorce. Despite the unhappiness of their parents, many children were relatively happy and considered their situation to be neither better nor worse than those of other families (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980).

The adaptation of the child to the divorce process also varies with their developmental status. Wallerstein & Kelly (1980) reported that the preschool children were the most emotionally disturbed at 18 months of separation. Younger children and adolescents appear to cope better than latency-age children four years after separation. They found that children of pre-school age typically reacted with denial, and frequently assumed they had a part in causing the divorce. Children of seven and eight years old (early latency) were characterized by pervasive sadness and were less able to use denial than younger children. The nine to ten year old children (late

latency) felt shame and anger but were able to use a variety of mechanisms to deal with their feelings. At the one year follow-up, nearly half of the pre-school, over one-third of the early latency, and half of the late latency children either were displaying dysfunctional behaviors observed in the initial interview or were in even more deteriorated psychological conditions (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

In summary, the divorce process may lead to children having a variety of social, emotional and psychological problems. These situations seem to be related to age, length of time from divorce and the child's developmental status.

Adolescents and Divorce

The Divorce Adjustment

Adolescents reactions to divorce depend on the nature and extent of family disharmony prior to the divorce, the parent's relationship during the separation and divorce periods, the adolescent's relationships with their parents, and their capacity for adjustment (Schwartzberg, 1980). To look at the impact of the divorce process on the adolescent, you must see the divorce through the eyes of both the adult and the child. During these years the adolescents have their own opinions, biases, and analysis of the divorce. They may be sensitive to the social consequences resulting from the image of a divorced family. In contrast to younger children, adolescents often think in terms of others going through the same experiences as

them. They can appreciate the benefits of divorce to the adults involved, if the benefits are obvious to the adolescent (Westman, 1972).

For many adolescents, the problems of parental divorce may be overweighted by the advantage of growing up sooner. Many of their own needs for care and nurturance must be ignored if they are to become more independent and take on new responsibilities. Weiss (1979) speculates how growing up too soon may affect these children when they are adults.

Studies conducted by Nye (1957) and Burgess (1970) on adjustment in divorced and happy or unhappy intact-family homes, hypothesized no differences between conflicted two-parent families and reconstituted and/or single-parent families. Adolescents from the divorced and/or reconstituted families showed significantly better adjustment in the areas of psychosomatic illness, delinquent behavior, and parent-child adjustment. In a similar study, Landis (1960) found that the degree of divorce-related trauma experienced by adolescents was greater for those who saw their homes as "happy" prior to the divorce. Those who saw their homes as characterized by open conflict between parents experienced less trauma after divorce.

Burchinal (1964) compared adolescents in different family structures and did not find the single-parent family to have adverse effects for their adjustment or developmental characteristics. These findings also were supported by other studies (Keller and Murray, 1973; Feldman and Feldman, 1975; Raschke and Raschke, 1979).

Sorosky (1977) found special psychological vulnerabilities that may occur in adolescents: a fear of abandonment, rejection, or loss

of love, interference with the resolution of typical adolescents conflicts, and an intense fear of personal marital failure. In addition, the child is often confronted by conflicting loyalties as described by Wallerstein and Kelly (1974). They noted that parents have expectations for the child to align against the other parent, resulting in frequent feelings of despair, guilt, and depression.

Wallerstein and Kelly (1974, 1980) in their study of twenty-one adolescents from divorced families, noted that family disruption poses a very specific hazard to the normal adolescent process of emancipation from the primary love objects. If the disruption does not come prior to the normal detachment, independence and maturation may even be facilitated. The adolescent may be able to 'transform' feelings of helplessness into a sense of control by active mastery.

In adolescents, some prominent effects are related to sadness and a sense of loss and betrayal by parents. There was evidence of recurrent themes of anxiety about future marriage, worry about money, abrupt deidealization of parents, heightened awareness of parents as sexual objects, and often intense loyalty conflicts. Adolescents who coped best were able to make a strategic withdrawal from parental conflicts, allowing for a more objective assessment of parental behavior (Slater, Stewart and Linn, 1983). Wallerstein & Kelly (1974, 1980) noted three major psychopathological formations: prolonged interference with entry into adolescence, temporary interference with entry into adolescence and pseudo adolescence. Schwartzberg (1980), in a study of thirty adolescents from divorced families, noted similar psychopathologies. Subsequently, Wallerstein & Kelly

(1980) found a close connection between continued contact with the non-custodial parent and the adolescent's self-esteem. This connection was especially strong among older teenagers, particularly boys.

In general, most adolescents experience considerable initial pain and anger when their parents divorce. However, when the immediate trauma of divorce is over, they are more able to assign responsibility for the divorce, to resolve loyalty conflicts, and to cope with economic and other practical exigencies (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1974, 1976, 1980).

Gender of Adolescents

According to Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1978, 1979, 1981) and Wallerstein and Kelly (1978, 1980), the impact of marital discord and separation are more pervasive and enduring for boys than for girls. Disturbances in social and emotional development in girls have largely disappeared two years after the divorce, although they may reappear at adolescence in the form of disruptions in heterosexual relations (Hetherington, 1972, 1981). Boys from divorced families in contrast with girls from divorced and nuclear families demonstrated higher rates of behavior disorders, problems in interpersonal relations in the home, the school, with teachers and peers. Boys in divorced families are less compliant than girls. After divorce it seems that boys are more likely to be exposed to parental battles, including confronting inconsistency, negative sanctions, and opposition from parents, particularly from the mother (Hetherington, 1979; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

A study conducted by Hetherington (1972) involved 24 adolescents who regularly attended a community recreation center. He found that for both father-absent groups, the lack of opportunity of girls for constructive interaction with a loving, attentive father had resulted in apprehension and inadequate skills in relating to males. Daughters of divorcees sought more attention from male adults and initiated proximity-seeking and physical contact with male peers. This was supported by greater time spent in areas dominated by males in the recreation areas. Others studies also found females to be more anxious and depressed (Farber, Primavera & Felner, 1983) or to have lower self-esteem than males (Slater et al., 1983).

Burchinal (1964) and Reinhard (1977), on the other hand, studied the reaction of adolescent girls and boys to the divorce of their parents and concluded that there were no differences between males and females. They found that adolescents did not react in a negative way to the divorce. There were no hostile or rejecting feelings or difficulties with school. The adolescents saw themselves as having matured faster and assumed greater responsibilities than their peers.

In summary, male and female adolescents appear to react to divorce and separation differently. Research studies indicated that the impact of divorce and separation was more detrimental for males than for females. Males demonstrated higher rates of behavior and problems in interpersonal relations than females from divorced families.

School Achievement

The way in which students view themselves and the world are products of how others see them and are primary forces in academic achievement. Many students have difficulty in school not because of low intelligence, poor eyesight, or poverty, but because they have learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic work (Kirland, 1978). Hammond (1979) concluded that school achievement was related positively to self-concept. Perception of acceptance by peers and the need to be successful or receive rewards also were related to self-esteem. Other researchers have reported that children from divorced homes did not differ from children from intact homes in participation in school activities, school grade point averages, attitudes toward school, and perception of acceptance by peers (Burchinal, 1964; Reinhard, 1961; Hammond, 1979).

Two recent reviews have concluded that children growing up in mother-headed families showed deficits on cognitive performance as assessed by standardized intelligence and achievement tests, and school performance (Biller, 1974; Shinn, 1978). In single-parent homes, which are usually headed by women, children are more likely to show the pattern of higher verbal and quantitative scores in aptitude and achievement tests (Hammond, 1979). In studies of middle class children, those raised in single-parent families may actually have verbal scores higher than those from intact families (Hammond, 1979).

Consistent with this research evidence, a hypothesis of this research model proposed that school achievement was positively related

to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from intact (see Figure 1) and divorced families (see Figure 2). It was also hypothesized that the relationship between school achievement and self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents was stronger for intact families.

Socioeconomic Status

According to Felner et al. (1980), children with histories of parental separation were seen to be experiencing higher economic stress than those from intact families. Some of the most prevalent stresses confronting children of divorce are those associated with downward economic mobility and drop in socioeconomic status. This shift in the family's economic status may result in a vastly different life-style.

Results from different studies have indicated that maladjusted children were from homes in which there had been a drop in income immediately following the divorce (Desimone-Luis, O'Mahoney, & Hunt, 1979). Another study concluded that the loss of income was more detrimental than the father's absence from the home (Colleta, 1979).

Even in the event a previously non-working mother enters the job market, it is usually at an entry level salary. For many divorcing families, the cost of establishing two homes adds economic stress to the existing social and emotional stress (Paddock-Ellard & Thomas, 1981).

When parents, especially the mother moved toward economic independence, the children did not always share the benefits. They often suffered a diminishing self-esteem because of the lack of attention and availability (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

Consistent with this research evidence, a hypothesis of this research model proposed that father's education (an indicator of socioeconomic status) was positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from intact (see Figure 1, p. 12) and divorced families (see Figure 2, p. 13). It was also hypothesized that the relationship between parent's education and self-esteem was stronger for Puerto Rican adolescents from intact families.

Length of Parent's Divorce

Length of divorce is another variable that has an effect on the self-esteem of adolescents. In the longitudinal study conducted by Hetherington et al. (1976) they reported that the quality of parent-child interaction improved over a two year period but still was less healthy than in intact families. Wallerstien and Kelly's (1974, 1975, 1976, 1980) five year study found that although the mother-child relationship initially deteriorated by the end of one year, many adolescents were able to establish a satisfying relationship. Fine, Moreland, & Schwehel (1983) reported that the long-term consequences of divorce were that adolescents from divorced families perceived the relationships with their fathers to be less positive than youth from intact families. Therefore, a hypothesis in this research model proposed the length of parent's divorce was positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced families (see Figure 2).

In summary, research related to children and divorce has indicated that the process of divorce may lead to children having a

variety of social, emotional and psychological problems. Age, gender of children, length of time since parent's divorce and socioeconomic status seem to be related to the self-evaluation of those children.

Males and females appear to react differently to separation and divorce. Adolescent's school achievement and perception of parent's behaviors might be associated with how adolescents react to the divorce process and the development of their self-esteem.

Nature of Self-esteem

Self-esteem has been the focus of an increasing number of theoretical speculations and empirical research within the past two decades. Much of the research, however, has been both theoretical and non-developmental (Wylie, 1975). The vast majority of published research on self-esteem relies on the relationship of self-esteem to self. This relationship was noted a century ago by William James (1890) and was later elaborated by C. H. Cooley (1902) and G. H. Mead (1934). Researchers have further clarified the conceptualization of self-esteem by equating it with the evaluative dimension of the self (Coopersmith, 1967; Fitts, 1972; Gecas, 1971, 1972; Rosenberg, 1965; Thomas et al., 1974; Openshaw et al., 1981).

A commonly cited definition of self-esteem is found in a study by Rosenberg (1965, p. 5), who defines self-esteem as "the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval." Similarly, Coopersmith (1967) views self-esteem as a judgment of self-worthiness. Wells and Marwell (1976) define self-esteem as a

"more or less phenomenal process in which the person perceives characteristics of him/herself, and reacts to those characteristics emotionally or behaviorally." It has been generally accepted that an individual acts on a situation as he/she perceives and defines it (Thomas, 1923).

Most descriptions of self-esteem include the idea that an optimal level of self-esteem exists and is important for social and psychological well-being. High or positive self-esteem has been reported to be a healthy and functional condition for individuals. Negative or low self-esteem, on the other hand, has been reported to have a wide variety of adverse consequences in most of the literature.

Thoreau (1854) wrote more than a hundred years ago, that public opinion is a weak tyrant compared to one's own private opinion. More recent researchers have argued that self-evaluation rarely agrees with how others really view us. Instead, self-esteem seems to be a function of the manner that individuals think others are perceiving them to be (Gecas, 1982).

Other sources of self-esteem are based on evidence of self-worth that individuals receive from their external social environment and the people important to them. According to Franks and Marolla (1976), outer sources of self-esteem consist of the kinds of degrees of social support received from significant others. Also, parents, teachers, peers, siblings, and other participants in social interaction are all seen as sources of potential influence on self-esteem.

Rosenberg (1979) has identified certain dispositions and physical traits as inner sources of self-esteem. These dispositions include

abstract categories of attitudes, attributes, values, and habits which reflect information about individuals to themselves and others. Individuals may have positive or negative feelings toward themselves as a whole, and also may have positive or negative feelings toward their various traits, intelligence, helpfulness, skills, and so on. In addition, individuals actively respond to how they classify and evaluate these dispositions and traits.

Adolescents and Self-esteem

Some studies suggest that age is an important factor in the self-esteem of children (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980; Kirland, 1978). Levels of self-esteem tend to increase with age. According to Kirland (1978), adolescents have the higher levels of self-concept scores on most self-concept tests. It may be likely that the higher levels of scores of older subjects may reflect defensiveness because it is socially desirable, which may account for their higher scores in self-esteem (Kirland, 1978).

One of the most widely referenced studies dealing with self-esteem is the study of pre-adolescents boys done by Coopersmith (1967). Coopersmith's research indicated that persons who differed in self-esteem (from low to high) have "pervasive and significant differences in experiential worlds of social behaviors" (p. 79). He reported that persons with high self-esteem were likely to be happier and more effective in meeting environmental demands than people with low self-esteem. Individuals with high self-esteem were described by Coopersmith (1967) as being more confident, worthwhile,

creative, independent, and assertive. In contrast, individuals with low self-esteem were apprehensive, withdrawn, self-conscious, and preoccupied with personal problems. Coopersmith (1967) also reported that persons with high self-esteem were likely to assume an active role in social groups and to express their views effectively. They apparently move directly and realistically toward personal goals and were also less burdened by self-doubt (Coopersmith, 1976; Wylie, 1979).

Gender of Adolescents

Sex differences in self-esteem development during the adolescent years have been well documented (e.g., Douvan & Adelson, 1966; Dusek & Flaherty, 1981). For example, Douvan & Adelson found that adolescent males were more concerned with achievement and autonomy issues with regard to their identities, whereas female adolescents' identity concerns involved interpersonal matters and aspects of an expressive role. In spite of our so-called age of sex role enlightenment, adolescent males may still be reluctant to disclose the more introspective aspects of themselves to others, though these may be acknowledged as part of their private self-conceptions (Noppe, 1983). Nor conforming to such gender role specifications may have its costs, as demonstrated by the finding that males who are more introspective generally exhibited lower self-esteem scores (Noppe, 1983).

It is common to view adolescence as a time of disturbance of the self-concept (Erikson, 1959; Rosenberg, 1979; Savin-Williams & Demo, 1983); thus the issue of the developmental stability would appear to

be an important one. If there is a period of crisis and disruption during the adolescent years, then it should be reflected in the one's level of self-esteem during the teenage years (Savin-William and Demo, 1983).

Although the traditional, theoretical view of adolescence is one of instability and stress, the empirical evidence presents a divergent view (Coleman, 1977). Dusek & Flaherty (1981) found no significant change in self-concept levels from 11 to 18 years of age. O'Malley and Johnston (1978); Savin-Williams & Demo (1983) reported stability of self-esteem scores from middle adolescence through the young adult years.

In general, one's self-esteem seems to be sensitive to changes, but is not infinitely flexible or in constant change (Coopersmith, 1967; Wylie, 1979). According to Coopersmith (1967) individuals arrive at a general appraisal of their social worth that tends to remain stable over time. Self-esteem has certain components that are relatively constant. Researchers, counselors, teachers, parents, and family life specialists should be interested in examining how self-esteem becomes related in a positive or negative way to family structure and children's perceptions of parent's behavior.

Parental Divorce and Self-esteem

As reported in several studies, family structure (i.e., intact, divorced, reconstituted) has been associated with differing levels of self-esteem. Some research suggests that when parents divorce, children are prone to various problematical attitudes and emotions.

One of the several reactions one might expect is the development of low self-esteem of children of divorced parents. Children may blame themselves in any attempt to keep parents together (Toomin, 1974) and feel that they deserve to be abandoned (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1975; Berg & Kelly, 1979). Children have little control over the divorce process and may justifiably feel weak and helpless (McDermott, 1970).

Several researchers (e.g., Coopersmith, 1967) have reported that self-esteem in mothers was related directly to self-esteem in children. Therefore, if divorce changes the self-concept of parents, the changes parents experience also may affect the children. Wallerstein & Kelly (1974, 1975, 1976) reported that children initially experienced a loss of self-identity following divorce. Other researchers reported that children had a shaken sense of identity after experiencing parental divorce (Anthony, 1974; Brandwein et al., 1974; Burchinal, 1964; Burgess, 1970; Jacobson, 1978; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980; Nye, 1957; Rosenberg, 1965). In his pioneering study, Beissinger (1976) noted a relationship between parental divorce during adolescence and self-concept. He concluded that youth who had experienced parental divorce generally had lower self-esteems, decreased self-satisfaction and self-acceptance, lessened feelings of personal worth or value as family members.

Lifshitz (1975) proposed that identity, or self-concept develops as a function of successive comparisons between self and fathers and mothers. Parish and Copeland (1979) studied 206 male and female college students from intact families and found that they tended to develop self-concepts that were significantly correlated with how

they perceived (i.e., evaluated) their mothers and fathers. They stated that individuals from father absent families were strongly identified with their mothers and their step-fathers, but not their fathers (Parish & Copeland, 1979). According to Landis (1960) and Wallerstein & Kelly (1974), father absence results in an increase in the emotional distance between the absent fathers and their children. As children attempt to redefine their feelings toward one or both parents, they generally come to feel closer to their mothers. The allegiance to their mothers may be fostered by feelings of uncertainty within the children who are seeking to regain some of the stability they have lost (Parish & Copeland, 1979).

Rosenberg (1965) found that the amount of parental attention and concern given to the child was significantly related to self-esteem. He concluded that adolescents who had a closer relationship with their fathers were higher in self-esteem than those in more distant, impersonal relationships. He also found that self-esteem of children from broken homes was sometimes affected, but did not seem to differ for children from intact homes. The factors he found that lowered self-esteem in children of broken homes were: mother's young age at the time of marital disruption, remarriage of the mother, and religion.

Parish and Taylor (1979) investigated the self-concepts of fourth through eighth grade students from Oklahoma and found that children who came from divorced non-remarried families demonstrated significantly lower self-concepts than did children from intact families. In addition, they found that children from divorced-remarried

families demonstrated somewhat lower self-concepts than those from intact families and somewhat higher self-concepts than those from divorced families. Parish & Dostal (1980) and Nunn & Parish (1982) who studied children of comparable ages in Kansas and Iowa, respectively, found results similar to those reported by Parish & Taylor (1979). Other studies by Hetherington (1972); Kelly (1980) also reported that parental divorce generally has a negative impact on the self-concept of children across various ages. It must be pointed out, however, that we understand relatively little about the changes that occur in parent-child relationships and the child's later development following divorce.

The few studies reported have generally found that divorce, father loss, and solo parenting can be quite debilitating to the development of children's subsequent self-concepts and their emotional attachment to their parents. For instance, Young and Parish (1977) examined the self-concepts of female college students from intact and broken homes. They found, like Parish and Taylor (1979) that students from divorced families where the mother had not remarried, but not from the students from divorced families where the mother had remarried, demonstrated significantly lower self-concepts than students from intact families. Interestingly, the respondents of Young and Parish (1977) and Parish and Copeland (1976) studies were college students, while respondents in Parish and Taylor (1979) were grade school and junior high students. These findings suggest that divorce and the events surrounding it may be associated with development of lower self-esteem by children and young adults who

have undergone this experience. The presence of a father figure in the home may attenuate and/or compensate for at least some of the detrimental effects associated with divorce and subsequent father loss.

Parish and Taylor (1980) found that children from divorced families tend to perceive or evaluate themselves and their parents less favorably than do children from intact families. The adolescent may be more sensitive to the repercussions from the image of a divorced family. In contrast with the young child, the adolescent can actually think in terms of others going through the same experience of divorce and can appreciate the benefits of the divorce for the adults involved if the benefits are obvious to him.

In another study by Parish and Kappes (1980), college students were asked to evaluate their parents. It was found that the parents from homes broken by divorce were consistently more negatively evaluated than were parents from intact families, regardless of whether the mother had remarried and regardless of the sex of the students doing the ratings. From the findings in this study it appears that children from divorced families tend to perceive (i.e., evaluate) themselves and their parents less favorably than do children from intact families. The impact of divorce, father loss, and solo parenting tends to be modified when the remaining parent (the natural mother) remarries.

Specifically, with the mother's remarriage, the self-esteem of children and the evaluation of their absent fathers seem to become

more favorable. In contrast, children's evaluations of their mothers seem to become less favorable, although not significantly.

The trauma of divorce need not be the bases of diminished future self-esteem. Although Coopersmith (1967) did not investigate the effects of divorce on self-esteem specifically, he found that traumatic experiences in the child's past were unrelated to self-esteem. Coopersmith (1967) found that separation from parents due to illness, travel, and the like, and extensive non-parental care were unrelated to self-esteem. He suggested that the most important determinants of self-esteem of children were the attitudes and behaviors of parents. Parents with children of high self-esteem expressed a total or nearly total acceptance of their children, placed nearly defined and enforced limits on the behavior of their children, yet allow children some latitude of behavior within these limits (Berg & Kelly, 1979).

Self-esteem in children living in divorced and intact families was examined by Raschke and Raschke (1979) in relation to conflict within the home. They reported that self-concept was not affected by family structure, but there was an inverse relationship between conflict in the home and self-concept of children. These findings are congruent with Horney's (1937) statement that the antecedents of self or self-esteem are found within interpersonal relationship in the family. In both Raschke and Raschke (1979) and the Parish et al. (1981) studies, however, children's self-concepts did vary as a function of level of perceived family concept (i.e., whether the child perceived his/her family as either happy or unhappy). Notably, Wallerstein & Kelly (1980) and Hess & Camera (1980) suggested that

both family structure and family concept (i.e., happy versus unhappy and conflictful versus unconflictful) are both important if one truly wishes to understand children's socio-emotional development.

In a study of fifty-seven children ages 9 to 15, Berg & Kelly (1979) found that children with divorced parents had self-esteem levels comparable to those children from intact-accepted families. The self-esteem measured was not different from that of children from intact families. They found that children with low self-esteem were those who viewed the family as undesirable (Berg & Kelly, 1979).

In summary, a person establishes his/her identity with the world outside the family during the years of adolescence. Self-esteem, establishment of a new identity, and perceptions of familial relationships have been related to the process of divorce adjustment. When separation and divorce occur, the personal repercussions for each child depend upon the child's age, gender, relationship with the parent of custody, circumstances of the divorce, relationship between siblings, and personal development history (Westman, 1972; Anthony, 1974). Although the immediate effects of divorce are painful for family members and disorganization of the family unit, over time, most persons and family units reequilibrate themselves. Self-esteem is restored and a new identity is established so that family members are functioning well again.

Parental Support and Self-esteem

Parental support has been considered to be an important variable that predicts a variety of child social and personality characteristics, including the self-esteem of children and adolescents (Baumrind, 1966; Becker, 1964; Rollins & Thomas, 1979; Peterson & Rollins, in press). Parental support has been labeled in different ways including warmth, physical affection, nurturance, acceptance, and general support (Peterson, Ellis, Rollins & Thomas, 1981; Rollins & Thomas, 1979; Peterson & Rollins, in press). Parental supportive behaviors are parental sentiments, expressions of love and approval that parents direct at children. Child rearing behaviors of this kind communicate security and stability within the parent-child relationship.

Parents may use supportive behaviors as a mean of assigning significance to certain behaviors that they want children to exhibit. Support fosters child behavior that is consistent with parental expectations, solidifies the parent-child relationship, and enhances the self-esteem of children and youth.

Parental support has been a subject of research on parental behavior of divorced families and self-esteem of adolescents (Hetherington, Cox & Cox, 1979; Hetherington, 1979). According to Hetherington et al. (1979), children of many divorced parents receive less adult attention. Some of the father's functions may be taken by mothers, social institutions, relatives, friends, stepfathers, siblings and neighbors. In most divorcing families there is a period in the first year following the divorce when mothers become depressed,

self-involved, erratic, more non-supportive and ineffectually authoritarian dealing with their children (Hetherington, Cox & Cox, 1978).

The ability of young people to cope successfully with changes in their life-styles seems to rest on whether they become pawns in the divorce process and the perceived amount of emotional support they receive from parents, friends and family (Gullota, 1981). A continually supportive relationship and involvement of the father with the child is the most effective support system for divorced mothers and their children. Frequent contact with the parents eases the adjustment to a new life-style and provides support for both parents and youth (Slater et al., 1983; Jacobson, 1978; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Individuals who viewed their family as more cohesive had lower anxiety levels and viewed their role as a family member more positively than those who viewed their family as less cohesive (Farber, Primavera, & Felner, 1983).

Support from siblings and accessibility of extended family members may also have helped the adolescent to adjust to their single family (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1977; Slater et al., 1983). In addition, some teenagers found their peers to be sources of support (Kelly & Wallerstein, 1977). For adolescents, dependence on peers in dealing with their parents' divorce was associated with less adequate self-image in their social relationships (Farber, et al., 1983; Slater et al., 1983).

Being pushed toward early responsibilities has led to feelings of being overwhelmed by unsolvable problems, incompetence, resentment about lack of support, unavailability of mothers and to precocious

sexual concerns in some school-aged children and adolescents (Hetherington, 1979; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Older children and adolescents have frequently been able to confine their stress within the family arena, to use peers and school as sources of information, satisfaction, and support (Hetherington, 1981). The enhancement of self-worth, competence and personal satisfaction were functions served by peers. A positive school environment is to some extent able to attenuate the effects of stressful family relations (Hetherington et al., 1980; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

It could be argued that boys encounter a set of circumstances that make divorce a more stressful experience for them than for girls. After divorce, boys rather than girls have received less positive support, solicitude, and nurturance and are viewed more negatively by mothers, teachers, and peers in the period immediately after divorce (Santrock, 1975; Hetherington et al., 1978, 1979, 1981; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1979, 1980). It also may be argued that sex role standards cause people to perceive girls as requiring more support in terms of stress and that signs of emotional needs were less acceptable in boys than in girls. Boys are more exposed to stress, frustration, and aggression and have fewer available supports following divorce (Hetherington, 1981).

As parents interacted with adolescents in supportive ways, they were found to feel as though they were worthwhile individuals with the capability of acting upon and/or reacting to their immediate environment (Rollins & Thomas, 1979; Openshaw et al., 1983). Thus, parental support after divorce should be positively related to the

self-esteem of adolescents. Therefore, another hypothesis in this research model proposed was that parental support was positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from intact (see Figure 1, p. 12) and divorced families (see Figure 2, p. 13). The hypothesis was also proposed that the relationship between parental support and self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents was higher for intact families.

Parental Induction and Self-esteem

Parental induction is another child-rearing behavior that influences the self-esteem of children and adolescents. Parental induction is also called love-oriented positive discipline, reasoning demanding or authoritative parental behavior. It has been seen as an attempt by parents to seek voluntary compliance from children by using explanations and/or pointing out the consequences of the child's behavior for themselves and others (Hoffman, 1970; Rollins and Thomas, 1979; and Peterson & Rollins, in press). Parental inductive behavior places rational maturity demands on children, offers explanations and communicates confidence that youth have the ability to understand the consequences of their actions.

Hoffman and Saltztein (1967) and Shoffeit (1971) reported that various levels of morality in children and adolescents were positively associated with the use of parental induction or the use of reasoning. Adolescents who had their love, belonging, and self-esteem needs threatened were less likely to be freed to use their abilities to the fullest extent in achieving higher levels of moral development (Parish, 1980).

According to Hetherington, Cox & Cox (1976), divorced parents made fewer maturity demands on their children, showed marked inconsistency in discipline and lack of control over children in comparison to parents in intact families. Over time, the divorced mother showed less attempts at authoritarian control and became more effective in dealing with their children (Hetherington, 1976). Effectiveness in dealing with children was related to support and agreement with the spouse in disciplining the child in both divorced and intact families (Weiss, 1978).

After the divorce process, children were asked to fulfill some of the functions of the absent father. When the mother was not making excessive or inappropriate demands for emotional sustenance, the greater participation in family decision-making and responsibility of the household tasks tended to accelerate self-sufficiency in children (Weiss, 1978). On the other hand, the assumption of adult responsibilities push the adolescent toward early independence, to feelings of being overwhelmed by unsolvable problems, resentment about lack of support and unavailability of mothers (Kelly and Wallerstein, 1978).

In general, a parent utilizing induction will transmit to the adolescent a recognition of his/her problem-solving abilities. Rational control from parents has implications for the self-esteem of youth by allowing them to make and evaluate their own choices (Openshaw, 1978). Consequently, children and adolescents often develop greater confidence in the decisions they have made about their own behaviors. This relationship was consistent with other

researchers explanations that there should be a positive relationship between parental induction and adolescents' self-esteem. (Openshaw et al., 1983; Openshaw, 1978; Coopersmith, 1967). Therefore, it was hypothesized in this research model that parental induction was positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from intact (see Figure 1, p. 12) and divorced parents (see Figure 2, p. 13). It was also proposed that the relationship between parental induction and self-esteem was higher for Puerto Rican adolescents from intact families.

Parental Coercion and Self-esteem

In contrast to parental induction, it has been argued that coercive parental behavior is detrimental to the development of a positive self-esteem in children and adolescents (Baumrind, 1971; Hoffman, 1980; Rollins and Thomas, 1979). Parental coercion or power assertion are attempts by parents to control their offspring involving the direct application of force in an arbitrary manner (Peterson & Rollins, in press). According to Hoffman (1970), parental behaviors that were considered to be coercive were physical punishment, the direct application of verbal force, and the implicit threat to use force or physical punishment.

When children were exposed to parental quarreling, mutual denigration and recrimination, and placed in a situation of conflicting loyalties, one of their parents might frequently attempt to coerce or persuade children to form hostile alliances against the other parent. Conflict between parents gave children the opportunity to

play one parent against the other, and in some children developed exploitative manipulative skills (Tessman, 1978; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980; Hetherington, 1979). When mothers were hostile and critical of fathers, the children began to view their fathers in a more ambivalent and negative manner as well as less acceptable as a role model (Hetherington, 1979). A conflict-ridden intact family was more deleterious to family members than a stable home in which parents were divorced. Inaccessible, rejecting, or hostile parents in intact families were more detrimental to the self-esteem of a child than a parent from a divorced home (Hetherington, 1979).

Parish (1980) found that children from less advantaged homes and from homes where parents had been found to use physical punishment, threatened individual's lower level needs. A possible explanation for the significant relationship between self-concept of individuals who suffered father loss and their evaluations of their mothers and their fathers, was that mothers and stepfathers tended to use power assertive approaches in order to gain compliance from children as they grew up (Parish & Copeland, 1979). Such coercive techniques may foster greater dependence in their children. Also, coercion creates individuals who wish to conform to the expectations of those who are in authority rather than to face punishment and/or rejection (Parish & Copeland, 1979). In a conflict-ridden home to the unhappiness of the mother must be added father's unhappiness and frustration, which reduce their capacity to be warm, helpful, accepting, and fair with their children.

Low evaluation by parents of adolescent's "self" and the use of coercive techniques by parents have implications for developing negative self-esteem in children and youth. As a result, a hypothesis of this research was proposed that parental coercion was negatively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced (see Figure 2, p. 13) and intact families (see Figure 1, p. 12) and that this relationship was higher for adolescents from divorced families.

Parental Love Withdrawal and Self-esteem

A final control attempt that affects children and adolescent self-esteem is love withdrawal. It refers to parental behavior that threatens the continuation of the parent-child relationship until problematic behaviors are changed (Hoffman, 1980; Peterson & Rollins, in press). Love withdrawal has a highly punitive quality that threatens abandonment or separation from parental affection and support (Hoffman, 1980). This dimension communicates that the child's "self" and his/her behaviors are being rejected by the parents (Hoffman, 1980). Love withdrawal includes such parental behaviors as ignorance, isolation, implicit or explicit rejection or disappointment and cold responses by parents to childrens' or adolescents' behaviors.

In an intact family, a loving, competent and well-adjusted parent can help counteract the effects of a rejecting, incompetent unstable parent. In a single parent, mother-headed family, the father is not present to mitigate any of the negative behaviors of the custodial parent in the day-to-day experience of children and youth (Hetherington et al., 1978; Kelly, 1978; Hetherington, 1981).

Parish and Nunn (1980) stated that when parents have failed to provide love and affection, or have only provided it when their children have conformed to expectations, such circumstances may threaten children's needs and may seem to interfere with the development of self-esteem within them. According to Hetherington et al. (1978), during the first year after divorce, parents are often preoccupied with their own depression, anger and emotional needs and therefore tend to be inconsistent, less affectionate and lacking of control over their children.

Coopersmith (1967) found that mothers who were more loving and had closer relationships with their children had children whose self-esteems were higher than did children who had mothers who were less loving. According to Rosenthal and Hansen (1980), in a single-parent household, the love of the mother remains constant for the adolescent. There is little change in the amount of love and rejection the child perceived after divorce. The effects of divorce on the adolescent can either overburden them as they struggle to break away from the primary love objects, or help them to accelerate their growth toward adulthood.

If love withdrawal by parents is frequent and persistent, adolescents might develop negative self-esteem. Thus, it may be argued that parental love withdrawal is negatively related to the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families. After divorce, adolescents may become inconsistent in their behavior, sometimes acting younger. They may tend to seek the protection and nurturance they once knew from parents and other times acting quite

natural seeking acceptance as adults from their parents (Berg-Cross, 1977).

Like parental coercion, parental love withdrawal has been reported to have a negative influence on the development of self-esteem in adolescents (Hoffman, 1980). If frequent and persistent, the use of love withdrawal may produce negative orientations to the self by adolescents. As a result, a hypothesis for this research proposed that parental love withdrawal was negatively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced (see Figure 2, p. 13) and intact families (see Figure 1, p. 12) and that this relationship was higher for divorced families.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the degree to which child-rearing behaviors of divorced and intact parents predicted the self-esteem of adolescents. An ex-post facto survey design was used to compare adolescents from divorced and intact families. Adolescent self-esteem was the dependent variable and parental support, induction, coercion, love withdrawal, length of divorce, school achievement and father's education were the independent variables.

Sample

The sample included tenth- through twelfth-grade students from four senior high schools located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Eleven thousand high school students were available in the metropolitan area as a possible population for the study. From this total, 470 students were assessed. The subjects' ages ranged between 14 to 18 years, with the mean age for the sample being 15 years.

The sample consisted of all the adolescents whose parents were divorced. The adolescents from intact family homes were randomly selected from the remaining questionnaires. A goal was to identify the children from divorced families without embarrassing them. Only subjects who came from intact families or those who were estranged from fathers or mothers through divorce were included in the present study. Families with stepparents were excluded since one of the interests of the investigation was to see how children function in

one-parent homes, and how their functioning was related to the self-esteem of adolescents.

All the subjects were Hispanic, predominantly middle class adolescents. In general, the criterion variables, background variables, and sociodemographic variables indicated that the youth from intact and divorced groups were very similar to each other and comparable with the normative, middle income families in Puerto Rico.

The mean educational attainment for the fathers of the adolescents was 12.9 years within the intact families and 13.07 years within the divorced families. For the mothers of the adolescents from divorced families mean educational attainment was 13.20 years and for the intact families mothers it was 13.12 years.

After systematic selection, the sample size for this investigation was 86 adolescents from divorced families and 102 adolescents from intact families, or 40% of the adolescents who were assessed. There were 65 males and 37 females from intact families and 42 males and 44 females from divorced families.

Procedure

Permission was acquired from the Puerto Rico Department of Education to conduct the study. Arrangements were made with school officials in advance of the assessment. Human subject approval also was granted from The University of Tennessee.

Data were collected from all students who volunteered to participate (see Appendix B). All testing was conducted in high school classrooms during the home-room period by the researcher and research

assistants who were trained to administer the questionnaires and to answer the participants' questions.

A cover letter of introduction from the investigator accompanied the questionnaire. Each subject was assured that his/her anonymity would be protected. A general orientation was given explaining the types of questions that would be asked and approximately how long it would take to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaires were pilot tested for completion time and difficulty in comprehension. The data were collected during January 1984. The entire questionnaire usually took the subjects about 20 minutes to complete.

Measurement

Self-report questionnaires were chosen because it was the most practical and economical means of obtaining the desired information. The adolescent's questionnaire consisted of 66 items and was designed to be completed in 20 minutes. The 66-item questionnaire included a background data sheet that was used to obtain information on socio-demographic variables (see Appendix C). Also included were the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES) and the Parent Behavior Scale (PBS) (see Appendix C) that were completed by all the students.

Because the primary language of the respondents was Spanish, all the instruments were translated from English to Spanish. After translation, the questionnaires were given to a bilingual editor for a reverse translation to insure clarity and validity of the translation.

Demographic data. Descriptive information relevant to this study included several socio-demographic items about (a) personal data (i.e., age, gender, and grade), (b) educational status of both mother and father, (c) family composition (i.e., married, divorced, separated, etc.), and (d) length of divorce.

Adolescents self-esteem. Rosenberg (1965) developed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale as a measure of self-esteem. The instrument is a ten-item scale that assesses global self-esteem using a Likert-type scale that varies from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Responses measured adolescent's feelings about him/herself in a general evaluative sense.

The reproducibility and scability coefficients for the scale suggests that the items have satisfactory internal reliability. Silber and Tippet (1965) showed a two week test-retest reliability of $r=.85$. An examination of the items suggests that they have face validity. It appears that the items deal with a general favorable or unfavorable global self-attitude. The reliability coefficient for self-esteem was .71.

Parental behavior variables. The Parental Behavior Scale (PBS) has 24 items that measure parental behavior including support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal. This instrument was composed of items which had the highest loadings in a factor analytic study by Peterson (1978). The Peterson (1978) study was based on an 80-item instrument originally derived from Schaefer's (1965) Parent Behavior Inventory. Additional items measuring parental support were derived

from Heilbrum (1964) and the Cornell, Bronfenbrenner (1961) measures of parental support (Ellis, Thomas & Thomas, 1976). The induction items were developed in a series of previous studies (Peterson, 1978) based on Hoffman's (1970) conception of rational influence attempts by parents.

Of the 24-item Parental Behavior Scale, four items measured parental support, five measured induction, six measured coercion, and two measured love withdrawal. The respective Alpha reliability coefficients for parental support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal were .78, .86, .85, and .77. The respective Alpha reliability coefficients for maternal behaviors were .71, .83, .79, and .76 for support, induction, coercion, and love withdrawal.

Operational Definitions

Adolescent self-esteem. Adolescent self-esteem was measured by the 10-item Rosenberg Scale (1965) (see Appendix C). The items consisted of adolescent's feelings of usefulness, personal satisfaction, ability, attitude, worth and self-evaluation. Sentences such as, "I take a positive attitude toward myself" were included. Respondents indicate the degree (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) to which each statement reflects their own self-attitudes. The items were scored as 1, 2, 3, or 4 depending on the adolescents' responses. The scale score was obtained by summing responses for each item for all ten questions.

Parental support. Paternal and maternal support were measured by items 1-4 of the PBS (see Appendix C). The items concerned maternal and paternal responses like approval, dependability, and affection. Students indicated the behavior of each parent by choosing one of the following responses: Never, Sometimes, or Always. The items were scored as 1, 2, or 3 depending on the adolescents' responses. Adolescents' perception of parental support scores were obtained by summing each item for all four questions.

Parental induction. Paternal and maternal induction was measured by items 5-9 of the PBS (see Appendix C). These items concerned paternal and maternal behaviors like explaining the way adolescents should feel when they share or do what is considered to be right within the family setting. Students selected the behaviors of each parent by choosing one of the following responses: Never, Sometimes, or Always. The items were scored as 1, 2, or 3 depending on the adolescents' responses. The adolescent perception of parental induction scores were obtained by summing each item for all five questions.

Parental coercion. Paternal and maternal coercion was measured by items 16-21 of PBS (see Appendix C). Adolescent perception of maternal and paternal complaints, deprivation of privileges, physical punishment, and punishment by isolation were measured. Students indicated the behaviors exhibited by their parents by choosing one of the following responses: Never, Sometimes, or Always. The items were scored as 1, 2, or 3 depending on the adolescents' responses.

The adolescents' perceptions of parental coercion scores were obtained by summing each item for all five questions.

Parental love withdrawal. Parental love withdrawal was measured by items 23 and 24 of the PBS (see Appendix C). These items indicated maternal and paternal responses to adolescents like avoiding contact or withdrawing affection. Students indicated the behaviors of both mothers and fathers by choosing one of the following responses: Never, Sometimes, or Always. The items were scored as 1, 2, or 3 depending on the adolescents' responses. The adolescent perception of parental love withdrawal were obtained by summing each item for all two questions.

School achievement. School achievement was measured by item 4 of the High School Students Questionnaire (see Appendix C). It assessed the self-reported grade point average of the adolescents.

Father's education. Father's education is an indicator of the socioeconomic status of the family. It was measured by item 6 of the High School Students Questionnaire (see Appendix C).

Length of divorce. Length of time since parents' divorce was measured by item 8 of the High School Students Questionnaire (see Appendix C).

Data Transformation

The data gathered by the questionnaire was transferred to code sheets by the investigator and one trained coder. Then, the data

were key punched on computer cards and verified for accuracy. From the computer cards, the data were transferred to a magnetic computer tape and a disk. Each variable was labeled and a code book was developed for use with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner and Bent (1975). Means, frequencies, and standard deviations were calculated for all the variables (see Appendix A).

Plan of Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to test the model from this study. Pearson correlation (r) is a measure of association indicating the strength of the linear relationship between two variables (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner & Bent, 1975). The correlation coefficients indicate the degree to which variation (or change) in one variable is related to the variation (or change) in another. An assumption associated with the application of the Pearson r is that the relationship between variables being correlated is a linear one. If this is not the case, the Pearson r will not yield a valid indication of relationship. The model was analyzed for gender of parent/gender of adolescent differences and for family status. The variations included: mother/daughter, mother/son, father/daughter and father/son; each analyzed individually for divorced and intact families. The .05 level of significance was used for reporting all results.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The self-esteem of adolescents from Puerto Rican divorced and intact families as predicted by parental behaviors (support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal) was examined within parent/adolescent dyads and within family status. Descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables in the research model are reported in Appendix A.

Principal Data Analysis

Hypothesis one. The first hypothesis proposed that perceived parental support would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and that this relationship would be higher for adolescents from intact families. Within divorced families, the results supported this hypothesis only for the mother/son dyad which demonstrated a significant correlation coefficient of .27 (see Table 1). For the mother/daughter, father/daughter, and father/son dyads in divorced families, the results were non-significant with correlation coefficients of .01 (see Table 2), .15 (see Table 3), and .05 (see Table 4), respectively.

The hypothesis also was supported for mother/son, mother/daughter, and father/daughter dyads from intact families with respective significant correlation coefficients of .23 (see Table 5), .25 (see Table 6), and .40 (see Table 7). The father/son dyad from intact

TABLE 1
PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
DIVORCED-MOTHERS BEHAVIOR AND MALE
ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	P
Support	42	.27	.044
Induction	42	.03	.424
Coercion	42	-.29	.033
Love Withdrawal	42	-.07	.324
Length of Divorce	42	.29	.033
Father's Education	42	-.09	.281
Age of Adolescents	42	.03	.425
School Achievement	42	.22	.078

p = .05

TABLE 2
PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
DIVORCED-MOTHERS BEHAVIOR AND FEMALE
ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	P
Support	44	.01	.467
Induction	44	.18	.125
Coercion	44	-.24	.005
Love Withdrawal	44	-.30	.023
Length of Divorce	44	-.02	.451
Father's Education	44	.21	.086
Age of Adolescents	44	-.14	.185
School Achievement	45	.39	.004

p = .05

TABLE 3
PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
DIVORCED-FATHERS BEHAVIOR AND FEMALE
ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	p
Support	44	.15	.159
Induction	44	.41	.395
Coercion	44	-.12	.220
Love Withdrawal	44	-.07	.317
Age of Adolescents	44	-.14	.185
Father's Education	44	.21	.086
School Achievement	44	-.39	.004
Length of Divorce	44	-.02	.451

p = .05

TABLE 4
 PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
 DIVORCED-FATHERS BEHAVIOR AND MALE
 ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	P
Support	42	.05	.368
Induction	42	.23	.069
Coercion	42	-.02	.441
Love Withdrawal	42	-.05	.367
Length of Divorce	42	.28	.033
Father's Education	42	-.09	.281
Age of Adolescents	42	.30	.425
School Achievement	42	.22	.078

p = .05

TABLE 5
PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
INTACT-FAMILY MOTHERS BEHAVIOR AND
MALE ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	P
Support	65	.25	.021
Induction	65	.23	.036
Coercion	65	-.31	.006
Love Withdrawal	65	-.34	.003
Father's Education	65	.15	.114
Age of Children	65	.16	.104
School Achievement	65	.16	.100

p = .05

TABLE 6
PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
INTACT-FAMILY MOTHERS BEHAVIOR AND
FEMALE ADOLESCENT'S SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	P
Support	37	.23	.084
Induction	37	.35	.018
Coercion	37	-.22	.095
Love Withdrawal	37	-.16	.178
Age of Adolescents	37	.31	.032
Father's Education	37	-.56	.000
School Achievement	37	.45	.003

p = .05

TABLE 7
 PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
 INTACT-FAMILY FATHERS BEHAVIOR AND
 FEMALE ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	P
Support	37	.40	.007
Induction	37	.29	.040
Coercion	37	-.23	.088
Love Withdrawal	37	-.05	.389
Age of Adolescents	37	-.31	.032
Father's Education	37	.56	.000
School Achievement	37	.45	.003

p = .05

families demonstrated a non-significant correlation coefficient of .16 (see Table 8) which did not support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis two. The second hypothesis proposed that perceived parental induction would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and that this relationship would be higher for adolescents from intact families. This hypothesis was supported for father/son and mother/daughter dyads from divorced families. Perceived parental induction demonstrated significant correlation coefficients of .23 (see Table 4) and .18 (see Table 2), respectively. Father/daughter and mother/son dyads within divorced families had non-significant correlation coefficients of .04 (see Table 3) and .03 (see Table 1).

The second hypothesis also was supported for the mother/son, mother/daughter and father/daughter dyads within intact families. Perceived parental induction demonstrated significant correlation coefficients of .23 (see Table 6), .35 (see Table 5), and .29 (see Table 7), respectively. The father/son dyad from intact families demonstrated a non-significant correlation coefficient of .09 (see Table 8), which did not support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis three. The third hypothesis proposed that parental coercion is negatively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorce and intact families and that this relationship would be higher for adolescents from divorced families. This hypothesis was supported for mother/daughter and mother/son divorced family dyads. Perceived parental coercion demonstrated significant

TABLE 8
 PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR PERCEIVED
 INTACT-FAMILY FATHERS BEHAVIOR AND
 MALE ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Independent Variables	Cases	r	P
Support	65	.16	.107
Induction	65	.09	.244
Coercion	65	-.29	.010
Love Withdrawal	65	-.43	.000
Age of Adolescents	65	.16	.104
Father's Education	65	.16	.114
School Achievement	65	.16	.100

p = .05

correlation coefficients of $-.24$ (see Table 2) and $-.29$ (see Table 1), respectively. For the father/daughter and father/son divorced family dyads, the results showed non-significant correlation coefficients of $-.12$ (see Table 3) and $-.02$ (see Table 4), which did not support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis three also was supported for father/son, father/daughter, mother/son and mother/daughter intact family dyads. Perceived parental coercion demonstrated significant correlation coefficients of $-.29$ (see Table 8), $-.23$ (see Table 3), $-.31$ (see Table 1), and $-.22$ (see Table 2), respectively.

Hypothesis four. The fourth hypothesis proposed that perceived parental love withdrawal would be negatively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and that this relationship would be higher for adolescents from divorced families. The hypothesis was supported for the mother/daughter dyad within intact families. Perceived parental love withdrawal showed a significant correlation coefficient of $-.31$ (see Table 2) for the mother/daughter divorced-family dyad. For the father/daughter, father/son and mother/son divorced family dyads, the non-significant coefficients were $-.07$ (see Table 3), $-.05$ (see Table 4), and $-.07$ (see Table 1), respectively.

Hypothesis four also was supported for mother/son and father/son intact family dyads. Perceived parental love withdrawal demonstrated significant correlation coefficients of $-.34$ (see Table 6) and $-.43$ (see Table 8), respectively. The mother/daughter and father/daughter

dyads for intact families demonstrated significant correlation coefficients of $-.16$ (see Table 5) and $-.05$ (see Table 7), respectively.

Hypothesis five. The fifth hypothesis proposed that length of time since the parents' divorce would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced families. This hypothesis was supported for males. Length of divorce had a significant correlation coefficient of $.29$ (see Table 1) for sons. For daughters, a non-significant correlation coefficient of $.02$ (see Table 2) was apparent.

Hypothesis six. The sixth hypothesis proposed that father's education (an indicator of socioeconomic status) would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families. The hypothesis was supported for daughters from divorced families, with fathers' education demonstrating a correlation coefficient of $.21$ (see Table 2) for daughters from divorced families. Sons from divorced families demonstrated a non-significant correlation coefficient of $-.09$ (see Table 1), which did not support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis six also was supported for daughters from intact families. Father's education had a significant correlation coefficient of $.56$ (see Table 5) for daughters from intact families. For sons, the results had a non-significant correlation coefficient of $.15$ (see Table 6), which did not support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis seven. The seventh hypothesis proposed that school achievement would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families. This hypothesis was supported for both daughters and sons from divorced families. School achievement demonstrated significant correlation coefficients of .39 (see Table 2) and .22 (see Table 1) for daughters and sons from divorced families, respectively.

Hypothesis seven also was supported for daughters from intact families. School achievement had a significant correlation coefficient of .45 (see Table 5) for daughters from intact families. For sons from intact families, the correlation coefficients of .16 (see Table 6) was non-significant and did not support the hypothesis.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Researching the effects that divorce has on children and adolescents is an extremely complex undertaking. Although children of divorce have experienced a similar family crisis, many of them are subject to different child-rearing practices which impact differently on the divorce process. Previous research has not attempted to study the impact of divorce on the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents. Research was needed that examined the perception of parental behaviors such as support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal on the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families. Research relating to child-rearing behaviors of parents has included information about the impact of specific parental behaviors on the socialization of children. Studies using samples from the United States view divorce as being a period of life transition consisting of a process extending over time with varying impacts on family members (Bloom, 1979; Felner, Stolbert & Cowen, 1975; Felner, Farber & Primavera, 1980).

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether the child-rearing behaviors used by Puerto Rican parents from intact versus divorced families predicted the self-esteem of adolescents differently. A secondary purpose was to determine if adolescents self-esteem was predicted by school achievement, socioeconomic status (measured by father's education) and by length of time since parent's divorce. Implications for home economists, parents and family life

professionals interested in assisting children and adolescents of divorce were also examined. To facilitate the following discussion, a summary of the results is included in Table 9 and Table 10.

Comparison of Puerto Rican Adolescents from Divorced and Intact Families

Parental Support

It was hypothesized that perceived parental support would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and that this relationship would be higher for adolescents from intact families. The relationship between perceived parental support and adolescents self-esteem was supported and was statistically significant for all parent/adolescent intact family dyads with the exception of the father/son dyad. Within the divorced family dyads the relationship between parental support and adolescents self-esteem was only supported for the mother/son dyad. The positive relationship between parental support and the self-esteem of adolescents was higher for father/daughter and mother/daughter intact family dyads than it was for the same divorced family dyads, which did support the hypothesis (see Table 9).

This study provided additional evidence indicating that support enhanced the self-esteem of adolescents from intact families except for father/son dyads. Support did not emerge as a variable which predicted the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced families with the exception of the mother/son dyad.

TABLE 9

SUMMARY OF RESULTS
PEARSON CORRELATION ANALYSIS OF PERCEIVED PARENTAL
BEHAVIORS IN RELATION TO ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Variables	Divorced Family Mothers		Intact Family Mothers		Divorced Family Fathers		Intact Family Fathers	
	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters
Support	.27*	.01	.25*	.23*	.05	.15	.16	.40*
Induction	.03	.18*	.23*	.35*	.23*	.41*	.09	.29*
Coercion	-.29*	-.24*	-.31*	-.22*	-.02	-.12	-.29*	-.23*
Love Withdrawal	-.07	-.30*	-.34*	-.16	-.05	-.07	-.43*	-.05

*Statistically significant
p = .05

The findings of this study for intact family dyads were consistent with the findings reported by Saavedra (1981) who identified that Puerto Rican adolescent males' perception of parental warmth or acceptance predicted the positive assessment of self-esteem. Results for fathers from intact family dyads showed that support was not significantly related either positively or negatively to the self-esteem of male adolescents. Within the mother/daughter, father/daughter and father/son divorced family dyads, results indicated the same trend.

In the divorced family, fathers often are not available to their children, and it is unlikely that fathers would be perceived as loving and supportive if they are not physically present. For the mother/daughter relationship, perhaps the absence of the father makes the situation of the mother more difficult, consequently she becomes less supportive to her daughter.

Parental support seemed to communicate security and stability to children and youth when they felt valued and approved by the most significant adults in their lives (i.e., their parents). Parents often used supportive behaviors as a means of assigning significance to certain behaviors that were consistent with parental expectations in order to solidify parent-child relationships.

A reasonable explanation regarding divorced mothers' supportive behaviors toward sons was that in divorced families mothers have a greater amount of mother-son interaction than mother-daughter interaction because sons had possibly assumed the husband/father role in the household. In divorced families, the mother is usually the only

adult in the home, therefore the sons may perceive her as more loving and supportive than the absent father.

These findings were not consistent with previous divorce research indicating that boys encountered more stressful experiences than girls after divorce. Boys, more than girls, have received less positive support and nurturance in the period immediately after divorce (Hetherington et al., 1978, 1979, 1981; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1979, 1980).

A continued, mutually supportive relationship and involvement of the father with the child was the most effective support system for children from divorced families (Gullota, 1981). Fathers who maintained frequent contact with their children after divorce had more impact on the child development than did fathers whose contacts were relatively infrequent and who were relatively detached (Hetherington, 1979). Positive family relationships and support from parents can facilitate the development of positive self-esteem for children and adolescents from divorced and intact families.

Parental Induction

Some differences were apparent between divorced and intact-family adolescents for the predicted relationships between perceived parental induction and self-esteem. The second hypothesis proposed that perceived parental induction would be positively related to the self-esteem of adolescents from intact and divorced families and that the relationship would be higher for adolescents from intact families. This hypothesis was supported and was statistically significant for

divorced father/daughter, father/son and mother/daughter dyads. It also was significant for intact-family mother/son, mother/daughter and father/daughter dyads (see Table 9). Divorced mother's inductive behaviors predicted the self-esteem of daughters, and intact family mothers predicted the self-esteem of sons and daughters. Divorced fathers predicted the self-esteem of sons and daughters and intact family fathers predicted the self-esteem of daughters.

The positive relationship between parental induction and adolescents self-esteem was higher for divorced fathers dyads than it was for intact father/adolescent dyads. For mother/adolescent dyads the relationship was higher for intact than for divorced family dyads.

A difference compared to other findings was that intact family dyads were significant within cross-gender dyads (i.e., mother/son, father/daughter), but just the opposite for divorced family dyads. The opposite results were supported within the same-sex (mother/daughter, father/son) divorced family dyads.

According to the symbolic interaction perspective, induction is a parental behavior that promotes role-taking. When parents use inductive behaviors, they communicate expectations about appropriate behavior to children and youth. When a parent offers a rationale for his or her expectations and actions, the adolescent is able to take the role of the parent more effectively. The results of this study suggested that in divorced families, role-taking is accomplished more effectively within the same-sex dyads (father/son, mother/daughter).

A question is raised here about how it is possible for males to take the role of the father if he is absent from the home. Also, it would be questioned why Puerto Rican fathers predictive inductive behaviors to sons were not significant for the intact-family dyad, but were significant for divorced father/son dyad.

A possible answer is that Puerto Rican fathers inductive behavior to sons are not explicit within the intact-family home. Fathers may not offer explanations to their children because there are implicit norms and rules within the family that children are expected to follow.

When fathers are absent from the home, the time they spend with their children is appropriate to promote the role-model of the father. Puerto Rican fathers may offer a rationale for their expectations and actions in a way that the adolescent may be able to take the role of the absent father more effectively than when the father is present in the home.

If parents use induction with the child, the child is more likely to put him/herself in the parent's position, understand parent's expectations, and respond to those expectations accordingly. The results of this investigation were consistent with findings of other studies in which parental induction predicted the self-esteem of children and adolescents in a positive manner (Baumrind, 1967; Peterson, Southworth and Peters, 1983; Openshaw, 1978, Openshaw et al., 1983). If the adolescent perceives that parents are communicating expectations about appropriate behavior, the parent-child relationships and responses to parent's expectations from youth are clarified.

Because adolescent's compliance is voluntary they may develop greater confidence in themselves and in their abilities to make and evaluate their own choices and to solve problems.

When investigating divorced families, Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1976) found that divorced parents made fewer maturity demands on their children, showed marked inconsistency in discipline and lack of control over their children when compared with intact families. The present study suggested that Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced families received positive induction from their parents (except mother/son dyad) in a way that tended to accelerate their self-sufficiency and enhanced their own responsibilities and decision-making. These findings failed to support the research done by Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1976).

Parental Coercion

Some differences between adolescents' perception of parental coercive behaviors in divorced and intact families were found in this study. The third hypothesis proposed that perceived parental coercion would be negatively related to the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families and that this relationship would be higher for adolescents from divorced families. The relationship between parental coercion and self-esteem was supported and reached significance for mother/daughter and mother/son dyads from divorced families. It was also supported for all the parent/adolescent intact-family dyads (see Table 9).

Non-significant relationships were evident for father/son, father/daughter divorced family dyads in this study. One explanation for this finding was reported by Hetherington, et al. (1976, 1978, 1979) who found that the absent father was initially more permissive and indulgent. In order to please their children the absent father used fewer coercive behaviors. During the time fathers were with their children they tried to make the children feel cared for and lovable by being permissive and indulgent.

It seems apparent that as young children grow into adolescence and young adulthood, the amount of contact with an absent father would become less, and the majority of the father-child relationships would become limited over time. As a result, the absent father may direct fewer coercive behaviors at adolescents, and youth may attribute less efficacy to the coercion that fathers direct at them.

Parish (1980) and Parish and Copeland (1979) found that children's self-esteem were threatened in homes where parents used physical punishment. According to Parish and Copeland (1979), children's evaluation of their mothers and fathers after divorce were explained by mothers who use power assertive approaches in order to gain compliance from their children.

Researchers have reported negative effects from the use of coercive behaviors with adolescents (Baumrind, 1972; Hoffman, 1970). Other research cited a negative relationship between coercion and the self-esteem of adolescents (Baumrind, 1966; Rollins and Thomas, 1979; Thomas et al., 1974; Hoffman, 1980).

Results from this study are consistent with the study conducted by Saavedra (1981). He found that negative assessment of competence was related to Puerto Rican adolescent males' perceptions of restrictive control.

Love Withdrawal

Parental love withdrawal was hypothesized to be negatively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and that this relationship would be higher for adolescents from divorced families. Results from this study indicated that the relationship was supported and reached significance for the divorced mother/daughter dyad. However, there was a non-significant relationship between love withdrawal and self-esteem for father/daughter, father/son, mother/son divorced family dyads. The relationship also was supported and reached significance for father/son, mother/son intact family dyads (see Table 9). Previous research regarding this relationship indicated that there was a negative relationship between parental love withdrawal and self-esteem (Baumrind, 1966; Peterson, Rollins, Thomas & Ellis; 1980, Hoffman, 1980).

In the Puerto Rican culture, mothers seem to be more expressive than fathers (Nieto, 1972). Mothers who threaten to withdraw nurturance and support are more likely to be perceived as punitive by their children (Hoffman, 1980). Adolescents might interpret these behaviors as rejecting and devaluing from their mothers. These findings were not consistent with existing research findings which indicated that children from families of separation and divorce felt the most

rejected by their parents (Rosenthal and Hansen, 1980). According to Hetherington et al. (1978), during the first year after divorce parents were often preoccupied with their own depression, anger and emotional needs and tended to be inconsistent and less affectionate with their children. The development of the self-esteem is hampered when parents have failed to provide love and affection or have provided it only when their children have conformed to expectations (Parish & Nunn, 1980).

A possible explanation for these findings may be that Puerto Rican adolescents received love and affection from support systems outside the nuclear family. The love and affection of other family members might compensate for the love withdrawal of the absent parent.

Length of Divorce

It was proposed that length of time since parents' divorce would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents. This relationship was supported and reached significance for sons, however, it was not supported for daughters (see Table 10). That is, length of parent's divorce had positive implications for the self-esteem of males, but not for females. These findings are consistent with results reported by Fine, Moreland & Schwehel (1983) indicating that after divorce the self-esteem of adolescents improved over time.

According to Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1978, 1979, 1980 and Wallerstein and Kelly (1978, 1980), the impact of marital discord and separation are more pervasive and enduring for boys than for girls. Disturbances in social and emotional development in girls have

TABLE 10

SUMMARY OF RESULTS
PEARSON CORRELATION ANALYSIS OF OTHER VARIABLES IN THE
RESEARCH MODEL IN RELATION TO ADOLESCENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

Variables	Divorced Family Mothers		Intact Family Mothers		Divorced Family Fathers		Intact Family Fathers	
	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters
Length Divorce	.29*	-.02			.28*	-.02		
Father's Education	-.09	.21*	.15	.56*	-.09	.21*	.16	.56*
School Achievement	.22*	.39*	.16	.45*	.22*	.39*	.16	.45*

*Statistically significant
p = .05

largely disappeared two years after the divorce, although they may reappear at adolescence in the form of disruptions in heterosexual relations (Hetherington, 1972, 1981). Boys from divorced families in contrast with girls from divorced and nuclear families demonstrated higher rates of behavior disorders, problems in interpersonal relations in the home, the school, with teachers and peers. Boys in divorced families are less compliant than girls. After divorce it seems that boys are more likely to be exposed to parental battles, including confronting inconsistency, negative sanctions, and opposition from parents, particularly from the mother (Hetherington, 1979; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

Socioeconomic Status

This study proposed that father's education would be related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and that the relationship would be stronger for adolescents from intact families. This hypothesis was supported and reached significance for daughters from divorced and intact families (see Table 10). Father's education was the strongest predictor of female adolescents' self-esteem for intact families. In other words, the higher the socioeconomic status of the family, the higher the self-esteem of daughters.

In divorced families, the mother's relationship with children is often burdened by economic pressures and financial worries. The family's economic adjustment after divorce is often reflected in the adolescent's good adjustment. The downward change in the family's

standard of living following divorce can be seen as a source of and bitter preoccupation for both parents and children (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980) and, consequently, for lower self-esteem.

School Achievement

It was proposed that school achievement would be positively related to the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families and that the relationship would be stronger for adolescents from intact families. This relationship was supported and reached significance for daughters and sons from divorce families. It also was supported for daughters from intact families, but was not statistically significant for sons.

There was a positive relationship between sons and daughters from divorced families in terms of school achievement. Daughters and sons from divorced families who had higher grade point averages had higher self-esteem. For daughters from intact families, there was a similar relationship, but it was not significant for sons (see Table 10). These findings partially support earlier studies which reported that children from divorced families did not differ from children from intact families in participation in school activities, school grade point averages, and attitudes toward school (Burchinal, 1964; Reinhard, 1961).

Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the relationship between perceived parental behaviors (support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal) and the

self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families. Several factors may have influenced the findings of this study, including the nature of the sample, instrumentation, socially desirable response patterns and the cross-sectional nature of the data. The possible limitations of the study include:

1. A study of this nature should have included additional subjects both to increase its representativeness and the power of the statistical procedures. Future studies of this nature should have a greater pool of subjects to obtain additional subjects from divorced families.
2. The data collected on school achievement was based on the self-reported grade point average by each child rather than on a standardized instrument. The results may be less accurate due to inaccurate reporting by students.
3. The students responses were dependent on the participant's willingness to provide accurate answers. There is a tendency to provide answers that reflect conventional norms of society. Socially desirable responses, therefore, affect the quality of this data.
4. This study also was limited by the cross-sectional nature of the data. The analysis of the data for this study do not necessarily indicate that parental behaviors influence or predict the self-esteem of adolescents. In the parent-child relationship, it might be possible that the self-esteem of adolescents may elicit certain parental behaviors. For example, children and adolescents who demonstrate high

self-esteem may draw out the use of supportive, inductive non-coercive behaviors. On the other hand, if children and adolescents demonstrate behaviors associated with low self-esteem, they may frustrate parental efforts to impact the behaviors of children, and may draw out responses from parents that are coercive in nature. Then, it is important to examine the bidirectionality of relationships on parent-adolescents relations for future research.

Theoretical Implications

Results from this study indicated that certain parental behaviors were related to adolescent self-esteem and that family structure (i.e, intact vs. divorced) influenced the relationship between parental behaviors and adolescent self-esteem. Also, the gender of parents and adolescents influenced the relationship between parental behaviors and the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families.

These results may be conceptualized best in terms of the symbolic interaction perspective. Perceptions of parental behaviors are important for adolescents "definition of the situation." The way adolescents from divorced and intact families perceive parental behaviors enhances or diminishes the impact of parental behaviors on the adolescent self-esteem. Because children's and youth's perception of the situation also are related to their reactions to parental divorce, it is also important to clarify the parents' situation after

and before the divorce in order to diminish the impact of parental divorce on their self-esteem.

Another important concept from the symbolic interaction perspective is that expectations for behavior are communicated between parents and adolescents as they interact with each other (Stryker, 1980). Children and adolescents usually perceive their parents as significant others. Adolescents attempt to modify their behaviors according to the expectations of parents for behavior. If responses from children and youth are consistent with parental expectations, the self-esteem of children and adolescents should be enhanced. Negative self-image may result if adolescents are unsuccessful in adjusting their behavior to conform to parental expectations (Peterson & Rollins, in press).

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, the use of induction (reasoning and explanations) communicates parental confidence in the ability of adolescents to cope successfully in future family situations. If adolescents understand the reasons for parental influence attempts (before and after divorce), a likely result might be a more positive self-image. The use of induction, for example, encourages role-taking in children and youth by providing them with information about parent's inner experiences, expectations, and rational for child-rearing actions (Peterson and Rollins, in press). The use of inductive behaviors and explanations of parent's actions might be an effective way to help adolescents to develop a positive self-esteem.

In contrast to the use of parental support and induction, coercion and love withdrawal communicate rejection to the child and youth,

and may result in low evaluation of the child's self. Parents failed to communicate expectations for behaviors and how to perform the child socializee role. As a result of coercive techniques and love withdrawal, adolescents may develop lower self-esteem.

Perceptions of parental behaviors, are likely to be affected by the circumstances of the parent's divorce, length of time since parent's divorce and by socioeconomic status of the family. The use of certain child-rearing behaviors before and after divorce are likely to increase or diminish the impact of divorce on the self-esteem of youth.

Research Implications

Because this study represents one of the first systematic comparisons of Puerto Rican adolescents from divorced and intact families regarding the relationship between parental behaviors and adolescents self-esteem, it suggests a great need for future research. An important objective for future research might be a longitudinal study of children of divorce. A control group and data collection prior to, during, and after parent's separation should be important components of this study. It would be helpful to compare a child's perception of parental behaviors and self-esteem based on the actual age of the child and the age at the time of separation. Another dimension for further research might be the involvement of children of younger ages than the fourteen to eighteen age range examined in this study.

Further research would also benefit from interviews with each parent to obtain a more complete understanding of the family dynamics

and the parent's understanding of their behaviors. Family observation along with personal interviews with the family may provide a more accurate basis for comparing intact and divorced families than do self-reports from children alone. Examination of the bidirectionality of relationships on parent-adolescent relations may be important in future research.

Further investigation also would be beneficial in the area of self-esteem and self-concept. Rosenberg (1979) indicated that self-concept and self-esteem are different, though not mutually exclusive constructs. These terms are usually used interchangeably in most literature, including the divorce literature. Researchers need to clarify which they are concerned with and to explore the differences between self-concept and self-esteem among children of different family structures.

Practical Implications

The relationship between parental support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal and the self-esteem of adolescents from divorced and intact families are important issues for home economists, educators, counselors, and other family life professionals concerned with the effective socialization of children and youth in different family life settings.

Home economists, counselors and family life specialists could be helpful in making parents aware of their children and youth's greater needs for supportive and inductive behaviors and help them devise ways to be more available to their children. They could be helpful

in making parents more aware of their child's needs for attention and caring. Also, they could be helpful by increasing the opportunities for the child to receive positive attention from peers, teachers and friends.

Home economists, school counselors and other family life professionals could initiate and lead communication and parenting skills workshops open to all parents or specific workshops for divorced parents. They could discuss some of the unique needs and effects of divorce on children and adolescents, as well as facilitate group support to parents.

Several education programs are available which include the understanding and use of child-rearing practices similar to supportive and inductive behaviors in their intervention strategies. Program like Parent Effectiveness Training (Gordon, 1975), How to Discipline Without Feeling Guilty (Silberman & Wheelan, 1980) and Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976) have components which explain the importance of parental supportive behaviors to their offspring. Professionals could help participants practice skills that communicate support, use encouragement, express their expectations clearly, and provide reasons for these expectations. Development of these skills on the part of parents can have important implications for the self-esteem of children and youth.

Family life professionals could best help children whose parents are divorcing by encouraging them to talk about their feelings and

perceptions of parents behaviors. They could give students opportunities to talk about their feelings about parents behaviors, individually or in groups with other adolescents in similar situations.

Family life professionals could identify children of divorced parents by asking teachers, or obtaining from school records a list of students who are not living with both of their parents. They could be helpful in explaining to teachers and parents the greater need for time and attention from parents that children and adolescents from divorced parents might need. If the personnel of the school are aware of some of the feelings a child of divorce might have, then there is much they can do to be helpful.

Counselors, home economists, teachers and other family and child professionals could also assist children and youth of divorced parents by providing them with books and materials to read about divorce. These strategies could be implemented in small group situation in which books about divorce could be read and serve as a stimulus for discussion. Books such as The Boys and Girls Book About Divorce (Gardner, 1970), Talking About Divorce (Grollman, 1975), How to Get Together when Your Parents are Coming Apart (Richards, 1976), How Does it Feel when Your Parents Get Divorced? (Berger, 1977), Daddy Doesn't Live Here Anymore (Turow, 1977), What's Going to Happen to Me? (Lesham, 1978), Surviving Your Parents Divorce (Boeckham, 1980), My Parents are Divorced, too (Robson, 1980), My Mom and Dad are Getting a Divorce (Bienenfeld, 1980), Mom's House, Dad's House (Ricci, 1980), You Father's Not Coming Home Anymore (Jackson, 1981), Mom and Dad are Divorced, But I'm Not (Anderson, 1981), What Children

Need to Know when Parents Get Divorced (Coleman, 1983), and Growing Up Divorced (Francke, 1983) can provide the motivation for children and youth to discuss attitudes and values related to divorce, as well as suggestions for handling difficult situations at home without developing a negative self-esteem.

Professionals in the area of child and family studies cannot stop the increasing divorce rate, nor can they protect the number of children and adolescents who are affected by their parent's divorce. They can do much, however, to help parents learn the necessary skills for the effective socialization of children and youth in different family life settings. Parents can have a positive impact on children's and youth's self-esteem if they can learn to use parental behaviors like support and induction to enhance the self-esteem of adolescents. Family life specialists also can help children and youth accept the reality of their parent's separation and to make them have a better quality of life and consequently higher self-esteem.

Summary

As more research is conducted in the area of divorce, researchers will be able to provide theorists and family life specialists with valuable information about family structure, parental behaviors and how to prepare families for the divorce process. The purpose of this study was to examine whether the child-rearing behaviors of Puerto Rican parents predicted the self-esteem of adolescents differently in divorced versus intact families. Pearson Correlation Coefficient

analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between dependent (self-esteem) and independent (support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal) variables within the same gender and cross-gender dyads.

Partial support was found for the predictive relationships between parental support, induction, coercion and love withdrawal and adolescents self-esteem from divorced and intact families. There were gender differences in these relationships. A positive relationship was found between maternal support and self-esteem of sons from divorced families. A similar positive relationship was found for mother/son, mother/daughter, and father/son intact family dyads. Parental induction was positively related to the self-esteem within same-sex divorced family dyads (father/son, mother/daughter). There were positive relationships within cross-gender intact family dyads (father/daughter, mother/son) between parental induction and self-esteem.

Significant negative relationships were found between maternal coercion and self-esteem for both sons and daughters. A similar negative relationship was found for all parent/adolescent intact-family dyads.

Significant negative relationships also were found between maternal love withdrawal and the self-esteem of daughters from divorced family dyads. The relationship also was negatively related for all mother/son and father/son intact-family dyads.

It can be concluded that child-rearing behaviors of Puerto Rican parents predicted the self-esteem of adolescents differently in

divorced and intact families. In general, the findings of this study suggested that there were differences between the predictive inductive behaviors and predictive control attempts of Puerto Rican divorced and intact families and the self-esteem of adolescents. Puerto Rican divorced fathers may tend to develop a more authoritative style during the time they spend with the children after divorce than when they are present in the home. These differences may in part be due to cultural factors in the Puerto Rican society not examined in this study.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR VARIABLES

TABLE 11
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR
MALES FROM INTACT FAMILIES

Variable	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.
SES	65	29.3077	4.0386
SUPM	65	9.6000	1.4230
INDM	65	11.7692	2.4159
COEM	65	12.8462	3.2221
LWM	65	2.6000	0.9321
AGEA	65	1.2769	0.4510
GRADEF	65	13.4462	4.6200
GPAA	65	2.3077	1.0296
SUPF	65	8.9692	2.0461
INDF	65	8.5231	2.2368
COEF	65	12.2462	3.4912
LWF	65	2.7538	1.0160

TABLE 12
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR
FEMALES FROM INTACT FAMILIES

Variable	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.
SES	37	28.7297	4.5009
SUPM	37	9.4595	1.4258
INDM	37	11.3784	3.0309
COEM	37	12.9730	3.3374
LWM	37	2.8378	1.0142
LEDIV	37	0.0000	0.0000
AGEA	37	1.2973	0.4634
GRADEF	37	12.4324	4.7932
GPAA	37	2.5676	0.8347
SUPF	37	8.9730	1.9648
INDF	37	7.7838	2.4959
COEF	37	11.2162	3.1193
LWF	37	2.7568	0.9547

TABLE 13
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR
MALES FROM DIVORCED FAMILIES

Variable	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.
SES	42	28.7143	3.3950
SUPM	42	9.6429	1.5273
INDM	42	11.5952	2.6324
COEM	42	13.0238	2.9091
LWM	42	3.0000	1.1894
LEDIV	42	4.4048	0.7982
AGEA	42	1.3333	0.4771
GRADEF	42	13.3095	3.2195
GPAA	42	1.8333	0.9349
SUPF	42	8.0238	2.4444
INDF	42	7.4524	2.3911
COEF	42	11.7857	3.5168
LWF	42	2.7381	1.0833

TABLE 14
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR
FEMALES FROM DIVORCED FAMILIES

Variable	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.
SES	44	30.3409	3.8455
SUPM	44	9.3182	1.9739
INDM	44	12.0909	2.7434
COEM	44	13.1818	3.0214
LWM	44	2.9773	1.2102
LEDIV	44	4.3636	1.1016
AGEA	44	1.3182	0.4712
GRADEF	44	12.8409	3.7537
GPAA	44	2.5455	0.9010
SUPF	44	8.8636	2.2782
INDF	44	7.9545	2.5965
COEF	44	10.1364	2.7330
LWF	44	2.5909	0.9721

TABLE 15
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR MALES AND
FEMALES FROM DIVORCED AND INTACT FAMILIES

Variable	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.
SES	188	29.3032	3.9757
SUPM	188	9.5160	1.5836
INDM	188	11.7287	2.6600
COEM	188	12.9894	3.1094
LWM	188	2.8245	1.0827
SUPF	188	8.7340	2.1971
INDF	188	8.0053	2.4265
COEF	188	11.4468	3.3371
LWF	188	2.7128	1.0040
LEDIV	188	2.0053	2.2834
AGEA	188	1.3032	0.4609
GRADEF	188	13.0745	4.1708
GPAA	188	2.3085	0.9759

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

PARENTAL CONSENT

Dear parents:

Like yourself, I have a special interest in children. Because of my special interest in children, I am doing a research study to find out how children perceive the parent-child relationship and how a child views himself or herself.

Results for the entire group of children will be sent to your children's school at the completion of the project or to you upon request. No specific information about your child's (children's) results will be released to you, your child, or anyone else. Confidentiality will be maintained by using code numbers instead of names on the tests your child (children) complete.

Please take time to think about the project and return the Informed Consent for Parents with your child indicating whether or not you wish them to participate. I hope that your child will be able to participate in my study. Thank you for your time in reviewing this letter.

Sincerely,

Gloria Torres
Graduate Student
The University of Tennessee
Knoxville

For more information please contact:

Gloria Torres
Extension Service
Phone - 765-8000
Ext. 256,259

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARENTS

By agreeing my child (children) may participate in this study I understand:

1. The testing will take between 20 to 30 minutes of school time.
2. There are no specific risks or benefits associated with the testing, but the group results may provide useful information to me.
3. My child's confidentiality as a participant will be maintained by the use of a code number instead of names.
4. No information regarding my child's specific answers will be released to me or anyone else.
5. I may ask any questions about the procedures of this study at any time I wish by contacting Gloria Torres at the Extension Service (765-8000, Ext. 256,259).
6. I may withdraw my child from the study any time I desire.

Date _____ Signature _____

INFORMED CONSENT FOR CHILDREN

A lot of people talk about parent-child relationships and family situations. The purpose of this study is to find out how children from different types of families perceive themselves and the parent-child relationship. If you are between the ages of 14 to 18 you will be asked to complete three tests. These tests do not have any right or wrong answers.

By agreeing to participate in this study I understand:

1. The testing will take less than one hour.
2. There are no good or bad side effects of the testing.
3. Any information I give will remain private because the interviewer will use a code number instead of my name.
4. No information about my specific answers will be given to my parents, me, or anyone else.
5. I may ask any questions about the process of this study at any time I wish.
6. I can change my mind later if I decide I do not want to participate.

Date _____

Signature _____

APPENDIX C
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out about your life-style and your family. Please read each question carefully and circle or check the best answer.

1. How old are you?

_____ 14-16 years

_____ 17-18 years

2. Sex: _____ Male

_____ Female

3. What grade are you in? (Circle one)

10 11 12

4. What is your grade point average in school?

a. 4.0 - 3.5

b. 3.4 - 3.0

c. 2.9 - 2.5

d. 2.4 or less

5. Circle the highest grade in school that your mother completed.

Grade School/High School

College

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

6. Circle the highest grade in school that your father completed.

Grade School/High School

College

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

7. Which of the following describes the parents or guardians with whom you live?

My parents are (Circle the one that applies)

- a. married and living together
 - b. married, but are separated
 - c. divorced
 - d. my father is dead
 - e. my mother is dead
 - f. my father is remarried
 - g. my mother is remarried
 - h. my mother is single
 - i. my father is single
8. If your parents are divorced, how long have they been divorced? (Circle one)
- a. less than three months
 - b. seven months to one year
 - c. one year to two years
 - d. three to four years
 - e. other (specify)

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM

The RSE is a 10-item Guttman scale with Coefficient of reproducibility of 92 percent and Coefficient of Scalability of 72 percent. Respondents are asked to strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following items.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	SA	A	D*	SD*
2. At times I think I am no good at all.	SA*	A*	D	SD
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	SA	A	D*	SD*
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	SA	A	D*	SD*
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	SA*	A*	D	SD
6. I certainly feel useless at times.	SA*	A*	D	SD
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	SA	A	D*	SD*
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	SA*	A*	D	SD
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	SA*	A*	D	SD
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	SA	A	D*	SD*

PARENTS BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Circle the answer which best describes how your mother has treated you over the past several years. Be sure and circle the choice on each statement which you think describes what your mother is like.

Example:

Never Sometimes Always

1. My mother tells me how much she loves me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

2. My mother says nice things about me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

3. My mother has made me feel that she would be there if I needed her.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

4. My mother seems to approve of me and the things I do.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

5. My mother explained to me how good I should feel when I did something that she liked.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

6. Over the past several years, my mother has explained to me how good I should feel when I shared something with other family members.

_____ Never
_____ Sometimes
_____ Always

7. My mother explains to me how good I should feel when I do what is right.

_____ Never
_____ Sometimes
_____ Always

8. My mother explains to me that when I share things with other family members, that I am liked by other family members.

_____ Never
_____ Sometimes
_____ Always

9. My mother tells me how good others feel when I do what is right.

_____ Never
_____ Sometimes
_____ Always

10. My mother tells me that I will be sorry that I wasn't better behaved.

_____ Never
_____ Sometimes
_____ Always

11. My mother tells me that someday I will be punished for my behavior.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

12. My mother tells me that if I love her, I should do what she wants me to do.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

13. My mother is always finding fault with me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

14. My mother tells me about all the things that she has done for me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

15. My mother complains about my behavior.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

16. My mother does not give me any peace until I do what she says.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

17. My mother punishes me by sending me out of the room.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

18. My mother punishes me by not letting me do things with other teenagers.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

19. My mother spansks or hits me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

20. My mother punishes me by not letting me do things that I really enjoy.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

21. My mother enjoys doing things with me.*

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

22. My mother shares many activities with me.*

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

23. My mother will not talk to me when I displease her.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

24. My mother avoids looking at me when I have disappointed her.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

*Item was not analyzed in the study.

PARENTS BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Circle the answer which best describes how your father has treated you over the past several years. Be sure and circle the choice on each statement which you think describes what your father is like.

Example:

Never Sometimes Always

1. My father tells me how much he loves me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

2. My father says nice things about me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

3. My father has made me feel that he would be there if I needed him.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

4. My father seems to approve of me and the things I do.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

5. My father explained to me how good I should feel when I did something that he liked.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

6. Over the past several years, my father has explained to me how good I should feel when I shared something with other family members.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

7. My father explains to me how good I should feel when I do what is right.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

8. My father explains to me that when I share things with other family members, that I am liked by other family members.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

9. My father tells me how good others feel when I do what is right.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

10. My father tells me that I will be sorry that I wasn't better behaved.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

11. My father tells me that someday I will be punished for my behavior.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

12. My father tells me that if I love him, I should do what he wants me to do.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

13. My father is always finding fault with me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

14. My father tells me about all the things that he has done for me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

15. My father complains about my behavior.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

16. My father does not give me any peace until I do what she says.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

17. My father punishes me by sending me out of the room.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

18. My father punishes me by not letting me do things with other teenagers.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

19. My father spansks or hits me.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

20. My father punishes me by not letting me do things that I really enjoy.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

21. My father enjoys doing things with me.*

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

22. My father shares many activities with me.*

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

23. My father will not talk to me when I displease him.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

24. My father avoids looking at me when I have disappointed him.

_____ Never

_____ Sometimes

_____ Always

*Item was not analyzed in this study.

APPENDIX D

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

(Spanish Version)

CUESTIONARIO PARA ESTUDIANTES DE ESCUELA SUPERIOR

RELACIONES ENTRE PADRES E HIJOS

Muchas personas hablan sobre las relaciones entre padres e hijos y otras situaciones en la familia. El propósito de estos cuestionarios es saber qué piensan los jóvenes sobre sí mismos y sobre las relaciones con los padres. Si tú tienes entre 14 y 18 años me interesaría contestaras estas preguntas. No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas.

Al contestar estas preguntas yo entiendo que:

1. Los cuestionarios no me tomarán más de 30 minutos.
2. No habrá efectos negativos para mí.
3. Toda la información que yo ofrezca será confidencial.
4. Puedo hacer cualquier pregunta sobre el procedimiento si tengo dudas.
5. Yo puedo decidir si quiero o no contestar las preguntas.

CUESTIONARIO

Instrucciones:

El propósito de este cuestionario es conocer tu estilo de vida y el de tu familia. Por favor lee cuidadosamente cada pregunta y contesta escribiendo una X en la letra que corresponda. Muchas gracias por tu cooperación.

1. Qué edad tienes?

_____ 14-16 años

_____ 17-18 años

2. Sexo: _____ Varón

_____ Hembra

3. En que grado estás? Marca X uno

7 8 9 10 11 12

4. Cuál es aproximadamente tu promedio académico?

a. 4.0 - 3.5

b. 3.4 - 3.0

c. 2.9 - 2.5

d. 2.4 o menos

5. Haz un círculo que indique el grado más alto de escuela que tu mamá ha completado:

Escuela elemental y superior

Universidad

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

6. Haz un círculo que indique el grado más alto de escuela que tu papá ha completado:

Escuela elemental y superior

Universidad

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

7. Como describes mejor a tus padres:
 - a. Están casados y viven juntos
 - b. Están casados pero viven separados
 - c. Están divorciados
 - d. Mi papá falleció
 - e. Mi mamá falleció
 - f. Mi mamá esta casada nuevamente
 - g. Mi papá esta casado nuevamente
 - h. Mi mamá esta soltera
 - i. Mi papá esta soltero
8. Si tus papás están divorciados, cuánto tiempo hace?
 - a. Menos de tres meses
 - b. Siete meses a un año
 - c. Uno a dos años
 - d. Tres a cuatro años
 - e. Otro (especifica)

ESCALA DE AUTO-ESTIMA ROSENBERG

El propósito de este cuestionario es saber como piensan los jóvenes de sí mismos. A continuación hay una serie de preguntas las cuales vas a indicar si estas completamente de acuerdo, de acuerdo, en desacuerdo o completamente en desacuerdo. No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas.

Este cuestionario es completamente confidencial y será indentificado con un número. Muchas gracias por tu cooperación.

Respuestas:

CA - Completamente de acuerdo

A - De acuerdo

D - En desacuerdo

CD - Completamente en desacuerdo

- | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 1. En general, yo estoy satisfecho(a) conmigo mismo(a). | CA | A | D | CD |
| 2. Yo pienso a veces que no soy muy bueno(a). | CA | A | D | CD |
| 3. Yo siento que tengo bastantes cualidades buenas. | CA | A | D | CD |
| 4. Yo puedo hacer las cosas tan bien como otras personas las hacen. | CA | A | D | CD |
| 5. Yo siento que no tengo muchas cosas de que sentirme orgulloso(a). | CA | A | D | CD |
| 6. De hecho yo me siento inútil a a veces. | CA | A | D | CD |
| 7. Yo siento que soy una persona que valgo mucho, por lo menos igual que otras personas. | CA | A | D | CD |
| 8. Yo quisiera tener mas respeto por mi mismo(a). | CA | A | D | CD |
| 9. Sobretudo yo me inclino a pensar que soy un fracaso. | CA | A | D | CD |
| 10. Yo tengo una actitud positiva sobre mi mismo(a). | CA | A | D | CD |

CUESTIONARIO REFERENTE A LOS PADRES
(Madre)

Instrucciones:

Haz un círculo sobre la contestación que mejor describa como tu mamá te ha tratado en los últimos años. Asegúrate de marcar la contestación que mejor describa como tus padres se portan contigo. Muchas gracias por tu cooperación.

1. Mi mamá me dice lo mucho que ella me quiere.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

2. Mi mamá dice cosas buenas sobre mí.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

3. Mi mamá me hace sentir que ella estará conmigo cuando yo la necesite.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

4. Mi mamá esta de acuerdo conmigo y con las cosas que yo hago.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

5. Mi mamá me explica cuan bien me debo sentir cuando yo hago las cosas como ha ella le gustan.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

6. En los últimos años, mi mamá me ha explicado lo bien que yo me debo sentir cuando comparto algo con otros miembros de la familia.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

7. Mi mamá me explica lo bien que yo me debo sentir cuando yo hago las cosas bien.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

8. Mi papá me explica que cuando yo comparto con otros miembros de la familia yo soy apreciado por ellos.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

9. Mi mamá me dice lo bien que ella se siente cuando yo hago bien las cosas.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

10. Mi mamá me dice que yo debo sentirme mal porque yo no me porto bien.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

11. Mi mamá me dice que algún día voy a ser castigado por mi mala conducta.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

12. Mi mamá me dice que si yo la quiero a ella yo debo hacer lo que ella dice.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

13. Mi mamá me está encontrando faltas siempre.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

14. Mi mamá me dice todas las cosas que ella ha hecho por mí.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

15. Mi mamá se queja de mi comportamiento.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

16. Mi mamá no me deja en paz hasta que yo hago lo que ella dice.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

17. Mi mamá me castiga enviándome fuera de la habitación.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

18. Mi mamá me castiga no dejándome hacer cosas con los amigos de mi edad.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

19. Mi mamá me da de golpes o me pega.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

20. Mi mamá me castiga no dejando que yo haga las cosas que más me gustan.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

21. A mi mamá le gusta hacer diferentes cosas conmigo.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

22. Mi mamá comparte actividades conmigo.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

23. Mi mamá no me habla cuando yo no la complazco.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

24. Mi mamá evita mirarme cuando yo la hago enojar.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

CUESTIONARIO REFERENTE A LOS PADRES
(Padre)

Instrucciones:

Haz un círculo sobre la contestación que mejor describa como tu papá te ha tratado en los últimos años. Asegúrate de marcar la contestación que mejor describa como tus padres se portan contigo. Muchas gracias por tu cooperación.

1. Mi papá me dice lo mucho que él me quiere.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

2. Mi papá dice cosas buenas sobre mí.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

3. Mi papá me hace sentir que él estará conmigo cuando yo la necesite.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

4. Mi papá está de acuerdo conmigo y con las cosas que yo hago.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

5. Mi papá explica cuán bien me debo sentir cuando yo hago las cosas como ha él le gustan.

_____ Nunca
_____ Algunas veces
_____ Siempre

6. En los últimos años, mi papá me ha explicado lo bien que yo me debo sentir cuando comparto algo con otros miembros de la familia.
- _____ Nunca
- _____ Algunas veces
- _____ Siempre
7. Mi papá me explica lo bien que yo me debo sentir cuando yo hago las cosas bien.
- _____ Nunca
- _____ Algunas veces
- _____ Siempre
8. Mi papá me explica que cuando yo comparto con otros miembros de la familia yo soy apreciado por ellos.
- _____ Nunca
- _____ Algunas veces
- _____ Siempre
9. Mi papá me dice lo bien que él se siente cuando yo hago bien las cosas.
- _____ Nunca
- _____ Algunas veces
- _____ Siempre
10. Mi papá me dice que yo debo sentirme mal porque yo no me porto bien.
- _____ Nunca
- _____ Algunas veces
- _____ Siempre

11. Mi papá me dice que algún día voy a ser castigado por mi mala conducta.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

12. Mi papá me dice que si yo lo quiero a él yo debo hacer lo que él diga.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

13. Mi papá me está encontrando faltas siempre.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

14. Mi papá me dice todas las cosas que él ha hecho por mí.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

15. Mi papá se queja de mi comportamiento.

_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

16. Mi papá no me deja en paz hasta que yo hago lo que él dice.

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_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

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_____ Algunas veces

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_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

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_____ Siempre

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_____ Nunca

_____ Algunas veces

_____ Siempre

VITA

The author was born on July 18, 1945 in Sabana Grande, Puerto Rico. She attended high school at L. Muñoz Rivera High School in Sabana Grande, P.R., graduating in 1961 from Hostos High School, Mayagüez, P.R. Her undergraduate education was received at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, P.R., from which she received the Bachelor's degree in Home Economics and Extension Education in May 1965. For the next thirteen years she worked for the Puerto Rico Agricultural Extension Service as Home Economist, 4-H Agent, and Family Relations Regional Agent. She received her Master's degree in Child and Family Sciences from Michigan State University, Lansing, in December 1979. The author also attended the University of Illinois, Urbana and Rutgers University, New Jersey, where she did graduate work. The author's doctoral work was done at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, from June 1982 to August 1984; she received the Ph.D. in Home Economics with a major in Family Studies.

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