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An Exploration of Overparenting and College Student Ability to Manage the Stress Associated with College Life

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to Manage the Stress Associated with College Life

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Abstract

There has been an increase in the level of anxiety, perceived stress, and mental health problems among college students. An examination of the contributions of parenting to these increases may help in improving college student mental health; however, research is limited in this area. This study examined the associations between overparenting, and other types of parenting including, authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting, and differentiation of self, cognitive emotion regulation, perceived stress, and state and trait anxiety. The participants were 163 undergraduate college students (74.8% identified as cisgender women, 25.2% identified as cisgender men). The participants completed questionnaires that described their mother's and father's parenting behavior. The participants also completed questionnaires assessing their differentiation of self, cognitive emotion regulation strategy use, perceived stress, and state and trait anxiety. The results concerning parenting and differentiation of self indicated high levels of overparenting, and authoritarian parenting by mothers and by fathers were associated with lower levels of differentiation of self. Also, high levels of authoritative and permissive parenting by mothers and by fathers were associated with higher levels of differentiation of self. The results concerning parenting and cognitive emotion regulation indicated high levels of overparenting and authoritarian parenting by mothers and by fathers were associated with higher levels of using maladaptive emotion regulation strategies. A contrasting pattern emerged with high levels of authoritative parenting and permissive parenting being associated with higher levels of using adaptive emotion regulation strategies. The results concerning parenting, perceived stress, and anxiety indicated overparenting by mothers and by fathers was related to perceived stress and trait anxiety, and overparenting by mothers was positively related to state anxiety. Authoritarian parenting by mothers and by fathers was positively related to perceived stress, while authoritative parenting by mothers was negatively associated with perceived stress, state anxiety,

and trait anxiety. These findings have important clinical and developmental implications for how overparenting and other types of parenting may contribute to increased perceived stress and anxiety in college students.

Keywords: college students, stress, mental health, overparenting, differentiation of self

Chapter 1: An Exploration of Overparenting and College Student Ability

to Manage the Stress Associated with College Life

College has been characterized as a stressful experience for students, but in recent years the level of perceived stress is increasing. In the 2010 American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA, 2010), 41.1% and 9.3% of students reported that within the last 12 months, they experienced either more than average stress or tremendous stress, respectively. In 2016, these percentages increased to 43.3% and 11.4%, respectively (ACHA-NCHA, 2016), and in 2019, these percentages rose to 48.2% and 14.5%, respectively (ACHA-NCHA, 2019). These data suggest that over half of today's college students may be experiencing moderate to significant levels of stress. Given the connection between stress and mental health, it is not surprising that during this same period there has been an increase in the prevalence of college students suffering from mental health problems including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation (Brunner et al., 2014; Kruisselbrink Flatt, 2013; Liu et al., 2019; Pedrelli et al., 2015).

The explanations for the increase in stress and concomitant mental health problems have been varied. Some have pointed to stressors such as (a) academic pressure (Furr et al., 2001; Howe & Strauss, 2000); (b) financial burden (Joo et al., 2008; Kadison & DeGeronimo, 2004; Watkins et al., 2011); (c) the use of technology (Hall & Parsons, 2001; Kim, LaRose et al., 2009; Thomée et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2015); (c) the taking on of more adult-like responsibilities with the transition to college (Pedrelli et al., 2015); and (d) lack of social support (Friedlander et al., 2007; Li et al., 2014; Pokorny et al., 2017). In general, the extent of psychological distress demonstrated suggests a significant proportion of college students are having difficulty coping with the stress associated with college attendance.

This study aimed to address one contributor to this problem, "helicopter" or overparenting (Cline & Fay, 1990). Overparenting is defined as "the use of developmentally inappropriate levels of involvement, control, and problem-solving by parents of young adults" (Rousseau & Scharf, 2015, p. 2). Parents who overparent are excessively involved in their children's or emerging adult children's daily affairs on tasks they can accomplish on their own to protect them from stressful situations or to help them to succeed. For college-age individuals, examples of overparenting may include calling their children to wake them up for class, putting together their class schedule, or contacting professors about their children's grades (Dunnewold, 2007). Regarding the importance of social support and the involvement of parents for college students, Friedlander et al. (2007) found peer support, but not family support, predicted improvement in the adjustment of first-year undergraduate students, while Li et al. (2014) found both peer and parental support were associated with better psychological adjustment. Sax and Weintraub (2014) observed that parents have become more engaged with their children attending college, and there has been a negative portrayal in the media of helicopter parenting, which was suggested to stunt student growth. In their study concerning parental involvement, Sax and Weintraub found that what seemed to matter was both quantity and quality of communications. Of interest was their finding that, "Emotional well-being is strengthened for students who view their parents as supportive, interested, helpful, non-intrusive and uncritical; this is especially true for mothers with daughters and fathers with sons" (Sax & Weintraub, 2014, pp. 122–123). Differences in the impact of living at home versus living on campus while attending college have also been found to be essential to college student psychological health (Pokorny et al., 2017). For example, living on campus may be important for developing a sense of belongingness, while living with parents and commuting to campus may lead to less of a sense of belonging but

provide social support from friends and family. Based on these studies, whether living at home or away, it seems what is of importance for the psychological well-being of college students is the nature of parental involvement.

The current study was conducted to understand better how overparenting, and parenting, in general, may contribute to college student psychosocial functioning. Bowen Family Systems Theory (Bowen theory) was used as the guiding theoretical framework for this study. As such, a review of Bowen theory is provided, along with a discussion of the applicability of this theory to non-western cultural groups and women. In addition, because of the importance of parenting for college student psychosocial well-being, the influence of parenting is explored within the context of clinical psychology and the intersection of this research with critical topics in clinical psychology. This discussion is followed by a detailed review of the empirical literature examining overparenting, traditional parenting styles (e.g., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive), parenting in new family forms and sexual minority families, and parenting by fathers. To better contextualize the challenges facing families, with speculation that some of these challenges may lead to more intensive parenting among certain socioeconomic groups, social justice and societal inequality across families is discussed. This section has a particular focus on how societal inequality impacts families of different socioeconomic status and those who fall into what is referred to as new family forms and sexual minority families. An elaboration of the purpose of the current study, its significance in terms of the existing research literature, research questions addressed by this study, and the delimitations of the study is then presented. Lastly, the findings of the current study are discussed, and their implications for clinical psychology, and future research in the area of overparenting and college student psychological well-being.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Bowen Family Systems Theory

Bowen theory provides a framework for conceptualizing the influence of overparenting on stress reactions in college students. Bowen theory emphasizes how the family system influences both individual and family functioning. Bowen theory posits that family patterns develop in response to defuse anxiety and that the emotional functioning of persons is affected by the multigenerational, self-perpetuating family system. A cornerstone of Bowen theory is differentiation of self (Bowen, 1985). Differentiation of self is defined according to two dimensions, an intrapsychic level and an interpersonal level (Skowron & Friedlander, 1998). On the intrapsychic level, differentiation is conceptualized on a continuum from fusion to differentiation. Fusion refers to the extent to which emotions and intellect are joined or fused. When emotions and intellect are fused, the emotional system dominates one's life (Bowen, 1985). On the other end of the continuum is differentiation, which refers to a greater separation between emotion and intellect (Bowen, 1985). On an interpersonal level, differentiation is conceptualized as a balance between intimacy with others and autonomy of self. At the interpersonal level, less differentiated individuals when emotionally overwhelmed, express fusion or emotional cutoff. Fusion here is characterized as having intense feelings of responsibility for other's reactions, while emotional cutoff is characterized as emotional distancing from others to avoid tensions within a relationship (Brown, 1999; Skowron & Friedlander, 1998). Bowen (1985) argued that less differentiated individuals are less flexible, have difficulty with adapting to situations, are more emotionally dependent on others, and easily stressed into dysfunction. In contrast, during periods of stress, more differentiated individuals show greater flexibility, adaptability, and more independence of the emotionality around them.

Therefore, differentiated individuals cope more easily with stress and are less likely to experience dysfunction when facing stress than are less differentiated individuals (Bowen, 1985).

According to Bowen theory, experiences in the family of origin significantly impact mature functioning in young adulthood (Bowen, 1985). Family relationships that are characterized by emotion regulation and the balancing of autonomy and connectedness contribute to the differentiation of self and, thus, to the psychological adjustment of young adults (Skowron, Stanley et al., 2009). This assertion is supported by research examining parenting styles that demonstrate authoritative parenting, or parenting characterized by warmth, acceptance, communication, and autonomy support, is associated with later competence psychologically and relationally, more positive attitudes about school, and more success in academics by adolescents (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg et al., 1989). Also, more autonomous functioning and psychological adjustment have been found in persons who reported well-differentiated family boundaries (Lopez et al., 1988). In regard to overparenting, because it involves developmentally inappropriate levels of involvement, control, and problem-solving, differentiation of self is compromised and poor psychological adjustment is expected (Rousseau & Scharf, 2015).

Interestingly, there have been questions about the universality of Bowen theory, and more specifically, the applicability of differentiation of self to persons from non-western cultures and to women. Bowen theory is like other family systems theories in that it views the role of the family as central (Skowron, 2004). However, some have argued that Bowen theory does not take into account ethnic and cultural diversity (Alaedein, 2008; Erdem & Safi, 2018), and overvalues what are considered stereotypical male characteristics (Ault-Riche, 1986; Hare-Mustin, 1978;

Luepnitz, 1988; McGoldrick et al., 1989). In regard to differentiation of self and ethnic and cultural diversity, Erdem and Safi noted an essential dimension of cultures to consider is the continuum of individualism-collectivism. For example, the United States and Western European countries value individualism or independence (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), while Asian, African, and Latin American countries, as well as Native American societies, value collectivism and interdependence (Greenfield, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In reference to the cultural dimension of individualism-collectivism, differentiation of self can be viewed as a construct that places an overemphasis on independence, and less emphasis on the importance of interrelatedness in defining positive psychological functioning in an interpersonal context.

The constructs of differentiation of self and fusion have similarly been criticized by feminist scholars. Hare-Mustin (1978) provided an early critique of differentiation of self, noting "Bowen's Differentiation of Self Scale (8) can be readily identified as a sex-stereotyped masculinity-femininity scale with femininity at the devalued end" (p. 182). She furthered, "Bowen ignores the fact that women's socialization encourages them to be emotional and intuitive rather than rational (Hare-Mustin, 1978, pp. 182–183). Luepnitz (1988) asserted that from a Bowen theory perspective, one might conclude that society actually schools females into undifferentiation because women are taught to put the needs of others first and are not socialized with the same degree of autonomy in regard to their economic and physical fates. Knudson-Martin (1994) echoed this observation, noting that if existing theories define seeking connection with others as pathological or minimally, as immature, then they have been biased against women.

The questions about the universality of Bowen theory have led to a reexamination of Bowen theory, and in some cases, to an expanded model of the theory. Erdem and Safi (2018),

for example, used the cultural lens approach (Hardin et al., 2014) to examine the cultural validity of Bowen theory. Utilizing the cultural lens approach, they found empirical data supports the basic premises of Bowen theory and differentiation of self, but that most of that empirical work was conducted in the United States (U.S.). When examining research conducted with non-U.S. samples, Erdem and Safi found that the study findings were mixed in regard to the expected direction proposed by Bowen theory. For instance, there were inconsistent findings with fusion with others, or the extent to which emotions and intellect are joined or fused, especially in Asian societies. What is of particular interest in Erdem and Safi's analysis examining the universality of Bowen theory is the hypothesized impact that the dimension of individualism-collectivism may have on the findings of studies conducted in different cultural contexts. This led Erdem and Safi to suggest individualism-collectivism, self-construal, and autonomy-relatedness could be integrated into Bowen theory as cultural dimensions of differentiation of self.

An expanded model of Bowen theory was offered by Knudson-Martin (1994) to include the female experience more fully. In her analysis of Bowen theory, Knudson-Martin pointed out that persons who are considered poorly differentiated invest excessive energy into togetherness. Knudson-Martin added that the emotional boundaries are then blurred and that the thinking responses get overwhelmed by the feelings and emotions generated within the relationship. Bowen theory holds that when individuals are sensitive to emotional disharmony and the opinion of others, a characteristic of having a connected self, they are described as having low differentiation. Knudson-Martin suggested this characterization leads to the necessity to overcome togetherness needs to become differentiated, which is an inevitable consequence of viewing togetherness and individuality as competing forces. To resolve this issue, Knudson-Martin proposed a model that conceptualized the feeling and cognitive systems as

parallel and mutually reinforcing rather than as competing forces. She argued that this conceptualization better captures how women develop. That is, "they discover themselves at the same time they develop and maintain relationships" (Knudson-Martin, 1994, p. 41).

In sum, care must be taken in the application of a theoretical framework and associated constructs in any study, and Bowen theory is no exception. As per Hardin et al.'s cultural lens approach, one must have a good understanding of how theoretical constructs have been defined or operationalized in past research, the groups from which definitions were formulated, to which groups the constructs have not been applied, and to which groups unexpected results were found. Moreover, a researcher should try to identify significant dimensions that may underlie cultural variability. Having examined Bowen theory within the context of these guidelines, researchers have helped to clarify the universality and limitations of Bowen theory and differentiation of self. In regard to the current study, the empirical literature suggests that the application of a Bowen theory and the construct of differentiation of self to a Western sample of college students may provide a suitable theoretical framework for the evaluation of the impact of overparenting on college student stress, anxiety, and emotion regulation behavior while recognizing the limitations of Bowen theory.

Chapter 3: Implications for Clinical Psychology and Intersections

with Critical Topics Implications for Clinical Psychology

Understanding parenting behaviors and their effects on college students' sense of self-differentiation is an essential area of research in the field of clinical psychology. Most psychological services centers across the U.S. adhere to a cognitive-behavioral therapeutic model. To best serve college students, incorporating Bowen's differentiation of self in psychotherapy with existing college psychological approaches can set an additional foundation for improving the mental health of students.

College Students' Mental Health and Differentiation of Self

Relatedness and autonomy are central to the health and functioning of young adults (Skowron et al., 2009). Skowron et al. found that at the beginning of the semester, a greater level of self-differentiation, that is, less emotional reactivity, cutoffs or fusion, and ability to take an interpersonal "I" position, "predicted fewer psychological symptoms and interpersonal problems at the semester's end" (p. 13). In contrast, students feeling more emotional reactivity, fusion and/or cutoffs, lesser ability to regulate emotions, difficulty thinking under stressful demands, and losing a sense of self in relationships, reported more psychological distress (Skowron et al., 2009). These findings also suggest that lesser levels of differentiation may be related to interpersonal difficulties in terms of emotional reactivity and hostility, possibly stemming from feeling anxious (Skowron et al., 2009). Thus, college students with parents who were over-involved reported experiencing lower emotional well-being and greater likeliness of resorting to medication to treat symptoms of anxiety and depression (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011).

College students who have been overparented during their childhood can still be influenced in their current relationships by internalized representations of self and others, and a sense of security assembled in childhood (Collins, 1996; Schiffrin et al., 2014). Young adults may be anxious in regard to the availability of others or avoidance and distance from others (Brennan et al., 1998) that may have been formed during their early relationships with parents, which in turn, inform a poorly differentiated individual's need for fusion and cutoffs. Young adults' increased psychopathology levels have been linked to attachment insecurity (Otani et al., 2009), and poor differentiation experienced with high stress has been associated with greater levels of psychological dysfunction (Murdock & Gore, 2004). Thus, addressing college stress and coping via Bowen's differentiation of self model can assist college students in improving stress-coping behaviors and responses. Moreover, students attending college counseling centers to address stress and coping difficulties would benefit from individual, family-of-origin therapy (Skowron, Wester et al., 2004).

Individual Therapy

Bowen (1985) advocated working with one member of a family in individual therapy, asserting that when one family member increases her or his level of self-differentiation and stays in contact with the family, the overall level of differentiation of the family augments. Notably, the initial step in implementing interventions based on Bowen's theoretical model of differentiation of self is to evaluate the stress level of the client and the family (Murdock & Gore, 2004). With college students, new coping strategies may be taught via cognitive-behavioral approaches to provide immediate stress-reducing intervention. Thus, Bowen's self-differentiation therapy can be utilized as a conceptual model to structure therapeutic interventions designed to reduce chronic anxiety and emotional reactivity when facing stressful situations. Bowen's (1985)

model of therapy draws attention to generational patterns of relationships and events present within the client's family system, which assists the client in developing insights and awareness as well as how family events have affected the client's current functioning (Meyer, 1998).

Overparenting

Examining family dynamics within the context of differentiation, specifically overparenting, is a relatively new concept among researchers (Rousseau & Scharf, 2015). Overparenting and its effect on parental mental health and the overall family system are relevant to clinical psychology for several reasons. Overparenting disregards the autonomy of young adults. It is indicative of family differentiation problems, developmentally inadequate parental involvement and control, and parents' problem-solving for young adults (Lemoyne & Buchanan, 2011). The overprotection of young adults, an essential overparenting factor, is a behavior that has yet to be understood (Katrijn-Brenning et al., 2017). In their study, Katrijn-Brenning et al. found that separation and attachment anxiety were associated with parental overprotection. Attachment anxiety denotes an individual's concerns about rejection and abandonment (Brennan et al., 1998). Based on Bowlby's (1973) attachment theory, past attachment representations are reflective of either secure or insecure attachment styles and patterns. Such patterns can be reenacted with the departure of a loved one. Thus, when young adults leave home, the empty nest phase can trigger contradictive emotions and behavior from the parents (Bouchard, 2014). As mentioned in Katrijn-Brenning et al., no longer having to parent as much may initiate relief and lessening of stress while at the same time initiating feelings of loss and loneliness for parents. Insecurely attached parents are more prone to attachment anxiety and overprotecting behavior (e.g., increase of physical proximity with their college offspring). In turn, anxiously attached parents are more likely to experience separation anxiety and over-protective parental

instincts (Katrijn-Brenning et al., 2017). Thus, parental separation anxiety seems to be linked with negative affect, depression, and low self-esteem (Katrijn-Brenning et al., 2017).

Parent Therapy

Self-differentiated parents have a high tolerance for intimacy and autonomy; they are less emotionally reactive; they regulate their emotions effectively and have a clear sense of self (Bowen, 1978; Titelman, 1998). In contrast, less differentiated parents experience more difficulty regulating their emotions and do not think clearly amid parental demands and stressful situations (Bowen, 1978). Hence, overprotective parents express "unresolved emotional attachment (which) is equivalent to the degree of undifferentiation" (Bowen, 1978, p. 534). The goal of therapy, based on Bowen theory, is to differentiate each parent as a "defined self," able to act on his or her own volition with clarity while facing emotional forces (Titelman, 1998, p. 15). The effort of each parent is focused on changing oneself rather than changing the other. Both parents can work individually and/or together to develop a person-to-person relationship or communicate freely about personal issues without talking about the other and others (Titelman, 1998). Moreover, parents are encouraged to analyze the nature of their caregivers' relationships while maintaining contact with them and take an interest in the interpersonal history of the family system. Ultimately, parents take responsibility for their enactment of patterns of undifferentiation. Parents are then able to enact a healthy balance between autonomy and support for their young adult offspring and themselves.

Intersections with Critical Topics

Other areas of psychology intersect with college students' coping, stress, psychological distress, emotion regulation, and parental influences. Approaching the mental health and well-being of college students considering parental influences from the standpoint of

differentiation may not address other elements necessary to introduce a holistic view of the problem and positive therapeutic outcomes for college students and parents alike. Thus, Bowen's approach to individual therapy might be incorporated into evidence-based practice, diversity, ethics, and the development of young adulthood for psychologists to work better with college students' psychological distress.

Evidence-Based Practice

In the field of psychology, evidence-based practice (EBP) encompasses the most relevant empirical and clinical research for psychologists to engage in better interventions to accommodate and work with a patient's culture and characteristics. In turn, psychologists create resources based on clinical experts, reliable scientific sources, and the choices and needs of their patients to inform their EBP (McKibbon, 1998). The American College Health Association (ACHA, 2009) recommended EBP when assessing college students' levels of anxiety, depression, and stress as well as EBP strategies and interventions. Research in this area provides evidence for cognitive, behavioral, and mindfulness interventions for college students' stress reduction (Deckro et al., 2002; Hamdan-Mansour et al., 2009; Regehr et al., 2013). However, research evidence about CBT interventions specifically designed to address the influence of the involvement of fathers with their college student son or daughter seems to be nonexistent. As future research investigates this issue in randomized controlled trials, EBP psychotherapy for young adults in college regarding father parental stress could help in lessening overall college-related stress for students.

Bowen theory principles are essential to strengthen EBP interventions with college students who are experiencing psychological distress exacerbated by parental stressors. For example, invasive parents do not allow for an age-appropriate balance between relational

closeness and distance. Thus, children's relatedness and autonomy needs remain unfulfilled (Boszormenyi-Nagi & Ulrich, 1981; Bowen, 1993; Minuchin et al., 1975), which can affect interpersonal patterns of relationship later in life (e.g., Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Thus, intrinsic to EBP and Bowen theory is the self-determination model which, in the context of family systems theory, emphasizes people's inherent needs for mediating and balancing interpersonal closeness and distance (Deci & Ryan, 2000; La Guardia et al., 2000) Also, as mentioned in Deci and Ryan, overparenting impedes on essential human needs such as one's confidence and autonomy. Therefore, as emphasized by EBP, observing client's treatment preferences fosters optimal client-motivation, intervention, and care (Spring, 2007), as well as autonomy and self-determination, which are essential factors for successful treatment outcomes (Pelletier et al., 1997). Accordingly, college students experiencing negative parental influences are motivated to attend and continue psychotherapy sessions because their preferences and treatment choices are respected and enacted.

Diversity

As mentioned in Brunner et al. (2014), the Millennial Generation of college students is "the most ethnically diverse of all, with over a third being of minority status" (p. 261). In past decades, the enrollment of biracial or multiracial millennial students has been on the increase, especially on urban college campuses (Broido, 2004). Students with low socioeconomic and faith backgrounds, non-traditional students, gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual students, immigrants, and students of color reflect numerous cultural differences and specificities (Evans et al., 2009). Examining the culture of college students' overparenting, in terms of "anticipatory problem-solving; advice/affect management; tangible assistance; and less child-self direction" (Scharf et al., 2017, pp. 1361–1362) intersects with issues of diversity for several reasons.

Research shows that collectivistic cultures are more overparenting, controlling, and intrusive regarding their parenting behavior than individualistic/majority cultures (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014). Thus, high levels of parental involvement observed in young adults are developmentally age-inappropriate, which denotes a poor overall differentiation of the family (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Segrin et al., 2012).

Self-differentiation has been found to mediate academic and college students' financial stress and to negatively impact adjustment (Skowron et al., 2004). Furthermore, Skowron (2004) found that ethnic minorities with higher levels of self-differentiation were better skilled in social problem-solving and psychological adjustment, as well as feeling a positive sense of ethnic group belonging (Skowron, 2004). Consequently, to the extent that psychologists can help minority individuals be aware of their emotional reactivity to reduce habitual reactive responses induced by racist and discriminatory comments, minority individuals might benefit from adopting a differentiated stance when faced with racial injustices (Gushue et al., 2013). By the same token, psychologists assist non-minority individuals to notice any discriminative behavior based on cutoff towards minority individuals to take responsibility for undifferentiated and racist patterns of behavior. As a result, and according to Bowen, the societal system of discrimination would recalibrate itself and be more accepting of differences (Gushue et al., 2013). Issues of racial-cultural differences associated with college stress-adjustment cannot be denied. Psychologists' awareness of cross-cultural issues pertaining to collectivistic and individualistic cultures and parenting must be addressed to enhance a sense of autonomy as a way to lessen college stress and positively impact coping mechanisms of college students.

Ethics

Ethical principles are essential to clinical psychology and its practice. They are relevant to psychotherapy when considering parental behavior as it relates to college students' coping and stress responses. The American Psychological Association (2010) emphasizes psychologists' ethical responsibility to attend to their biases and multicultural competency. Therefore, psychologists working with a college student to understand his or her relationship patterns are ethically responsible for having an understanding of their pattern of parental relationships, as well as their level of self-differentiation. Moreover, psychotherapists' multicultural self understanding enhances comfort levels with their clients who have different values than their own (Sue, 2006). Additionally, clients' reactions towards the therapist may reflect and be based on their own culture (Sue, 2006). Thus, multicultural awareness provides some clarity to the therapeutic process because the psychologist can identify the culture and values of the client as unique and enriching, making the therapeutic process respectful of the cultural differences embodied by both the client and therapist.

Psychologists are responsible for equally and justly distributing beneficial psychological services to their clients (American Psychological Association, 2010). As previously mentioned, to ensure fairness in the distribution of services, psychologists must be aware of their personal biases. Accumulating multicultural knowledge and competency enables psychologists to practice within the scope of their expertise to render appropriate interventions to diverse clients. Poor mental health among students is related to relationship stressors (Blanco et al., 2008; Kisch et al., 2005). Consequently, psychologists' understanding of the interpersonal aspects of differentiation, or the ability to maintain one's autonomy aside from the influences from other individuals and

social systems (Bowen, 1978) can assist college students in mediating their stress and coping responses more adequately.

Developmental Perspective

Developmental theory and research suggest that family-of-origin influences one's sense of autonomy, relatedness, and emotion regulation (Arnett, 1998; Lopez & Brennan, 2000). As mentioned in Schiffrin et al. (2014), parental involvement can have a positive influence on a child's development and behavior (e.g., better peer relationships, fewer problems in school, and better grades). Children who have "autonomy supportive parents" (Schiffrin et al., 2014, p. 549) are encouraged to solve their problems and are socially and emotionally better adjusted (Kenney-Benson & Pomerantz, 2005; Grolnick et al., 1991). However, research also shows that overparenting may be associated with adverse outcomes such as lesser motivation and higher levels of anxiety and depression with children (Marano, 2008). Furthermore, psychological control or the fostering of guilt and refusal to give love may damage children leading young children to externalize or internalize their problems resulting in anxiety and depression when they reach adolescence (Barber et al., 1994). The transition from adolescence to young adulthood poses its own sets of problems with the ongoing consolidation of one's identity and the development of interpersonal maturity (Carter & McGoldrick, 1999). Starting college can be stressful for some students. Leaving home and assuming financial responsibilities as well as increasing a sense of intimacy with peer-relationships can be a daunting task. Self-differentiation could help college students to mediate such stressful transitions.

Chapter 4: Literature Review Parental Influences on College Students

Past research has linked parent behavior to a child and adolescent ability to handle stress (Eisenberg et al., 1997; Power, 2004). However, there is a growing interest in examining exactly how parenting may affect stress and coping in college students (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014; Skowron et al., 2004). Stress is defined as a relationship or transaction between the person and the environment evaluated by an individual as "taxing or exceeding his or her resources and is endangering well-being" (Folkman et al., 1986). Excessive stress in college students has shown to impact health and performance (Campbell & Svenson, 1992). Coping refers to "the process of managing demands (external or internal) that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 283). One of the drivers of this renewed interest in parental influences is an attempt to understand why today's college students are experiencing increased levels of mental health problems. An initial focus of this research was on generational differences. For example, Bland et al. (2012) examined stress tolerance in college-aged millennials. A second focus has recently emerged examining how parenting may contribute to the management of college stress and adjustment, with this research centering on the concept of "helicopter" or overparenting (Cline & Fay, 1990), and on parental involvement more broadly.

As noted, engaging in overparenting use developmentally inappropriate levels of involvement, control, and problem-solving with their offspring (Rousseau & Scharf, 2015). This type of parenting differs from other types of parenting, such as authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting. Although overparenting may contain elements of other parenting styles (i.e., warmth, communication, control, and lack of responsiveness), it differs in that a central goal of overparenting is to protect one's offspring from potentially adverse outcomes while also ensuring their success (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014). However, findings suggest that

overparenting may have the opposite effect. For example, in younger samples, internalizing disorders were associated with overparenting in early and middle childhood (Bayer, Hastings et al., 2010; Bayer, Sanson et al., 2006). Similarly, in young adults, neuroticism, increased dependency, and less openness to new experiences were associated with overparenting (Montgomery, 2010). Regarding mothers and fathers, Rousseau and Scharf (2015) investigated the associations between overparenting and adjustment in young adults. They found differences in the effect of overparenting by mothers and by fathers. The impact of overparenting by mothers was moderated by psychological control (i.e., indirect control of an individual's behavior through control of their emotions and cognitions). In contrast, the effect of overparenting by fathers led to more distress and interpersonal sensitivity. Thus, the limited research examining young adults and overparenting has found similar adverse effects associated with this parenting style.

In research specifically focusing on college students, LeMoyne and Buchanan (2011) found college students who experienced overparenting were more likely to show lower psychological well-being, to engage in recreational consumption of pain pills, and to be taking medication for anxiety and depression. Consistent with these findings, Schiffrin et al. (2014) found that overparenting was associated with higher levels of depression and with lowered life satisfaction in a sample of college students. Bradley-Geist and Olson-Buchanan (2014), in an investigation of parental involvement and college students' college experiences, found that overparenting, and not parental involvement, was associated with lower self-efficacy in college students.

Of particular interest, in regard to possible avenues for clinical intervention, two studies examined stress and differentiation of self (Murdock & Gore, 2004; Skowron, et al., 2004).

Differentiation of self is utilized to define "people according to the degree of fusion, or differentiation, between emotional and intellectual functioning" (Bowen, 1985, p. 362). In other words, the level of differentiation relates to the extent to which one can balance intimacy and autonomy and discriminate between thoughts and feelings. Bowen (1985) argued that more differentiated individuals are better able to choose between following their intellect or their emotions, and as such, are better able to cope with stress with logic rather than emotional reactivity. In investigating the latter point, Murdock and Gore (2004) found that coping strategies were related to differentiation of self with reflective coping being related to greater differentiation of self; suppressive and reactive coping was associate to lower differentiation of self. Similarly, Skowron et al. (2004) found that differentiation of self mediated the association between stress and psychological symptoms, with college stress negatively associated and psychological adjustment positively associated with greater differentiation of self.

Differentiation of Self, Parenting, and Psychological Control

The processes associated with differentiation of self explain why overparenting may be related to psychological maladjustments. Bowen theory argues that every individual comes into the world wholly dependent on others for their well-being. From this perspective, an infant starts life in a complete state of emotional fusion or symbiosis with their mother. It is over the course of development that the child pursues the task of becoming a separate individual. At the same time, the parents are confronted with the task of supporting their child's individuality to emerge. Moreover, Bowen theory posits that differentiation is an instinctually rooted force that pushes the developing child toward being an emotionally separate and individually functioning person who can think for herself, feel for herself, and act for herself. However, Bowen theory argues a second instinctually rooted force of togetherness operates to keep family members emotionally

interconnected and together. Of importance, differentiation of self contributes to the functioning of the family and facilitates the development of individuality among its members. For example, in a well-differentiated family, one does not exert too much pressure for togetherness, family members are allowed to grow, to think, to feel, and to act for themselves. In contrast, in a poorly differentiated family that exerts too much pressure on togetherness, family members are not allowed to grow, think, or act for themselves, and family members function in reaction to others.

Interestingly, in the developmental literature on parenting, distinctions are made between two types of parental control, psychological control, and behavioral control. Psychological control "refers to control attempts that intrude into the psychological and emotional development of the child" (Barber, 1996, p. 3296), while behavioral control involves attempts to exercise control over a child's behavior (Barber, Olsen et al., 1994; Manzeske & Stright, 2009). In general, high levels of psychological control have been associated with negative psychological functioning, while moderate levels of behavioral control have been associated with positive outcomes (Barber, Stolz et al., 2005). More specifically, psychological control has been consistently associated with internalizing behaviors in adolescents and college students including anxiety and depression (Albrecht et al., 2007; Barber, 1996; Barber & Harmon 2002; Barber, Olsen et al., 1994; Barber, Stolz et al. 2005; Gerlsma et al., 1990; Seibel & Johnson, 2001; Simpson et al., 2012). From this research, it appears that parenting that is intrusive and nonresponsive to the emotional and psychological needs of adolescents and young adults negatively impacts their psychological adjustment and their ability to function in stressful environments. Taken together, these findings and those associated with overparenting, provide support for the adverse effects of parenting that utilizes psychological control on psychological adjustment.

Psychological Control and Emotion Regulation

Another area of research that informs the relations between parenting, differentiation of self, and college student psychological functioning is research focusing on the development of emotion regulation. Emotion regulation "refers to the processes by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions" (Gross, 1998, p. 275). Implicit in this definition are the goals of emotion regulation, which have been characterized as the down-regulation of negative emotions and the up-regulation of positive emotions (Gross et al., 2006; Quoidbach et al., 2010), although individuals may also have reasons to up-regulate negative emotions and down-regulate positive emotions (Gross, 2015). There are different regulatory strategies that individuals use to meet emotion regulation goals including behavioral strategies (e.g., situation selection, situation modification) and cognitive strategies (e.g., attentional deployment, cognitive change; Garnefski, Legerstee et al., 2002; Gross, 2015). In regard to parenting, emotion regulation is a central concern of the socialization process beginning in infancy and continuing into adolescence and young adulthood (Riediger, & Klipker, 2015; Thompson, 2015).

There is a large body of research that examines the linkage between emotion regulation and mental health. For example, depression has been conceptualized as resulting from dysfunctional emotion regulation (Gross & Munoz, 1995). Depressed individuals have difficulty identifying emotions (Honkalampi et al., 2000), as well as difficulty in areas of emotion regulation including how to deal with negative emotions when experiencing them, how to accept and tolerate negative emotions, and in modifying the experience of negative emotions (Campbell-Sills, Barlow et al., 2006; Rude & McCarthy, 2003). Similarly, individuals with generalized anxiety disorders have difficulty understanding emotions, react more negatively to

emotions, and after experiencing negative emotions, are less able to self-soothe (Cisler et al., 2010; Tull et al., 2009).

Research has also examined emotion regulation at the level of emotion regulation strategies and their relation to specific psychological disorders. Two that have attracted attention in the literature on anxiety disorders are suppression and cognitive reappraisal. Suppression has been defined as "a response-focused ER strategy that occurs late in the temporal unfolding of the emotional response … Suppression can be directed specifically toward inhibition of the behavioral expression of emotion (expressive suppression) and/or toward the dampening of feelings (emotion suppression)" (Campbell-Sills, Ellard et al., 2015, p. 397). Cognitive reappraisal has been defined as entailing "thinking about stimuli in a way that diminishes the intensity of emotion" (Campbell-Sills, Ellard et al., 2015, p. 398). In general, suppression is viewed as a maladaptive regulatory strategy, while cognitive reappraisal is viewed as an adaptive emotion regulation strategy in individuals suffering from anxiety disorders (Campbell-Sills, Ellard et al., 2015). In this context, maladaptive means the regulatory strategy does not lead to a reduction of an unwanted emotional response or may be costly in the long run to the individual who achieves a short-term reduction of the unwanted emotion.

Research on parenting and emotion regulation has primarily focused on the influence of traditional conceptions of parenting with few studies examining overparenting and emotion regulation. Findings suggest that authoritative parenting has positive effects on emotion regulation, while authoritarian, permissive, and parenting high in psychological control have negative impacts on adolescent and young adult emotion regulation (Betts et al., 2009; Feng et al., 2009; Fosco et al., 2012; Jabeen et al., 2013; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Roth & Assor, 2012). Given these findings, it is likely that one-way overparenting is influencing college student

psychological health is by negatively impacting the development of effective or adaptive emotion regulation for negotiating highly stressful environments like the college campus environment.

Parenting, New Family Forms, and Sexual Minority Families

There is a lack of research that focuses on new family forms and the impact of overparenting within these family structures. New family forms include families created through assisted reproduction families, solo mother families, single father families, same-gender families, bisexual families, and transgender families (Biblarz & Savci, 2010; Golombok, 2017). Much of the research conducted during the 1990s focused on parenting and children's developmental outcomes in assisted reproduction families, solo mother families, and lesbian mother families. Research conducted after the turn of the 20th century continued this focus but expanded to begin to include gay father families, bisexual families, and transgender families. Early research examining parenting and new family forms were focused on several fundamental questions concerning child outcomes. This is not surprising given the controversy that surrounded gay families raising children. For example, Stacey and Biblarz (2001) provided a description of the assertions made about gay parenting in the 1990s:

> Likewise, Wardle (1997) draws explicitly on Cameron's work to build his case against gay parent rights. Research demonstrates, Wardle maintains, that gay parents subject their children to disproportionate risks; that children of gay parents are more apt to suffer confusion over their gender and sexual identities and are more likely to become homosexuals themselves; that homosexual parents are more sexually promiscuous than are heterosexual parents and are more likely to molest their own children; that children are at greater risk of losing a homosexual parent to AIDS, substance abuse, or suicide,

and to suffer greater risks of depression and other emotional difficulties; that homosexual couples are more unstable and likely to separate; and that social stigma and embarrassment of having a homosexual parent unfairly ostracizes children and hinders their relationships with peers. (p. 161)

It was against this backdrop that researchers examining new family forms conducted their work. Although there is a lack of research investigating overparenting in new family forms, a brief review of the existent literature on parenting more generally and new family forms is presented below.

Golombok (2017) observed that since the first baby was born through in vitro fertilization in 1978, there have been more than 5 million children born through the utilization of assisted reproductive technologies. Golombok, Jadva et al. (2005), Golombok, MacCallum et al. (2006), and Golombok, Murray et al. (2006) have systematically studied families who used assisted reproductive technologies. Those researchers used information on the psychological development of children and adolescents raised in these families. What they have found, in contrast to concerns about children raised in families created using reproductive technologies, was that the psychological adjustment of children and adolescents was not negatively impacted by the origin of their family. Of importance was not how the family was created, but rather the quality of the parent-child relationship that determined positive psychological functioning.

In research examining lesbian mother families, Golombok (2017) echoed the aforementioned assertions about gay parents noting "it was argued that lesbian mothers would be less nurturing than heterosexual mothers and would show higher rates of psychological disorder and that their children would develop psychological problems as a result" (p. 80). Concerns were also raised about the gender development of children in lesbian mother families. From the

perspective of conventional conceptualizations of gender development, it was thought boys would be less masculine in identity and behavior, and girls would be less feminine, as compared to children raised in a heterosexual family. What Golombok and colleagues found in their research was that lesbian mothers were just as likely to experience good mental health as heterosexual mothers, and that lesbian mothers were just as likely to experience positive relationships with their children as heterosexual mothers (Golombok, 2017). Moreover, children raised by lesbian mothers were no more likely to experience problems in psychological adjustment or to show atypical gender development than were children raised by heterosexual mothers (Golombok, 2017). Schumm and Crawford (2019) provided support for these findings in their evaluation of 72 social science reviews conducted between 2001 and 2017, and whether or not an association was found between the sexual orientation of the parents and their children. Schumm and Crawford reported, "Over 90% of the reviews assessed concluded that there was no association between parent and child sexual orientations, demonstrating a clear scientific consensus on the issue since at least 2001. The small minority of reviews that concluded otherwise often had issues that might lead many scholars to discredit the validity of their conclusions" (p. 1).

Researchers have also examined lesbian couple families prior to their having children and after their having children in the areas of the division of labor, perceptions of parental roles, and perceptions of the closeness of children to each parent. In a study of inseminating lesbian couples, Goldberg and Perry-Jenkins (2007) found that non-biological mothers-based decisions about returning to work on financial considerations within weeks of the birth of their child, while biological mothers reduced the number of hours they worked for months after the birth of their child. They also found that biological mothers retained more responsibility for child care, but

that co-mothers kept an equitable distribution of household tasks after the birth of their child. Goldberg, Downing et al. (2008) examined co-mothers' perceptions of children's preferences in situations where one mother was genetically linked to the child. They found that many of the mothers in their sample believed that their children had a preference for the birth mothers, attributing this preference to breastfeeding and time spent with the birth mother. However, after the initial preference, the mothers believed that the children preferred both parents equally.

Research on gay male families has lagged behind research on other new family forms, but more studies began to be conducted during the first decade of the 21st century. Biblarz and Savci (2010) noted that like research on lesbian family households, the research on gay male families moved from individuals who became parents within the context of heterosexual marriages or relationships to planned families using adoption, surrogacy, or co-parenting with a lesbian woman or couple. Similar to lesbian families, gay male families have been found to co-parent more equally and compatibly than heterosexual parented families (Johnson & O'Connor, 2002). The term "degendered parenting" has also been used by some to describe parenting in gay male families because what seems to be guiding the division of labor in these families is a personal choice, aptitude, and fairness (Silverstein et al., 2002). Consistent with this research, Panozzo (2015) in a study examining child care responsibility in gay-parented families, found that fathers who took on more of the child care responsibilities made less money and demonstrated a greater desire to have a child before the arrival of the child than did their partners. In a literature review examining lesbian mothers, gay fathers, and children's psychosocial developmental outcomes, Tasker (2005) noted children raised in these families were comparable to children from heterosexual families. Tasker also noted that systematic research "has so far not considered developmental outcomes for children brought up from birth

by single gay men or gay male couples (planned gay father families), possibly because of the difficulty of locating an adequate sample" (p. 225). Biblarz and Savci similarly commented that they were not aware of research directly studying coresidential sons and daughters of gay fathers. Subsequent to these reviews, a small number of studies have been conducted examining gay father families (Baiocco et al., 2015; Farr et al., 2010; Goldberg & Smith, 2011; Goldberg, Smith et al., 2010; Golombok, Mellish et al., 2014; Golombok, Blake et al., 2018; Green et al., 2019; Tornello et al., 2011).

Golombok, Mellish et al. (2014) provided a comparison between gay father families, lesbian mother families, and heterosexual parent families with adopted children living in the United Kingdom. The findings showed that when there were differences across these groups, the gay father adoptive families had more positive functioning than the heterosexual parent families. Moreover, Golombok, Mellish et al. reported that gay fathers showed lower levels of depression and stress in comparison to the heterosexual parent families and that there were no differences in psychological functioning between gay father families and lesbian mother families. These findings were consistent with prior research examining the psychological well-being of gay and lesbian parents (Farr et al., 2010; Goldberg & Smith, 2011; Goldberg et al., 2010; Tornello et al., 2011). Golombok, Mellish et al. also reported differences between gay fathers and heterosexual fathers on a number of parenting behaviors. Gay fathers were found to engage in higher levels of warmth, interaction, and responsiveness to their children, and lower levels of disciplinary aggression than heterosexual parents. There were no differences found between gay fathers and lesbian mothers. Lastly, differences in child adjustment were reported between gay families and heterosexual families, with parent-rated externalizing behaviors being greater in heterosexual families than in gay families.

A similar picture emerged in the findings reported by Golombok, Blake et al. (2018) using a sample from the United States. In their comparison of children's adjustment in gay father families created through surrogacy and lesbian mother families created through donor insemination, Golombok, Blake et al. found low levels of behavioral and emotional problems in general across both family types, but also found significantly lower levels of internalizing problems in gay father families compared to lesbian mother families. In terms of externalizing behaviors, which were also at low levels across both groups, no differences between groups were found. These findings were consistent with studies conducted by Baiocco et al. (2015) and Green et al. (2015) that investigated the psychological well-being of children in gay father and lesbian mother families. Of note, the sample used for Baiocco et al. lived in Italy, and compared gay father, lesbian mother, and heterosexual parents. Regarding differences in the societal context between the Golombok, Mellish et al. (2014), Golombok, Blake (2018), and Baiocco et al. studies, when the Baiocco et al. study was conducted, same-sex civil unions were not allowed, and gay men and lesbian women were not allowed to adopt children. The couples either became parents when they were in a heterosexual relationship, or they would travel to other countries to legally access assisted reproductive technologies. The planned gay and lesbian families in Baiocco et al.'s sample became parents by traveling to the U.S. or Canada to gain access to artificial insemination and gestational surrogacy. In regard to the psychological well-being of children, Baiocco et al. found similar levels of psychological well-being across all three family groups. They reported no differences in emotional regulation and a measure of emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems, and prosocial behavior. Green et al. (2019), in a comparison of gay father families created through gestational surrogacy and a normative sample of parents, similarly found positive psychological

functioning in children in gay father families. Specifically, the children in gay father families had significantly lower scores on internalizing and externalizing behaviors than the children of parents in the comparison sample.

In their review of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender families, Biblarz and Savci (2010) pointed out that the state of the academic research on transgender people and families was almost nonexistent, and that research on bisexuality had not yet fully connected with family research. Reczek (2020) similarly noted in a review of sexual minority families that beyond gay and lesbian families, there are very few studies that investigate other gender and sexual-minority families, including transgender and bisexual families. Stotzer et al. (2014) wrote that of the research available examining the outcomes of children who had transgender parents, "no evidence that having a transgender parent affects a child's gender identity or sexual orientation development, nor has an impact on other developmental milestones" (p. 2). Hafford-Letchfield et al. (2019) suggested that their meta-analysis of the literature showed transgender parents were just as invested and committed to their families as other parents, but feared that if their authentic selves were known, that this would destroy their familial bonds. Moreover, what was important in providing protective factors for children before and after the transition was the level of cohesiveness of the family prior to and after the transition. Previous research examining how families adapt to the transition of a family member is consistent with Hafford-Letchfield et al. findings. Dierckx et al. (2017) identified four protective family processes, including family continuity, family communication, significant others' acceptance, and attributing meaning. In sum, there has been some work on transgender parents and families; however, much more work needs to be done to have a better understanding of these families.

The literature examining bisexual parent families is similarly deficient. Some observers have noted that one reason is that when bisexual parents have been included in studies, they tend to be collapsed with gay men and lesbian women (Biblarz & Savci, 2010). Bowling et al. (2018) observed that bisexual parents have been absent from research even though they represent the largest proportion of parents among the lesbian, gay, and bisexual parents. Of the few studies that have specifically examined bisexual parenting, Calzo et al. (2019) presented data on the psychological well-being of children raised by bisexual parents. Calzo et al. used data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS; National Center for Health Statistics, 2014, 2015) to examine children's psychological well-being as compared to that of heterosexual parents, gay parent families, and lesbian parent families. The NHIS used the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ; Bourdon et al., 2005) as an assessment of children's psychological well-being. The SDQ was completed by a parent or other person knowledgeable about the child. In their analysis, Calzo et al. found that children who had a bisexual parent scored higher than children with a heterosexual parent on the SDQ summary score. Moreover, there were no differences in the SDQ between children who had a bisexual parent and those who had a lesbian or gay parent. Although these findings demonstrated positive outcomes for children raised by bisexual parents, like the research on transgender families, much more work is needed to have a better understanding of these families, including work examining overparenting. Beyond the deficiencies highlighted here in research on new family forms, Reczek (2020) observed:

> Research in the past decade focuses primarily on cisgender gay, and lesbian identified people and individuals who live in same-sex households. A smaller but important body of research examines bisexual and transgender partnered families, although research has not kept up with the rapid growth of both of these family forms during the past decade.

Comparing cisgender gay and lesbian families to cisgender heterosexual families was an important first intervention to a historically cisgender heterosexual-dominant field. Yet there has been very little empirical research on the families of other SGM populations, including intersex—people born with a range of intersex traits normatively presumed to be exclusively male or female (e.g., physical genitalia or gonads incongruent with sex chromosomes; Davis, 2015); pansexual—someone attracted to all genders; asexual—someone who does not experience sexual attraction or sexual interest to people of any gender (Carroll, 2019); bisexual—someone who is attracted to more than one sex; or polyamorous—someone who rejects the monogamous imperative and is romantically involved with more than one person at once. These gaps neglect the full range of SGM minority families, especially those who may be the most stigmatized as well as those who offer the most robust challenges to paradigms of monogamy, the gender binary, and heteronormativity. (p. 313)

Clearly, research that focuses on parenting and child outcomes needs to address the significant deficiencies in the area of new family forms and/or sexual and gender minority families.

In terms of the current study, the research reviewed showed positive psychosocial functioning among children raised in new family forms and in sexual minority families. As research in this area of inquiry progresses, however, it would be of importance to specifically examine new conceptions of parenting styles like overparenting in these families. This research would allow for an examination of how overparenting may operate within other family structures beyond those of heterosexual partnered families. For example, given the biases and discrimination couples and children in these families may face, and given one aspect of overparenting is to protect children from negative experiences, it would be interesting to examine

whether or not there were differences in the frequency of overparenting behavior during the course of children's lives or during specific developmental periods. It would also be important to better understand how overparenting may affect children and young adults in the different family structures represented by new family forms and sexual minority families given the differences in how each of these family structures are received by the society in which they live.

Parenting and Fathers

The preceding sections of this literature review examined overparenting and college student psychological functioning. They included a discussion of the influences of overparenting by both fathers and mothers in two-parent, heterosexual families. This section briefly centers on questions of father's parenting more generally in examining whether or not parenting by fathers should be considered as conceptually different than the parenting provided by mothers. This line of research has its roots in studies conducted during the mid and late 20th century (e.g., Lamb et al., 1985). Fagan et al. (2014) and points out that the research community's early interest in fathers was in response to three factors during this time period. First, those developmental researchers were not studying fathers' contributions to parenting. Second, there were concerns about how a father's absence due to war-related separation would affect children. And third, there were findings of studies that examined father absence that indicated children do better when they live with their fathers. The first concern coincided with mothers entering the workforce in increasing numbers during the last quarter of the 20th century. With mothers increasingly entering the workforce, children were placed in nonparental care in increasing numbers. These changes led to a questioning of whether fathers could pick up some of the responsibilities of mothers so they would not be overly burdened in filling both worker and parenting roles. Fagan et al. also noted that divorce and birth outside of marriage were

increasing, and fathers were seen as having little contact with their children and taking on minimal parental responsibilities. In sum, questions about father's absence and societal changes impacting the nature and structure of American families began to put a focus on fathers and their involvement in the family.

During the mid-1980s, an influential examination of fathers and parenting was conducted by Lamb et al. (1985). It was this group's work that led to what has come to be known as the tripartite model of father involvement. In their review of fathers and parenting, Lamb et al. explored a number of questions related to paternal behavior, and reminiscent of some of the discussion about new family forms and sexual minority families, they considered "evidence concerning the competence displayed by fathers: compared with mothers, just how good are they as parents and caretakers?" (p. 833). Lamb et al. went on to describe three components of father involvement that would come to make up an early version of the tripartite model of father involvement. These components included interaction with children, the availability of a father to his children, and the degree of responsibility a father assumed for his children. The following were the operational definitions of each of these components,

> 'Interaction' refers to the father's direct contact with his child, through caretaking and shared activities. 'Availability' is a related concept concerning the father's potential availability for interaction by virtue of being present or accessible to the child whether or not direct interaction is occurring. 'Responsibility' refers, not to the amount of time spent with or accessible to children, but to the role father takes in making sure that the child is taken care of and arranging for resources to be available for the child. (Lamb et al., 1985, p. 884)

These components are now described in the tripartite model as paternal engagement, accessibility, and responsibility (Fagan et al., 2014). Importantly, Pleck (2010) revised and expanded the first component of the tripartite model, engagement, in response to shifts in the research literature toward focusing on positive father engagement. Fagan et al. explained that a problem with the original concept was that it was too broad for understanding how father's parenting contributed to child outcomes. For example, much of the research examined engagement as the amount of time fathers spent in interaction with their children. But, the quantity of time spent does not capture the quality of time spent in interaction with children. If the father's parenting behavior is intrusive, controlling, or demeaning, this behavior would represent negative and not positive engagement with their children. Thus, Pleck described the revision of the construct of paternal involvement as including "three primary components: (1) positive engagement activities, (2) warmth and responsiveness, and (3) control" (p. 58). Pleck added the revision also included "two auxiliary domains: (4) indirect care, and (5) process responsibility" (p. 58).

Fagan et al. (2014) observed that the work on paternal involvement has had a significant impact on the understanding of how fathers are involved in their children's lives, and has led to a better understanding of the roles that men play in families. This includes research investigating aspects of paternal involvement among divorced fathers, low-income fathers, fathers who were serving in the military, and on the effects of paternal involvement on children (Fagan et al., 2014). Interestingly, beyond a better understanding of the influence of father involvement is a seeming convergence of similar parenting effects by mothers and fathers. For example, Fagan et al. have suggested that based on the evidence, researchers should move away from using the term "father involvement" because this term itself implies that father's parenting is conceptually

different than mother's parenting. These researchers based their conclusion on three sets of research findings showing that fathering and mothering constructs were the same, that their parenting behaviors influenced children in similar ways, and that fathers and mothers were more similar than ever before in their engagement behaviors with children, and among North American, Australian, and European parents, in the amount of time they spent with their children.

Given the convergence of findings examining parenting by mothers and fathers, the convergence of roles between mothers and fathers, at least among heterosexual families in western societies, and the findings of research examining new family forms and sexual minority families, it seems worthwhile to consider Fagan et al.'s (2014) argument for gender-neutral conceptualizations of parenting dimensions. It seems that in each of these areas of research, what is of most importance is the quality of parenting provided by parents and not the gender or sexual orientation of the person or persons providing that parenting. This assertion has important implications for attitudes about parental competence and cultural acceptance of new family structures.

Chapter 5: Social Justice and Societal Inequities Across Families

Social justice can mean different things to different people in different contexts. Ornstein (2017) presented an analysis of the history, purpose, and meaning of social justice. In his analysis, he points out that social scientists study social mobility in an effort to gain an understanding of the openness and fluidity of social structures. Ornstein further observed social scientists are concerned with the difficulties different persons within social structures have in acquiring goods and services that are of value in a culture. In ascription societies, he noted the stratification system is closed. This is because an individual's status is determined at birth. Ascription societies are differentiated from open-class societies, where different people may start with different advantages (or disadvantages) at birth, but opportunity exists to change one's social position. Ornstein (2017) provided a list of 30 principles that should be considered as the framework in defining social justice. One of those basic principles is:

> A fair and just society will encourage democratic principles of equality, opportunity, and mobility. It will also provide a legal framework for human rights (the concept is less than 350 years old), civil rights, and individual rights. (p. 546)

The current study centers on overparenting and college student's ability to manage the stress associated with college life. An examination of this topic brings into focus inequities that exist across socioeconomic groups that are significant in influencing parent behavior that affects children's development, mental health, and social mobility as adults. This topic also brings into focus inequities across different family structures that are impacted by societal norms, attitudes, beliefs, and biases regarding who should be a parent, and the promulgation of this inequity across persons falling into particular sexual orientation and gender classes. These social justice issues are explored below. Because of the importance of economic inequality for understanding

the social justice issues explored, a number of statistics are provided addressing economic inequality. These data are presented to illustrate the depth and complexity of the societal problem of economic inequality and its impact on families and their ability to thrive.

Parenting and the Impact of Socioeconomic Inequality

An important backdrop to differences among families in their parenting behaviors whether talking about traditional typologies of parenting styles or newer conceptualizations of parenting like overparenting and intensive parenting, is the persistence of socioeconomic inequality in the U.S. For example, recent data from the Pew Research Center (2020) indicated that the income and wealth gap in the U.S. has continued to increase while at the same time, the middle class has continued to shrink. Moreover, the Pew Research Center reported that, "Economic inequality, whether measured through the gaps in income or wealth between richer and poorer households, continues to widen" (p. 12). They also noted that in 1971, 61% of households were considered middle-income, and that in 2019 that percentage stood at 51%. Recognizing that differences in socioeconomic status may lead to differences in parenting, social scientists and economists have examined the effects of socioeconomic inequality and how it may affect parenting styles across different socioeconomic groups, and how socioeconomic inequality may affect parental investments of time and spending on their children. This research has been helpful in explaining differences in parenting in families across socioeconomic strata and in societal shifts in parenting behavior. It has also been helpful in highlighting the disadvantages suffered by children from lower-income families and wealth groups.

Parenting Styles, Behavior, and Socioeconomic Status

Research in the U.S. examining the relationship between parenting styles and socioeconomic status began as early as 1936 (Hoff et al., 2002). During the ensuing 84 years,

research has been fairly consistent in demonstrating differences in parenting behavior across socioeconomic groups. For example, in their comprehensive literature review, Hoff et al. reported there are socioeconomic status differences in parent's beliefs about how much control they have over an outcome for children that they value, with lower socioeconomic status parents believing they have less control than higher socioeconomic status parents. Hoff et al. also reported consistent differences in parenting styles used by parents of different socioeconomic classes. Families with higher parental education are higher in authoritative parenting and lower in authoritarian and permissive parenting than are families with lower parental education. There are also differences in specific parenting practices across socioeconomic status groups (Hoff et al., 2002). Parenting practices include verbal interaction practices, control practices, and managerial control of children. Hoff et al. noted that higher socioeconomic status mothers have more verbal interaction with their children, and their children experience more complexity in the speech directed to them, compared to lower socioeconomic mothers. They also noted that the direct control practices of lower socioeconomic mothers are more controlling, restrictive, and disapproving than those of higher socioeconomic mothers. Lastly, parent's managerial practices varied as a function of socioeconomic status with activities like time spent by children watching television versus time spent in skill development activities (e.g., homework), and the coordination of participation in activities like sports, clubs, private lessons, and church-related activities. Thus, consistent differences in parenting styles and behaviors across socioeconomic groups have been documented over the years.

A similar picture emerged in recent research by economists examining the connection between rising income inequality and the over involvement of parents in their children's lives. The over involvement of parents can be operationalized in terms of time spent with children, and

in terms of differences in newer forms of parenting like overparenting or helicopter parenting. In their research, Doepke and Zilibotti (2019) examined changes in the time spent by parents with children as a measure of the intensity of parenting. They examined these changes in several countries including the U.S., Canada, Italy, U.K., Spain, and the Netherlands. Although the consecutive years available for analysis varied across countries, the data for the U.S. and the Netherlands spanned over three decades from 1975 to 2012. Doepke and Zilibotti (2019) found that the hours spent each week with children by both mothers and fathers had steadily increased in all countries over the years. Looking specifically at the U.S., they found that the amount of time mothers and fathers spent with their children increased by approximately 6 hours a week, or by approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes of parent-child interaction time per day. In regard to differences in time spent in childcare activities, they found that in the 1970s, less-educated and more-educated parents spent about the same amount of time, but that there was now a gap of more than 3 hours between groups in favor of more educated parents.

Parenting and Economic Conditions

Doepke et al. (2019) provided an analysis of the relationship between parenting styles and the economics of parenting. They suggested that economic conditions affect the type of parenting styles parents choose to raise their children. Doepke et al. noted that in their research, "choice of parenting style describes the extent to which parents interfere with their children's inclinations and how they go about getting children to conform to their own wishes" (p. 60). Doepke et al. suggested paternalism and altruism are two dimensions of parenting that can be used to define parenting behavior. Paternalism is viewed as a parent interference with their children's choices and outcomes in directing their children toward choices considered by the parent as of worth and value. Altruism, on the other hand, is the extent to which a parent cares

about their children's choices and outcomes but does not interfere with the choices or outcomes that are of worth or value to the child. Analogizing to Baumrind's (1971) conceptualization of parenting styles, the extreme of paternalism could be viewed as obedience-based authoritarian parenting, while the extreme of altruism could be viewed as permissive parenting. From their perspective, Doepke et al. suggested one area of conflict between parents and children is the choices children want to make versus the choices their parents want them to make. For instance, children may want to make choices that map onto immediate gratification, but not future success, whereas parents may want their children to make choices that map onto delay of gratification and future success. Thus, from an economics of parenting perspective, parents may interfere with children's choices in the service of helping them achieve what is viewed as of worth or value to the parent, or not interfere with children's choices, and allow them the independence to choose what is of worth or value to them.

To examine how economic conditions may affect the type of parenting styles parents choose to raise their children, Doepke et al. (2019) examined data on parenting values collected by the World Value Survey (WVS), which is a part of a larger survey conducted by a global network of social scientists. This network studies how changing values in general affect social and political life around the world. In their analysis, Doepke at al. used the data on parenting values to define two types of parenting, intensive parenting and relaxed parenting. Intensive parents are those that value a mix of authoritarian parenting (e.g., value obedience) and authoritative parenting values (e.g., value hard work). Relaxed parents are those that value permissive parenting values (e.g., value independence and imagination, but do not mention obedience or hard work). When these two parenting styles were correlated with economic indices, Doepke at al. showed that greater inequality across countries was correlated with greater

intensive parenting, and that tax progressivity and social expenditure across countries were correlated with less intensive parenting in the countries examined. These data suggest that when countries enact measures to help alleviate the stress on families that comes with greater economic inequality, they may also affect the intensity of parenting by reducing societal factors that may motivate increased competition between families for economic mobility within a society.

In sum, research suggests income and wealth inequality are associated with differences in parental behavior, and the types of parenting styles families use including traditional parenting styles (e.g., authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive) and newer conceptualizations of parenting (e.g., overparenting, intensive parenting). These data also suggest that countries whose systems do not take measures to reduce economic inequality may not be meeting basic principles of social justice. The differences in parental behavior may work to advantage some individuals in society over others in terms of equality, opportunity, and social and economic mobility. A final area of research reviewed in this section is work that examines how economic inequalities can lead to social inequalities. In this literature, the focus is on economic inequality and how differences in parental investment in children may facilitate the transmission of advantage across generations. There has been work in this area by both sociologists and economists.

Parental Investment in Children and Economic Inequality

During the modern era of sociology (i.e., the mid-20th century), sociologists theorized about social stratification in societies (Davis & Moore, 1945; Parsons, 1940). For example, Parsons defined social stratification as "the differential ranking of the human individuals who compose a given social system and their treatment as superior and inferior relative to one another in certain socially important respects" (p. 841). Parsons also noted that the "status of any given

individual in the system of stratification in a society might be regarded as a resultant of the common valuations underlying the attribution of status to him' in dimensions such as achievements, possessions, authority, and power" (p. 849). Lavrijsen and Nicaise (2016) observed that scholars such as Parsons essentially defended the idea that "some degree of social inequality might be necessary, as society requires different profiles to occupy different positions, and the more important positions have to be the best rewarded. The aim therefore is not equal outcomes, but a particular distribution of possible outcomes that are unrelated to a person's social background" (p. 1). It is within this theoretical context that some scholars have examined social stratification and considered the extent to which the allocation of social positions is based on achievement (i.e., meritocratic principles) or based on ascription (i.e., one's social origins).

In their work to better understand how advantage may be transmitted across generations, Schneider et al., (2018) investigated the association between income inequality and class gaps in the parental investment of money and time in children. They noted that in the past 40 years, there has been historic increases in income inequality in the U.S. Schneider et al. also observed during this same period of time, there have also been increases in class differences, as measured by household income and educational attainment, and in the amount of money and time parents spend on children. In thinking about mechanisms that may be driving that relationship, Schneider et al. suggested one pathway may be contextual effects that influence parent's thinking about the world. In particular, they suggested that with a rising awareness of income inequality there may come heightened anxiety among parents with higher socioeconomic status about the transmission of socioeconomic advantage to their children. This greater anxiety might then lead to greater investment of time and money by some parents in an effort to transmit socioeconomic advantage. Consistent with their assertion, Schneider et al. found that income inequality may serve as a basis

for unequal financial investment in children. This finding is consistent with other research investigating inequalities in parental spending on children (Kornrich, 2016; Kornrich & Furstenberg, 2013). Moreover, they found that parents in higher-income-rank households spent more on children when income inequality was greater as measured by state-level income inequality. Schneider et al. speculated that one consequence of unequal investment is that there may be differences in adult attainment across social classes. If accurate, and in conjunction with prior work on the benefits of parental investment, inequalities in parental investment may be an important factor connecting income inequality and intergenerational mobility, or lack thereof.

The work by psychologists, economists, and sociologists have documented consistent differences in parenting that are associated with socioeconomic status and economic inequality. This is true whether examining parental behavior, parenting style, time spent, or money spent on children. As families negotiate the changing social and economic landscape of the 21st century, it is important to address fundamental questions about fairness in regard to merit-based social and economic stratification in the U.S., and whether there is movement toward an increasingly ascribed-based system of stratification. From a social justice perspective, all families should have an equal opportunity to engage in the activities that will better prepare their children for school, college, and ultimately, the 21st century marketplace. So, what factors may lead to increased economic inequality and/or the maintenance of inequality across generations of families? These factors include the cost of raising children, the benefits and costs of purchasing a college education, and variation in wage growth across social and demographic groups.

The Cost of Parenting, Ability to Spend, and Long-Term Implications

Parenting in the U.S. requires a significant investment of a family's financial resources. The United States Agricultural Department (USDA) has been examining data on expenditures on

children since 1960 and what the estimated costs are to raise children from birth to 17 years of age. What their reports have shown is that the estimated cost of raising children varies according to household income, the region of the country a family lives in, and the composition of families. In their most recent report, Lino et al. (2017) presented estimates of the annual expenditures on children in married, two-parent, and single-parent families with two children using data from the 2011–2015 Consumer Expenditure Survey. The categories of expenditure included housing, food, transportation, clothing, health care, childcare and education, and miscellaneous. In their report, they used income groups that represent the lower, middle, and upper thirds of the income distribution in the U.S. They defined the lower income group as a family who earns less than $59,200 of before-tax income, the middle-income group as a family who earns between $59,200 and $107,400 of before-tax income, and the upper-income group as a family who earns more than $107,400 of before-tax income. For each of these income groups, the annual expenses in 2015, depending on a child's age, ranged from $9,330 to $9,980, $12,350 to $13,900, and from $19,380 to $23,380, respectfully. The total expenditure to raise a child from birth to 17 years of age for the overall U.S. (i.e., not by state or region of the country) in a married, two-parent family was $174,690, $223,610, and $372,210, respectively. For a single-parent family defined according to two income groups, those who had a before-tax income of $59,200 or less and those who had a before-tax income of more than $59,200, the costs were $172,200 and $319,020, respectively.

The examination of the cost of raising children underscores the significant differences in how much a family in each income group can spend on their children. Of particular interest is the spending on childcare and education, and on miscellaneous. Spending on these activities is essential as a means for preparing children for education, or the first steps up the socioeconomic

ladder. Lino et al. (2017) defined childcare and education expenses as consisting "of day care tuition and supplies; babysitting; and elementary and high school tuition, books, fees, and supplies. Books, fees, and supplies may be for private or public schools," and miscellaneous expenses as consisting "of personal care items (haircuts, toothbrushes, etc.), entertainment (portable media players, sports equipment, dance lessons, computer games, etc.), and reading materials (non-school books, magazines, etc.)" (p. 3). The estimated expenditures on childcare and education by lower, middle, and upper income groups overall in the U.S. for 2015 were $21,240, $38,040, and $86,820, respectively. The estimated expenditures on miscellaneous by lower, middle, and upper income groups overall in the U.S. for 2015 were $10,710, $17,460, and $32,340, respectively. The difference in spending between the lower- and upper-income groups for childcare and education was $65,580, and for miscellaneous was $21,630 for childbirth to 17 years of age. The ability to invest greater financial resources in these activity areas may partially explain socioeconomic-related gaps in children's school readiness (Morgan et al., 2009; Reardon & Portilla, 2016; Solano & Weyer, 2017) and in academic achievement (Lacour & Tissington, 2011; Reardon et al., 2013). These early gaps in school readiness and academic achievement may affect children throughout their lives and into adulthood. For example, the average literacy skills of children from low-socioeconomic families are five years behind those from high-socioeconomic families when entering high school (Reardon et al., 2013). Moreover, graduation rates differ by socioeconomic status with college students from low socioeconomic backgrounds graduating at significantly lower rates than college students from high socioeconomic backgrounds (Bjorklund-Young, 2016). Thus, early disadvantage can have long-term consequences for college readiness and completion. This at a time when college has become more important than in prior decades for socioeconomic mobility (DeAngelo & Franke,

2016; Issacs, 2012).

College as a Means for Social and Economic Mobility

Many families in the U.S. depend on college as a way to achieve social and economic mobility. The benefits of obtaining at least a bachelor's degree are demonstrated by such indicators as income level, employment rates, and the health and welfare of families. For example, Ma et al. (2019) highlighted these benefits reporting that in 2018 the median earnings of those with a bachelor's degree employed full-time were $24,900 higher than those with a high school diploma employed full-time. They added that in 2018 and among women and men between the ages of 25 and 34 with a bachelor's degree working full-time, their median earnings were $52,500 and $63,300, respectively, compared to those with a high school diploma whose median earnings were $29,800 and $39,800, respectively. Moreover, in 2018, individuals with a bachelor's degree 25 years and older experienced around half of the unemployment rate than those with a high school diploma. For those 25 to 34 with a bachelor's degree, they experienced a 2.2% unemployment rate compared to those with a high school diploma who experienced a 5.7% unemployment rate. In regard to leading a healthier lifestyle, Ma et al. (2019) reported that in 2018, 69% of individuals ages 25 to 34 with at least a bachelor's degree exercised vigorously at least once a week compared to 47% of those who were high school graduates. These differences between groups not only benefit the individuals themselves, but their families and society as a whole through the payment of more taxes, the lower likelihood of being on public assistance programs, and in reducing healthcare costs by leading a healthier lifestyle.

Increasing Cost of College and Variation in Growth of Wages: Implications for

Socioeconomic Mobility

Pursuing a bachelor's degree can have long-term benefits for individuals, families, and society. However, going to college requires a significant financial investment on the part of families and individuals. For some families, the net price of college, or the cost of college that includes things like textbooks, transportation, and living expenses minus the state, federal, and institution grants received by the student, is unaffordable. According to Cochrane et al. (2017), the Institute for College Access and Success (2017), the share of total income needed to cover the national average net cost of college for families making $30,000 a year was 50% for a two-year public college and 77% for a four-year public college. For families making between $48,001 and $75,000 a year, the percentages were 15% for a two-year public college and 25% for a four-year public college. And for families making $110,000 a year, the percentages were 8% for a two-year public college and 14% for a four-year public college. Thus, for some families, it may not be feasible to pay for their children's college education. Moreover, the proportion of family income needed to pay for college continues to increase as the cost of college continues to grow. For example, according to Snyder et al. (2019), the average cost of undergraduate tuition, fees, and room and board in 1999–2000 for a four-year public institution were $12,127 in constant dollars (i.e., an adjusted value of currency used to compare dollar values from one period to another). In 2017–2018, the cost was $20,050 in constant dollars representing a 65% increase in cost from 1999–2000 to 2017–2018. It is clear that this increase in cost is a burden for many families and may make it impossible for some to cover the cost of a college education. Unfortunately, the growth in wages has not kept pace with the increased cost

of college, thus disenfranchising numerous families who cannot afford to pay for college.

Differences in wage growth across social and demographic groups are explored below.

Wage Growth and the Maintenance of Economic Inequality

According to the DeSilver (2018), the average hourly wage in the U.S. in constant 2018

dollars went from $20.27 in 1964 to $22.65 in 2018, for an increase of $2.38. Thus, while the

cost of receiving a bachelor's degree from a 4-year public institution increased by 65% in

constant dollars, the average hourly wage in the U.S. increased by 12% in constant dollars. Also,

the increase in wages was not evenly distributed across wage-earning groups. When DeSilver

examined increases by percentile from 2000 to 2018, he found that wage increases had mostly

gone to those in the highest income percentiles. DeSilver reported, "Since 2000, usual weekly

wages have risen 3% (in real terms) among workers in the lowest tenth of the earnings

distribution and 4.3% among the lowest quarter. But among people in the top tenth of the

distribution, real wages have risen a cumulative 15.7%, to $2,112 a week – nearly five times the

usual weekly earnings of the bottom tenth ($426)" (para. 7).

Similarly, the Congressional Research Service (2019) provided data on wages from 1979

to 2018 showing an unequal distribution of wage growth across wage-earning groups. Examining

wage-growth in constant 2018 dollars, their data indicated there were differences in wage growth

across a number of different demographic groups in the 10th, 50th, and 90th percentile of

wage-earning groups. For example, overall wage growth from 1979 to 2018 was 1.6%, 6.1%,

and 37.6% by percentile group, respectively. Breaking down the trends by men and women in

the 10th, 50th, and 90th percentiles showed a negative trend for men in the 10th and 50th

percentiles at -13.3% and -5.1%, and a positive trend in the 90th percentile at 36.4%. For

women, the trend for the percentile groups was 4.8%, 25.7%, and 66.7%, respectively. When considered by race and ethnicity in the 10th, 50th, and 90th percentile groups, White (non-Hispanic) trends were 8.2%, 13.2%, and 45.6%. For Black (non-Hispanic), the trends were -0.3%, 1.2%, and 28%, respectively, and for Hispanic, the trends were -3.7%, -4.6%, and 11.4%, respectively. Thus, wage growth among some demographic groups actually declined from 1979 to 2018. Finally, differences in wage growth were examined by educational attainment. For college degree holders in the 10th, 50th, and 90th percentile groups, the trends were 4.0%, 14.4%, and 34%, and for high school diploma or less education, the trends were -3.7%, -12.3%, and -9.7%, respectively.

Socioeconomic Inequality, Families, and Intergenerational Mobility

Research examining socioeconomic inequality and intergenerational mobility is complicated and would require more than this brief examination to understand the many factors that contribute to social and economic mobility. What does seem clear, however, is that some of the factors described here that may act to exacerbate socioeconomic inequality, may also act to increase intergenerational persistence, or lack of intergenerational mobility in families. As has been noted, socioeconomic status is implicated in gaps in school readiness and academic achievement, and in high school and college graduation or completion rates. The impact on college graduation rates is perhaps best illustrated by the completion rates of students with the same high school GPA (HSGAP) but from families with different socioeconomic statuses. For example, Ma et al. (2019) examined college student completion rates at public 2-year institutions, and at public, private nonprofit, and for-profit 4-year institutions by student HSGPA category and family income category. The GPA categories included 2.9 and lower, 3.0 to 3.4, and 3.5 to 4.0. The income categories included low, less than $50,000 a year, middle, between

$50,000-$99,000 a year, and high, over $100,000 a year. In every instance, students whose families had higher incomes were more likely to complete their degree than students whose families had lower incomes. For a 4-year public institution, the completion rates for those in the 2.9 and lower HSGPA category were 33% for those in the low-income group, 45% for those in the middle-income group, and 55% in the high-income group. The completion rates for those in the 3.0 to 3.4 HSGPA category were 52% for those in the low-income group, 62% for those in the middle-income group, and 75% in the high-income group. The completion rates for those in the 3.5 to 4.0 HSGPA category were 61% for those in the low-income group, 81% for those in the middle-income group, and 89% in the high-income group. This same pattern emerged whether looking at 2-year public, 4-year private nonprofit, or for-profit institutions.

The opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a college degree has also not accrued equally across demographic groups, a situation that has persisted across time. In comparisons between African American, Hispanic, and White students in the percentage of college enrollment, Ma et al. (2019) reported that in 1998, 59%, 55%, and 68% of recent high school graduates were enrolled in college within one year of their high school graduation, respectively. And in 2018, those enrollment rates were 60%, 66%, and 70%, respectively. Looking at the percentage of bachelor's degrees completed for individuals between 25 and 29 and among women who were African American, Hispanic, and White, the percentages in 1998 were 17%, 11%, and 34%, respectively. In 2018, the percentages were 25%, 22%, and 47%, respectively. Among men, the percentages in 1998 were 13%, 10%, and 31%, respectively, and in 2018, were 20%, 17%, and 39%. Moreover, the increase in cost of college has also acted to decrease racial and ethnic diversity further on college campuses. Allen and Wolniak (2019) found a negative correlation

between tuition increase at 2-year community colleges and 4-year public institutions and the racial/ethnic composition of enrolled students.

In closing, the data on the cost of raising children, the costs of purchasing a college education, variation in wage growth, and college completion rates across social, economic, and demographic groups suggest those in more privileged groups are better positioned to maintain their social and economic advantage. These data also suggest that it is becoming increasingly difficult for families in disadvantaged and traditionally underrepresented groups to experience social mobility. Democratic countries, such as the U.S., have been viewed as built on the idea that they are open-class and meritocratic societies. But it seems that in countries that do not implement progressive tax and social policies, the ability for social mobility is becoming increasingly difficult for more and more families and their children. Without fundamental changes to these policies, it seems the gap in social and economic inequality will only get larger to the detriment of children and young adults in disadvantaged groups.

New Family Forms and Sexual Minority Families

When considering social justice, new family forms, and sexual minority families, the issues, both past, and present, cut across a number of fields of inquiry. These have included psychological, sociological, legal, ethical, religious, political, and ideological issues. Some of the psychological and sociological issues were discussed in the section reviewing the literature on parenting, new family forms, and sexual minority families. As was noted, much of the psychological research had as its starting point the questioning of the fitness of gay and lesbian parents, and whether or not gay and lesbian families would bring about psychological and emotional harm to children growing up in these family structures. This questioning has continued seemingly unabated and in what appears to be newly evolved arguments suggesting the social

science literature is still inconclusive on children's welfare in sexual minority families (Schumm, 2016). This, in the face of more than thirty years of research demonstrating that children raised in gay and lesbian families do not suffer psychosocial problems due to their parent's sexual orientation (Bastianelli et al., 2017; Russell, 2019). Moreover, at a time when there is growing acceptance of sexual minority families in Western countries, some argue that misconceptions about same-gender families may be in part rooted in misconceptions about children needing both a male and a female role model for positive psychosocial development (Webb, 2018). Webb et al. argued that it is mistaken beliefs like these that may influence the support for same-gender family rights, which then may impact legislation changes that provide legal protections for these rights. Bastianelli et al. reached this sobering conclusion about the debate around same-sex families (SSF):

> It seems fair to conclude that an analysis of data published over the last few years continues to show, on the one hand the absence of problems for children growing in a homosexual context and, on the other a clear ideological divide between those supporting and those opposed to SSF.

> At present, it seems impossible to open a scientific and neutral debate between the two camps. This is due to an irremediable conflict between supporters of the right of every individual, regardless of sexual orientation, to form a family and those insisting that every child has a fundamental right to have a mother and a father.

> It is our opinion that information gathered by scientific research will not resolve the dilemma of whether children rights are violated by their growing in a SSF. (p. 005)

Where to go from here? It seems reasonable to stay the course of informed decision making based on research and analysis, and based on the adherence and application of basic principles of social justice on behalf of families. Since the consensus of the literature is that children's psychosocial development is not affected by their parent's sexual orientation, then the work providing a legal framework protecting the rights of sexual minority families should continue undeterred.

Mayo-Adam (2020) presented a review of family law and policy documenting the gains and setbacks for LGBTQ families to date. From a social justice perspective, the gains are significant in family law and policy, especially in light of Mayo-Adam's observation that LGBTQ families have existed for centuries, even with laws and policies designed to criminalize their relationships. Of particular note was the 2015 Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage across the U.S. Unfortunately, the setbacks are just as significant from a social justice perspective. They include the continued variation in legal protections for LGBTQ families across the states in regard to parental, adoption, and foster care rights of sexual minority family parents. This variation is due to what constitutes a family that is, for the most part, determined by state and local law (Mayo-Adam, 2020). It is at this intersection that cultural, historical, and legal definitions of families may collide to the detriment of the rights of some families.

The societal definitions of what constitutes a family are important in the area of law and policy. Russell (2019) observed that family has always been historically and culturally defined and not without controversy. Russell added that current discourse about what constitutes a family is based on a romanticized and historically unique version of a family in the U.S. during the period after World War II. This unique version is the American nuclear family made up of a

first-marriage man and a first-marriage woman and their biological children. When observing the cultural debate about sexual minority families, much of it centers on the American nuclear family as the standard, with one side of the debate arguing anything short of this is aberrant and harmful to society. Interestingly, a good portion of the psychological research examining sexual minority families has compared these families to heterosexual nuclear families, and in doing so, perhaps has unintentionally reinforced this standard. Russell concluded that families are "fundamentally complex, contested, and ever-changing in the context of historical times and cultures" (p. 360). Using this assertion as a frame of reference, over 74 years have passed since the end of World War II, and during this period, the conception of what constitutes a family in American society appears to have changed somewhat to include family structures other than only the nuclear family.

One source of evidence for changing conceptions of the family comes from public opinion polls conducted on attitudes about same-sex marriage. For example, in a Pew Research Center (2019, May 14) poll, the results showed that in 2001, 35% of U.S. adults were in favor of same-sex-marriage, while a majority of 57% were opposed. However, in 2011 the majority view shifted such that 46% were in favor of same-sex marriage, and 44% were opposed. In 2019, the majority in favor grew to 61% with only 31% being opposed. Looking at specific categories of Americans, the Pew Research Center (2019, December 13) poll showed the percentage of U.S. adults who favor same-sex marriage by religious affiliation also grew from 2001 to 2019. The groups polled included White evangelical Protestants, White mainline Protestants, Black Protestants, Catholics, and Unaffiliated. The percentage of adults in favor in 2001 were 13%, 38%, 30%, 40%, and 61%, respectively. In 2019, the percentages were 29%, 66%, N/A% (no data were provided for 2019, but in 2017, 44% were in favor), 61%, and 79%, respectively.

Thus, across each religious group polled, the percentage in favor increased. In regard to generational differences, the poll found similar shifts in attitudes. The generational groups polled were the Silent Generation (1928–45), Baby Boomers (1946–64), Generation X (1965–80), and Millennials (1981–1996). The percentage of adults in 2003 were 17%, 33%, 40%, and 51%, respectively, in favor of same-sex marriage. In 2019, the percentages were 45%, 51%, 58%, and 74%, respectively. As the majority of U.S. adults move toward acceptance of changes in family forms, one can assume those in public office will increasingly feel empowered and/or pressured to put legislation into place that protects the legal rights of sexual minority families.

In addition to attitudes on families, an integral part of the movement forward in establishing legal protections and rights for sexual minority families has been social science research. According to Mayo-Adam (2020), social science findings have been significant in framing the debate concerning LGBTQ family law and policy. Mayo-Adam argued that social science research has been important in court cases considering: (a) the constitutionality of same-sex marriage, (b) LGBTQ parent's influence on the health and well-being of children, (c) legislation that concerns the full legal recognition of LGBTQ families. Even with all the progress that has been made in family law and policy, it still seems that becoming parents for the LGBTQ community can be a daunting task. For example, in a recent article published by the New York Times, Dodge (2019) provided a guide to becoming parents for LGBTQ people. The guide included: (a) knowing the laws in your state because a couple's legal outlook can vary widely depending on the state that they live in; (b) understanding your preferred path to parenthood (i.e., donor arrangements, adoption, or fostering) because each choice comes with its own set of legal considerations; (c) understanding any legal concerns around your relationship status (i.e., single, unmarried, or married); (d) if not biologically related to your child,

comprehending and taking the steps to establish legal parentage (i.e., the person or persons for whom the law recognizes as a parent for child welfare and custody purposes) even if married to the child's biological parent; (e) recognizing that becoming an LGBTQ parent can be an expensive prospect; and (f) being prepared to hire an experienced family attorney if you encounter obstacles to becoming a parent (i.e., in states with unfavorable parenting laws for the LGBTQ community). Although married and unmarried heterosexual couples may confront some of these issues in becoming parents, the guidelines suggest a particularly complex and unequal set of circumstances for LGBTQ people.

In closing, it is essential to consider Russell's (2019) thoughts about social justice and families:

> I define social justice as the ability of people and families to realize their potential for health and thriving in the context of the society in which they live. In simple terms, this means that families (and the individuals in them) will have the potential to become the best version of themselves that they can possibly be. Social justice is manifest when families have opportunities to maximize their health and happiness across the life span. (p. 359)

The preceding review suggests that in the case of sexual minority families, the character of our society, reflected politically, economically, socially, or culturally, has acted in ways that has not allowed families in general, and sexual minority families specifically, to realize their full potential. Work should continue at all levels to correct this situation.

Chapter 6: Statement of Purpose, Significance of Study, Research Questions,

`and Delimitations of Study

Statement of Purpose, Significance of Study, and Research Questions

This study will explore the effect of parenting on college student psychological functioning. Although research has been conducted exploring the associations between more traditional conceptions of parenting (e.g., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive) and behavioral constructs associated with parenting (e.g., psychological control, behavioral control), fewer studies have been conducted investigating the connections between a newer conception of parenting, helicopter or overparenting, and the psychological well-being of college students. This is a critical area of study given the increase in problems associated with college student mental health. It is important to understand better how overparenting, and parenting in general, may be affecting college student mental health via its effect on factors important for negotiating stressful environments (e.g., differentiation of self and emotion regulation). To better understand these connections, this study will examine the following quantitative questions: What are the associations between parenting, differentiation of self, and emotion regulation, and how is each of these factors related to college student perceived stress and anxiety? It is hypothesized that consistent with previous research, overparenting will be negatively associated with differentiation of self. In regard to emotion regulation, and consistent with previous research examining parenting and emotion regulation, it is hypothesized that overparenting will be positively associated with maladaptive emotion regulation strategies. It is also predicted that overparenting will be positively associated with higher levels of perceived stress and anxiety in college students. In terms of indirect relationships between overparenting, anxiety, and perceived stress, it is hypothesized that greater differentiation of self will be associated with less perceived

stress and anxiety, and that maladaptive emotion regulation strategy use will be associated with higher levels of perceived stress and anxiety.

Delimitations of Study

A delimitation of this study was that archival data were used to investigate the influence of parenting on college student psychological functioning. The archival data used was collected as a convenience sample. Archival data is defined as data that is already available (Antioch University New England, 2017; Jones, 2010), and a convenience sample is defined as a sample that was selected because of participant's accessibility and proximity to the research (Bornstein et al., 2013). Among the advantages of using archival data for secondary analysis is that it can be a no-cost to low-cost strategy for data collection, staff members associated with data collection generally clean the data and provide documentation about the data and cleaning process, and the use of archival data relieves a researcher from the time-intensive process of collecting the data (Cheng & Phillips, 2014). The disadvantages of using archival data include that the data may not have been collected to specifically examine the user's research questions, and thus may not be representative of all population subgroups from all geographic areas of interest (Cheng & Phillips, 2014). Other disadvantages can include the data having been stripped of identifying information to protect participant confidentiality, such as where the data was collected, race, ethnicity, and the age of the participants. (Cheng & Phillips, 2014). The current study was able to capitalize on the advantages while avoiding some of the disadvantages. Measures for this study were included at time of data collection, and demographic information was made available.

Among the advantages of convenience sampling are ease of recruitment, less time involved in obtaining the sample, and less expense related to obtaining the sample (Bornstein et al., 2013). Among the disadvantages of convenience sampling are that the generalizability of the

sample is limited to that sample or samples with similar characteristics, the generalizability of estimates of differences between sociodemographic groups is limited to that sample or samples with similar characteristics, and that these samples usually include a small number of underrepresented subgroups (e.g., ethnic minorities). Concerning the last issue, having insufficient numbers results in having insufficient power to detect subgroup differences with any sociodemographic factor or factors (Bornstein et al., 2013).

Other delimitations of this study include the research design used and the factors chosen for the study. This study used a cross-sectional research design to investigate the influence of parenting on college student psychological functioning. A cross-sectional design measures an assumed risk factor and an outcome at the same time. The advantages of using a cross-sectional design are that they are efficient in regard to time spent on data collection since data are all collected at one time, and they are inexpensive relative to longitudinal studies (Setia, 2016). They are also useful for hypothesis generation. However, a disadvantage is the difficulty in determining whether a particular outcome occurred as a result of exposure to a risk factor since measures are all collected at the same time. This disadvantage is particularly relevant in the study of the influence of parenting on developmental outcomes. Also, all of the measures used in the current study are self-report measures.

To limit the scope of this study, the factors examined that may influence perceived stress and anxiety included parenting, differentiation of self, and emotion regulation. Other factors that may influence stress and anxiety in college students not examined in this study include factors such as trauma (Frasier et al., 2009; Riggs & Han, 2009), temperament (Gunthert et al., 1999), socioeconomic status, social support, and concerns about the future (House et al., 2020; Kim, Kim et al., 2018).

Chapter 7: Method

Sample

Archival data was used for this study and was collected using a convenience sample at a

college in the northeastern United States. The participants in this sample were 163 undergraduate

students. Approximately 74.8% of the participants identified as cisgender women, and 25.2% of

the participants identified as cisgender men. The participants age ranged from 18 to 21 years of

age (M=18.00, SD=0.70). Approximately 68.1% identified as White, non-Hispanic, 9.8%

identified as Black or African American, 12.3% identified as Hispanic or Latino, 3.7% identified

as Asian, 5.5% identified as multiple races, and 0.6% did not identify. Regarding class level,

73.0% were freshmen, 18.4% were sophomores, 7.4% were juniors, and 1.2% were seniors.

Among the current sample, 41.7% carried 15 credits, which is considered a full-time load, 16.0%

carried 12 credits or less, and 42.3% carried more than 15 credits. The majority of students were

not employed on-campus or off-campus, 77.3% and 89%, respectively. The majority of students,

80.4%, lived on campus, and 19.6% lived off-campus. Most students reported coming from a

two-parent household, 84.7%, while 13.5% reported coming from a one-parent, mother

household, and 1.8% reported coming from a one-parent, father household.

Measures

Demographic Information

Demographic Questionnaire. Participants reported on their age, gender, race,

relationship status, class status (e.g., freshman, sophomore), whether or not they were in-state,

out-of-state, or international students living on or off-campus, and what kind of community they

lived in before coming to college (e.g., rural, urban, city). Participants also reported on their

major, minor (if any), the number of credits they were carrying for the semester, the number of

hours they work each week, the number of hours they volunteer each week, the number of organizations they belong to, and factors they find stressful about college.

Parenting Styles

Caregiver Information Questionnaire. A modified version of the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ; Buri, 1991), the Caregiver Information Questionnaire (CIQ), was used to assess parenting styles. The original version of the PAQ is a 30-item self-report measure that measures permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness for mothers and fathers using two separate, but identical forms. The PAQ uses a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The PAQ was modified to accommodate new family forms (e.g., single-parent home, mother; single-parent home, father; two-parent home, mother and mother, etc.), and to include questions about both parents on the same form. Also, additional items were added that compose the Helicopter Parenting Scale (HPS; LeMoyne, & Buchanan, 2011). The HPS similarly measures helicopter parenting using a Likert ranging from 1 (strongly disagree to 5 (strongly agree).

Emotion Regulation

Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire. The Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ) was used to assess the cognitive emotion regulation strategies used by college students. The CERQ is a 36-item self-report instrument that measures nine conceptually distinct subscales. The cognitive emotion regulation strategies measured by each subscale refer to what someone thinks after experiencing either a threatening or stressful event. Garnefski and Kraaij (2007) defined each cognitive emotion regulation strategy as follows: *self-blame* refers to thoughts of putting the blame for what you have experienced on yourself; *other-blame* refers to thoughts of putting the blame for what you have experienced on the environment or another

person; *rumination* refers to thinking about the feelings and thoughts associated with the negative event; *catastrophizing* refers to thoughts of explicitly emphasizing the terror of what you have experienced; *putting into perspective* refers to thoughts of brushing aside the seriousness of the event/emphasizing the relativity when comparing it to other events; *positive refocusing* refers to thinking about joyful and pleasant issues instead of thinking about the actual event; *positive reappraisal* refers to thoughts of creating a positive meaning to the event in terms of personal growth; *acceptance* refers to thoughts of accepting what you have experienced and resigning yourself to what has happened; and *refocus on planning* refers to thinking about what steps to take and how to handle the negative event.

A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always) is used to measure cognitive emotion regulation strategies. Garnefski, Kraaij, and Spinhoven (2002) reported the CERQ was normed using five groups. Four of the groups were from the general population. These included 586 adolescents 13 to 15 years old, 986 adolescents 16 to 18 years old, 611 adults 18 to 65 years old, and 99 individuals 66 years old and over. The fifth group was composed of 218 adult psychiatric patients, 18 to 65 years old. Cronbach's alpha was used to examine internal consistency. Garnefski, Kraaij, and Spinhoven (2002) reported alpha coefficients of the various subscales across the groups ranged from well over .70 to over .80. They reported test-retest reliabilities between .48 (refocus on planning) and .65 (other-blame).

Differentiation of Self

Differentiation of Self-Revised. The Differentiation of Self-Revised (DSI-R; Skowron, & Schmitt, 2003) was used to assess differentiation of self. The DSI-R is a 46-item, self-report instrument that focuses on adults, and examines their significant relationships and current relations with their family of origin. The DSI-R uses a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not

at all true of me) to 6 (very true of me) and measures four subscales. The four subscales are: Emotional Reactivity (ER), "I" Position (IP), Emotional Cutoff (EC), and Fusion with Others (FO). The ER scale is designed to assess the tendency to respond to environmental stimuli on the basis of autonomic emotional responses, emotional flooding, or lability. The IP scale is designed to assess a clearly defined sense of self and the ability to thoughtfully adhere to one's convictions even when pressured to do otherwise. The EC scale is designed to assess fears of intimacy or engulfment in relationships, and the accompanying behavioral defenses against those fears. The FO scale is designed to assess emotional overinvolvement, overidentification with parents' values, beliefs, and expectations, as well as a heavy reliance on significant others to confirm one's own beliefs and decisions, and a tendency to hold few constant beliefs of one's own (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003). Skowron and Schmitt used Cronbach's alpha to calculate internal consistency reliabilities. They reported the alpha coefficients were high for the full scale and high for the subscales: DSI-R full scale = .92, ER = .89, IP = .81, EC = .84, FO = .86.

Perceived Stress

Perceived Stress Scale. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen et al., 1983) was used to assess college student perception of stress or the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. The PSS is a 14-item self-report questionnaire, with each item assessed using a Likert scale ranging from 0 (Never) to 4 (Very Often). A PSS score is calculated by reverse scoring 7 items and then summing across all 14 items. Cohen et al. (1983) reported the coefficient alpha reliability was high for each of the three samples tested, .84, .85, and .86.

Anxiety

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Adults. The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Adults (STAI; Speilberger et al., 1983) was used to measure trait and state anxiety. The trait anxiety

scale is designed to assess relatively stable aspects of anxiety proneness, including general states of calmness, confidence, and security. The state anxiety scale is designed to assess the current state of anxiety, asking how respondents feel right now, using items that measure subjective feelings of apprehension, tension, nervousness, worry, and activation/arousal of the autonomic nervous system. The STAI is a 40-item self-report questionnaire, with each item assessed using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very much so). The STAI uses 20 items to assess trait anxiety and 20 items to assess state anxiety. Speilberger et al. (1983) reported internal consistency coefficients ranged from .86 to .95, and test-retest reliability coefficients ranged from .65 to .75.

Procedure

The archival data used for this study originated from a sample of college students recruited from seven introductory psychology courses. The instructors for these courses were contacted by electronic mail and were provided with a brief description explaining the purpose of the study. Students interested in study participation were asked to contact the principal investigator for the study. After being contacted by prospective participants, the principal investigator sent the students electronic mail instructions for study participation. Study participation took place in a research laboratory located in the psychology department at the college. Students were given a study packet that included a consent form explaining the study, and that the study was voluntary and anonymous. The study packet also contained the study measures, including the demographic form, CIQ, CERQ, DSI-R, PSS, and STAI. Any questions the students had about the study were answered prior to their signing the consent form for study participation. The self-report questionnaires were completed using paper and pencil at the laboratory site. After the consent form was signed, participants were instructed to complete the

demographic form and to read the instructions for each questionnaire prior to completing the

questionnaire. Each laboratory visit was approximately 1 hour in duration.

Chapter 8: Results

Gender Effects

The means and standard deviations for study measures are presented in Table 1. The data are presented for the total sample, and women and men separately. Independent-samples t-tests were used to compare women's and men's scores for each study measure. The results of these analyses are also presented in Table 1. There were significant differences between women and men on differentiation of self scores, emotion regulation scores, perceived stress scores, and anxiety scores. For differentiation of self, the total scores were higher for men than for women, as were the emotional reactivity scores and fusion with others scores. For the emotion regulation scores, rumination scores were higher for women than for men. For perceived stress and anxiety, perceived stress scores were higher for women than for men, as were the state anxiety and trait anxiety scores.

Parenting Styles and Differentiation of Self Correlations

Pearson correlations were calculated to examine the relationship between mother and father parenting styles and differentiation of self for total and subscale scores (Table 2). Overparenting by mother and by father were negatively related to differentiation of self as measured by the total score, and to emotional reactivity and "I" position. Overparenting by mothers was negatively related to the emotional cutoff, and overparenting by fathers was negatively related to fusion with others. These findings indicated that higher levels of overparenting were related to lower levels of differentiation of self. A similar pattern emerged with authoritarian parenting and differentiation of self. Authoritarian parenting by mothers and by fathers was negatively related to the total score and to emotional reactivity, while authoritarian parenting by mothers was negatively related to emotional cutoff. Authoritative

parenting by mothers and by fathers was positively associated with "I" position and emotional cutoff, while authoritative parenting by mothers was negatively associated with fusion with others. Permissive parenting by mothers and by fathers was positively associated with "I" position. These findings indicated that in all but fusion with others, higher levels of authoritative and permissive parenting were associated with higher levels of differentiation of self.

Parenting Styles and Emotion Regulation Correlations

Table 3 contains Pearson correlations for the parenting styles used by mothers and by fathers and cognitive emotion regulation strategy use scores. Overparenting by mothers and by fathers was positively related to self-blame, and negatively related to positive reappraisal. Overparenting by mothers was negatively related to refocus on planning. Authoritarian parenting by fathers was positively related to self-blame. Authoritative parenting by mothers was positively associated with rumination, positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, and refocus on planning. Similarly, authoritative parenting by fathers was positively associated with positive reappraisal and refocus on planning. Permissive parenting by mothers was positively related to putting into perspective, positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, acceptance, and refocus on planning. Permissive parenting by fathers was also positively related to positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, and refocus on planning, and was negatively related to self-blame.

The cognitive emotion regulation strategies measured by the CERQ have been described as being "more adaptive" strategies and "less adaptive" strategies (Garnefski, Kraaij, & Spinhoven, 2001). Those described as more adaptive include positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, putting into perspective, refocus on planning and acceptance. Those that have been described as less adaptive include rumination, self-blame, blaming others, and catastrophizing. The findings of the correlational analysis indicated that overparenting by mothers and fathers was associated with higher levels of using the maladaptive emotion regulation strategies and

lower levels of using adaptive emotion regulation strategies. This was also true in regard to the association between authoritarian parenting and the use of self-blame as an emotion regulation strategy. For authoritative and permissive parenting, a contrasting pattern emerged in that these parenting styles were associated with more adaptive emotion regulation strategy use except for an association between authoritative parenting and rumination.

Parenting Styles, Perceived Stress, and Anxiety Correlations

Pearson correlations were calculated to examine the associations between parenting styles used by mothers and by fathers and the scores for college student perceived stress, and state and trait anxiety (Table 4). Overparenting by mothers and by fathers was positively related to perceived stress and trait anxiety, and overparenting by mothers was positively related to state anxiety. Authoritarian parenting by mothers and by fathers was positively related to perceived stress, while authoritative parenting by mothers was negatively associated with perceived stress, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. These findings indicated that greater levels of overparenting and authoritarian parenting by mothers and by fathers were related to greater levels of perceived stress and anxiety in college students. These findings also indicated that greater levels of authoritative parenting by mothers were related to lower levels of perceived stress and anxiety in college students.

Perceived Stress, Anxiety, and Differentiation of Self Correlations

Table 5 contains Pearson correlations calculated to examine the associations between differentiation of self total score, differentiation of self subscale scores, and perceived stress and anxiety scores. Differentiation of self as measured by the total score and by the subscale scores was negatively related to perceived stress, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. These findings indicated that greater levels of differentiation of self were related to lower levels of perceived stress and anxiety in college students.

Perceived Stress, Anxiety, and Emotion Regulation Correlations

Pearson correlations were calculated to examine the associations between perceived stress, state anxiety, trait anxiety, and cognitive emotion regulation strategy use scores (Table 6). Perceived stress was positively related to self-blame, rumination, and catastrophizing, and negatively related to putting into perspective, positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, and refocus on planning. The pattern of correlations for both state and trait emotion regulation were essentially the same as that for perceived stress. These findings indicated that greater use of more adaptive strategies of emotion regulation was associated with lower levels of perceived stress and anxiety, while greater use of less adaptive strategies was associated with higher levels of perceived stress and anxiety.

Chapter 9: Discussion

This study explored the effect of overparenting on college student psychological functioning by examining the associations between parenting styles, differentiation of self, and emotion regulation, and how each of these factors was related to perceived stress and anxiety in college students. While most studies of parenting have focused on traditional conceptions of parenting (e.g., authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive), the current study examined a newer conception of parenting, helicopter or overparenting, and its impact on college student psychological functioning. To summarize the hypotheses, it was expected that overparenting would be negatively associated with differentiation of self. In regard to emotion regulation, it was expected that overparenting would be positively associated with maladaptive emotion regulation strategies. It was also predicted that overparenting would be positively associated with higher levels of anxiety and perceived stress in college students. In terms of indirect relationships between overparenting, anxiety, and perceived stress, it was expected that greater differentiation of self would be associated with less anxiety and perceived stress, and that maladaptive emotion regulation strategy use would be associated with higher levels of anxiety and perceived stress.

The findings regarding overparenting and differentiation of self were consistent with predictions. Higher levels of overparenting by mothers and by fathers were associated with lower levels of differentiation of self in college students. The same pattern of findings emerged in relation to authoritarian parenting by mothers and by fathers, with higher levels of authoritarian parenting being associated with lower levels of differentiation of self. In regard to the other two parenting styles examined, authoritative and permissive parenting, the correlational analysis showed higher levels of authoritative parenting were associated with higher levels of differentiation of self on two measures, including "I" position and emotional cutoff. Similarly,

higher levels of permissive parenting were associated with higher levels of differentiation of self as measured by the subscale score for "I" position. These results are consistent with other research examining parenting styles and the total score for differentiation of self, which has found that authoritarian parenting was negatively associated with differentiation of self and that democratic parenting was positively associated with differentiation of self (Rageliene & Justicks, 2016). The characteristics of each of the parenting styles are important to consider when interpreting the findings pertaining to parenting and differentiation of self. Commonalities across overparenting and authoritarian parenting are that they involve inappropriate levels of intrusiveness and control. Commonalities across overparenting, authoritative parenting, and permissive parenting are that they involve high levels of communication and warmth. And commonalities across authoritative and permissive parenting are that they involve promoting autonomy and individuality, although different forms of parental support may be involved (Baumrind, 1971). In instances of overparenting and authoritarian parenting, intrusiveness and control would be expected to interrupt the development of autonomy and individuality and lead to lower levels of differentiation of self. This is because both styles of parenting engage in psychological and behavioral control, expect compliance with parental demands, and infrequently support age-appropriate freedom to make autonomous decisions (Baumrind, 1991; Darling, 1999). These parental practices are in contrast to parents who are more responsive to their children fostering their individuality, self-assertion, and self-regulation by being attuned and supportive of their children's needs (Baumrind, 1991).

Turning to the findings examining the relationship between overparenting and emotion regulation, the results were consistent with the hypothesis. Higher levels of overparenting by mothers and by fathers were positively associated with self-blame and negatively associated with

positive reappraisal. Overparenting by mothers was also negatively associated with refocus on planning. Although no specific hypotheses were made regarding the associations between each of the other styles of parenting and cognitive emotion regulation, the pattern of relationships is what might be expected given the qualitative differences in the parenting styles. For example, authoritarian and permissive parenting by fathers were related to self-blame. Higher levels of authoritarian parenting by fathers was positively associated with self-blame, and higher levels of permissive parenting by fathers was negatively associated with self-blame. There were also a number of significant relationships between authoritative and permissive parenting styles and cognitive emotion regulation strategies, but the majority of those relationships were found for mothers. For example, authoritative parenting by mothers was positively associated with rumination, positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, and refocus on planning. Permissive parenting by mothers was positively related to putting into perspective, positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, acceptance, and refocus on planning. The pattern of relationships was similar for fathers and these two parenting styles. For example, authoritative parenting by fathers was positively associated with positive reappraisal and refocus on planning. Permissive parenting by fathers was also positively related to positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, and refocus on planning.

As noted earlier, the nine cognitive emotion regulation strategies measured by the CERQ have been described according to those that are considered more adaptive and those that are considered less adaptive (Garnefski, Kraaij, & Spinhoven, 2001). The findings of this study indicated that overparenting by mothers and by fathers was associated with higher levels of use of at least one maladaptive emotion regulation strategy, self-blame, and lower levels of using more adaptive emotion regulation strategies in this sample of college students. This was also true

in regard to the association between authoritarian parenting and the use of self-blame as an emotion regulation strategy. For authoritative and permissive parenting, the findings showed a contrasting pattern in that these parenting styles were associated with more adaptive emotion regulation strategy use, with the exception of the association between authoritative parenting by mothers and rumination. Research examining the socialization of emotion regulation may be helpful in interpreting these findings. For example, Morris et al. (2007) presented a tripartite model of the impact of the family on children's emotion regulation and adjustment. The model captures the various factors that impact emotion regulation in children and adolescents, including observational learning, parenting practices, the emotional climate of the family, parent characteristics, and child characteristics. These factors interact to directly or indirectly influence emotion regulation, which, in turn, affects children and adolescent's adjustment in regard to internalizing, externalizing, and social competence. The model presents a bidirectional system in which children's and adolescent's adjustment feeds back to emotion regulation behavior, which then feeds back to impact each of the aforementioned factors in the model.

Among one of the important child characteristics in the tripartite model is development. The expectation is that with development, the socialization of emotion regulation will change as children get older. For example, parents may directly intervene to regulate infant's and children's emotion. But as children develop more sophisticated cognitive and emotional skills they are able to regulate their emotions more independently. Morris et al. (2007) noted that although less is known about the socialization of emotion regulation during adolescence, one change that occurs during adolescence is parents begin to balance the need for adolescent autonomy and the need for continued supervision. If that balance does not exist, adolescents may be at risk for the development of internalizing or externalizing problems. More specifically, Morris et al.

concluded that when adolescents are overly dependent on parents for assisting in the regulation of emotion, they may be at risk for internalizing disorders, and adolescents who refuse guidance from parents in regulating emotion may be at risk for externalizing problems. In support of this assertion, research examining autonomy and relatedness between parents and adolescents indicates that adolescents who find it difficult to establish autonomous relationships with their parents show higher depressive symptomatology (Allen, Hauser, Eickholt et al., 1994; Kiang & Bhattacharjee, 2018), whereas adolescents who find it challenging to maintain relatedness demonstrate externalizing behaviors (Allen, Hauser, O'Connor et al., 1996; Van Petegem et al., 2020).

According to the tripartite model, parenting practices impact the socialization of emotion regulation. When discussing the balancing of the need for supporting adolescent autonomy and the need for continued supervision, recognizing that parents vary on the dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness may be helpful to understand why some parents do not strike that balance. Baumrind (2005) defined responsiveness as "the extent to which parents foster individuality and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's requests; it includes warmth, autonomy support, and reasoned communication" (pp. 61–62), and demandingness as "the claims parents make on children to become integrated into society by behavior regulation, direct confrontation, and maturity demands (behavioral control) and supervision of children's activities (monitoring)" (p. 62). Looking at parenting styles, authoritarian parents are characterized as highly demanding and directive, but not responsive, authoritative parents are characterized as demanding and responsive, and permissive parents are characterized as more responsive than they are demanding. In the case of overparenting, it is difficult to characterize this parenting style using the two-dimensional approach. For example,

overparenting may be considered high on responsiveness because these parents demonstrate warmth and communication but may also be considered low in responsiveness because these parents do not provide autonomy support. Overparenting may be considered low on demandingness because these parents do not make maturity demands but may also be considered high on demandingness because these parents exert more behavioral and psychological control. Reed et al. (2016) examined overparenting from a self-determination theoretical framework (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which argues individuals have three basic psychological needs including autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In their analysis, Reed et al. argued that "a supportive family environment would promote health and well-being by satisfying an individual's needs, whereas a negative family environment is expected to thwart health and well-being by frustrating an individual's needs (p. 3137). Using this framework, they suggested that overparenting can be conceptualized as providing a need-frustrating social environment instead of a need-supportive social environment. In explaining the associations found in this study between overparenting and authoritarian parenting, and emotion regulation strategy use, both styles of parenting may interfere with the development of adaptive emotion regulation through their lack of autonomy support. In contrast, authoritative and permissive parenting, which both, albeit in different ways, support the need for autonomy.

The findings in this study focusing on parenting styles, differentiation of self, and perceived stress and anxiety support the need for a better understanding of how parenting can impact a college student's ability to deal with the daily pressures of college life. In sum, higher levels of overparenting by mothers and by fathers were related to higher levels of perceived stress and trait anxiety in our sample. Higher levels of overparenting by mothers was also related to higher levels of state anxiety. Higher levels of authoritarian parenting by mothers and by

fathers were related to higher levels of perceived stress. The opposite pattern was found with authoritative parenting. Higher levels of authoritative parenting by mothers was associated with lower levels of perceived stress, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. The relationships found between differentiation of self and perceived stress and anxiety indicated that college students who reported greater levels of differentiation also reported lower levels of perceived stress, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. These findings support the contention that parenting styles that do not support the development of autonomy may have significant detrimental effects on a college student's ability to deal with the pressures of college life.

The last set of correlational analyses focused on the relationship between emotion regulation strategy use and perceived stress and anxiety. College students who reported greater use of self-blame, rumination, and catastrophizing, reported greater levels of perceived stress, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. College students who reported greater use of putting into perspective, positive refocusing, positive reappraisal, and refocus on planning, reported lower levels of perceived stress, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. It is interesting to note that cognitive emotion regulation strategies that have been conceptualized as maladaptive were related to higher levels of stress and anxiety, while strategies that have been conceptualized as adaptive were related to lower levels of stress and anxiety.

Clinical Implications

The clinical implications of incorporating a Bowen theory approach to college student counseling were described earlier in regard to college student mental health, and therapy for students and parents. The results of this study support such an approach that incorporates Bowen theory principles into the therapeutic setting when working with college students. For example, Bowen's model utilizes a technique referred to as coaching when conducting family therapy with

an individual. Brown (1999) described coaching as a therapist providing input and support to their adult clients who are trying to develop greater differentiation from their families of origin. The negative association between differentiation of self and overly controlling parenting styles suggests working with clients to establish a differentiated self may offer a path to functioning more autonomously within the college setting while also remaining emotionally connected to the family.

The associations between parenting and emotion regulation suggest that in situations where college students have experienced styles of parenting that are not conducive to developing more adaptive emotion regulation skills, that some form of emotion regulation training may be useful. Research has shown a relationship exists between emotion regulation strategies (e.g., acceptance, avoidance, problem-solving, rumination, suppression) and internalizing disorders like anxiety and depression (Aldao et al., 2010; Cisler & Olatunji, 2012), and that emotion regulation training was effective in reducing symptom severity in internalizing disorders (Berking et al., 2019). The results of the current study showing an association between emotion regulation strategies, perceived stress, and anxiety are consistent with these findings. Mindfulness or cognitive behavioral therapy that integrates affect regulation training may be particularly useful in settings where short-term therapy is the rule rather than the exception.

Limitations and Future Directions

The limitations of this study include the characteristics of the sample, the data collection methods, and the research design used for this study. This study used archival data that was collected using a convenience sample. Using this sampling method limits the representativeness of the sample and thus the generalizability of the findings to only those groups with the same or similar characteristics. Also, the majority of participants identified as cisgender women and there

were limited numbers of diverse students in the study sample. More gender-balanced, racially, and ethnically diverse samples should be used in future research given differences in parenting styles may exist across demographic groups that affect the pattern of relationships among the constructs observed in this study. In addition, future research investigating overparenting using samples of sexual minority families should be conducted. The data collection method used for gathering information was self-report. The dangers associated with using self-report measures include relying on participant honesty in responding to questions, the introspective ability of participants to respond accurately to a question regardless of their honesty, variability in the understanding or interpretation of questionnaire items, and response bias (i.e., a participant's tendency to respond a certain way even though the actual evidence used to evaluate their response to a question may suggest otherwise). Future research could incorporate reports by others (e.g., parent report of college student behavior) and objective measures of internalizing behavior (e.g., standardized assessments of anxiety). The research design was correlational and cross-sectional with data collection on all variables occurring at the same point in time. Therefore, no causal statements can be made about the observed relationships among the factors analyzed in this study. Recent longitudinal research has shown that overcontrolling parenting at two years of age was negatively associated with emotion regulation and inhibitory control at five years of age (Perry et al., 2018). Moreover, this research showed that poorer emotion regulation and inhibitory control was associated with children's self-reported emotional and school problems at 10 years of age, and with fewer teacher-reported social skills and less teacher-reported academic productivity. Longitudinal research designs like these should be used to better understand causal relationships between overparenting during childhood and adolescence and later psychological and behavioral functioning in college students.

While recognizing these limitations, the current study contributes to the limited research on overparenting and college student psychological well-being. First, overparenting, as well as traditional forms of parenting, by both mothers, and by fathers were examined separately within this study to understand better how each contributed to differentiation of self, emotion regulation, perceived stress, and anxiety. Including measures of father's parenting is essential because they typically have been underrepresented in psychological research. Moreover, when included, many studies do not examine mother and father parenting behavior separately. For example, Parent et al. (2017) indicated that of the studies examining parental involvement in child psychopathology research from 2005–2015, 38.36% involved mothers along, 23.76% involved both mothers and fathers where parenting effects were analyzed separately, 37.12% involved both mothers and fathers, but parenting was not analyzed separately, and just 0.76% involved only fathers. Research examining emotional well-being in college students has also underscored the need to analyze mother and father effects separately. Differences have been found in college student communication patterns during their first year in college with students communicating more with mothers than with fathers (Sax & Weintraub, 2014). Lastly, there are significant demographic changes occurring in families both in the U.S. and in other countries (Pew Research Center, 2019). In the U.S., 12% of children lived in single parent households in 1970, and the majority of those lived in mother-only families (Smock & Schwartz, 2020). In 2018, that number had doubled to 24%, and of these, 3% lived in father-only homes. Furthermore, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2019), 191,000 children live with same-sex couples. Still, it is only recently that research has begun to examine similarities and differences in parent behavior within sexual minority families. Taken together, these data suggest there is a

need to better understand the separate and joint contributions of mothers and fathers to their children's psychosocial development.

Conclusion

College student life is stressful. The current study suggests that parenting may significantly impact college student's ability to deal with this stressful environment by influencing level of differentiation of self and how college students regulate emotion within this stressful context. Decreased levels of differentiation and less adaptive emotion regulation, in conjunction with higher levels of parental interference in the daily functioning of their college-age children, may then add to the stress felt, resulting in increased anxiety among this population of emerging adults. Although parents who overparent may be attempting to help their children, they may inadvertently not allow their children to develop the skills necessary to cope with stressful environments. If understood within this context, these parents may be amenable to learning more productive ways to support their children while they deal with the stressors of college and daily life.

The findings of this study also suggest that students who are having increased difficulty dealing with stress, or who may be suffering from psychological distress in an academic setting, could profit from therapy that focuses on the development of independent coping skills, and on personal decision making within the context of connectedness to the family or other relational supports. Moreover, many college students may profit if changes were made to a societal system that seems to unfairly burdensome families compared to others by not providing adequate support to families and their children during this most difficult of life transitions. More adequate support includes increased funding for offsetting college expenses, for healthcare, and for mental health services. A continued lack of support may be especially detrimental to families

experiencing low socioeconomic status, to students who may be away from home for the first time in their lives, and to students from traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups.

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Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Tests for Gender Differences in DSI-R, CERQ, PSS, and STAI Scores

Measure	Total Mean (*SD*)	Mean (*SD*)		*t*-test	*p*-value	*d*
		Women (*n*=122)	Men (*n*=41)			
DSI-R						
DSI-R Total Score	3.65(0.71)	3.56(0.69)	3.93(0.72)	-3.00**	.003	-.54
Emotional Reactivity	3.24(1.13)	3.07(1.05)	3.73(1.24)	-3.35**	.001	-.60
"I" Position	3.91(0.85)	3.83(0.82)	4.12(0.89)	-1.89	.060	-.35
Emotional Cutoff	4.26(1.02)	4.21(1.02)	4.40(1.00)	-1.08	.283	-.19
Fusion with Others	3.18(0.78)	3.08(0.78)	3.46(0.72)	-2.71**	.008	-.50
CERQ						
Self-blame	11.40(3.73)	11.28(3.68)	11.78(3.91)	-0.74	.458	-.13
Other-blame	7.89(2.81)	7.98(2.71)	7.61(3.11)	0.74	.463	.13
Rumination	13.35(3.59)	13.76(3.41)	12.12(3.87)	2.58**	.001	.46
Catastrophizing	9.39(3.67)	9.59(3.61)	8.78(3.81)	1.23	.222	.22
Putting into Perspective	14.06(3.47)	14.17(3.48)	13.71(3.43)	0.74	.459	.13
Positive Refocusing	9.98(3.63)	10.23(3.73)	9.24(3.22)	1.51	.132	.27
Positive Reappraisal	13.45(4.01)	13.51(4.06)	13.29(3.93)	0.30	.767	.05
Acceptance	13.83(3.31)	13.69(3.25)	14.27(3.49)	-0.97	.333	.18
Refocus on Planning	13.45(3.70)	13.56(3.70)	13.12(3.73)	0.65	.516	.12
PSS						
PSS Score	28.46(8.40)	29.33(7.76)	25.88(9.70)	2.07*	.043	.42
STAI						
State Anxiety	44.19(12.57)	45.61(12.16)	39.95(12.95)	2.53*	.012	.46
Trait Anxiety	46.83(12.01)	48.07(11.07)	43.17(13.96)	2.04*	.046	.41

*p < .05, **p < .01. All t-tests two-tailed. *d* refers to Cohen's (1988) effect size: small effect = .20; medium effect = .50; large effect = .80.

Table 2

Correlations between Parenting Styles and Differentiation of Self for Mothers and Fathers[1]

DSI-R Score	CIQ/Parenting Styles Score			
	Overparenting	Authoritarianism	Authoritativeness	Permissiveness
DSI Total Score	-.25** (-.23**)	-.22** (-.17*)	.09 (.09)	.14 (.12)
Emotional reactivity	-.18* (-.21*)	-.21** (-.18*)	-.08 (-.03)	.09 (.10)
"I" Position	-.20* (-.19*)	-.09 (-.07)	.20* (.16^{+})	.23** (.25**)
Emotional cutoff	-.26** (-.09)	-.25** (-.10)	.29** (.20*)	.10 (-.01)
Fusion with others	-.09 (-.21*)	-.08 (-.10)	-.16* (-.06)	.00 (.03)

[1]Correlations for fathers in parenthesis. $^{+}$p<.10, *p < .05, **p < .01. Mothers, *n*=160, fathers *n*=141

Table 3

Correlations between Parenting Styles and Cognitive Emotion Regulation Strategy Use for Mothers and Fathers[1]

| CERQ Score | CIQ/Parenting Styles Score | | | |
	Overparenting	Authoritarianism	Authoritativeness	Permissiveness
Self-blame	.30** (.26**)	.09 (.21*)	.04 (.03)	-.08 (-.18*)
Other-blame	-.07 (.04)	-.01 (.08)	.04 (.01)	.05 (.07)
Rumination	.08 (.10)	.07 (.13)	.17* (.08)	-.03 (-.07)
Catastrophizing	.10 (.10)	.09 (.00)	-.03 (.04)	-.01 (-.00)
Putting into perspective	-.12 (-.15+)	-.12 (-.07)	.18* (.08)	.20* (.16+)
Positive refocusing	-.10 (-.10)	-.05 (-.02)	.30** (.09)	.20* (.16*)
Positive reappraisal	-.21** (-.18*)	-.11 (-.08)	.30** (.23**)	.30** (.28**)
Acceptance	-.01 (.01)	-.06 (.12)	.11 (-.02)	.22** (.11)
Refocus on Planning	-19* (-.13)	-.01 (-.06)	.30** (.19*)	.27** (.29**)

[1]*Correlations for fathers in parenthesis.* +$p<.10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$. Mothers, *n*=160, fathers *n*=141

Table 4

Correlations between Parenting Styles, Perceived Stress, and State and Trait Anxiety for Mothers and Fathers[1]

Stress and Anxiety Scores	CIQ/Parenting Styles Score			
	Overparenting	Authoritarianism	Authoritativeness	Permissiveness
Perceived Stress	$.17^*$ $(.26^{**})$	$.19^*(.17^*)$	$-.19^*(-.05)$	$-.10$ $(-.11)$
State anxiety	$.18^*$ $(.12)$	$.06$ $(.10)$	$-.19^*(-.13)$	$-.02$ $(-.03)$
Trait anxiety	$.25^{**}(.22^{**})$	$.12$ $(.14^+)$	$-.20^*(-.15^+)$	$-.11$ $(-.12)$

[1]*Correlations for fathers in parenthesis.* $^+$p<.10, *p < .05, **p < .01. Mothers, *n*=160, fathers *n*=141

Table 5

Correlations between Differentiation of Self, Perceived Stress, and State and Trait Anxiety

	DSI Scores				
	DSI Total	Emotional	"I" Position	Emotional	Fusion with
Stress and Anxiety Scores	Score	Reactivity		Cutoff	Others
Perceived Stress	-.63**	-.54**	-.54**	-.39**	-.43**
State Anxiety	-.58**	-.42**	-.54**	-.40**	-.40**
Trait Anxiety	-.69**	-.57**	-.55**	-.49**	-.48**

**p < .01.

Table 6

Correlations between Perceived Stress, State and Trait Anxiety, and Cognitive Emotion Regulation

	PSS Score	Anxiety Scores	
CERQ Score	Perceived Stress	State anxiety	Trait Anxiety
Self-blame	.39**	.35**	.50**
Other-blame	.04	.01	.05
Rumination	.38**	.39**	.46**
Catastrophizing	.37**	.38**	.46**
Putting into perspective	-.29**	-.15*	-.25**
Positive refocusing	-.32**	-.25**	-.34**
Positive reappraisal	-.51**	-.43**	-.53**
Acceptance	.03	.10	.05
Refocus on Planning	-.36**	-.38**	-.45**

*p < .05, **p < .01.

Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire and

Sample Items from Study Questionnaires

Demographic Questionnaire

Participant No: _____

1. Age (please specify):

____

2. Which option best describes you?

__ Female

__ Male

__ Not Listed (please specify)

_____

__ Prefer not to answer

3. Which option best describes you?

__ African American/Black

__ American Indian or Alaska Native

__ Asian

__ Hispanic/Latino

__ Multiracial (two or more races)

__ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

__ White/Non-Hispanic

__ Not Listed (please specify)

_____

__ Prefer not to answer

4. Class status:

__ Freshman

__ Sophomore

__ Junior

__ Senior

5. How many credits are you carrying this semester?

__ Less than 12 credits

__ 12 credits

__ 15 credits

__ 15 to 17 credits

__ 18 credits or more credits

6. How many hours do you work for pay OFF campus this semester?

__ None

__ 1-10 hours/week

__ 11-20 hours/week

__ 21-30 hours/week

__ More than 30 hours/week

7. How many hours do you work for pay ON campus this semester?

__ None

__ 1-10 hours/week

__ 11-20 hours/week

__ 21-30 hours/week

__ More than 30 hours/week

8. Major at SUNY Plattsburgh (please specify):

_____ First Major

_____ Other Major, if applicable

9. Minor at SUNY Plattsburgh (please specify):

_____ Minor

_____ Other Minor, if applicable

10. Are you an:

__ In-State, On-Campus Student at Plattsburgh

__ Out-of-State, On-Campus Student at Plattsburgh

__ Out-of-State, On-Campus International Students at Plattsburgh

__ In-State, Off-Campus Student at Plattsburgh

__ Out-of-State, Off-Campus Student at Plattsburgh

__ Out-of-State, Off-Campus International Student at Plattsburgh

11. Which of the following is most applicable to your living situation this semester (check all that apply)?

___ I live alone.

___ I live with another student.

___ I live with multiple roommates who are students.

___ I live with a roommate who is not a student.

___ I live with multiple roommates who are not students.

___ I live with my parent(s).

___ I live with my spouse.

___ I live with my domestic partner.

___ I live with my significant other.

___ I live with my child/children.

12. How many hours do you do volunteer work OFF campus this semester?

___ None

___ 1-10 hours/week

___ 11-20 hours/week

___ 21-30 hours/week

___ More than 30 hours/week

13. How many hours do you do volunteer work ON campus this semester?

___ None

___ 1-10 hours/week

___ 11-20 hours/week

___ 21-30 hours/week

___ More than 30 hours/week

14. Approximately how many organizations do you participate in regularly this semester (e.g., academic club, community, fraternity, sorority, political, student government, religious, recreation, sports)?

_____ Approximate number

15. What do you find of most concern about college? Please rank with "1" being of most concern:

___ Academic pressure (e.g., doing well in classes)

___ Cost of education (e.g. tuition, books, supplies)

___ Loans or college-related debt

___ No down time (e.g., free time to relax)

___ Parental pressure (e.g., to do well in classes)

___ Social demands

___ Transportation

___ Worries about future employment

___ Living arrangement

___ Other (please specify): _____

16. What best describes where you lived before coming to SUNY Plattsburgh?

___ **City – Large:** City with population of 250,000 or more.

___ **City – Midsize:** City with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.

___ **City – Small:** City with population less than 100,000.

___ **Suburban – Large:** Area outside a City and inside an Urbanized Area with population of 250,000 or more.

___ **Suburban – Midsize:** Area outside a City and inside an Urbanized Area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.

___ **Suburban – Small:** Area outside a City and inside an Urbanized Area with population less than 100,000.

___ **Town – Fringe:** Less than or equal to 10 miles from an Urbanized Area.

___ **Town – Distant:** More than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an Urbanized Area.

___ **Town – Remote:** More than 35 miles from an Urbanized Area.

___ **Rural – Fringe:** Rural area that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an Urbanized Area.

___ **Rural – Distant:** Rural area that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an Urbanized Area.

___ **Rural – Remote:** Rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an Urbanized Area.

Sample Items from Study Questionnaires

Caregiver Information Questionnaire

1.   While I was growing up my caregiver felt that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do.

7.   As I was growing up my caregiver did not allow me to question any decision she/he had made.

32.   I sometimes feel that my caregiver did not feel I could make my own decisions.

Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire

3.   I often think about how I feel about what I have experienced

12.   I am preoccupied with what I think and feel about what I have experienced

34.   I tell myself that there are worse things in life

Differentiation of Self – Revised

5.   I usually need a lot of encouragement from others when starting a big job or task.

19.   There's no point in getting upset about things I cannot change.

38.   I often wonder about the kind of impression I create.

The Perceived Stress Scale

2.   In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?

6.   In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?

11.   In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that happened that were outside of your control?

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory

8.   I feel satisfied

17.   I am worried

27.   I am "calm, cool, and collected"