

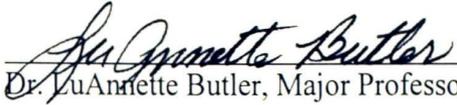
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PERCEIVED PARENTING STYLE AND
LOCUS OF CONTROL ORIENTATION

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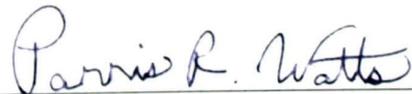

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PERCEIVED PARENTING STYLE AND
LOCUS OF CONTROL ORIENTATION

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

Austin Peay State University

Tracey Perley Saturday

May 2001

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children

Miranda Dawn Saturday

Kristen Brooke Saturday

Leo Vernon Saturday, III

and to my parents

David Sidney Perley, II

Margaret Grimm Perley

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for giving me the courage and strength to stay focused and drive on when seemingly insurmountable obstacles blocked my path. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my major professor, Dr. LuAnnette Butler, for her guidance, support, and shoulder throughout the past three years. Little does she know the lasting effect her warm and caring nature has had on me. I would like to thank Dr. Stuart Bonnington and Dr. Nanci Woods for their valuable insight and contributions to this study's details. Many thanks are extended to Dr. Maureen McCarthy for her gracious assistance in the statistical realm of this study. Thank you to my beautiful children for continually putting a smile on my face and a skip in my step. Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my parents, David and Margaret Perley, and to my husband, Leo Saturday, for believing in me and providing me with the moral support that was so vital throughout my academic career.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated college students' perceptions of their primary caregivers' parenting styles that were practiced during the students' childhood years, and how those perceptions related to the students' current locus of control orientations. The perceived parenting style--authoritarian, authoritative, or permissive--was determined by administering the Perceived Parenting Style Survey to the college students. To measure locus of control, Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale was administered. Based on previous research on parenting styles and locus of control, it was hypothesized that locus of control scores would vary based on the perceived parenting style. Specifically, students who perceived their primary caregivers as authoritarian would likely have scores that reflected higher external locus of control than the students who perceived their primary caregivers as authoritative and permissive. Secondly, students who perceived their primary caregivers as authoritative would likely have scores that were more internal than the authoritarian and permissive groups. Thirdly, students who perceived their primary caregivers as permissive would have locus of control scores that were neither as external as students with authoritarian caregivers nor as internal as students with authoritative caregivers. Results of the statistical analysis did not support the hypothesis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research has indicated that the parenting style to which an individual is subjected during his or her childhood years has a profound effect on the psychological well-being of that individual. Developmental psychologists view the manner in which parents raise their children as affecting the child's personality, intellectual capacity, and behavior (Mekertichian & Bowes, 1996). Some researchers think that the effects of parenting style, in particular its influence on locus of control, may continue well into adulthood (Taris & Bok, 1996).

Parenting styles have been classified into a variety of categories and types by a number of researchers. The parenting styles discussed in this paper are those defined by Diana Baumrind (1966, 1968, 1978, 1994, 1996) as authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. Baumrind classified the parenting styles according to two primary components: responsiveness and demandingness. Responsiveness refers to the extent to which the parent fosters individuality and self-assertion in the child through attunement, support, and acquiescence to the child's needs and demands (Baumrind, 1996). Essential facets of responsiveness include parental warmth, reciprocity, clear communication, person-centered discourse, and attachment toward the child (Baumrind, 1994, 1996). Demandingness includes the disciplining and monitoring of the child's behavior through coercion, confrontation, supervision, consistent discipline, and corporal punishment (Baumrind). Based on these two childrearing dimensions, authoritarian parents are highly demanding and lack responsiveness; authoritative parents are both responsive and demanding; and permissive parents are highly responsive but lack demandingness

(Baumrind). The authoritarian and permissive parenting styles are considered the two extremes on the continuum of parental behaviors, with the authoritative parenting style representing the balance between the two extremes (McClun & Merrell, 1998).

The authoritarian parenting style can be characterized as one in which the parent is detached from the child and attempts to shape, control, and evaluate the child's behavior and attitudes according to an absolute set of standards (Baumrind, 1966,1968). According to Baumrind, this parent values obedience and respect for authority as virtuous attributes and favors harsh discipline as a means of controlling the child and curbing his or her self-will (Baumrind). Verbal give and take between the parent and child is nonexistent, for the child is to obey all parental demands without question or delay. Authoritarian parenting is associated with lower psychosocial maturity in children (Mantzicopoulos & Oh-Hwang, 1998), with these children generally characterized as unfriendly, uncooperative, uninterested, and more delinquent than other children (Baumrind, 1991).

The authoritative parent is generally controlling and somewhat demanding, but warm, accepting, and responsive to the child (Baumrind, 1966,1968; McClun & Merrell, 1998). This parent sets clear standards for the child's behavior and explains to the child the reasoning behind rules and decisions (Baumrind, 1966, 1968). The child's perspective and interests are acknowledged and validated by the parent, and verbal give and take is encouraged between the parent and the child (Baumrind). This parent values both autonomous self-will and disciplined conformity within the child (Baumrind, 1991). Baumrind found that children of authoritative parents tend to be friendly, socially competent, responsible, and possess qualities of leadership and trust.

The permissive parent is non-demanding, non-controlling, highly responsive, accepting, and warm, allowing the child to be self-regulating and free from restraint (McClun & Merrell, 1998). Few demands are made on the child for household responsibility and orderly behavior, and there is little encouragement to obey parental or externally defined standards (Baumrind, 1966). This parent allows the child to explore and express opinions and emotions freely (Baumrind, 1971), as well as permits the child to make his or her own decisions and to learn from natural consequences (Buri, 1991). Adolescents of permissive parents tend to be highly aggressive and independent (Baumrind, 1991).

Baumrind (1991) recognizes a fourth parenting style, the rejecting-neglecting prototype, which is characterized by low levels of both responsiveness and demandingness. The rejecting-neglecting parent tends to be unsupportive of the child, lacks structure, and does not monitor the child's activities or behavior (Baumrind). This parent either actively rejects the child or neglects parental responsibilities altogether (Baumrind). The rejecting-neglecting parenting style is not included in this research due to the parameters of the Perceived Parenting Style Survey (McClun & Merrill, 1998), which is the instrument used in this study to measure the perceived parenting style of the participants' primary caregivers.

Research on parenting styles indicates that the authoritative parenting style is more beneficial to the well-being of the child than are the authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. For instance, the authoritative parenting style has been linked to children's use of effective learning and studying strategies (Boveja, 1998), school achievement (Chen, Dong, & Zhou, 1997; Cohen & Rice, 1997; Dornbusch, Ritter,

Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Radziszewska, Richardson, Dent, & Flay, 1996; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992), and positive school-related behavior (Onatsu-Arvillomi, Nurmi, & Aunola, 1998), whereas the authoritarian parenting style is associated with aggressive and disruptive classroom behavior (Chen et al.) and low school achievement (Chen et al.; Dornbusch et al.; Steinberg, Lamborn, et al.). Low school achievement has been linked to the permissive parenting style as well (Dornbusch et al.). Further, adolescents who perceive their parents as authoritative are more likely to identify with well-rounded peer groups that support both adult values and peer interactions (Durbin, Darling, Steinberg, & Brown, 1993), to be accepted by their peers (Chen et al.), to practice personal and social responsibility (Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Steinberg, & Ritter, 1997), and to facilitate self-actualization (Dominguez & Carton, 1997). Authoritative parenting has also been linked to higher levels of self-confidence (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991) and positive self-esteem (Buri, 1989; Buri, Louiselle, Misukanis, & Mueller, 1988; Klein, O'Bryant, & Hopkins, 1996; Pawlak & Klein, 1997), whereas the authoritarian parenting style has been linked to low levels of self-confidence (Lamborn et al.) and negative self-esteem (Buri; Buri et al.; Klein et al.). Children of authoritative parents have been found to possess higher adolescent maturity levels (Mantzicopoulos & Oh-Hwang, 1998), better interpersonal relations (Hall & Bracken, 1996), and elevated psychosocial maturity levels (Lamborn et al.; Steinberg, Elmen, et al.). Other studies indicate that an authoritarian parenting style is associated with higher levels of adolescent substance use (Clausen, 1996), and adolescent drug abusers tend to come from families in which the parents practice either a highly authoritarian or a highly permissive disciplinary style

(Reich, 1991). Further, adolescents who smoke tobacco and drink alcohol perceive their parents as less authoritative and more permissive than adolescents who do not engage in substance use behaviors (Cohen & Rice). It was also found that children of authoritarian parents suffer from higher rates of insomnia than do children of authoritative parents (Brassington, 1994).

Parenting styles have been linked to the development of locus of control orientation. In a review of the research literature pertaining to antecedents of locus of control, Carton and Nowicki (1994) concluded that parental warmth and control, combined with stressful life events, are important factors in the development of locus of control orientation. Locus of control is defined as the degree to which an individual believes he or she controls his or her life outcomes (Rotter, 1966). Individuals who possess an external locus of control believe that their successes and failures are beyond their control, resulting instead from luck, fate, chance, or powerful others. Those individuals with an internal locus of control feel that their own actions and abilities directly determine the outcomes of their life events (Rotter).

From a meta-analytic review of literature pertaining to the effect of locus of control orientation on persuasion, social influence, and conformity, Avtgis (1998) reported that individuals who score higher on external locus of control are likely to be more easily persuaded, socially influenced, and conforming than those who score higher on internal locus of control. One study indicated that adolescents who had poor relations with their parents and schools tended to have locus of control scores that were high in externality (Lau & Leung, 1992). Adolescents with external orientations were also found to be more likely than those with internal orientations to be influenced by their peers to

smoke tobacco (Webster, Hunter, & Keats, 1994). Further, an external locus of control has been found to be negatively related to self-concept (Lau & Leung), and positively related to adolescent delinquency (Lau & Leung; Shaw & Scott, 1991), depressive tendencies (Benassi, Sweeney, & Dufour, 1988; Klefтарas, 1997), and suicidal ideation (Sidrow & Lester, 1988). Other research suggests that an internal locus of control is related to positive self-esteem (Halpin, Halpin, & Whiddon, 1980), lower levels of stress in children (DeBrabander, Hellemans, Boone, & Gerits, 1996; Carton & Nowicki, 1996), positive life satisfaction in adolescents (Dew & Huebner, 1994), and lower levels of school-related test anxiety (Choi, 1998).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is limited research on the relationship between parenting styles and locus of control orientations. Of the research related to this topic, three studies were published within the past five years, with the remainder published more than twenty years ago. The majority of the studies relied on the perceptions of the children to determine parenting styles, and all but two of the studies were conducted with child and adolescent populations.

Taris and Bok (1996) conducted a longitudinal study with an adult population, which investigated the relations of parenting style, locus of control, and depression. The sample included 642 Dutch adults, aged 18 to 26 during the first of two data collection points. Four years separated the two points of data collection. Participants' feelings of depression and locus of control orientations were measured at both time intervals. Locus of control was measured using a thirteen-item scale that demonstrated reliability coefficients of .69 at time one and .75 at time two. Perceptions of paternal and maternal parenting styles were measured during the first data collection only using the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI, Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979). The PBI demonstrated reliability coefficients ranging from .61 for paternal behaviors to .73 for maternal behaviors. The results of the study indicated that a loving and caring paternal parenting style was related to an internal locus of control, whereas a loving and caring maternal parenting style was related to an external locus of control. These results are not supported by other research literature in this area. Taris and Bok acknowledge that further validation of the instruments used in this study is imperative.

In an effort to clarify the relationship between control orientations and parent-child relationships, MacDonald (1971) measured locus of control orientations and perceived parental behaviors of 427 (192 males and 235 females) undergraduate students attending a university in West Virginia. Locus of control was measured using Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966), which demonstrated internal consistency alpha coefficients ranging from .65 to .79 and test-retest alpha coefficients ranging from .49 to .83. Perceived parental behaviors were measured using the Perceived Parenting Questionnaire (PPQ), which was developed for this study by the author and was adapted from a questionnaire used by Devereaux, Bronfenbrenner, and Rodgers (1969) at Cornell University. The PPQ demonstrated internal consistency alpha coefficients ranging from .48 to .82. The results of an analysis of variance indicated that internality was associated with maternal nurturance, paternal nurturance, and maternal predictability of standards. Externality was associated with maternal protectiveness and maternal deprivation of privileges. In addition, there were significant differences between males and females. For instance, male internality was associated with maternal predictability of standards and paternal physical punishment, and male externality was associated with maternal affective punishment. Female internality was associated with maternal achievement pressure.

Nowicki and Segal (1974) conducted a study to ascertain perceived parental behavior associated with locus of control orientation. Instruments that measured locus of control orientation and perceived parental behaviors were administered to 112 high school seniors (58 males and 54 females). Locus of control was measured by administering the Nowicki-Strickland Personal Reaction Survey, which was a

modification of the Nowicki-Strickland Children's Locus of Control Scale (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973). The Nowicki-Strickland Personal Reaction Survey demonstrated test-retest reliability coefficients from .63 to .82 and internal consistency reliability coefficients from .63 to .79. Perceived parental behaviors were assessed by a modification of the Parent-Child Interaction Rating Scale (Helbrun, 1964). Results of the study indicated that perceived parental nurturance was related to internality for both genders. Female internality was associated with greater perceived paternal affection, physical contact, trust, and security, as well as greater perceived maternal physical contact, trust, and security. Male internality was related to greater perceived maternal affection.

Scheck (1978) conducted a study to determine if certain combinations of parental child-rearing dimensions influenced the development of an internal as opposed to an external locus of control orientation among adolescent females. The child-rearing dimensions examined were parental support (nurturance), parental control, and parental consistency. Five hundred thirteen ninth grade white female students from eight junior high schools in Indiana participated in the study. The age range of the students was 13 to 17 years, with a mean age of 14.6 years. The participants were administered a questionnaire which measured the three parent-child dimensions, the internal-external dimension, and social class. The parental control and parental support dimensions were drawn from the Parent-Child Relations Questionnaire (Roe & Siegalman, 1963). The parental consistency dimension was drawn from the Inconsistent Parental Discipline Scale (Scheck, 1969), which reported split-half reliabilities ranging from .67 to .94. The locus of control dimension of the questionnaire was drawn from Rotter's Internal-

External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966). Results of the study indicated that the most internally oriented adolescent females perceived their mothers as providing high support, high consistency, and low control, followed by those who perceive their mothers as providing high support, high consistency, and moderate control. In regard to the child-rearing dimensions of the fathers, the most internally oriented adolescent females perceived their fathers as exhibiting high support, high consistency, and moderate control, followed by those who perceived their fathers as providing high support, high consistency, and low control. Overall, the results of this study indicated that young adolescent females who perceived both parents as providing high support and high consistency of discipline combined with low or moderate levels of control have the most internal locus of control orientations.

A study was conducted by Rohner, Chaille, and Rohner (1980) which examined the relationship between locus of control and both the age and perceived parental acceptance-rejection of children between the ages of 9 and 11. Participants included 271 children in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in a middle-class, urban Connecticut school district. The children were verbally administered instruments that measured parental acceptance-rejection and locus of control orientation. Parental acceptance-rejection was assessed by administering the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ, Rohner & Rohner, 1980), which reported reliability coefficient alphas ranging from .64 to .85. Locus of control was measured by the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale for Children (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973). Results indicated that internality was related to both an increase in age and an increase in perceived parental acceptance. A post hoc comparison revealed that children who perceived themselves to

be accepted by their parents increased in internality between the ages of 9 and 11, whereas the children who perceived themselves as rejected by their parents did not change control orientations between the age span.

Halpin et al. (1980) conducted a study to identify parental antecedents of locus of control and self-esteem. Fifty-nine American Indian males and females and 141 White males and females, all between the ages of 12 and 18, participated in the study.

Perceptions of parental behavior were assessed by the Perceived Parenting Questionnaire (MacDonald, 1971); self-esteem was assessed using the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1967); and locus of control orientation was measured by administering the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire (Crandall, Katkovsky, & Crandall, 1965). The results of the study indicated that internal locus of control was positively related to nurturance, principled discipline, achievement pressure, and parental instrumental companionship involving help with learning problems. With the exception of achievement pressure, these same factors were found by Halpin et al. to contribute to a positive self-esteem. There were no significant differences in parental antecedents of locus of control and self-esteem between the Indian children and the White children.

Morton and Mann (1998) conducted a cross-sectional study with children and adolescents to determine if the children's control beliefs were related to their perceptions of their parents' controlling behavior and acceptance/child-centeredness. Control beliefs and perceived parental behavior were measured in 31 children (grades three through five) and 127 adolescents (grades nine and ten). Control beliefs were measured using the Multi-Dimensional Measure of Children's Perceptions of Control (MMCP; Connell,

1985) and Weisz's (1986) Contingence, Competence, and Control questionnaire. Parental behavior was measured by administering selected scales from Schluderman and Schluderman's (1970) short form of the Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Scheafer, 1965). Results from this study indicated that child and adolescent reports of parental acceptance and child-centeredness are related to internal control beliefs. Conversely, the relationship between perceptions of parental controlling behavior and the children's control beliefs differed between children and adolescents. Parental controlling behavior was related to internal control beliefs in children and external control beliefs in adolescents. The results are an indication that parental control may have different affects on children according to their developmental levels. Based on these findings, Morton and Mann suggest that a parent may have to move from a more controlling parenting style during middle childhood to a less controlling parenting style during adolescence in order to maintain the child's internal locus of control.

McClun and Merrell (1998) investigated the relationship between adolescents' perceptions of their parents' parenting styles, the adolescents' locus of control orientations, and the adolescents' self-esteem. Participants included 198 eighth and ninth grade students (114 males and 84 females), aged 13 to 16 years. To assess locus of control orientation, participants completed the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale for Children (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973). Perceived parenting styles were assessed using the Perceived Parenting Style Survey (PPSS), which was developed by the authors for this study and which reported a test-retest reliability of 100 percent. Self-concept of the participants was measured by the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA; Harter, 1988). The SPPA reported internal consistency reliability

coefficients ranging from .74 to .93 (Harter). Results indicated that the group of students who perceived their parents to be authoritative reported a significantly higher internal locus of control orientation and a more positive self-concept than the group of students who perceived their parents to be either authoritarian or permissive. Further, students who perceived their parents to be authoritarian had the most extreme external locus of control orientations and the most negative self-concepts of the entire sample. McClun and Merrell suggest that these findings indicate that an authoritative parenting style contributes to more positive social-emotional characteristics in adolescence than do the authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

The majority of the research conducted on this topic has relied heavily on child and adolescent populations. Of the two studies conducted with adult populations, neither classified perceived parental characteristics of the participants' parents into defined parenting style groupings. The current study will alleviate this shortcoming by administering to adult participants a modified version of the Perceived Parenting Style Survey (McClun & Merrell, 1998), an instrument which classifies parental characteristics into one of three parenting styles. The Perceived Parenting Style Survey is based on Baumrind's (1966, 1968, 1994, 1996) descriptions of the authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles.

The current study examined the relationship between college students' perceptions of their primary caregivers' parenting styles and the students' current locus of control orientation. By studying an adult population, insight can be gained on whether or not the effects of parenting style follow an individual to adulthood. This type of research may be helpful to the counseling profession in a number of ways, including the

development of instructional material for parenting classes and interventions in school counseling and family therapy.

Based on the body of research on parenting styles and locus of control orientation, it was hypothesized that the students who viewed their primary caregivers as having authoritarian parenting styles would have more external locus of control scores, whereas students who perceived their caregivers as having authoritative parenting styles would have more internal locus of control scores. Students who perceived their caregivers as permissive would more likely have locus of control scores that were neither as external as students with authoritarian caregivers, nor as internal as students with authoritative caregivers.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 90 graduate and undergraduate students who were enrolled in psychology courses at Austin Peay State University and who were at least 18 years of age. One participant did not complete all forms, and the data from that participant was eliminated from the study. Of the remaining 89 participants (mean age = 23.1 years), 68 were female, 20 were male, and 1 did not report gender. Sixty-eight participants identified themselves as Caucasian, 16 as African American, 2 as Asian, and 3 as a race other than African American, Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic, or Native American. The only criterion for participation in the study was the ability of each participant to identify a primary caregiver who was present for at least ten consecutive years of his or her childhood. Childhood was defined as the years between birth and age eighteen. The students were informed that participation in the study was voluntary; however, students who participated received extra credit at the discretion of their professors.

Measures

Parenting Style. The participants' perceptions of their parents' parenting styles was measured by administering a modified version of the Perceived Parenting Style Survey (PPSS) which McClun and Merrell (1998) developed for use in their research with adolescents. The PPSS consists of three forced-choice groups of descriptive statements, with each group composed of six statements identifying one of the three major parenting styles (permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian). The participants were to read the

groups of statements and then choose the group that most closely described the behaviors of their primary caregivers. The parenting style identified by the chosen group of statements was used to determine the perceived parenting style of each participant's primary caregiver. The PPSS in its original form was written in the present tense and described the actions of one or both parents. For purposes of this study, the PPSS was modified so that it read in the past tense and was singular rather than plural, describing the actions of only the identified primary caregiver. A simple reliability analysis of the PPSS conducted by McClun and Merrell using 25 students showed a test-retest reliability of 100 percent. No test of validity was conducted on the PPSS.

Locus of Control. The participants' locus of control orientations were measured by administering Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966). The instrument consists of 29 forced-choice pairs of statements, 6 of which are not used for scoring purposes. The score ranges from 0 to 23, with higher scores reflecting more external locus of control orientation and lower scores reflecting more internal locus of control orientation. Rotter reported internal consistency alpha coefficients ranging from .65 to .79 and test-retest reliability alpha coefficients ranging from .49 to .83.

Procedure

Participants were recruited for this study through enrollment in graduate and undergraduate psychology courses at Austin Peay State University. Sign-up sheets with a description of the study as well as the criterion for participation were posted outside the psychology department office. Each participant signed up for one 30-minute session. During each session, each participant was given a packet that included two informed consent forms, one Perceived Parenting Style Survey, one Rotter's Internal-External

Locus of Control Scale, and one biographical profile questionnaire which contained age, gender, and ethnicity items, as well as questions pertaining to the participant's primary caregiver. Except for the informed consent forms, all forms contained an arbitrarily assigned number on the right hand corner that was used solely for data identification. The participants were given an explanation of the study and were asked to read and sign the informed consent forms. They were then given verbal instructions for completing the forms in the packets. Upon completion, each participant put all forms except the signed informed consent forms into the respective packet. Each participant put one signed informed consent form into a separate envelope and kept one informed consent form for his or her records. Participants were given extra credit slips to return to their respective professors.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Prior to running an analysis of variance, the participants' responses to the PPSS were categorized into three parenting style groups: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. Of the 89 participants, 13 (11 females, 1 male, 1 unreported) perceived their primary caregivers as authoritarian. Three of the authoritarian group described themselves as African American, nine as Caucasian, and one as other. The mean age for the group was 26 years. The mean locus of control score for the authoritarian group was 10.846.

Seventy-two participants (55 females, 17 males) perceived their primary caregivers as authoritative. Of the authoritative group, 11 described themselves as African American, 2 as Asian, 57 as Caucasian, and 2 as other. The mean age for this group was 22.5 years. The authoritative group had a mean locus of control score of 10.083.

Four participants (2 females, 2 males) perceived their primary caregivers as permissive. Two of those perceived themselves as African American and two as Caucasian. The mean age for the permissive group was 24.3 years. The permissive group had a mean locus of control score of 6.5.

A one-way analysis of variance analyzed the difference between perceived parenting styles and locus of control orientation. The alpha level was .05. The effect was not statistically significant, $F(2,86) = 2.657, p = .076$.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationship between perceived parenting styles of participants' primary caregivers and the participants' current locus of control orientation. It was hypothesized that participants' locus of control scores would vary based on the perceived parenting styles of their primary caregivers. Specifically, participants who perceived their primary caregivers as authoritarian would likely have locus of control scores that were more external than the other participants; participants who perceived their primary caregivers as authoritative would have locus of control scores were more internal than the other participants; and participants who perceived their primary caregivers as permissive would have locus of control scores that were neither as external as the authoritarian group nor as internal as the authoritative group. Contrary to the hypothesis, an analysis of variance indicated that there was no significant difference between parenting style and locus of control orientation.

A major limitation of the current study was the sample sizes of the permissive ($N = 4$) and the authoritarian ($N = 13$) groups. Both groups were considerably smaller than the authoritative group ($N = 72$), and together consisted of a mere 19% of total participants. Although there was no statistical difference between parenting style and locus of control orientation based on an alpha of .05, it is important to note that the analysis approached significance, $p = .076$. Were this study to be replicated with a significantly larger sample that increased the authoritarian and permissive groups, it is possible that significance would result.

In determining the parenting style of the participants' primary caregivers, it is possible that the parenting style perceived by each participant was not an accurate representation of the true parenting style. There are several reasons that this may be possible. First, a study conducted by Cohen and Rice (1997) which examined how parenting styles were associated with academic achievement and substance use, found that agreement on parenting styles between parents and children was poor. With this in mind, it is impossible to determine an accurate and true parenting style based solely on a subjective perception, whether it is the parent's or the child's. Second, the participants' perceptions of their primary caregivers' parenting styles may have altered as they moved away from home and became adults and possibly parents themselves. Third, the forced choice format and the extremity of statements on the instrument used to measure parenting style, the PPSS, may have limited the participants' responses to the less extreme of the three choices. Choice A (which indicates a permissive parenting style) and choice C (which indicates an authoritarian parenting style) include statements that the participants likely determined were extremes of one another. Choice B (which indicates an authoritative parenting style), includes statements that are not as extreme as choices A and C. It is possible that the participants did not feel comfortable categorizing their primary caregivers in such extreme ways, and consequently chose the more-balanced choice B.

Another limitation of the current study is that it took into consideration the parenting style of only one caregiver who was present during each participant's childhood years. It is possible that many of the participants had more than one caregiver during their childhood years, and the parenting styles of the other caregivers may have

been quite different from the parenting style of the primary caregiver. The responses to the PPSS may have differed considerably if the participants were to have based their responses on another significant childhood caregiver.

In conclusion, the current study examined the difference between perceived parenting styles and locus of control orientation. It was predicted that locus of control orientation would vary based on the perceived parenting style of the primary caregiver. The results indicated that there was no significant difference between perceived parenting style and locus of control orientation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent Form

Thank you for participating in this research study. Please read the following material carefully. It explains the purpose of this study, the procedures to be used, the risks and benefits of your participation, and an explanation of what will happen to the information collected from you.

1. *The purpose of the study* is to investigate the relationship between college students' perceptions of their parents' parenting styles and the students' locus of control orientations.
2. *The procedures to be used.* You will be asked to complete three questionnaires. The first questionnaire asks you to provide demographic and biographic information (i.e. age, gender, number of siblings, etc.) about you and your primary caregiver. This questionnaire will take approximately three minutes to complete. The second is entitled Perceived Parenting Style Survey (PPSS). The purpose of the PPSS is to identify your perception of your primary caregiver's parenting style during your childhood years. The PPSS will take approximately eight minutes to complete. The third questionnaire is entitled Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, and its purpose is to determine the degree to which you believe you control your life outcomes. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.
3. *Risks and benefits of participation.* There are no known risks associated with your participation in this study. Indirect benefits may include a sense of satisfaction from having participated and the knowledge of what it is like to participate in a psychological study. In some cases, psychology instructors offer extra course credit for participation in research. If one of your instructors awards extra credit, be sure to take the "Certificate of Participation" to him or her as evidence of your participation.
4. *What will happen to the information collected.* The data collected from you will be coded by an arbitrary subject number and entered into a computer for analysis. The data will be used for purposes of academic requirements and scientific publication only. In any such use of this information, your identity will be carefully protected. Neither your identity nor the identity of other participants will be revealed in any published or oral presentation of the results of this study. The data collected from the study will be made public only in summary form, which makes it impossible to identify participants.
5. *Contact information.* This study is investigated by Tracey Perley Saturday, under the supervision of Dr. LuAnnette Butler, Faculty Advisor. Should you wish to contact either the investigator or the Faculty Advisor, you may leave a message with the APSU Psychology Department at 221-7233. For questions pertaining to your rights as a participant in research, please call the APSU Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs at 221-7881.

Please read the statements below. They describe your rights and responsibilities as a participant in this research project.

1. I agree to participate in the present study conducted by Tracey Perley Saturday, a graduate student in the Department of Psychology at Austin Peay State University, under the supervision of Dr. LuAnnette Butler, a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at Austin Peay State University. I understand that this entails completing three questionnaires.

2. I have been informed in writing of the purpose of the study, the procedures to be used, the risks and benefits involved, and the use of the information I provide.

3. I understand that the data will have no identifying notations and will be used strictly for purposes of academic requirements and scientific publication.

4. I understand that I may withdraw from participation at any time without penalty or prejudice. I also understand that any data obtained from me will be withdrawn and destroyed if I choose to withdraw.

5. I realize that by signing this form, I willingly consent to participate in the current study. I also acknowledge that I have been given a copy of this form to keep for my records.

Name (please print)

Date

Signature

Witness

Biographical Questionnaire

Please answer these questions as best and as truthfully as you can. Your answers will be completely anonymous. The researcher will not be able to connect your name with your responses on this sheet.

Age: _____

Gender: MALE FEMALE

Race: African-American _____
 Asian _____
 Caucasian _____
 Hispanic _____
 Native American _____
 Other _____

Did you have a primary caregiver for at least ten consecutive years during your childhood?

YES NO

What is the gender of that primary caregiver?
 (If there were two or more, please consider the caregiver who had the most authority in your household.)

MALE FEMALE

Perceived Parenting Style Survey

"What My Primary Caregiver Was Like"

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

- A My parent allowed me to do almost anything I wanted to do.
My parent gave me just about everything I asked for.
I was expected to make all my own decisions.
My parent did not usually tell me if my choices were right or wrong.
My parent rarely gave me rules.
My parent rarely punished or disciplined me.
-
- B My parent was willing to listen to my ideas and viewpoints.
My parent was reasonable about discipline, and listened to my reasons if I broke a rule.
My parent and I discussed decisions that I had to make, and usually let me make the final decision.
My parent had expectations for me that were realistic.
My parent encouraged me to do things I was interested in and supported the activities that I participated in.
When I asked for things, my parent would help me, but didn't always give me everything.
-
- C My parent felt that I must obey him/her.
My parent did not allow me to make my own decisions very often.
If I disagreed with my parent, I was not allowed to discuss it with him/her.
Whatever my parent said was right, and I was expected to accept it.
I was not allowed to talk back to my parent.
My parent's punishments were harsh and often unjust.
-

Instructions for Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale

This is a questionnaire to find out the way in which certain important events in our society affect different people. Each item consists of a pair of alternatives lettered a or b. Please select the one statement of each pair (*and only one*) which you more strongly *believe* to be the case as far as you're concerned. Be sure to select the one you actually *believe* to be more true rather than the one you think you should choose or the one you would like to be true. This is a measure of personal belief; obviously there are no right or wrong answers.

Your answers to the items on this inventory are to be recorded on a separate answer sheet which is loosely inserted in the booklet. REMOVE THIS ANSWER SHEET NOW. Print your identifying number that was given to you by the examiner on the answer sheet, then finish reading these directions. Do not open the booklet until you are told to do so.

Please answer these items *carefully* but do not spend too much time on any one item. Find the number of the item on the answer sheet and black-in the space under the letter a or b which you choose as the statement more true.

In some instances you may discover that you believe both statements or neither one. In such cases, be sure to select the *one* you more strongly believe to be the case as far as you're concerned. Also try to respond to each item *independently* when making your choice; do not be influenced by your previous choices.

1. a. Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.
b. The trouble with most children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.
2. a. Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck.
b. People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.
3. a. One of the major reasons why we have wars is because people don't take enough interest in politics.
b. There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.
4. a. In the long run people get the respect they deserve in this world.
b. Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he tries.
5. a. The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.
b. Most students don't realize the extent to which their grades are influenced by accidental happenings.
6. a. Without the right breaks one cannot be an effective leader.
b. Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities.
7. a. No matter how hard you try some people just don't like you.
b. People who can't get others to like them don't understand how to get along with others.
8. a. Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality.
b. It is one's experiences in life which determine what they're like.
9. a. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.
b. Trusting to fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.
10. a. In the case of the well prepared student there is rarely if ever such a thing as an unfair test.
b. Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.
11. a. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it.
b. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.

- 12.a. The average citizen can have an influence in government decisions.
b. This world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much the little guy can do about it.
- 13.a. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.
b. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things can turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.
- 14.a. There are certain people who are just no good.
b. There is some good in everybody.
- 15.a. In my case getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.
b. Many times we might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.
- 16.a. Who gets to be the boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place first.
b. Getting people to do the right thing depends upon ability, luck has little or nothing to do with it.
- 17.a. As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are the victims of forces we can neither understand nor control.
b. By taking an active part in political and social affairs the people can control world events.
- 18.a. Most people don't realize the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings.
b. There really is no such thing as "luck."
- 19.a. One should always be willing to admit mistakes.
b. It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.
- 20.a. It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you.
b. How many friends you have depends upon how nice a person you are.
- 21.a. In the long run the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones.
b. Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.
- 22.a. With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption.
b. It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.
- 23.a. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the grades they give.
b. There is a direct connection between how hard I study and the grades I get.

- 24.a. A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do.
b. A good leader makes it clear to everybody what their jobs are.
- 25.a. Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.
b. It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.
- 26.a. People are lonely because they don't try to be friendly.
b. There's not much use in trying too hard to please people, if they like you, they like you.
- 27.a. There is too much emphasis on athletics in high school.
b. Team sports are an excellent way to build character.
- 28.a. What happens to me is my own doing.
b. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.
- 29.a. Most of the time I can't understand why politicians behave the way they do.
b. In the long run the people are responsible for bad government on a national as well as on a local level.

VITA

Tracey Perley Saturday was born in Ipswich, Massachusetts on February 8, 1967. She graduated from Louisa County High School in Louisa, Virginia in June 1984. After attending Virginia Commonwealth University, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, Christopher Newport University, and Austin Peay State University (transient status), she graduated from Christopher Newport University in December, 1997 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting. She reentered Austin Peay State University in August, 1998, and received her Master of Science degree in Guidance and Counseling in May, 2001.