

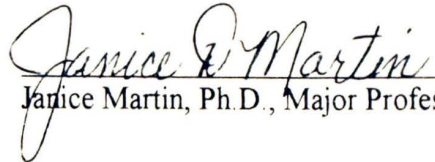
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ADULT PERSPECTIVES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
HARSH PARENTAL DISCIPLINE AND AGGRESSION IN ADOLESCENCE
AND ADULTHOOD

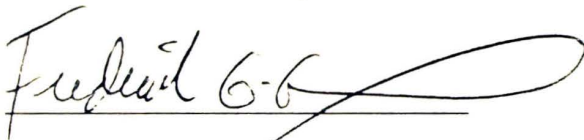
SHELBY D. FAIRBANKS

To the Graduate Council

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Shelby D. Fairbanks entitled "Adult Perspectives on the Relationship Between Harsh Parental Discipline and Aggression in Adolescence and Adulthood." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Psychology.

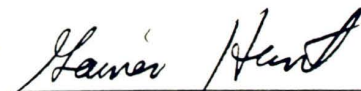

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HARSH PARENTAL DISCIPLINE AND AGGRESSION IN ADOLESCENCE AND
ADULTHOOD

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
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Shelby D. Fairbanks

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Abstract

Extensive research has been done on the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression in children. Little research has been reported that investigates adult perspectives on the relationship between these two variables. The current study examined the relationship between manifestation of aggression in adolescence and adulthood and adult perspective of harsh discipline in adolescence. The current study measured adult participants' beliefs on what constitutes harsh discipline, current levels of aggression, and their perceptions of past aggression. Participants were also asked if they believed harsh discipline to be related to aggression in adolescence and adulthood. One hundred and seventeen college students were recruited. The Aggression Scale of the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) was used to measure adult aggression. The Adolescent Symptom Inventory-4 was used to measure adolescent aggression. The Parental Discipline Inventory was used to measure parental discipline and participant's beliefs. Pearson correlations were conducted to determine if harsh discipline is related to aggression. Adult self-report of harsh discipline was significantly correlated to self-report of aggression in adolescence and adulthood. A two-sample t test and chi square analysis were conducted to determine significance of adult beliefs about the two variables. A significant difference was found between individuals who reported that they received harsh discipline and those individuals who did not report receiving harsh discipline about their beliefs on the effect harsh discipline has on aggression. A relationship can be determined about adult beliefs on the two variables and a relationship was found between adults' self-reports of harsh discipline and aggression.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of Study.....	3
Hypothesis.....	4
Operational Definitions.....	4
Limitations of Study.....	6
Scope of Study.....	6
II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	8
Effects of Harsh Discipline on Children.....	8
Effects of Harsh Discipline in Adulthood.....	13
Definition of Harsh Discipline.....	16
Self-Reports of Discipline.....	18
Self-Reports of Aggression.....	20
Summary	21
III METHOD.....	22
Participants	22
Materials	22
Procedure	27
IV RESULTS	27
V. DISCUSSION	30
LIST OF REFERENCES	47
APPENDIXES	54
A. The Parental Discipline Inventory	39
B. Informed Consent Statement	43
C. Written Instructions for Participants	45
VITA	46

Chapter I

Introduction

Extensive research has been reported on the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression in children. The contention that children are affected by the type of discipline they receive is an important topic because of the impact of discipline on children in school, in their relationships with peers and adults, as well as consequences that may show up later in life. Children who are disciplined harshly are more likely to show aggressive behavior and maladaptive information processing (Weiss, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1992). Children who receive physical punishment show a significant amount of disruptive behavior in school in comparison to children who do not receive physical punishment (Michels, Pianta, & Reeve, 1993). Aggression is more prevalent in children who are punished violently or harshly than in children who are punished less or not at all (Strassberg, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1994). Aggression in children who have been exposed to harsh discipline may reflect the social modeling theory which explains why children who are not exposed to harsh discipline are less aggressive than those who are (Fry, 1993; Muller, Hunter, & Stollak, 1995). Another explanation for aggression in children who are harshly disciplined is called Oppositional Orientation (Greene, Houston, & Holleran, 1995). Oppositional Orientation is defined as insecurity and negative feelings in children due to parental behavior that may result in aggressiveness toward others.

Less research has been reported on harsh discipline in adolescence. Aggression in adolescents seems to be highly correlated to lack of parental involvement. Lack of parental involvement may be related to corporal punishment (Simons, Johnson, & Conger, 1994).

A limited amount of research has been reported on the effects of harsh discipline in adulthood. Attitudes toward violence and aggression in adults do not seem to be correlated with the type of punishment administered in childhood (MacIntyre & Cantrell,

1995). However, punitive discipline appears to be related to later delinquency and adult crime (McCord, 1995). Erratic and harsh discipline increases delinquent behavior, which is related to criminal behavior in adulthood (McCord, 1995). Parents with strong beliefs about the appropriateness of harsh discipline are likely to practice harsh parenting (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Chyi-In, 1991).

Little to no research has been reported about perceptions of harsh discipline and aggression in adulthood. Some research suggests that parents who received harsh parenting by their own fathers are likely to believe in harsh discipline (Simons et al., 1991). MacIntyre and Cantrell (1995) examined attitudes of adults and found no indication that the type of discipline received in childhood as reported by the participants affected adult attitudes on violence and aggression.

Based on the assertion in a review of the literature that harsh discipline is related to aggression in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, the current study examined the relationship between participants' subjective remembrance of harsh discipline in adolescence and self-reported measures of aggression in adolescence and adulthood. Research has shown that those adults who received harsh discipline in childhood are likely to exhibit aggression (Greene et al., 1995). Therefore, the current study attempted to determine whether individuals who perceive discipline in adolescence as being harsh will also remember aggressive behavior in adolescence, and report high levels of aggression in adulthood. Research has shown harsh discipline to be related to both delinquency in childhood and crime in adulthood (McCord, 1995). Adult attitudes toward violence and aggression were found not to be related to reported discipline in childhood (MacIntyre & Cantrell, 1995). The current study examined the correlation between reported discipline in adolescence and adult beliefs on the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression.

Purpose of Current Study

- 1 Adult perceptions of childhood punishment, and the effects of this perception on beliefs about punishment is the primary focus of the current study.
- 2 The present study examined perceptions of harsh discipline from parents during adolescence, remembrance of aggression in adolescence, current levels of aggression, and beliefs regarding the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression.

The present study investigated whether people who did not receive harsh discipline have different beliefs about the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression than do people who experienced harsh discipline. Another important reason for the current study is that it compared self-reported aggression in adolescence and self-reported current aggression. The present study examined whether individuals perceive their aggression as having changed over time or having stayed the same and whether there is a significant relationship between perceived adolescent aggression as measured by the Adolescent Symptom Inventory-4 (ASI-4; Gadow & Sprafkin, 1995) and current reported aggression as measured by the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI; Morey, 1991). The participant's perception of discipline was evaluated to determine whether perceptions influence whether the participant views harsh discipline and aggression as related.

Participants described their parents' discipline and indicated whether they believed that there is a relationship between harsh discipline and aggression. The present study examined whether the participant perceived that he or she was disciplined harshly and therefore shows higher levels of aggression than someone who perceived that he or she was not disciplined harshly. Four issues were addressed: 1. Did the participant perceive having received harsh discipline from parents during adolescence? 2. Did the participant self-report aggression during adolescence? 3. Did the participant report aggression in adulthood? 4. Did the participant believe there is a relationship between harsh discipline and aggression?

Hypotheses

Given the four points of interest above, the following hypotheses were evaluated:

1. Perception of harsh discipline during adolescence, as measured by the Parental Discipline Inventory, would correlate significantly with: (a) aggression in adolescence, as measured by the oppositional-defiant scale on the ASI-4; (b) aggression in adolescence, as measured by the anti-social scale on the ASI-4; (c) aggression in adolescence, as measured by the conduct disorder scale on the ASI-4; (d) verbal aggression in adulthood, as measured by the verbal aggressive subscale on the PAI; (e) aggressive attitude in adulthood, as measured by the aggressive attitude subscale on the PAI; and (f) physical aggression in adulthood, as measured by the physical aggression subscale on the PAI, at significance level $< .01$.
2. Participants who self-reported harsh discipline would have different beliefs concerning the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression than participants who did not report harsh discipline: (a) Participants who did not perceive receiving harsh discipline during adolescence would admit to believing that a relationship does exist between harsh discipline and aggression; (b) Participants who did report harsh discipline would be less likely to admit believing that a relationship between harsh discipline and aggression does exist.

Operational Definitions

Discipline. Descriptions were provided by adult participants regarding their own memories of their parents' discipline. In the present study discipline is defined along a continuum. Discipline was measured as a range of parenting behaviors that contains little or no aggression (talking calmly) to violent behavior (injury from hitting, use of knives, etc.). Yelling, threatening, and spanking fall between the two extremes. Adult perceptions of adolescent discipline was measured using the Parental Discipline Inventory.

Harsh Discipline. In the present study harsh parental discipline was defined as instances of yelling, spanking, slapping, shoving, or hitting the child that occurred most frequently during adolescence. Although harsh parenting often overlaps with abuse or child maltreatment, it is not synonymous with abuse or maltreatment. As in Knutson's (1995) literature review, child abuse and maltreatment definitions often combine physical abuse and emotional neglect of the child. In the current study harsh discipline did not include neglect, nor did it completely overlap with physical abuse. Harsh discipline was measured using the Parental Discipline Inventory. Discipline was determined as non-harsh when a participant's score on the Parental Discipline Inventory was at or below the mean. Harsh discipline was considered any score higher than one standard deviation from the mean. Three discipline scores were generated: overall/total, mother's discipline, and father's discipline.

Adolescent Aggression. For the purpose of this study, adolescent aggression was defined using the diagnostic criteria of the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) for Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and Adolescent Antisocial Behavior. Aggression in adolescence was defined as threatening others, fighting, using weapons, stealing, being physically cruel to people and/or animals, destruction of property, serious violation of rules, losing temper and/or arguing with others, often annoying others deliberately, being easily annoyed, and often being spiteful and/or vindictive. The ASI-4 (Gadow & Sprafkin, 1995) was used to measure adolescent aggression.

Adult Aggression. For the purpose of the current study, adult aggression was defined by the aggression subtests of the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI, Morey, 1991). Aggressive attitude, verbal aggression, and physical aggression were measured by the PAI to determine adult aggression. A T score of 60, which is one standard deviation from the mean, was considered significant.

Limitations of the Current Study

A limitation to the current study is that given the personal nature of the questions, it is quite possible that some participants did not answer honestly. Using self-reports makes it easy for participants to lie on the questions, although confidentiality makes it less likely. The questions were straight-forward and usually not disguised. The PAI and ASI-4 have been shown to have adequate reliability and validity. In previous research self-reports have been demonstrated to be a valid method of measuring parental discipline if specific behaviors are described (Berger, Knutson, Mehm, & Perkins, 1988).

The ASI-4 was designed as a parental measure of current behavior not a self report of past behavior, therefore reliability and validity are undetermined for its use in the current study.

A third limitation is memory confounding. The questions asked participants to remember their adolescence. The accuracy with which they remembered their parents' discipline practices may be decreased or discipline may have changed over time. Perception is different than fact. The current study is not assessing the actual discipline the individual received, but the memory or the perception of that discipline.

The Scope of the Current Study

The scope of the current study is important because it may answer questions that have not been asked or answered by earlier research in this area, such as: 1. Is there a relationship between perceptions of harsh discipline in adolescence and aggression in adolescence and adulthood? 2. How do perceptions of harsh discipline in adolescence affect adult beliefs on the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression? The latter of the two questions is important because individuals who perceived themselves as receiving harsh discipline may have different views on this relationship than individuals who do not perceived themselves as receiving harsh discipline. Answering this question will shed more light on how perceptions of childhood or adolescent events affect views in

adulthood. The information obtained from the current study could help clinicians understand how a client's perception or remembrance of their past affects current behavior and beliefs. A person who has strong beliefs about discipline and aggression may have been influenced by parental discipline practices. By answering the question of perception we will determine if there is actually a correlation between perceptions of adolescent discipline and current beliefs. MacIntyre and Cantrell (1995) found that adult attitudes toward violence and aggression had no significant correlation with the type of childhood punishment reported, while Simons and colleagues (1991) concluded that individuals who experienced harsh discipline in childhood believed in harsh discipline as parents. The current study further investigated the contention that discipline received in childhood and adolescence affects adult beliefs on the relationship between discipline and aggression.

Chapter II

Review of The Literature

Current literature on the topic of harsh parental discipline and aggression focuses primarily on the effects of harsh discipline on children (Fry, 1993; Michels et al., 1993; Muller et al., 1995; Strassberg et al., 1994; Weiss et al., 1992). There are some studies, however, that have examined the effects of harsh parental discipline on behavior in adulthood (Greene et al., 1995; MacIntyre & Cantrell, 1995; McCord, 1995; Simons et al., 1991). The definition of harsh discipline is described in many different terms by several studies (Fry, 1993; Knutson, 1995; McCord, 1995; Simons et al., 1991; Strassberg et al., 1994). Self-reports have been used to measure parental discipline effectively (Berger et al., 1988; Greene et al., 1995). Other researchers have found discrepancies in using self-reports as a mean to measure parental discipline (Simons, et al., 1994; Simons, et al., 1991).

Effects Of Harsh Discipline On Children

The assertion that parental discipline is linked to aggression in children has been a topic of considerable research in recent years (Fry, 1993; Michels et al., 1993; Muller et al., 1995; Strassberg et al., 1994; Weiss et al., 1992). Weiss and colleagues (1992) suggested that the development of aggressive behavior and the development of a maladaptive social information processing system are two possible consequences of harsh discipline in childhood. Disruptive behavior in school occurs more in children who receive physical punishment than in children who receive non-physical punishment (Michels et al., 1993). Strassberg et al. (1994) concluded that children who receive harsh or violent discipline show increased aggression compared to children who receive little to no punishment. The social learning model has been suggested as an explanation for the association of aggression and harsh discipline (Fry, 1993; Muller et al., 1995). Simons et al. (1994) determined that lack of parental involvement (warmth, regard, and

involvement), especially during times of punishment, is highly correlated with aggression in children.

Weiss and colleagues (1992) researched the consequences of harsh discipline (slapping, spanking, and the extent to which the child might have been harmed by an adult) in early childhood on aggression in children and on their social information processing style. Two cohorts containing 309 and 275 participants, respectively, were used in the study. The first cohort was obtained in April of 1987. The second cohort was obtained in April of 1988. The second cohort was used to validate the results of the first cohort. To measure social information processing the researchers presented children video and cartoon stimuli while visiting the children at home. Twenty four vignettes made up the video stimuli and lasted 30 seconds each. The participant was asked a series of questions about each vignette after pretending to be the protagonist in the vignette. After viewing each video the participant was asked to tell what had happened in the story. The cartoon stimuli had eight series of drawings. Each drawing had a brief story read by the interviewer and the participant was asked to pretend to be the protagonist in the story. After each cartoon the participant was asked how and why the peer in the story might have acted the way he or she did. Responding to social events by encoding environmental cues is an example of maladaptive information processing. Maladaptive information processing may affect the development of aggressive behavior. The authors also suggest that the child is likely to be more aggressive and have worse information processing the more severe and harsh the discipline is (1st cohort: $t = 42.04(24)$, 1.78 , $p < .05$; 2nd cohort: $t = 34.12(24)$, 1.59 , $p < .05$). These researchers concluded that harsh discipline caused a child to either become aggressive or to develop a maladaptive way of social information processing.

Michels and colleagues (1993) compared children who had received physical punishment at home with children who had received non-physical punishment at home.

To find out whether the children had been physically punished, the researchers asked parents what type of discipline worked when their child misbehaved and how many times a week or month parents used each type of discipline. The choices were: attention, time out, deprive privileges, bribe threaten, physical punishment, reason with child, formal behavior management system, and nothing works. The authors of the study did not operationally define physical punishment. The researchers measured aggression in school by having teachers rate aggressive behavior using The Teacher-Child Rating Scale (TCRS, Hightower, Work, Cowen, Lotyczewski, Spinell, Guare, & Rohrbech, 1986). The TCRS measures classroom disruptive behavior such as hitting and defiance. The study was conducted to determine the usefulness of interview methods in screening and identifying children who were likely to have conduct problems in school. The researchers found that when compared with peers who received non-physical punishment at home, children who received physical punishment showed a significantly increased amount of disruptive behavior in school (fall of kindergarten: mean = 11.61, standard deviation = 5.21, $t = 3.44$ (263), $p = .001$; spring of kindergarten: mean = 10.91, standard deviation = 5.21, $t = 2.37$ (255) $p = .04$). The amount of non-physical punishment (times, length) did not increase levels of aggression.

The effects of physical punishment, such as spanking have been studied by Strassberg and colleagues (1994), who report that children who are punished violently (uncontrolled hitting instead of controlled spanking), or harshly (spanking or hitting), have increased aggression compared to children who are punished nonphysically or not at all (time out, privileges taken away, etc.). The study had 273 boys, girls, and parents as participants. The participants were recruited randomly at pre-registration for kindergarten at several schools in three geographic sites. The researchers measured parental discipline through an oral interview and a modification of the CTS (Straus, 1987). Child aggressive behavior was measured through observations of the children at school interacting with

peers. Each child was observed for five minutes twelve separate times. The observer recorded occurrence of aggressive behavior (retaliating angrily towards an act by a peer, attacking a peer when the participant was not provoked, and taking an object or toy in an aggressive manner). In contrasting groups of children who had been spanked (S children) and groups of children who had no punitive discipline (N children), the researchers found that S children had significantly more frequent aggressive behavior than N children ($F(1, 250) = 3.96, p < .05$). In contrasting children who had been spanked (S children) and children who received violence (V children), the researchers found that V children ($M = 8.54$) showed significantly more frequent aggressive behavior than S children (by 85%) ($M = 4.62$), $F(1, 250) = 5.71, p < .02$.

Models of Aggression in Children

One explanation for the connection between harsh discipline and aggression in childhood is the social learning model. The social learning model suggests that children model what they see from their parents. Fry (1993) studied two separate communities in Mexico and found evidence to support the social learning model. In a village where aggression was prevalent in adults, it was modeled in the children. He found that in one village corporal punishment was widely used and aggression was very prevalent. In a village where parents used non-physical punishment, such as explaining appropriate and inappropriate behavior, the children modeled their parents' calm, respectful behavior and exhibited little or no hostile behavior. Hostile behavior was considered as fighting each other and beating children.

Muller and colleagues (1995) recruited the parents of 983 college students and used the Conflict Tactic Scale (CTS; Straus, 1987) to measure parental discipline. The CTS measures behaviors which range from discussing issues calmly to using a knife or gun. The purpose of the Muller and colleagues (1995) study was to determine whether aggression resulting from corporal punishment could be best explained by the social

learning model or whether corporal punishment was better explained as a reaction to the aggressive child (the temperament model). Two models were compared regarding the intergenerational transmission of corporal punishment. Each model made different assumptions about integrational transmission of corporal punishment. The social learning model (Model B) suggested that each generation would either remain remarkably similar to the previous generation or become more aggressive and violent building upon what was learned from the previous generation. The temperament model (Model A) would suggest no pattern, and that aggressive discipline would be sporadic and not transmitted from generation to generation. The researchers analyzed the extent to which each model showed consistency with the data. The method of analysis used a two-step approach using a confirmatory factor analysis prior to the path analyses. A path analyses was conducted and correlations were presented separately for fathers, mother, and all parents. Model A showed not to be consistent with the data in any of the path analyses results. Chi Square test for overall goodness of fit showed a difference that was significant between the model and the data ($X^2(2) = 9.43, p < .009$). Model B showed no significant difference between the data and the model ($X^2(2) = .30, p < .860$). The results of a path analyses indicated that the social learning model was most consistent with the data. The authors concluded that the interaction between aggression and corporal punishment appear most compatible with the social learning model.

In contrast to the social learning theory, some researchers have found that there are other factors that appear to affect aggression. Simons and colleagues (1994) found that corporal punishment was not as highly correlated to aggression in children, as was the lack of parental involvement with the children. Warmth, regard, and involvement are often missing during times of punishment. The researchers collected data on 332 two parent families with seventh graders from eight separate counties. Corporal punishment was measured by parent self-reports using two questions adapted from the CTS (Straus,

1987). Adolescents also rated parental discipline practices using the same two questions that the parents answered and one additional question. Quality of parental involvement was measured using parent self-reports, adolescent reports, and observer rating of videotaped family interaction tasks. Adolescent aggressiveness was measured using the Aggressive Orientation Scale (Velicer, Govia, Cherico, & Corriveau, 1985). Adolescent aggression was also measured using a second instrument consisting of the Hostility Subscale of the SCL-90-R (Derogatis, 1983). Adolescent psychological well-being was measured using Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), Pearlin's Mastery Scale (Pearlin, Lieberman, Menaghan, & Mullen, 1981), and the Depression Subscale of the SCL-90-R. The quality of parental involvement by the mother showed a significant relationship with delinquency for boys ($r = -.25$) and girls ($r = -.39$). Corporal punishment by mothers did not show a significant effect on boys, but seemed to have a significant effect on girls. The negative relationship suggests that low involvement is associated with frequent corporal punishment. Corporal punishment administered by fathers did not seem significantly related to the delinquency of boys or girls. For boys, quality of parental involvement by fathers showed a significant relationship, but not for girls.

Effects of Harsh Discipline in Adulthood

Although there is a large amount of literature concerning the effects of harsh discipline in childhood, there have been few studies which looked at harsh discipline in childhood/adolescence and aggression in adulthood. Research using adults is often looking for effects in childhood instead of adulthood. This means that adults report about their discipline and aggression during childhood, rather than aggression or other effects of discipline in adulthood (Muller et al., 1995). Exposure to harsh discipline in childhood has been determined to affect beliefs in adulthood on harsh discipline. Individuals who received harsh discipline from their fathers believed in the practice of harsh discipline (Simons et al., 1991). One study, using adult male participants to report on their parents

behaviors during childhood, concluded that aggression in adulthood is related to less genuine acceptance, more interference in desires as a child, and more punitiveness from parents (Greene et al., 1995). MacIntyre and Cantrell (1995) noted the small amount of research reported on the effects of harsh discipline in adulthood. These researchers investigated the effect of punishment styles in childhood on adult attitudes toward violence and aggression. The results showed no correlation between childhood punishment and adult attitudes. McCord (1995) found that punitive discipline correlates with delinquency in childhood. The author suggested that delinquency in childhood correlates with crime in adulthood.

In the study by Simons and colleagues (1991) the authors found that parents who had strong beliefs that harsh discipline is appropriate were likely to practice harsh parenting. The authors defined harsh parenting as yelling, spanking, slapping, shoving, or hitting the child. Parents with aggressive or hostile personalities, especially mothers, were more likely to engage in harsh discipline. They also found that parents who received harsh parenting by their fathers had a tendency to believe in harsh discipline. They also found that the fathers of adolescent boys were likely to exhibit hostile personalities if they had experienced harsh parenting during their childhood and adolescence.

Greene and colleagues (1995) suggest that parental behaviors may cause individuals to feel insecure and develop negative feelings toward others which result in aggressiveness. The authors term this Oppositional Orientation. The researchers recruited 94 male college students. Child-rearing practices were assessed using the Parent Behavior Form (PBF; Kelly & Worell, 1976) which asked participants to answer questions about each of their parents child-rearing practices. Aggressiveness was assessed using the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (BDHI; Buss & Durkee, 1957). Statistical analyses using zero-order Pearson product-moment correlations revealed that aggressiveness was significantly correlated with both mother and father rejection ($r = .26$ and $.21$,

respectively, $p < .05$ for both), less equalitarianism, which is the extent to which the parent accepts the child's friends and ideas ($r = -.28$ and $-.18$, $p < .05$), and punitive control ($r = .28$ and $.33$, $p < .05$).

MacIntyre and Cantrell (1995) report that little research has been done to show the effects of harsh physical discipline in childhood on adult aggression. The sample for their study included 145 women and 95 men aged 18 to 52. Harsh physical punishment was defined as spanking and paddling and was measured using a questionnaire asking participants to identify one of four punishment styles used during childhood. Participant attitudes toward violence and aggression were measured using the Approval Index of Violence and Aggression (MacIntyre & Cantrell, 1995). MacIntyre and Cantrell hypothesized that participants reporting higher levels of discipline in childhood would show more approval of violence and aggression than participants who reported never receiving physical discipline. The results demonstrated a non-significant relationship between type of punishment in childhood and adult attitudes toward violence and aggression. The results suggested that males had higher levels of violence ($f = 4.43$, $p < .05$) and aggression ($f = 34.38$, $p < .05$) than females. A significant gender difference was found for punishment styles administered ($X^2(3) = 11.342$, $p < .05$). Men had higher frequencies of physical punishment with an explanation and women had higher frequencies of physical punishment accompanied by verbal assaults. MacIntyre and Cantrell concluded that verbal assault is possibly more damaging to the child than physical punishment. The results indicate a non-significant relationship between punishment styles and adult attitudes and are inconsistent with the theoretical implications of the study and suggest that different results may be gained with a different population.

McCord (1995) examined the long-term effects of punitive discipline and found that erratic and harsh discipline increased delinquency. Delinquency was found to increase adult crime, however, if delinquency is controlled then adult crime disappears. According

to McCord, 73% of parents report having used some type of violence, such as hitting, beating, or pushing in punishing their children and 71% of parents have used spanking or hitting more than once to discipline their children.

Definition of Harsh Discipline

Parental discipline is very hard to define and is described by different terms such as corporal punishment, harsh discipline, physical discipline, spanking, punitive discipline, and harsh parenting. Because of the assortment of terms many questions have been raised concerning how to operationalize the term "parental discipline." Fry (1993) defined physical punishment as hitting a child with a switch or stick. In another study, punitive discipline was operationalized as erratic, harsh, and threatening (McCord, 1995). Simons and colleagues (1991) discussed discrepancies in defining measures of harsh discipline, such as, what constitutes a slap, a shove, or a spanking. Simons and colleagues also defined harsh discipline as instances of yelling, spanking, slapping, shoving, or hitting the child with an object.

Coming to a consensus on this topic is difficult because of all of the different names and operational definitions that are used. Spanking has been considered as mild discipline by some researchers (Strassberg et al., 1994) and a harsh discipline by others (Simons et al., 1991). Simons and colleagues (1994) acknowledged that parenting discipline practices are often difficult to describe. Knutson (1995) also noted that a major problem in the literature on discipline is the poorly defined categorization of physical abuse. Defining corporal punishment has been found to have a generational element as well. In the 1950's, striking and beating were a more culturally accepted part of childrearing. Slapping and spanking is described more often by children of the present generation (McCord, 1995).

One issue that causes difficulty is defining levels of abuse. Discipline can be examined along a continuum with points of no abuse/no discipline, appropriate discipline,

harsh discipline, and abuse. It is most likely that this continuum of behaviors are constant, but the descriptions have changed. Accurate and complete definitions of harsh discipline are rare and vary from study to study. What some individuals consider to be normal punishment, others may view as abuse. What one person describes as a slap another may call a beating. It is difficult to determine at what point appropriate discipline turns into harsh discipline and harsh discipline turns into abuse. Another issue is the meaning of the words used to describe the abuse. Lay people and professionals use different words to describe the same thing and the same words to define different things. Since abuse and physical punishment are by and large taboo subjects, we have not come to any commonly accepted terms to describe them (Knutson, 1995).

Research indicates that physical discipline is a common form of parental punishment (Simons et al., 1994; Strassberg et al., 1994). Strassberg and colleagues (1994) examined the relationship between spanking and other types of physical punishment. The authors considered spanking to be separate from other harsher types of punishment that they called violence. The authors defined physical punishment as spanking, hitting, and beating up. The researchers explained the difference between spanking and hitting as "spanking involves using an open hand or object on the child's buttocks in a controlled manner, whereas hitting involved the impulsive or spontaneous use of a fist (closed hand) or object to strike the child more strongly than one would while spanking" (p.449). Finkelhor, Gelles, Hotaling, Murray, and Straus (1983) have noted that spanking and hitting administered during adolescence is considered to be harsh parental discipline.

Harsh discipline has been confused often times with abuse. Knutson (1995) found that children who are physically abused show greater amounts of aggression than children who are in distressed homes or are neglected. He defined physical abuse as an act of commission by the caretaker such as striking a child with an object, blows that result in

tissue damage, bruises, abrasions, fractures, disfigurement, or life-threatening injury. As mentioned earlier, physical abuse is often poorly defined in the research literature. Knutson further notes that the operationalized definition of physical abuse is often left to state agencies or other sources from which research participants are obtained.

Self-Reports of Discipline

Self-reports of discipline by individuals have been shown to be a valid means of measuring parental discipline. Berger and colleagues (1988) found that if specific behaviors are described then participants can give reliable and valid measures of childhood discipline using a self-report measure. Greene and colleagues (1995) argued that although the measure of parental behaviors was retrospective in the study, the results between aggressiveness and parental behaviors met the expectations of the study and are compatible with results in similar studies, suggesting the validity of retrospective measures of parental behaviors. Other researchers have found a discrepancy between children's report of aggressive parenting and parents' self-reports of aggressive parenting (Simons et al., 1994, Simons et al., 1991).

Berger and colleagues (1988) realized that sampling problems were occurring during studies of abuse and punitive childhood experiences because of the reliance on clinical samples and populations that were already identified as being deviant. These researchers argued that samples should come from natural populations such as college students. A study was designed to assess the validity of self-reports on childhood abusive and punitive experiences. The authors conducted two experiments. The first experiment assessed college students' self-report of childhood experiences of punitive and potentially abusive experiences. The experiences ranged from mild physical discipline such as spanking to potentially injurious physical punishment such as punching and kicking. Abusiveness was defined as being hit with objects or being injured. Medical services were identified and operationally defined. In the second experiment the authors compared the

self-reports of college students with results of three groups of adolescents identified by the Department of Social Services as having been physically abused (1st group), physically and sexually abused (2nd group), and no abuse (3rd group). The same measurements were taken in the second experiment as in the first experiment. The results of the two were compared and the accuracy of the answers were determined based on the comparisons. The results of the first study suggested that many middle-class young adults reported being exposed to discipline that could be considered abusive. The results indicated that abuse is widespread and not found only in clinical samples or groups identified with social deviance. The authors also concluded that most respondents who met criteria for having experienced physical abuse did not label themselves as having experienced abuse. The results of the severe physical punishment and abuse domains of the study appear similar to descriptions in the clinical literature on abusive families. The results of the second study, in which abused and nonabused adolescents were identified, established the validity of the use of questionnaires and self-reports in abuse research. The researchers concluded that the results in the study contradict common assumptions that self-report of disciplinary events in childhood are not valid. The authors noted, however, that the more discrete and specific the questions are, the more accurate the report will be.

A study by Greene and colleagues (1995) found that parental behaviors caused feelings of insecurity and negativity toward others which led to aggression in adulthood. Parental behaviors were measured from a self-report retrospective questionnaire. The authors findings suggest that the use of the retrospective measure of parental behaviors was valid because the expected pattern of results was obtained and the results were congruent with similar studies using other measuring methodologies. The authors determined that these results support the construct validity of a self-report measure of parental discipline behaviors.

Parents have been shown to report a lower percentage of punishment than childrens report (Simons et al., 1994). Simons and colleagues (1991) found only a modest correlation between parental self-reports of aggressive parenting and adolescents' report of aggressive parenting. Adolescents reported higher rates of aggressive parenting than did their parents.

Self-Reports of Aggression

The accuracy of self-report measures of aggression may be questionable due to response bias. Saunders (1991) suggests that a social desirability response bias needs to be taken into account when using self-report measures for violence and aggression. Saunders and Hanusa (1986) concluded in their study of 92 abusive husbands, that the men strongly suppressed their reports of depression as well as anger. However, in a different sample of 182 men who battered women, reports for violent and nonviolent crimes were not significantly related to social desirability response bias, suggesting that these men accurately reported their criminal behaviors (Saunders, 1991).

Capaldi and Patterson (1996) found that multiple arrestees with no arrests for violence would self-report as much violence as multiple arrestees with arrests for violence. Over a five year period the number of self-reported violent offenses of two groups of individuals with non-violent and violent arrests were evaluated. These researchers found a similarity between violent and non-violent self-reports of violence, which is important because it indicates that aggressive and violent behaviors may be accurately determined by the use of self-reports. However, this similarity between violent and non-violent self-reports of violence could also indicate that violent persons minimize their violence or that non-violent offenders exaggerate their violence.

Widom and Shepard (1996), using data from 1,196 participants, found that self-report measures of aggressive behaviors and abuse have good discriminant validity and predictive efficiency, despite underreporting by abused respondents. These

researchers concluded that self-report measures of abuse predict self-reported violence and aggression.

Summary

A review of the literature shows a deficit in research regarding the effects of harsh parental discipline in adults. Furthermore, little has been done that examines the beliefs and perceptions of individuals regarding harsh discipline and aggression. The lack of research in adult beliefs about harsh discipline and aggression gives rise to the necessity of the current study. The current study examined the relationship between participants' self-reported perceptions of parental discipline in adolescence, self-reported aggression in adolescence, and self-reported current aggression. In addition, the current study examined the relationship between the above self-reported measures and participants' beliefs about these variables.

Chapter III

Method

Participants

One hundred and seventeen participants were recruited from psychology courses at a mid-size southern liberal arts university. The participants voluntarily participated in this study and students may have received extra credit for participation at the discretion of their college professors. No other incentives were offered. No specific criteria had to be met to participate.

Materials

Parental discipline. Parental discipline was measured using the Parental Discipline Inventory which was created for this study by Fairbanks and Whitten (Appendix A). The Inventory is a questionnaire containing fifteen questions. Six of the questions ask the participant about mother's type of punishment. Examples of questions are: "How often did your mom lose her temper and yell at you?" and "How often did your mom slap you?" Six of the questions ask the same type of information about the participant's father: "How often did your dad spank you" and "How often did your dad lose his temper and yell at you?" The participants answered the questions using a Likert format with 1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = about half the time, 4 = most of the time, 5 = always. The remaining questions on the inventory asked about the duration and length of time participants were disciplined, how often he or she was "naughty" in relation to other children, and how bad the participant was when he or she was bad. Finally, the participant was asked if he or she believed that harsh discipline affects aggression in adolescence and adulthood.

No deception was used. The questions were not embedded in other questions. The participants knew that they were being asked questions about harsh discipline. The Parental Discipline Inventory was created for this study. It has not been used in other

studies, so reliability and validity have not been determined. The scale was used to measure adult reports of their parents use of harsh discipline during adolescence. (Appendix A).

Adult Aggression. Adult Aggression was measured using the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI; Morey, 1991). Specifically the Aggression scale was used, which measures aggression using three subscales: Aggressive Attitude, Verbal Aggression, and Physical Aggression. The PAI was developed as an alternative to the MMPI for assessing abnormal personality traits. The PAI was designed to be used to provide information relevant to clinical diagnoses, treatment planning, and screening for psychopathology. The PAI is a self-report questionnaire with 344 items scored on a Likert-type ordinal scale: F = False, not at all true; ST = Slightly True; MT = Mostly True; VT = Very True. There are 22 nonoverlapping scales including 4 validity scales, 11 clinical scales, 5 treatment scales, and 2 interpersonal scales. Ten scales are further subdivided into 31 conceptually distinct subscales. Aggression is one of the treatment scales. The PAI includes current items, and avoids biased or colloquial and slang expressions. The PAI is designed to be administered in group situations or on an individual basis. Administration takes 40 to 50 minutes.

Eighty-four percent of nonclinical subjects have a T score below 60 on the subscales of the PAI. A T score of 70 (two standard deviations from the mean) represents a pronounced deviation of the typical responses from the population. Ninety eight percent of the population have T scores below 70. Median scale and subscale reliabilities for the PAI's three sample groups are reported in the manual as $r = .81$, $r = .82$, and $r = .86$. Test-retest correlations ranged from $r = .31$ to $r = .92$ (median $r = .82$). Alpha coefficients and mean interim correlations for the Aggression Subscales are $\alpha = .74$, $\alpha = .80$, and $\alpha = .80$ for Aggressive Attitude; $\alpha = .67$, $\alpha = .77$, and $\alpha = .70$ for Verbal Aggression; and $\alpha = .71$, $\alpha = .79$, and $\alpha = .84$ for Physical Aggression.

Adolescent Aggression Aggression during adolescence was measured using the Adolescent Symptom Inventory-4 (ASI-4; Gadow & Sprafkin, 1995). The ASI-4 is a screening instrument for the behavioral, affective, and cognitive symptoms of twenty-four types of adolescent psychiatric disorders. The ASI-4 is used in clinical settings to collect information from caregivers of adolescents. It is used as an alternative to structured psychiatric interviews because it is less time consuming and less expensive. The ASI-4 screens for three types of aggression-related disorders: antisocial personality disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and conduct disorder. The checklist for each disorder is based on diagnostic criteria of the DSM-IV. The aggressive behavior that the ASI-4 screens ranges from losing one's temper to having used a weapon when fighting. Conduct disorder on the ASI-4 is composed of fifteen symptoms which are divided into four categories: aggression toward people and animals; destruction of property; deceitfulness or theft; and serious violations of rules. The screening of conduct disorder has a sensitivity index of .71 in agreement with clinical diagnoses. Antisocial Personality Disorder on the ASI-4 lists seven symptoms: breaking the law; being deceitful; impulsive; irritable/aggressive; reckless; irresponsible; and lacking remorse after mistreating someone. Oppositional Defiant Disorder on the ASI-4 is defined as a pattern of negativistic, hostile and defiant behavior. Four out of eight symptoms must be present for a 6 month period for the individual to be considered as exhibiting oppositional defiant disorder. Sensitivity index for ASI-4 is .63 in agreement with clinical diagnoses.

Although the ASI-4 is designed for parents to answer questions about their adolescent child, the participants in the current study were administered the ASI-4 in relation to their own adolescent behaviors. The participants were asked to remember their adolescence and answer the questions according to their remembrance. Because the ASI-4 was used as self-report on adolescent behavior instead of parental report on

adolescent behavior validity and reliability for this instrument is unknown for use in the current study.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from classes at a mid-size liberal arts university. The current study was conducted in approximately two hour group sessions. At the beginning of each session, the participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent form (Appendix B). A questionnaire booklet was then given to the participants containing a demographic sheet and the Parental Discipline Inventory, the ASI-4, and the PAI. The demographic sheet asked for participants gender, age, and parental status (whether they were parents). The participant was also asked the number of children in his or her family of origin and placement of participant in that series. Verbal instructions as well as written instructions were provided for the PAI and the ASI-4 (Appendix C). After completing the questionnaire booklets, they were collected from the participants. After the completion of the Parental Discipline Inventory, the PAI, and the ASI-4, the questionnaires were handed in and a debriefing was given to the participants to answer any questions that they had as a result of the study.

Chapter IV

Results

Demographic analysis revealed 80 females, 32 males, and 5 participants who did not indicate gender participated in this study. The average age of participants was 28 years. The number of participants who indicated that they were parents was 52. The number of participants who indicated that they were not parents was 61. There were 4 participants who did not indicate parental status.

For Hypothesis 1 Pearson correlations indicate that perception of harsh discipline during adolescence, as measured by the Parental Discipline Inventory, correlates significantly with (a) aggression in adolescence, as measured by the oppositional-defiant scale on the ASI-4 ($r = .28, p = 0.002$); (b) aggression in adolescence, as measured by the antisocial scale on the ASI-4 ($r = .322, p = 0.000$); (c) aggressive attitude in adulthood, as measured by the aggressive attitude subscale on the PAI ($r = .221, p = 0.017$); and (d) physical aggression in adulthood, as measured by the physical aggression subscale on the PAI ($r = .257, p = 0.005$). For hypothesis 1 verbal aggression in adulthood, as measured by the verbal aggressive subscale on the PAI was not found to be significantly correlated to perception of harsh discipline, as measured by the PDI ($r = -.027, p = 0.777$).

Aggression in adolescence, as measured by the conduct disorder scale on the ASI-4 was also not found to be significantly correlated with harsh discipline as measured by the PDI ($r = .185, p = 0.047$). (See Table 1 for correlation matrix for all scores). A hypothesis-based Bonferroni correction (Pedhazur, 1982) was used to determine statistical significance for the correlations.

Table 1

Correlation Matrix for PDI, PAI, and ASI-4 Scores

	PDI Total	PDI Mom	PDI Dad	PAI Attit	PAI Verb	PAI Phys	ASI Cond	ASI APD
PDI Total								
PDI Mom	$r = .778$ $p = .000$							
PDI Dad	$r = .688$ $p = .000$	$r = .320$ $p = .000$						
PAI Attit	$r = .221$ $p = .017$	$r = .296$ $p = .001$	$r = .014$ $p = .881$					
PAI Verb	$r = -.027$ $p = .777$	$r = .069$ $p = .464$	$r = -.124$ $p = .184$	$r = .144$ $p = .122$				
PAI Phys	$r = .257$ $p = .005$	$r = .244$ $p = .008$	$r = .122$ $p = .233$	$r = .665$ $p = .000$	$r = .208$ $p = .025$			
ASI Cond	$r = .185$ $p = .047$	$r = .275$ $p = .003$	$r = .013$ $p = .886$	$r = .446$ $p = .000$	$r = .018$ $p = .849$	$r = .504$ $p = .000$		
ASI APD	$r = .322$ $p = .00$	$r = .296$ $p = .001$	$r = .130$ $p = .166$	$r = .300$ $p = .001$	$r = .036$ $p = .701$	$r = .403$ $p = .000$	$r = .585$ $p = .000$	
ASI Opp	$r = .280$ $p = .002$	$r = .278$ $p = .003$	$r = .099$ $p = .293$	$r = .472$ $p = .000$	$r = .104$ $p = .268$	$r = .519$ $p = .000$	$r = .603$ $p = .000$	$r = .552$ $p = .000$

A two-sample t test was computed to evaluate hypothesis 2 which showed no significant difference between the harsh discipline group and the non-harsh discipline group's overall mean belief about the relationship between aggression and discipline as

measured by question #23 on the PDI ($t = (2, 115) = -1.269, p = .222$). (See Table 2 for means and standard deviations).

Table 2

Means and standard deviations for differences on question #23 between the harsh discipline and non-harsh discipline groups

	Mean	SD
Harsh Discipline Group	3.533 (N=15)	1.125
Non-harsh Discipline Group	3.147 (N=102)	.916

Pearson Chi-Square analysis (2×5) was conducted to determine if both groups had a similar pattern of beliefs about the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression or if both groups were heterogeneous in their beliefs. The analysis did yield significant differences between patterns of responses of the two groups regarding beliefs about harsh discipline and aggression ($X^2 = 10.62, p = .031$). (See table 3).

Table 3

Harsh discipline group and non-harsh discipline group beliefs about the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression

	NHDG*	HDG*	Total
1 = has no effect	7 (6.9%)	1 (6.7%)	8 (6.8%)
2 = has little effect	13 (12.7%)	1 (6.7%)	14 (11.9%)
3 = has partial effect	42 (41.2%)	5 (33.3%)	47 (40.2%)
4 = has much effect	38 (37.2%)	5 (33.3%)	43 (36.8%)
5 = has total effect	2 (2.0%)	3 (20.0%)	5 (4.3%)
	102	15	117

Note *NHDG = Non-harsh Discipline Group

*HDG = Harsh Discipline Group

Chapter V

Discussion

Congruent with the first hypothesis, harsh parental discipline was found to be related to adolescent aggression as measured by the Adolescent Symptom Inventory (ASI-4) on two of the three aggression scales: the antisocial scale and the oppositional defiant scale. Harsh parental discipline was also found to be related to aggressive attitude and physical aggression in adults as measured by the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI). This indicates that individuals who believe that they received harsh discipline in adolescence are more likely to also believe that they were more aggressive in adolescence and adulthood than those individuals who did not report harsh discipline. It is recognized that the measures obtained in this study were retrospective, however, the results that were obtained are congruent with previous research that suggest such a relationship exists (Simons et al., 1991; Greene, et al., 1995). Given the limitations of retrospective and self-report measures, it is also important to acknowledge that this particular study focused on adults' beliefs because the manner in which an individual remembers and perceives his or her life can have profound effects for that individual. For example, as Simons and colleagues (1991) reported, individuals who believed that they had experienced harsh discipline from their fathers were more likely to believe in the use of harsh discipline for their own children.

Verbal aggression in adult participants was not found to be significantly related to harsh parental discipline. This may be explained because many individuals might associate discipline with physical behaviors, such as spanking or beating, and in the same manner, may think of aggression as physical acts, disregarding verbal aggression altogether. An alternate, and more parsimonious, explanation may be that verbal aggression may not have a direct relationship with harsh discipline, that is, those individuals who report discipline as being harsh, may not perceive themselves as being verbally aggressive. Another

explanation is that children who are harshly disciplined may not perceive or react to verbal aggression the same way that other children would. They may be verbally aggressive and not consider it aggression.

Aggression in adolescence as measured by the conduct disorder scale on the ASI-4 was not found to be significantly related to harsh discipline. One reason for this finding could be that the questions on the conduct disorder scale ask about activities such as stealing, lying, playing hookey from school, destruction of property, running away, use of weapons, rape, and cruelty to animals and people. These are not typical behaviors of adolescence. While these behaviors are considered aggressive, they are atypical behaviors for a normal population.

Hypothesis #2 predicted that participants reporting harsh discipline would have different beliefs regarding the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression than participants who did not report harsh discipline. The results of this study partially support this hypothesis. No significant difference was found between individuals who reported harsh discipline and those who did not report harsh discipline regarding their beliefs about the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression when comparing their mean answers on question #23 on the PDI. One possible reason for this finding could be that adults have similar beliefs about the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression. Another explanation could be that the beliefs are so varied, that no one group of individuals hold the same beliefs regarding the two variables. To determine a possible explanation for the results, a chi-square analysis was conducted which found a significant difference between the two groups' pattern of beliefs about the relationship of aggression and harsh discipline. This means that the two groups were different in their pattern of responses regarding the relationship between harsh discipline and aggression. Reports in both groups ranged from "has no effect" to "has total effect" with significant differences in three of the comparisons. A significantly greater number of the harsh discipline group

reported that harsh parental discipline has “a total effect” on aggression in adolescence and adulthood, whereas a significantly fewer number reported that harsh discipline “has little effect” or “has partial effect” on aggression. There did not seem to be significant differences between the two groups regarding responses of “has no effect” and “has much effect”. These results suggest that those individuals who reported that they received harsh discipline in adolescence tend to report that harsh discipline has a total effect on aggression more so than those individuals who did not perceive that they were disciplined harshly. Those individuals who did not report receiving harsh discipline reported believing that harsh discipline has little to partial effect on aggression more than individuals who did report receiving harsh discipline. It was hypothesized that there would be a difference in beliefs regarding harsh discipline and aggression between those that reported harsh discipline and those that did not report harsh discipline. However, the beliefs are opposite of what was hypothesized. Instead of denying a relationship between harsh discipline and aggression, those that believe they received harsh discipline are also more likely to believe that it has a significant effect on future aggression.

The results of this study may not be representative of the total population because only 15 participants met the criteria for the harsh discipline group, whereas the non-harsh discipline group contained 102 participants. The results may have turned out differently if the two groups were more equal in number of participants.

Although the harsh-discipline group was a small sample, the results indicate that there is a strong relationship between harsh discipline and aggression. Adults who believe that they received harsh discipline in adolescence also believed that they exhibited aggressive behaviors in adolescence as well as in adulthood. Likewise, those adults who did not believe that they received harsh discipline, did not report as much aggression in adolescence or adulthood. It is possible that individuals who reported higher levels of

aggression as well as harsh discipline may have been disciplined more harshly because they were more aggressive.

Future research in the area of study could be directed in a long-term, longitudinal study that not only measures actual occurrences (e.g. discipline and aggressive behaviors) but also measures the individual perceptions of the discipline they are receiving and the aggression they are demonstrating. This would serve two purposes: one being that certain conclusions can be drawn from a longitudinal study that cannot be made from a retrospective study regarding the actual relationship between discipline and aggression. Secondly, a comparison can be made between the actual relationship and the perceived relationship of those two variables. Another possibility for future research could be to replicate this study using more participants and/or a different population. Much research has been done about these two variables that does indeed purport there to be a relationship. Since we know that there is likely a relationship between aggression and discipline, future research could be directed towards finding ways in which to alleviate some of the distress associated with discipline by examining effectiveness of alternative disciplinary procedures or parenting workshops. Another area of research for aggression and discipline could be in determining whether children who are disciplined harshly become more aggressive or if aggressive children provoke harsh discipline.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Demographic Information

Please Circle Your Sex Female Male
 Please Fill In Your Age
 Are You A Parent? Yes No

How many children are in your family of origin (how many brothers and sisters do you have?)

What is your placement in that array (1st, 2nd, ..10th, etc.)? _____

The Parental Discipline Inventory

Fairbanks and Whitten

1= never 2= sometimes 3= about half of the time 4= most of the time 5= always

(Use the above scale for questions 1-19)

1. How often did your mom lose her temper and yell at you?

1 2 3 4 5

2. How often did your mom spank you?

1 2 3 4 5

3. How often did your mom slap you?

1 2 3 4 5

4. When punishing you, did your mom ever hit you with something such as a belt, or stick?

1 2 3 4 5

5. When you did something wrong, how often did your mom tell you to get out of the house?

1 2 3 4 5

6. When you did something wrong, how often did your mom lock you out of the house?

1 2 3 4 5

7. How often did your dad lose his temper and yell at you?

1 2 3 4 5

8. How often did your dad spank you?

1 2 3 4 5

9. How often did your dad slap you?

1 2 3 4 5

10. When punishing you, did your dad ever hit you with something such as a belt, or paddle?

1 2 3 4 5

11. When you did something wrong, how often did your dad tell you to get out of the house?

1 2 3 4 5

12. When you did something wrong, how often did you mom or dad lock you in a room such as a closet or basement?

1 2 3 4 5

13. When you were bad how often did your parents not feed you dinner?

1 2 3 4 5

14. When you were being punished how often did your parents punish you for an excessive time? (Ex. Lock you in your room or some other room for more than a few hours or refuse to feed you for more than one meal)

1 2 3 4 5

15. How often did your mom or dad use violent language when he or she was mad at you?

1 2 3 4 5

16. When you were bad, how often did your mom or dad threaten to harm you (hit, etc), throw you away, leave you, or make you leave, without actually doing following through with the threat?

1 2 3 4 5

17. How often did your parents act like they were going to hit you without actually hitting you?

1 2 3 4 5

18. How often did your parents punish you differently in public than they did in private?

1 2 3 4 5

19. How often were your mom or dad high in intensity or volume when they yelled at you?

1 2 3 4 5

20. How often were you disciplined?

more than other kids about the same as other kids less than other kids

21. How often were you naughty?

all of the time often times sometimes very few times never

22. When you were bad-- how bad were you?

very bad not very bad hardly or barely bad

23. Do you believe that harsh parental discipline during adolescence effects aggression in adolescence and adulthood?

has no effect has little effect has partial effect has much effect has total effect

24. Do you feel you were harshly disciplined as a child?

Yes, definitely perhaps absolutely not

25. Compared to the way you were disciplined do you (or would you) discipline your child

less harshly about the same more harshly

Participant

You are about to participate in a study investigating the effects of perceived parental discipline on perceived adolescent aggression and adult aggression. *Please read the following material carefully.* It describes the purpose of the study, the procedures to be used, risks and benefits of your participation, and what will happen to the information that is collected from you.

1. *The purpose of the study* is to determine if there is a relationship between perceived harsh discipline in adolescence and reported adolescent aggression and current aggression.
2. *The procedure to be used.* Harsh discipline will be measured using the *Parental Discipline Inventory*, which is a questionnaire consisting of twenty-five questions. To determine how harshly you were disciplined in adolescence, you will be asked to complete this questionnaire. You will be asked questions such as "How often did your mom lose her temper and yell at you" and "How often did your dad spank you". The *Parental Discipline Inventory* also contains demographic questions which asks your age, sex, if you are a parent, how many siblings you have, and your placement in your family. You will not be asked to give your name or any other identifying information such as your social security number. This questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Adolescent aggression will be measured next using the *Adolescent Symptom Inventory-4* which is a questionnaire asking about your overall behavior in adolescence. You will be asked to complete this 120-question inventory so that your perceived aggression in adolescence can be determined. The *Adolescent Symptom Inventory-4* is a rating inventory, in which you will rate behaviors in adolescence as happening "never", "sometimes", "often", or "very often". Some of the behaviors that you will be asked to rate are "Plays Hookey From School" and "Is Excessively Shy With Peers". Other items on the inventory ask you to rate incidents or behaviors as "yes" or "no", such as "Experienced a Big Change in Normal Appetite or Weight" and "Experienced a Big Drop In School Grades Or Schoolwork". The items on the *Adolescent Symptom Inventory-4* ask a broad range of questions about behavior in adolescence. The items are not limited to aggressive behaviors. This questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

When the *Adolescent Symptom Inventory-4* has been completed, you will be asked to take the *Personality Assessment Inventory*. The *Personality Assessment Inventory* will measure your level of current adult aggression. It is a self-report questionnaire, of 344 items asking for responses of "False, not at all true"; "Slightly True"; "Mostly True"; and "Very True". The *Personality Assessment Inventory* will ask you many different types of questions about your personality. This questionnaire will take approximately 40 to 50 minutes to complete.

3. *Risks and benefits of participation.* There are no known risks from participating in this study. Similarly, there are no direct benefits to you other than perhaps a sense of satisfaction from having participated and knowledge of what it is like to participate in a psychology experiment. In some cases, psychology instructors award extra course credit for participating in research. If one of your instructors awards extra credit, be sure that you take the "certificate of participation" to him or her as evidence that you have participated.

4. *What will happen to the information collected.* The data obtained from you will be coded by an arbitrary subject number and entered into a computer for analysis. The data we obtain from you will be used for purposes of academic requirements and scientific publication only. In any such use of the information, all identities will be carefully protected. The identities of participants will not be revealed in any published or oral presentation of the results of the study. Information will be made public in the form of summaries which make it impossible to tell who the participants were. If you would like a summary of the findings of this study, you may contact:

Shelby Fairbanks
Austin Peay State University
Psychology Department
P.O. Box 4537
Clarksville, TN 37044
(615) 648-7233
email: sdf9370@apsu01.apsu.edu

Informed Consent Statement

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

1. I agree to participate in the present study being conducted by Shelby Fairbanks, a graduate student, under the supervision of Dr. Janice Martin.
2. I have been informed in writing of the procedures to be followed as well as the risks and benefits to me for participating. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.
3. I understand that I may terminate my participation at any time without penalty or prejudice and that I may have all data obtained from me destroyed.
4. I realize that by signing this form, I willingly consent to participate in this study. I also acknowledge that I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Signature

Date

Appendix C

The instructions for the participants will be as follows:

First fill out the demographic sheet. After you fill out the demographic information please answer the questions on that page by circling the number that best corresponds with your response. You will do the same for the following pages. You will turn in the questionnaire at the end of the testing session.

Instructions for the PAI:

Please complete the demographic information on the answer sheet (except for the name and any other identifying information) and then read and follow the directions within the test item booklet. Please answer all of the questions, you will be finished when you answer question #344. You will be instructed to hand the answer sheet and test item booklet in at the end of the session.

Instructions for the ASI-4:

You are to answer each question about yourself when you were an adolescent (middle school or junior high school age). Try to remember yourself in adolescence and answer each question accordingly. The questions are in present tense, you are to answer them as if they are in past tense. For example, the question "Has difficulty paying attention to tasks?", is asking you "if you had difficulty paying attention to tasks?" (in adolescence). You are to check the box under the answer that best applies to yourself in adolescence. Begin answering the questions at Category A, question #1. Please complete all questions, do not stop until you have answered question #120. The answer sheet will be collected at the end of the testing session.

Vita

Shelby Dean Fairbanks was born in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, on September 19, 1974. She attended elementary and junior high schools in Clinton, Tennessee, and graduated from Clinton High School in June, 1992. The following August she entered Cumberland College in Williamsburg, Kentucky, and in May, 1996 received the degree of Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Computer Information Systems. She entered Austin Peay State University of Clarksville, Tennessee, in August, 1996. She will receive a Master of Arts degree in Clinical Psychology in December, 1998.