FACTORS AFFECTING PARENTAL SATISFACTION AND
ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION IN MOTHERS PARTICIPATING IN THE
WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN PROGRAM

by

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(ABSTRACT)

Researchers have shown that certain demographic
variables, family structures, and parenting strategies
can predict the degree of satisfaction that a mother may
experience with her children. This study looked at the
relationship between some of these factors (i.e.,
maternal age, educational level, employment status,
occupational prestige, marital status, living
arrangements, number of children, age of oldest child,
spank, reason, and praise) and their predictive value to
parental satisfaction using mothers participating in a
federally funded Women, Infants, and Children program
(W.I.C.). The relationship between parental satisfaction
and parental acceptance/rejection was also examined.

Only three variables were found to be predictive of
parental satisfaction. Being married was found to be
positively related to parental satisfaction. The age of
the oldest child was found to have an inverse
relationship with parental satisfaction. The parenting strategy of reasoning with the child was found to have a positive relationship to parental satisfaction. A separate analysis was run which showed that parental satisfaction was related to parental acceptance.

The women participating in the W.I.C. program were found to be quite satisfied as parents. The mothers in this study were found to have a high level of satisfaction and a high rate of acceptance of their children. These mothers may have different expectations from their children than do mothers in other studies. Cultural norms, value systems, and expectations from life may be different among mothers from different SES levels or in mothers from different ethnic backgrounds.
Acknowledgements

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This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my husband,
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CHAPTER I

Most adults become parents at some point in their lives (Bianchi & Spain, 1986; Sweet & Bumpass, 1987). This is a role that most people assume without prior training. Nevertheless, most people report that they consider their parenthood one of their most important "jobs" (Meredith, Cacioppo, & Stinnett, 1984). Parents help to shape the next generation; they may have more influence over their children than any other person.

A child's first and enduring role models are her or his parents. Typically, a baby first learns to imitate and first interacts with his or her parents. Early in their child's life, parents begin to influence their child's self-concept (Graybill, 1978). How a child learns to feel about himself or herself can be dependent on the relationship and interaction that she or he has with his or her parent (Crockenberg, 1987; Sholomskas & Axelrod, 1986). Thus, it is important that parents remain accepting of their children (Bullock, 1989). One contributor to parents' ability to be accepting of their children may be their satisfaction with themselves and experiences in their role as parents.

Research suggests that the majority of parents are satisfied with their roles as parents (Campbell, 1981;
Chilman, 1980; Meredith et al., 1984). Yet, these studies show that there are still many parents (i.e., 20 to 30 percent) who are not satisfied with their parental role. A parent's behavior can affect a child throughout her or his entire life. A mother's satisfaction with her role as parent and her acceptance of the child can increase her child's ability to learn and to make effective decisions (Estrada, Arsenio, Hess, & Holloway, 1987). Children also learn from their mothers how to perform the parent roles which they, likely, will use later themselves. If a mother was rejected as a child, she will likely have a more difficult time responding to her own child(ren) with love. Unsatisfied parents not only produce less competent children, but they produce less satisfied future parents (Crockenberg, 1987). This chain can be broken. Parental satisfaction is a reasonable goal for every mother.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research was to examine the effects of several variables related to parental satisfaction among a population of mothers enrolled in local Health Department's Women, Infants, and Children (W.I.C.) programs. Mothers who enroll in the W.I.C. program are a special type of mother. Nationally, two
thirds of these mothers have incomes below poverty level. Only 45 percent of these mothers are married. At least 43 percent of these mothers have not completed high school. Only 17 percent of these mothers have more than 13 years of schooling. All of these mothers are in some way nutritionally at risk. (Williams, Lessler, Wheeless, & Wildfire, 1990). These mothers have small children who also tend to have nutritional deficits and a myriad of other physical and emotional problems that could lead to lower levels of parental satisfaction and acceptance.

Research on parental satisfaction and acceptance/rejection has been done mostly on middle class, well educated, married parents (Chilman, 1979; Chilman, 1980; Meredith et al., 1984). This study examined a sample of W.I.C. mothers who were of lower income and were at risk nutritionally.

The independent variables of maternal age, education, occupation, marital status, living arrangements, number and age of children, and parenting strategies were examined in relation to parental satisfaction. Parental satisfaction was also examined in relation to parental acceptance or rejection of their children.
Rationale

It is necessary to understand the correlates of parental satisfaction since it plays such an important role in the lives of most women. A large majority of parents rate parenthood as more important than their marriages (Chilman, 1979). Most research on satisfaction is geared to understanding peoples' self-perception of their marriage or overall life. Yet, studies have shown that parental satisfaction is significantly related to overall life satisfaction as well as to marital satisfaction (Meredith et al., 1984). Parenting experiences are an important domain of life and occupy a large number of years in most peoples' adult lives. Parenthood is not a job from which a person can easily resign or a commitment from which a person can change her or his mind and decide to do something else. Ideally, once a woman has made the decision to become a parent, she will fulfill this role for the rest of her life.

Professionals who work with mothers need to be aware of which factors most influence maternal satisfaction. Research has shown that adolescent mothers have lower parental awareness than adult mothers, and that they have fewer interactions with their children (Flick &
McSweeney, 1985; Ragozin, Bashman, Crnic, Greenberg, & Robinson, 1982). Maternal age has also been shown to be related significantly with increased satisfaction with parenting. Older mothers (over 20 years old) not only have higher levels of satisfaction, but they tend to commit more time to parenting, and to show more optimal behavior toward their child(ren) (Ragozin et al., 1982).

According to Meredith et al. (1984), those who were currently married and those widowed had a higher rate of parental satisfaction than those divorced or never married. On the other hand, Veroff, Douvan, & Kulka (1981) found in their research that divorced and separated parents had a more positive attitude toward their role as parents than did their married counterparts. Thus, marital status continues to warrant examination for its relationship with parental satisfaction.

Meredith et al's. (1984) research showed that as a parent's education level increased so did his or her satisfaction as a parent. Other research has shown just the opposite. Hoffman (1978) found higher education to be associated with a less positive attitude toward motherhood. Veroff et al. (1981) found that college educated parents did not value parenthood as much as
those parents with just a high school education. The value of parenthood and being satisfied as a parent may be defined differently. Perhaps college educated parents did not view parenthood as important as non college graduates due to the fact that they had other interests such as careers that they found as important. This does not necessarily mean that they did not find being a parent satisfying. Additional research needs to be done to further specify the relationship between years of education and parental satisfaction.

Baumrind (1971, 1972, 1975, 1978, 1980, 1983, 1987) described three patterns of parenting strategies after studying parent-child interactions between pre-schoolers and their parents. The first pattern is authoritarian. Here, the parents' word is law. Little affection or praise is given to the child. The second pattern of parent-child interaction is permissive. Permissive parents make few demands and give little discipline. The third pattern is authoritative. In this type, the parents set and enforce rules, but they also listen to their children and are more flexible in their discipline. Parents may learn these patterns of discipline as well as other types of strategies from their own childhood experiences.
How mothers interact with their children and how they relate to their children can affect the way they feel about their children and themselves as parents (Main & Goldwyn, 1984). Conversely, a child's temperament and personality can also affect the way a mother interacts and feels about her child. The types of parenting strategies a mother uses may be one of the most important factors in determining parental satisfaction. And, parental satisfaction may be the most important factor in determining whether a mother accepts or rejects her children.

The results of this study can be useful to professionals from many disciplines. Educators, medical personnel, clergy, social workers, therapist, teachers, and child care providers can benefit from this research. Knowing which factors best predict parental satisfaction will be useful in determining which mothers are more at risk for rejecting their roles as parents and for rejecting their children. Mothers who reject their parental role may be at greater risk for child neglect and abuse. Research has shown that parents who have less knowledge about child development and less understanding of parenting roles are more likely to abuse or neglect their children (Perry, Wells, & Doran, 1983). A similar
pattern may be found for mothers who derive less satisfaction from parenting.

Children of parents who are satisfied with themselves as parents tend to have higher self-esteem, do better in school, and become better parents themselves. They tend to be friendlier and happier children, and as adults they tend to be more loving and giving to their own children (Berger, 1980; Bullock, 1979; Crockenberg, 1987; Estrada et al., 1987; Graybill, 1978; Main & Goldwyn, 1984).

With new insight about which mothers tend to be more satisfied, perhaps parental satisfaction can be increased for other struggling, less satisfied mothers. Being able to identify less satisfied mothers will enable educators to target these mothers and perhaps help them to increase their parental satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

Family conceptual frameworks are useful in helping to understand the relationships and logic of the integration of ideas used to describe important issues and to give meaning to the dynamics of family life (Peterson, 1986). In this thesis, the symbolic interaction framework was used to help organize thinking about behaviors and feelings that mothers and children exhibit in their relationship to each other. The symbolic interaction
perspective assumes that people share meaningful symbols with one another and that they are able to construct their own realities through self-reflection, evaluation of self and others, and via dynamic social intercourse (Stryker, 1980). These symbolic capacities give structure to the interaction within family life. Family members use the ability to exchange symbols as a means of communicating expectations of their own behaviors and the behaviors of others (Burr, Leigh, Day, & Constantine, 1979).

Symbolic interaction helps explain how mothers perceive their role as parents. This results through role taking with significant others, and through a person's definition of situations. Certain expectations for roles already exist in the society into which each individual is socialized. Sets of these expectations (i.e., norms) guide how an individual carries out her or his roles. Individuals enter a role with certain expectations from past experiences, from their own socialization process, from interactions with others, and from their own culture's norms. A mother's perception of her role is contingent on how well she perceives or believes she is carrying out that role (Burr et al., 1979).
The mother-child relationship is concerned with how mothers and children share common meanings and role take each other. Role taking "involves the capacity of individual family members to view both the social world and themselves from the perspective of the other family members. The ability to role take each other and to share meanings allows them to anticipate the others' responses and to develop a social relationship of special intensity" (Peterson & Rollins, 1987, p. 472). Role taking allows the mother and child to anticipate each others' responses and to develop an intimate relationship with each other (Peterson & Rollins, 1987). From a symbolic interaction perspective, mother-child interactions are based upon the emergence of shared expectations. Through role taking mothers become responsive to the child's needs and expectations, and the child becomes responsive to their mother's expectations of them.

The concept of parental expectations can be seen through a symbolic interaction perspective. Mothers act as the child socializer, and children act as the socializee (Peterson & Rollins, 1987). Mothers have preconceived ideas about how their children should be. They tend to act toward their children accordingly.
Children also begin to have expectations about their mothers, and their behavior is related to how they expect their mothers to act and to react to them. Parental satisfaction is gained when a mother perceives that the child meets her expectations. Likewise, children feel competent when they perceive that their behaviors meet with the perceived expectations of their mothers.

Parental acceptance can be viewed as a significant symbol or gesture to the child that he or she is valued by the mother. Support and acceptance foster behavior from the child that is consistent with parental expectations (Peterson & Rollins, 1987).

Parental control can be viewed as another significant symbol or gesture that a child must learn to interpret. The type of parenting strategies that a mother uses determines which action that mother may use to control a child's behavior. A child's behavior may influence how a mother reacts and, therefore, which type of parenting strategy she may use to attempt a certain level of control of her child.

Which type of parenting strategy is used and how the child responds to that strategy depends on the amount of power a mother has. Parental power refers to the child's perception of the parent's potential ability to reward,
use force, give information, and become an important source of love. The amount of power that a parent has is determined by how strongly the child views that parent as a significant other (Edwards & Brauburger, 1973; French & Raven, 1959; Peterson & Rollins, 1987; Smith, 1970).

Satisfaction comes from a mother's own internal sense of whether or not her expectations, hopes, and dreams are realized. What a mother expects from parenthood and what they actually hope to obtain from being a parent are not always the same. A mother may expect parenthood to be the ultimate and most rewarding experience ever. However, she may actually hope to obtain a sense of well being and happiness while watching her children grow and develop. If the difference between expectations and true realizations is too great, then satisfaction may never be obtained. However, if the difference is not as great, a mother has a better chance of obtaining parental satisfaction. Satisfaction is expected to increase as this perceived difference decreases.

Nominal Definitions

Even though the sample for this study was limited to female respondents, most of the research reviewed was on both parents. Therefore, the concepts used were parental satisfaction, parenting strategies, mother-child
relationships, parental expectations, parental acceptance, parental rejection, and role.

Parental Satisfaction

Parental satisfaction was defined as the level of overall feeling of gratification, happiness, and pleasure that one feels about one's role as a parent. This can be how one feels about the role of parenthood, the value of being a parent, or how she feels about her own self as a mother. Parental satisfaction is the enjoyment and contentment that one attains from being a parent.

Parenting Strategies

Parenting strategies were defined as the methods used by mothers to discipline, to control, to teach, to nurture, and to reason with their child. These strategies also are the ways that a mother responds to a child's actions or behaviors.

Mother-Child Relationship

Mother-child relationship was defined as the quality and quantity of interaction that occurs between a mother and a child.

Parental Expectations

Parental expectations were defined as the behaviors and reactions that a mother anticipates a child will have at a given stage of development. A mother may anticipate
that a child will behave in a certain manner that is either consistent or inconsistent with their developmental stage. A mother may also anticipate that a child will respond to her in a certain manner. Parental expectations also include how a mother anticipates that she would feel about herself as a parent.

**Parental Acceptance**

Parental acceptance was defined as parental warmth which may be expressed physically by hugging, kissing, or affectionately touching; and verbally in such ways as complimenting or praising. Accepting mothers are seen as liking their child and approving of his or her personality. Accepting mothers take an interest in their child's activities and well-being (Rohner, 1984).

**Parental Rejection**

Parental rejection was defined as the opposite end of a continuum from parental acceptance. It is defined as the absence or withdrawal of warmth and affection. Parental rejection can be expressed as aggression and hostility or as neglect and indifference. Rejecting mothers seem not to like their child. They disapprove or resent him or her. They see their child as a burden rather than as a pleasure. Rejecting mothers may act cold and unsympathetic toward their child (Rohner, 1984).
Role

A role is a set of socially defined expectations that specify how a person should behave in a specific situation (Peterson, 1986).

Objective

The major objective of this study was to test the extent to which several specific variables predict the degree of parental satisfaction that W.I.C. participant mothers experience. In addition, the relationship between parental satisfaction and parental acceptance will be explored.

This study examined the relationship of eleven independent variables on the parental satisfaction of 350 mothers enrolled in the W.I.C. program in three counties in south west Montana and in Los Angeles County, California. The study then examined the relationship between parental satisfaction and parental acceptance/rejection. The specific objectives were as follows:

1. To determine the relationship between maternal age and parental satisfaction.

2. To determine the relationship between years of education and parental satisfaction.

3. To determine the relationship between occupation and parental satisfaction.
4. To determine the relationship between marital status and parental satisfaction.

5. To determine the relationship between living arrangements and parental satisfaction.

6. To determine the relationship between number and age of children and parental satisfaction.

7. To determine the relationship between parenting strategies and parental satisfaction.

8. To determine the relationship between parental satisfaction and parental acceptance or rejection of one's children.
Chapter II

Literature Review

Parenting involves a continuous series of interactions between a mother and a child which are aimed at assisting the child to grow into a healthy, independent, and responsible adult (Brooks, 1981). The parent role is acquired quite abruptly with the birth of the first child. At the birth of their child, mothers are expected to know how to parent. The popular media represents the parenting experience as exciting and enjoyable. However, new mothers are often surprised at the range of other emotions that they feel (e.g., frustration, resentment, anger, guilt) in addition to positive emotions.

Parenting is one of life’s major roles. The parental role never ends. Once entered it is very difficult to leave (Meredith et al., 1984). People can disassociate themselves from friends, divorce a spouse, or leave a job; although, mothers can and some do abandon their children, put them in foster homes, or give them up for adoption, it is not as easy for a mother to completely divorce herself from her child. Children are a mother’s legal and moral responsibility for many years; children are one
of their mother's major emotional and social investments forever.

The parental role is most difficult and complex. It lacks role definition and clarity (Pasley & Gecas, 1984). Parenting is a dynamic process. The effects of parenting are determined by the circumstances at that time, and circumstances change over time (Umberson, 1989).

Parenthood is inherently challenging. One view of parenting is that a parent must take an unsocialized human being and mold her or him into a productive member of society (Goetting, 1986). Of course children have characteristics (e.g. behavior, temperament, personality) which also determine how they will turn out as an adult. Mothers make emotional investments in their children and expect emotional returns. Parental satisfaction neither comes easily nor without incurring costs during the experience of parenting. Mothers who participate in the W.I.C. program may have an even harder time achieving parental satisfaction as they have so many other circumstances which they must endure (e.g., low income, nutritional risks, premature or sickly children) (Williams et al., 1990).
Parental Satisfaction

Definitions

Parental satisfaction has been conceptualized in several distinct ways. It can be a mother’s feeling of contentment or gratification regarding parental responsibilities toward a child (Mouton & Tuma, 1989). Children can satisfy a need for parents, though need fulfillment does not always lead to parental satisfaction (Hoffman, McManus, & Brackbill, 1987; Hoffman, Thorton, & Manis, 1978). Alternatively, parental satisfaction can be correlated with the degree to which a mother feels competent and confident in handling a child (Johnston & Mash, 1989). Thus, parental satisfaction can be defined as the level of overall feeling of gratification, happiness, and pleasure that a mother feels about herself as a parent.

The value of children to parents refers to the functions and needs they fulfill for the parent. Many studies interchange these two meanings (i.e., value of children versus satisfaction of being a parent). Hoffman and Manis (1979) and Hoffman (1987) found that men and women value their children for several reasons. Parents value their children because of their feelings of affection that come from interactions with their
children, in order to complete a family, to benefit the husband-wife relationship, for stimulation and fun, to experience purpose in life, in order to acquire immortality, as a useful activity, to show responsibility and maturity, because having children is natural and socially expected, for achievement and creativity, for security in old age, to help economically, and because it is considered a moral responsibility to reproduce.

A review of the literature shows that different researchers have defined parental satisfaction in different ways. Parental satisfaction is sometimes confused with the satisfaction derived from the status of having children (i.e., being a progenitor). Though a mother may place more or less value on children, this is not necessarily related to how much satisfaction she derives from her role as parent. Likewise, a mother may not be totally satisfied with the parent role, but she may be very satisfied with the interpersonal experience related to being a parent of this child.

Measurements

Parental satisfaction has been conceptualized in different ways and by use of different measurement methods. The most common way of assessing satisfaction has been through self-report questionnaires. Answers
were either open ended where the respondent answered as he or she desired or via forced choice where the respondent had to pick from predetermined choices. Meredith et al. (1984) used a nine-point satisfaction/dissatisfaction scale with 1 being "very satisfied" and 9 being "very dissatisfied." The scale was then grouped in three general categories: satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and dissatisfied. The respondents were also given a list with 31 potential satisfactions with parenting and asked to check their perception of the ten most important satisfactions that they derived from parenthood. The respondents in Meredith et al.'s study were mostly married (84 percent), many with college degrees (fathers 48 percent and mothers 26 percent), and many (39 percent) with incomes over $30,000.

Respondents to the Meredith et al. (1984) study reported on what they found most satisfying about being a parent. "Watching children grow and develop" was selected by 74% of the respondents; "love for children" was selected by 65%; "pride in children's achievement" was selected by 62%; "sharing" was selected by over half the respondents; and "growth experience," "passing on values," "fun to do things with," and "general enjoyment" were selected by over 40% of the respondents. Less
satisfied parents tended to select such items as "passing on the family name," "doing what is expected of me," and "feeling needed." Satisfied parents seemed to focus on vicarious experiences and enjoyed the everyday realities of parenthood. Less satisfied parents seemed to focus on what children could do for them and appeared to be interested only in the end results.

Hoffman (1987) used open-ended questions to determine what needs children satisfy for their parents. Parents were asked questions such as "what could you say are some of the advantages or good things about having children?" Answers were then coded into eight basic needs that children satisfied for parents such as "economic utility," "primary ties and affection," "stimulation and fun," "expansion of self," "adult status and social identity," "achievement," "morality," and "power."

Another common method used by researchers to assess parental satisfaction has been through interviews where the respondents were asked specific questions and their answers were recorded and later, coded. Chilman (1979, 1980) used this method with a random sample of parents in Milwaukee. Most of the sample were married, had at least a high school education, worked in either managerial or professional occupations, and had a median income of over
$18,000 a year. Four key questions were asked at different times during the interview. Responses to these questions were coded for the degree of satisfaction on a scale from five to seventeen.

Langenbrunner (1986) interviewed 15 parents of preschoolers and asked them only two questions. "When were they most satisfied as a parent?" "When were they most dissatisfied as a parent?" She found that parents were most satisfied when they were spending time with their child, watching their child learn new things, and holding and showing them affection. Statements of dissatisfaction related to not being able to balance the roles of parent and worker, not living up to their own expectations as a parent, day to day situational times, and not spending enough time with their children. Role performance, how a parent carried out his or her role, was the issue that contributed most to perceptions of dissatisfaction. Other major dissatisfaction noted by Langenbrunner (1986) were lack of freedom and the feeling of being tied down.

It may be argued that the satisfaction and costs of children cannot be meaningfully balanced against each other. Some people do not think about the myriad social, emotional, relational, economical, and other costs before
having children. Their expectations are that the positive aspects of being a parent will outweigh the negative aspects. Thought does not always match reality. Most adults do want to become parents (Fawcett, 1980). Veroff et al. (1981) studied parents in 1957 and again in 1976 and found that satisfactions from parenting and the value of children had not changed over this period of time.

Research Hypotheses

A review of the literature on parenting satisfaction reveals a lack of consensus about whether or not such variables as maternal age, education, occupation prestige, marital status, living arrangements, number or age of children, or parenting strategies have an effect on the level of satisfaction that a mother feels. The literature also reveals insight into the relationship between parental satisfaction and parental acceptance/rejection (see Figure 1). In the following sections, research related to each variable will be discussed.

Maternal Age

Ragonzin et al. (1982) found maternal age to be significantly related to increased satisfaction with parenting. In their study of 105 mother-child pairs, maternal age was found to predict parenting attitudes more
Figure 1. Research Hypotheses
than any other variable. Older mothers (over 20 years old) not only exhibited a higher level of satisfaction, they tended to spend more time with their child and displayed more optimal behavior toward the child. The older mothers tended to interact more with their children and to be more responsive to their child’s needs.

Veroff et al. (1981) in a national study of well-being and satisfaction, found that as a parent’s age increased, his or her feeling of restrictiveness at being a parent decreased. They concluded that this was due more to the increase in the child’s age rather than to the increase in parent’s age. Older parents tended to feel more companionship with their children as the child grew older.

Over 1500 parents were interviewed and questioned on their parent-child relationship quality (Umberson, 1989). Overall life satisfaction was related to the parenting role. Age of the parent was found to be one of the strongest predictors of the relationship quality between parent and child. In turn, relationship quality was related to a parent’s overall well-being and hence overall satisfaction with themselves (Umberson, 1989). It is assumed that this includes their satisfaction with their parental role as well as other roles in their lives.
Goldsteen and Ross (1989) studied mothers’ perception of the burden of having children. Older mothers did not perceive their children to be as much of a burden as did younger mothers. This suggests that satisfaction with parenting is greater with increased age of the parent.

Mullis and Mullis (1982) found that younger mothers had mixed feelings about being a parent. Older mothers tended to feel that having children added to their lives and that persons without children were not as happy. Other studies have also shown that greater satisfaction with parenthood comes with starting parenthood later in life (Campbell, 1981; Sheehy, 1979; Wolfe, 1982).

On the other hand, Roosa (1988) found that delaying childbearing had no effect on marital adjustment, self-esteem, or on the transition to parenthood. Neither Meredith et al. (1984) nor Chilman (1979) found significant differences in level of satisfaction of parents with regard to age of the parents. The majority of respondents in these studies were over the age of twenty, many were between the ages of thirty and forty.

The affect of maternal age on parental satisfaction may be most significant for those parents who are under the age of twenty-five. Many of the studies did not look
at the age of the mother in comparison to the age of the child. The mothers in this study will all have at least one child under the age of five. Most of the mothers in the W.I.C. program may also be under the age of twenty-five. Maternal age may make a significant difference in these mothers' parental satisfaction.

Therefore, hypothesis one was that the maternal age of mothers in the W.I.C. program is positively related to the level of parental satisfaction.

Education

The research literature reports conflicting evidence for the effect of educational attainment on parental satisfaction. Some studies have shown that the more education a parent has the more the parent is likely to experience parental satisfaction. Meredith et al. (1984) found that as a parent's education level increased, so did their level of parental satisfaction.

Parenting strategies also seemed to be related to education level. Gecas and Nye (1974) found that college educated parents tended to discuss problems and to reason with their children, whereas high school educated parents were more likely to use physical punishment and scolding in order to discipline their children.
Other studies have shown that more educated parents tended to value their children less. Hoffman et al. (1978) found that less educated parents (i.e., ten years of schooling or less) rated the value of having children higher than those with more education (i.e., greater than 17 years of school). However, the more highly educated were able to give more advantages for having children. It appears that the responses tended to favor more verbal parents who typically are the more educated since some of the questions required structured answers and some questions were open-ended. The parents with higher education were better able to express their responses to the open ended questions than were those with less education. Children were valued more for companionship and affection among the less educated parents and more for the strength they provided to the marital relationship among the more educated parents.

Veroff et al. (1981) found that college educated parents were more aware of parenting problems. They were better able to articulate the demands and restrictions of having children. They valued the parenting experience and found it fulfilling, but not as much as parents with less education. Less educated parents did not feel that children interfered with other important adult goals.
High school educated parents thought of parenthood as a fulfillment of one of their life goals, more so than did either the college educated or the grade school educated parents. However, this is not necessarily a measurement of parental satisfaction. Neither Veroff et al. (1981), nor Hoffman et al. (1978) looked at the satisfaction that parents felt with their children as people. Rather they looked at the value of children to the parents in their role as parents.

Chilman (1980) found no difference in educational level and perception of parent's satisfaction, concerns, or goals for their children. However, this may be due to the lack of socioeconomic variation in her sample. Mullis and Mullis (1982) found that for parents' attitudes about childrearing and parenthood that education was not related to parenting satisfaction. However, all but 7% of their respondents had completed high school. It was not noted how many were college educated.

There was conflicting research on the level of education as it related to parental satisfaction, especially in regard to the college educated parent. Since most mothers in the W.I.C. program have less than a college education (Williams et al., 1990), hypothesis two
was that the educational level of the W.I.C. mother is positively related to the level of parental satisfaction. Work Status and Occupational Prestige

Many studies compared the parental satisfaction of working mothers versus non-working mothers. Other studies focused on the socioeconomic status (SES) of the parents as a factor in determining parental satisfaction.

Goldsteeri and Ross (1989) found that employed mothers perceived their children as less of a burden than those who were not employed. Satisfaction was increased if mothers did not perceive their child as a burden. Ross and Mirowsky (1988) found that employed mothers with easy access to child care and support exhibited lower levels of depression than those mothers who stayed at home with their children. However, if child care was a problem and the mother had no help with the responsibilities of the child, the mother experienced even higher levels of depression than non-employed mothers. Lower levels of depression logically contributes to higher levels of satisfaction. Since mothers in the W.I.C. program are of lower income (Williams et al., 1990), they may have more trouble finding affordable child care than mothers who are at a higher income level.
Wethington and Kessler (1989) also found that women who worked outside the home were less psychologically distressed than those who did not work outside the home. They surmised that the psychological distress found in the transition to parenthood was related to the decrease in the amount of employment. Here again, less psychological distress could translate to higher levels of parental satisfaction. However, these two studies do not deal directly with parental satisfaction, but rather deal with overall life satisfaction.

Dienstag (1987) questioned 125 first time mothers in regard to their employment status. Working mothers were found to be more satisfied with parenthood than were non-working mothers. Age played a factor in the results. Older (i.e., over age 30) working mothers were more satisfied with parenthood than were younger working mothers, and older non-working mothers were more dissatisfied with parenthood than younger non-working mothers. The most satisfied mothers were those who were over thirty, worked outside the home, and who were able to take steps, such as bottle feeding their children instead of breast feeding, in order to reduce their work overload.
Although many mothers found parenthood and life more satisfying when they were employed outside of the home, Veroff et al. (1981) found that 84% of parents would rather be praised as being good parents than be told that they were good at the work they do. Chilman (1980) found that employment and income played only a small part in parents' perceptions of their satisfactions, concerns, and goals for their children. Equal proportions of employed and non-employed married women expressed high levels of satisfaction with their lives. Maternal role satisfaction tended to be linked more directly to child behavior outcome than to mother's work status (Lerner & Galambos, 1985).

In a study of black mothers, Ball (1984) found that level of income was significantly related to parental satisfaction. Lewis and Spanier (1979) also found a positive relationship between parental satisfaction and higher occupational prestige and income of fathers. Parents at more advanced occupational prestige felt more confident about their parenting (Frank, Hole, Jacobson, Justkowski, and Huyck, 1986).

Even though mothers in the W.I.C. program may have more trouble finding child care, working outside the home would give them more income and possibly more positive
feelings about themselves. Based on these assumptions as well as the cited research, hypothesis three was that parental satisfaction can be predicted by the employment status of the mothers in the W.I.C. program. Hypothesis four was that there is a positive relationship between parental satisfaction and occupational prestige.

Marital Status/Living Arrangements

Many studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between marital satisfaction and parental satisfaction (Belsky, 1984; Chilman, 1979; Goth-Owens, Stollak, Messe, Peshkess, & Watts, 1982; Meredith, Abbott, & Wikoff, 1984; Webster, 1989). Jouriles, Pfiffner, & O'Leary (1988) found that marital conflict positively correlated with observations of toddler deviance and maternal reports of conduct problems. Marital conflict also correlated positively with frequency of maternal disapproval statements directed toward sons' misbehavior.

However, Veroff et al. (1981) found that divorced and separated respondents were more likely than married parents to stress the positive aspects of parenthood. Divorced and separated parents were also less likely to report parenthood to be restrictive. The authors of this study speculated that single parents may find parenthood
more satisfying as compensation for the absence of satisfaction with an intimate adult relationship.

Conversely, in her study, Umberson (1989) found that besides parental age, that marital status of the parents was one of the strongest predictors of the quality of the relationship between the parent and the child. Divorce was found to be associated with significantly lower levels of parent-child relationship qualities.

Hughes (1989) also found that divorced parents had a lower quality of parent-child relationship. However, non-custodial divorced parents experienced more mental distress than custodial divorced parents. This could be due to the frustration and guilt that a non-custodial, divorced parent may feel.

Mullis & Mullis (1982) found that single parents expressed more negative attitudes toward their children. They agreed that parenthood often meant reducing one’s chance for success and would not choose to become a parent again. Not only did single mothers tend to be more stressed, but they also tended to interact less favorably with their children. They tended to be more critical and to use more spanking (Webster, 1989).

Regardless of marital status, children at home tended to have a negative effect on psychological
well-being of parents. This negative effect on overall well-being could effect the way parents feel about themselves and their parenting roles. Other adult members in the house, whether spouse or not, helped to reduce this negative effect (Goldsteens & Ross, 1989). Landesman & Jaccard (1987) found similar results. In their study, single and married women did not differ significantly in how satisfied they were with their relationships with their children. Single parents reacted positively to their own parent's assistance, whereas, married parents showed decreased satisfaction as the frequency of contact with their own parents increased.

Ball (1984) found slightly different results in his study of black mothers. Mothers who were separated tended to be less satisfied in the parental role. Also, mothers without husbands, whether separated, single, divorced, or widowed, but who lived with other adults, were less satisfied with parenting than those who lived only with their children. He felt this may be due to overcrowding.

Although most of the literature revealed that being married predicted higher levels of parental satisfaction, one could argue that a parent who is satisfied in their parental role, may tend to remain married for the sake of
the children. However, the scope of this study did not include marital happiness.

Even though the mothers from the W.I.C. program are more likely to be single (Williams et al., 1990), the literature reveals that the mothers who are married will be more satisfied than the mothers who are not married. Therefore, hypothesis five was that being married is positively related to parental satisfaction. Divorced and separated parents would exhibit a lower degree of parental satisfaction. Hypothesis six was that living arrangements are also related to parental satisfaction. Parents living without another adult in the house would also show a lower level of parental satisfaction.

Number and Age of Children

Westbrook (1978) found that there was a decline in positive attitudes toward parenting as the number of children increased. Goldsteine & Ross (1989) also found the more children a parent had, the more the parent perceived the children to be a burden.

Mullis & Mullis (1982) found that as the number of children increased, parents related satisfaction to the behavior of the child. However, these parents did feel that children added to their lives.
Beckman (1979) found just the opposite. In this study, satisfaction with parenthood and general rewards of parenthood were positively related to the number of children that a parent had. However, motivation for an additional child was negatively related to present number of children. Even those parents with more children who found parenting more satisfying did not want additional children. They seemed to realize that more children would decrease their satisfaction.

Some parents may feel more children to be a burden, whereas other parents tended to have more children because they did enjoy being a parent. It can not be determined whether the more rewards a person sees in children, the more children they have, or whether the more children they have, the more rewards they see in children (Beckman, 1979).

Not only is the number of children a parent has influential in their parenting satisfaction, but the ages of the children may also determine the degree of parental satisfaction that they experience. Parenting tends to change over time as children grow older. Pasley and Gecas (1984) found in their study that the most difficult age of childrearing was the adolescent period. Other studies
have shown preschool age children to be the most burdensome (Goldsteens & Ross, 1989).

Mothers who participate in the W.I.C. program already have at least one child who is at risk nutritionally. Having more children, especially adolescent children would likely add to her stress in caring for her children. Therefore, hypotheses seven and eight were that the number of children and the age of the children of the mothers in the W.I.C. program are related to parental satisfaction. Parental satisfaction is inversely related to the number of children a parent has. There is a curvilinear relationship between the age of the oldest child and parental satisfaction. It was hypothesized that those parents whose oldest child was a preschooler or adolescent would experience less satisfaction than parents whose oldest child was an infant or school age child.

Parenting Strategies

How a mother reacts to a child's behavior may have some bearing on how that mother feels about the child and herself as a parent. Different styles of parenting have been popular over the course of history. In the past, a more autocratic style was common. It was widely held that children needed to learn strict obedience. At the
present time, a more democratic form of discipline is preferred by most parent educators and many mothers. Yet, not all mothers are sure just which behaviors to use. Some parents become overindulgent and too permissive (Palmer, 1980). Logically, other parents may become too strict and domineering.

Baumrind (1971, 1972, 1975, 1978, 1980, 1983, 1987) has described three different ways that parents react to their children's behaviors. In authoritarian, little praise is given to the child. Discipline is usually by physical coercion. Permissive parents tend to ignore children's behaviors and let them get away with misconduct. Authoritative parents use reasoning and explanations to discipline their children. The children of authoritative parents tend to be more independent and self-reliant and show more positive outcomes in areas of cognitive and social competence (Baumrind, 1975).

Maccoby and Martin (1983) expanded the concept of parenting styles. They found that authoritarian parents controlled, shaped, and judged their children's behavior by using severe punishment which was often physical. The children of authoritarian parents were found to be unhappy, socially withdrawn, and to have low self-esteem.
Maccoby and Martin (1983) described permissive/indulgent parents as ones who allowed their children to regulate their own behavior, offered few rules, and gave little in the way of punishments. The children of these parents tended to lack impulse control, self-reliance, social responsibility, and independence.

Maccoby and Martin (1983) found authoritative/reciprocal parents to be parents who expected clear cut behavior from their children and who set definite limits. Rules were firmly and consistently enforced. These parents encouraged independence and open communication. Their children were found to be compliant, independent, socially responsible, self-confident, and to have high self-esteem and self-control.

A fourth type of parent was added to Baumrind’s three parenting styles (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). This was the indifferent/uninvolved parent. These parents kept their children at a distance and had little interaction with them. They were found to be rejecting of their children. The children were found to have low self-esteem, cognitive deficiencies, and to be more delinquent.

Chilman (1980) found that over half of her respondents felt that they experienced no problems in rearing their children. Parents who were most concerned
about their children were more likely not to use physical punishment. They favored talking to their kids, consulting with school personnel, or finding other resources for help. Rickard, Graziano, and Forehand (1984) found that parents who wanted to foster and optimize the development of their children tended to give their children more praise and to ignore deviant behavior by using "time out" methods of discipline.

Keane, Nelson and Herbert (1987) found that parents who were in positive moods tended to exhibit positive reactions to their children's behaviors. Mothers who reported feelings of not being angry, sad, grouchy, or frustrated reacted to their children with praise, reward, and affection. Whereas, mothers who reported that they felt angry, frustrated, and grouchy tended to spank or threaten to spank their children in response to the children's behaviors.

Parents who were angry and punitive tended to have children who were noncompliant and who distanced themselves from their parents (Crockenberg, 1987). Mothers who had children with behavior problems tended to have increased stress, lack of control over their children, and less satisfaction in their parenting roles than mothers whose children were not diagnosed as having
behavior problems (Mouton & Tuma, 1988). Differences in children's characteristics can lead to different parenting styles. It is hard to say which came first, the parenting style or the child's behavior. The parent-child interaction is a continuing two way process (Schaffer & Collis, 1986).

Lerner and Galambos (1985) conducted a longitudinal study of 133 children in New York. Parents were interviewed about parental permissiveness, consistency of rules, and discipline strategies. Children's temperament and behavior difficulties were also measured in order to see what effects a child's temperament may have on a mother's role satisfaction and later child difficulty. A bidirectional influence was found in mother-child interaction and in level of maternal satisfaction. Limit setting and inconsistency did not bear any relationship to the outcome measure of child difficulty. Maternal role satisfaction led to more positive interaction with a child which in turn enhanced a child's development and outcome.

Gecas and Nye (1974) tested Kohn's theory of parental class and child conformity and found that SES made a difference in the type of discipline a parent used. They found that middle class parents were more
likely to use reason, verbal threats, or withdrawal to punish their children. Middle class parents tended to ask their children for compliance and to use reason and explanations to gain compliance. These parents wanted to foster independence in their children. Lower class parents tended to use more physical punishment and to order their children to do things as opposed to asking for their compliance. These lower class parents did not try to foster independence in their children.

The literature did not examine parental satisfaction by type of parenting strategy. It tended to compare parenting behaviors to child outcome. Mothers tended to be more satisfied if they felt like they were more competent as parents. A favorable child outcome leads a mother to believe that they have been a competent parent. Therefore, it can be assumed that a parenting style that leads to a more favorable outcome will increase parents level of satisfaction with parenting.

It is hard to say which came first, the child's behavior or the type of parenting strategy. This study only looks at the mothers' parenting strategies. Parental satisfaction can only be measured accordingly. According to Gecas and Nye (1974), lower SES mothers tend to use physical punishment more than middle SES
mothers. If this is the case, these mothers should exhibit lower levels of parental satisfaction. Those mothers who do use praise and/or reason should be more satisfied.

Hence, hypothesis number nine was there is an inverse relationship between physical discipline and parental satisfaction. Hypothesis ten was there is a positive relationship between reasoning and explaining as means of discipline and parental satisfaction. Hypothesis number eleven was there is a positive relationship between praising children’s behaviors and parental satisfaction.

Parental Acceptance/Rejection

Mother-child bonding and attachment begins even before a child is born. Mothers begin to think of the child and prepare for the child during pregnancy (Brazelton, 1981; Brazelton & Cramer, 1990). Attachment and bonding continues after birth when the mother first holds the child. The mother’s behavior toward the child and the child’s responses to the mother in the early months may determine the degree of attachment that exists between the mother and child. Attachment, or lack of attachment, may be seen as a precursor to acceptance
or rejection of the child by the mother that emerges across the early months and years of their relationship.

Ainsworth and her colleagues developed a scoring system to assess the degree of an infant's avoidance of its mother on reunion with its mother in a standardized twenty minute laboratory observation (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). Using this scale, avoidant behavior has been measured in day care centers as well as laboratories (Blanchard & Main, 1979; Main & Cassidy, 1988; Main & Weston, 1981). George and Main (1979) found that abused children were markedly more avoidant than a group of control children. Main and Cassidy (1988) found that a child's avoidant behavior at the age of six could be predicted from his or her avoidant behavior as an infant. An insecure/avoidant infant was an insecure/avoidant six year old. A secure infant was still secure at the age of six. Thus, the degree of attachment that takes place in a child's early months is very important throughout his or her life.

Main & Weston (1982) found that children who were rejected by their parents tended to avoid their parents. They also tended to have sudden out of context bouts of angry behavior. These children had difficulty in social responsiveness to other adults. As these children became
older, they were found to be hostile, isolated and disconnected in their relationships to their peers.

A parent’s emotional connection with their child can be assessed by their acceptance or rejection of their child. Warmth and affection are on one end of a continuum and withdrawal of warmth and affection are on the other end (Rohner, 1984). This feeling of acceptance or rejection can be passed on from parent to child (Main & Goldwyn, 1984). Parents who experienced rejection during childhood are more likely to exhibit angry and punitive behavior toward their own child. In turn, their children become angry and non-compliant and distant themselves from their parents (Crockenberg, 1987).

The most satisfied parents are also most likely to have had happy childhoods and parents who were consistent and moderate disciplinarians. Dissatisfied parents tended to have fathers who were too strict. Dissatisfied parents are less likely to have well adjusted children and or more likely to abuse or neglect their own children (Chilman, 1979).

Children rejected by their mothers develop three characteristics that are similar to those in abused children. They tended to have difficulty controlling aggression; they were unsympathetic to distress in other
children; and they tended to isolate themselves. Though
the level of difference in the behavior of rejected and
abused children is substantial, it is similar (Main &
Goldwyn, 1984).

The quality of the mother-child relationship is also
important in determining the child's cognitive performance
in school. A good mother-child relationship will
increase a child's ability to problem solve, improve
their social competence, and enhance their social
performance (Estrada et al., 1987). Bullock (1989) found
that there was a relationship between mothers who
reported a high degree of satisfaction with their
children and the children's acceptance and popularity
with their peers.

Lerner and Galambos (1985) used participants from the
New York Longitudinal Study to do their own study of the
relation between maternal role satisfaction and child
adjustment and how this adjustment was affected by the
mother-child interaction. As this was a longitudinal
study, measures of child difficulty were taken at an
early age and then a few years later to determine if the
child's temperament had any effect on the mother's
satisfaction. It was found that there was a
bidirectional influence on the mother-child interaction
and maternal satisfaction. Maternal role satisfaction was related to maternal rejection which in turn was related to child difficulty.

The researchers found that mothers who were dissatisfied with their roles as a parent tended to show more rejection of their children. A more satisfied mother was more sensitive to her child and had a better mother-child relationship. Lerner and Galambos (1985) concluded that mothers who were highly satisfied with their roles displayed greater levels of warmth and acceptance than did dissatisfied mothers.

Maternal acceptance and rejection was measured by Lerner and Galambos (1985) using coded protocols after interviewing mothers and audio taping these interviews. The rejection cluster was made up of six items pertaining to the mother's tolerance and feelings for the child, her approval of the child, and the quality of the mother-child interaction. Trained raters listened to the taped interviews and then rated them according to a specific protocol.

Most of the literature reviewed the outcome of the child as related to the acceptance/rejection of the mother. Mother-child interaction was also discussed in relation to acceptance/rejection. Very little was
mentioned directly about satisfaction and acceptance/rejection.

However, based on the idea that mother-child interaction is related to satisfaction, and that acceptance/rejection is related to mother-child interaction, hypothesis number twelve was that parental satisfaction is positively related to parental acceptance.

Summary

The review of the literature has shown that there are many factors related to parental satisfaction. Those reviewed in this study were the age of the mother, the level of education attainment, the employment status of the mother, as well as the occupational prestige of the mother or husband/partner, the marital status of the mother, her current living arrangements, and the number and ages of her children. All were shown to be factors in determining how satisfied a mother was with her parental role. However, most of the research done on parental satisfaction and acceptance has been with middle class, married, well educated parents. This study used mothers who were considered to be already at risk for low parental satisfaction. It determined whether or not these factors were important in predicting which
mothers enrolled in the W.I.C. program were at risk for low parental satisfaction.

Past research has asserted that the type of parenting strategies used may be a factor in determining a mother's level of satisfaction. Parental satisfaction has also been shown to be a factor in a mother's acceptance or rejection of her child. This study was also directed toward understanding how these factors were related to parental satisfaction and how parental satisfaction, in turn, was related to parental acceptance/rejection among mothers enrolled in the W.I.C. program.
Chapter III

Sample

The data for this study came from a secondary data analysis collected in a larger research study. In the larger study, data were collected in Montana during 1988 and in California during 1989. The purpose of the original study was to determine the relationship between a parent's knowledge of child development and their expectations about what is appropriate parenting behavior. It also explored how this knowledge was related to satisfaction with the parenting role and use of child discipline strategies.

All mothers attending the federal Women, Infants, and Children (W.I.C.) program in three counties in southwest Montana during July of 1988, and those at the Long Beach W.I.C. office of Los Angeles County, California during February and March of 1989 were given the opportunity to participate in this research. The purpose of the W.I.C. program is to improve the health of persons who are nutritionally at risk. This is done through education as well as providing supplementary foods (Farrior & Ruwe, 1987; Williams et al., 1990). The participants attend the clinic approximately once a month and receive health and nutritional counseling and vouchers to purchase food.
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Eligibility for the W.I.C. program depends on three criteria. Participants in this program must be either pregnant and/or have one or more children below the age of five. The participants must be nutritionally at risk. Finally, eligibility for the W.I.C. program is determined by family size and income. Guidelines are established by the United States Department of Agriculture (Health Services Division, 1987; Office of Federal Register, 1990).

Procedure

With permission from the county Health Departments, flyers (see Appendix A) were posted informing clients of the upcoming questionnaire. During the following month, W.I.C. personnel distributed a research packet to each mother during her regular monthly visit. The research packet contained a letter of instruction (see Appendix B), a self-report questionnaire, a consent form on a pre-addressed, stamped postcard (see Appendix C), and a complimentary brochure about children (see Appendix D).

 Mothers were given the option of completing the questionnaire while in the office, taking the questionnaire home for completion, or not participating in the study at all. Questionnaires and consent cards could be placed in a box provided at the W.I.C. office or
could be mailed back in a preaddressed, stamped envelope. Additional flyers (see Appendix E) were passed out reminding parents to return their questionnaires.

Data Reduction and Transformation

Data from both states were coded and entered into the microcomputer using data management software called PC File +. The raw data was then uploaded to the mainframe at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. Analyses were run using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Norusis, 1990a; Norusis, 1990b).

Operational Definitions

Parental Satisfaction

The first dependent variable in this study was parental satisfaction of mothers in the W.I.C. program in southwest Montana during the month of July, 1988 and in Los Angeles County, California during the months of February and March, 1989. Parental satisfaction was assessed using a four question scale (see Appendix F) asking respondents how they feel about being a parent. The respondents were to mark either 1, 2, 3, or 4 with 1 being "strongly agree" and 4 being "strongly disagree." A score between 4 and 8 suggests that the respondent is satisfied with being a parent. The scale was pilot
tested for reliability. Preliminary analysis from this sample show the reliability coefficient to be .85 (see Appendix J).

**Parental Acceptance/Rejection**

The second dependent variable was parental acceptance/rejection of the W.I.C. mothers. Acceptance/rejection was measured using the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ). This questionnaire is a sixty item self-report instrument which measures a person's perceptions of how they treat their child (see Appendix G). Most of the items in the questionnaire refer to parental behavior rather than to parental attitude. The questionnaire asked respondents to answer statements such as "I say nice things about my child," "I make fun of my child," and "I enjoy having my child around me." The respondents were to check one of four appropriate lines, from "almost always true of me" to "almost never true of me" (Rohner, 1984).

The PARQ (Rohner, 1984) consists of four subscales. The first subscale, perceived parental warmth/affection, contains twenty items. The statements on this subscale (e.g., "I make my child feel wanted and needed") refer to the mother-child relationship where a mother perceives herself as giving love and affection unconditionally.
The second subscale, perceived parental aggression/hostility, contains fifteen items. The statements on this scale (e.g., "I hurt my child's feelings") refer to the mother's feelings of anger or resentment toward the child.

The third subscale, perceived neglect/indifference, also contains fifteen items. The statements on this scale (e.g., "I forget events that my child thinks I should remember") refer to the mother's feelings of unconcern or disinterest.

The fourth subscale, perceived undifferentiated rejection, contains ten items. The statements on this scale (e.g., "My child is a burden to me") refer to the mother's feelings of withdrawal from the child.

The items were scored by giving 'almost always true of me' 1 point and "almost never true of me" 4 points (items 7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 42, and 49 will be reversed). Each subscale was summed and divided by the number of questions in that subscale. A score from 1 to 4 was given. The warmth/affection subscale's score was then reversed in order to obtain a total score. The other three subscales measure perceived rejection. The scores from the four subscales were then summed for a total score which ranged from 4 to 16. A low score
indicates the mother is more rejecting and a high score that the mother is more accepting.

The PARQ was tested for reliability and validity. Reliability coefficients for the four subscales have been reported to range from .86 to .90. Further reliability tests were run using the present sample (see Appendix J). The PARQ was pretested using undergraduate students and all four subscales were found to be significantly (p < .001) related to their validity scales (Rohner, 1984).

The independent variables for this study were maternal age, educational level, employment status, occupational prestige, marital status, living arrangements, number of children, age of children, and parenting strategies. A twelve item questionnaire was used to determine demographic data and family status (see Appendix H).

**Maternal Age**

Maternal age was assessed by asking the respondents to check the age category, (i.e., 15-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, and 55 and over), which was appropriate for them.

**Educational Level**

Educational level was assessed by the respondent's answer to "circle the number of years of schooling which
you have completed." Answers ranged from 1 year of grade school to 20 years (4 years post graduate).

Employment Status

Employment status was assessed by the respondent answering the question "What is your occupation?" Mothers were given a score of either employed or nonemployed. Employment meant that the person was receiving wages for their work. Hence, homemaker, unemployed, and/or student were considered nonemployed.

Occupational Prestige

Occupational prestige was assessed by asking the respondent two questions. "What is your occupation? In a few words, please tell us what you do?" "What is your husband or partner's occupation (if he or she has one)? In a few words tell us what he or she does." The occupations were then rated on a scale of 0 to 6 with high prestige occupations (i.e., administrators, engineering, scientific) being 6 and lower prestige occupations (i.e., operators, fabricators, and laborers) being 1 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1983). Those that listed themselves as unemployed, students, or housewives and/or mothers were given a value of 0. The occupation of the partner with the highest score was the one used in the analysis.
Marital Status

Marital status was assessed by asking the respondent "Are you now married? What year were you married?" and "Was your previous marriage ended because of divorce, desertion, never married, or death." Respondents were considered either married or not married. Married respondents were coded as "0" and unmarried respondents were coded as "1."

Living Arrangements

Living arrangements were assessed by asking the respondent "Who lives with you? spouse, brother or sister, male friend, parent(s), grandparent(s), female friend." Respondents were classified as either living with another adult or not living with another adult.

Number and Age of Children

The number of children and the ages of the children were assessed by asking the respondents to list the birthdays (month and year) of each of their children. Children were considered infants (0-18 months), preschoolers (19-54 months), school age (55-120 months), or adolescent (121 months or older). Infants were coded as "1," preschoolers were coded as "2," school age children were coded as "3," and adolescents were coded as
"4." The age of the oldest child was used in the analysis.

**Parenting Strategies**

Parenting strategies were assessed using a scale from the Maternal Expectations, Attitudes, and Behavior Inventory (MEABI) which was "designed to assess patterns in maternal expectations and beliefs about the behavior and development of pre-school children" (Rickard et al., 1984). The scale used is called the Maternal Reactions to a Child's Deviant Behavior (MRCDB). This scale is composed of 23 items (see Appendix I). Mothers are asked to evaluate statements such as "If your child disobeyed your request that she/he apologize for hitting a friend, you would spank him/her" on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being "strongly agree" and 7 being "strongly disagree."

The MRCDB scale has five subscales: spank, reason, praise, ignore or correct, and allow. For purposes of this study three subscales were used to assess parenting strategies. The subscales used were spank, reason, and praise. The first subscale, spank, contains five statements. The statements on this subscale (e.g., "If your child refused to apologize for taking a toy away from a friend, you would spank him/her."") refer to a mother's decision to use physical punishment to discipline her child.
The second subscale, reason, also contains five statements. The statements on this subscale (e.g., "If your child was jumping up and down on the furniture, you would try to reason with him/her about it.") refer to a mother’s decision to use reasoning and explaining as a means to discipline her child.

The third subscale, praise, contains four statements. The statements on this subscale (e.g., "If your child came in from playing the first time you call him/her, you would praise him/her for this.") refer to a mother’s beliefs that praise is an effective means of rewarding good behaviors.

The items were scored by giving each statement a value from 1 to 7. The total was then divided by the number of statements in that subscale. A mother may have a total score from 1 to 7. A low score indicates the mother uses that particular parenting strategy. A high score indicates that the mother does not tend to use that strategy.

Reliability and validity test were run on the entire MEABI instrument. Rickard et al. (1984) reported the median Cronbach’s alpha value to be .67. A second reliability analysis was run on each scale (reason, praise, and spank) used in this study using the present
sample (see Appendix J). Convergent and discriminant validity were reported for the subscales spank, reason, and praise (Rickard et al., 1984).

Analysis

Multiple regression was used to explain the variance related to the independent variables (i.e., age, education level, employment status, occupational status, marital status, number of children, ages of children, living arrangements, and three parenting strategies) on the dependent variable (parental satisfaction). This analytical procedure was used to examine linear relationships. Multiple regression can be used to explain the proportions of variance in analyses where more than one independent variable is used (Hamburg, 1983).

Multiple regression was used to test the first eleven hypotheses of this study. To test each hypothesis, standardized (betas) and unstandardized regression coefficients were examined for statistical significance ($p < .05$). Multiple $R$s and $R^2$ (multiple correlation squared) were examined for the overall predictive capacity of the regression model.

Pearson correlations were used to determine if there was a relationship between parental satisfaction and
parental acceptance/rejection. As this relationship was shown to exist, then a bivariate regression analysis was used to explain the variance in this relationship. Pearson correlations were also used to ascertain the strength of relationships involving all of the independent variables with the dependent variable parental satisfaction and to test for multicollinearity.

Cronbach’s reliability analyses were conducted on each of the eight scales (parental satisfaction, spank, reason, and praise from the MRCDB scale, and warmth, aggression, neglect, and rejection from the PARQ, as well as the PARQ total) to determine internal consistency (see Appendix J).

An examination of the correlation matrix and tolerances was used for ruling out autocorrelation in the error terms (Neter & Wasserman, 1974). Additionally, analyses of scatterplots and histograms were conducted to check for appropriateness of statistics having parametric and linear assumptions (i.e., nonlinearity of regression function, nonconstancy of error variance, nonindependence of error terms, presence of outliers, and heteroscedasticity) (Hamburg, 1983).
Chapter IV
Results

The independent variables of age, education level, employment status, occupational prestige, marital status, living arrangements, number of children, age of oldest child, spank, reason, and praise were examined as predictors of parental satisfaction among mothers enrolled in the W.I.C. program. Parental satisfaction was then used as a predictor variable of parental acceptance/rejection. Multiple regression analyses were used to test these hypotheses.

Questionnaires were answered by 350 participants in the W.I.C. program. Fathers and pregnant, first time mothers were selected out. Hence, only mothers with at least one child were included in this study, leaving 330 eligible cases. Forty-two percent of the mothers were in the first age bracket (15-25 years old); fifty percent of the mothers were in the second age bracket (26-36 years old). Only ten percent of the mothers had not from graduated high school, and over forty percent of the mothers had attended at least one year of college. About seventy percent of the mothers were unemployed, but many of them were students. Over half the mothers or their
partners had jobs that were in the lower levels of the occupational prestige scale.

Contrary to the national description of mothers in the W.I.C. program (Williams et al., 1970), over half the mothers in this study were married, and almost three-fourths of them lived with another adult. Over two-thirds of the mothers in this study had one or two children; twenty-four percent of the oldest children were infants (category "1"); twenty-eight percent were preschoolers (category "2"); twenty-eight percent were school age (category "3"); and over sixteen percent were adolescents (category "4").

A low score on a parenting strategy indicated that the mother answered that she strongly agreed with that strategy. A high score indicated that the mother strongly disagreed with that particular strategy. The mean score for spank was "4" which was in the middle of the scale. Both reason and praise had low mean scores, indicating that most of the mothers used those strategies.

The parental satisfaction scale went from "4" to "16," with "4" indicating that the mother strongly agreed with the statements about being satisfied. Most of the mothers in this study scored at the low end of the scale. On the parental acceptance/rejection scale a low score
indicated that a mother was more rejecting and a high score indicated that the mother was more accepting. Most of the mothers in this study scored high on this scale. Descriptive statistics for each variable used in this model are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Data Analyses

Independent Variables

Age. The first hypothesis suggested that maternal age would be a predictor of parental satisfaction. This hypothesis was not supported as the standardized regression coefficient (i.e., beta) of .03 was found to be non-significant (see Table 3).

Education Level. The second hypothesis suggested that the educational level of the mother would be positively related to the level of parental satisfaction. Support was not provided for this hypothesis; the standardized regression coefficient of -.07 was found to be non-significant (see Table 3).

Employment Status. The third hypothesis suggested that parental satisfaction would be predicted by the employment status of the mother. The proposed hypothesis was not supported, however, as the beta coefficient of .01 was found to be non-significant (see Table 3).
Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for the Parental Satisfaction Model for Mothers in the Women, Infants and Children Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>12.52</td>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Prestige</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0-6</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Arrangements</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Oldest Child</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spank</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Satisfaction</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4-16</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>Number of Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Satisfac</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4-16</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARQ Total</td>
<td>14.01</td>
<td>4-16</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Occupational Prestige.** The fourth hypothesis stated that there would be a positive relationship between parental satisfaction and occupational prestige of the highest partner. Support for this hypothesis was not provided as the results demonstrated a beta of .01 that was non-significant (see Table 3).

**Marital Status.** The fifth hypothesis suggested that being married would be positively related to parental satisfaction. This hypothesis was supported as there was a significant relationship between marital status and parental satisfaction. Being married was predictive of parental satisfaction as indicated by a positive beta coefficient of .13 that attained statistical significance at the p < .05 level (see Table 3).

**Living Arrangements.** Hypothesis six suggested that those parents living without another adult in the house would show a lower level of parental satisfaction than those who lived with one or more other adults. Results for this variable revealed a non-significant relationship with a beta of .05 (see Table 3).

**Number of Children.** Hypothesis seven suggested that there would be an inverse relationship between the number of children a mother had and her parental satisfaction. This hypothesis was not supported as results indicated a
Table 3

Multiple Regression Results for Predictor Variables

with Parental Satisfaction among Women in the

Women, Infants, and Children Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic, Family Status, and Parenting Strategies Variables</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>tol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of mother</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Prestige</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Arrangements</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Oldest Child</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spank</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multiple Correlation (R) .23
Multiple Correlation Squared (R²) .05
Adjusted R² .02
Significant F .10
F-value 1.58

r = correlation coefficient
b = unstandardized beta
B = Beta or standardized regression coefficient
tol = Tolerance
beta coefficient of .02 that did not attain statistical significance (see Table 3).

**Age of Oldest Child.** Hypothesis eight suggested that there would be a curvilinear relationship between the age of the oldest child and parental satisfaction. A scatterplot of the data showed no significant curve in the results. However, an inverse linear relationship was noted between the age of the oldest child and parental satisfaction. The regression analysis indicated a beta coefficient of .11 that attained statistical significance at the $p < .05$ level (see Table 3).

**Spank.** Hypothesis nine suggested that there would be an inverse relationship between physical discipline (i.e., spanking) and parental satisfaction. No relationship was found to exist as the beta coefficient of .02 was found to be non-significant (see Table 3).

**Reason.** Hypothesis ten suggested that there would be a positive relationship between reasoning as a means of discipline and parental satisfaction. Support was provided for this hypothesis because the results yielded a positive beta of .11 that attained statistical significance ($p < .05$) (see Table 3).

**Praise.** Hypothesis eleven suggested that there would be a positive relationship between praising
children's behavior and parental satisfaction. This hypothesis was not supported as the standardized regression coefficient of .06 was found to be non-significant (see Table 3).

**Parental Satisfaction.** Hypothesis twelve suggested that parental satisfaction would be positively related to parental acceptance. This hypothesis was supported by the presence of a positive beta coefficient of .38 that attained statistical significance at the p < .0001 level (see Table 4).

Since only three of the first eleven variables were significant, a reduced regression model was run using only the independent variables marital status, age of the oldest, and reason. The results were slightly different from the first regression model (see Table 5). The adjusted R² increased from .02 to .03. The F-value increase to 4.72, and the significant F went from .10 to .003. These three variables showed greater significance in predicting parental satisfaction when used in a reduced model. The tolerances of these variables also improved as nonsignificant variables were deleted from the model.

**Appropriateness of Multiple Regression**

Tests for the appropriateness of multiple regression were used to determine if this form of analysis was
### Table 4

Multiple Regression Results for Predictor Variables with Parental Acceptance/Rejection among Women in the Women, Infants, and Children Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>tol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Satisfaction</td>
<td>.38***</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.38***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Correlation (R)</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Correlation Squared (R²)</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant F</td>
<td>.0001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-value</td>
<td>56.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** = p < .001
**** = p < .0001

r = correlation coefficient

b = unstandardized beta

B = Beta or standardized regression coefficient
tol = Tolerance
Table 5
Reduced Model of Multiple Regression Results for Predictor Variables with Parental Satisfaction among Women in the Women, Infants, and Children Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>tol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Oldest Child</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multiple Correlation (R)  .20
Multiple Correlation Squared (R²)  .04
Adjusted R²  .03
Significant F  .003
F-value  4.72

* = p < .05

r = correlation coefficient
b = unstandardized beta
B = Beta or standardized regression coefficient
tol = Tolerance
applicable to this study. Regression analysis requires that three assumptions be met: normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity (Hamburg, 1983). Therefore, tests of residual analysis, normal probability plots, and frequency histograms were conducted in order to determine if these assumptions were met. Additional tests were conducted to examine the possibility of outliers and for multicollinearity.

The assumption of normality rests on the presumption that the distribution of the dependent variable is normally and independently distributed (Younger, 1979). Separate analyses (i.e., histogram frequencies) for each dependent variable were conducted. A moderate bias in the histogram appeared for parental satisfaction; the PARQ was normally distributed. Neither model showed major violations of the normality assumption. Regression is a "robust" statistic and requires transformation of the data only if there are major violations of the assumptions (Chatterjee & Price, 1977).

The assumption of linearity is concerned with the idea that the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable will be linear (Tabachnick & Fidel, 1983). The scatterplot for parental satisfaction was slightly curved. Although this was not
a major violation of the assumption of linearity, possible reasons for the tendency of curvilinearity will be discussed in Chapter V. The scatterplot for parental acceptance/rejection was within the normal range.

Multicollinearity reflects the degree to which two or more independent variables are explaining the same variance. The tolerance score represents the proportion of variance that is uniquely explained by each independent variable. The independent variables that were found to be significant had high tolerances (see Table 5). A second check for multicollinearity was to examine the correlation matrix. The correlations among independent variables were found to be low. Therefore, multicollinearity was not suspected in this model.

Outliers are cases which demonstrate extreme variation from the central tendencies of the data. Using casewise plotting of standardized residuals (Norusis, 1990a; Norusis, 1990b) several cases were shown to be outliers. Outliers can make contributions to the variance and can reduce the $R^2$. However, due to the large sample size, the decision was made to retain all the cases and not to delete the outliers.
Summary of Analyses

The residual analyses, analyses of the normal probability plots, and the frequency histograms suggested that there were only minor violations of the multiple regression assumptions. Multicollinearity was tested and found not to be a problem. Although outliers were found to be present, the cases were not deleted from the study. No transformations of the data were necessary due to the robust nature of regression analysis and the large sample size (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983).

Summary of Results

The multiple regression analysis conducted for each dependent variable suggested the following results:
1. There were no significant relationships between the variables age, education level, employment status, occupational prestige, living arrangements, number of children, spank, or praise and the dependent variable parental satisfaction.
2. Being married was positively related to parental satisfaction.
3. The age of the oldest child was inversely related to parental satisfaction. No curvilinear relationship was found to exist.
4. The parenting strategy, reason, was positively related to parental satisfaction.

5. Parental satisfaction was positively related to parental acceptance.

The combined effects of the predictor variables explained only a small proportion of the variance in parental satisfaction. Parental satisfaction explained a higher percent of the variance in parental acceptance.
Chapter V

Discussions and Conclusions

The major objective of this study was to examine the extent to which several specific variables derived from a careful review of the research literature would predict the degree of parental satisfaction that W.I.C. participant mothers experience. Eleven predictor variables (i.e., age, educational level, employment status, occupational prestige, marital status, living arrangements, number and age of children, and three parenting strategies) were examined in relation to parental satisfaction. In addition, the relationship between parental satisfaction and parental acceptance was explored. The results of these analyses were presented in Chapter IV and are discussed in this chapter.

Discussion of the Results

Over 97 percent of the mothers who answered the questionnaires stated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the statements on the questionnaire, indicating that they were satisfied with being a parent. This overwhelming positive response may be due to several reasons. The mothers may really be this satisfied. This is different from other studies which found between 70 and 80 percent of the parents in those samples were
satisfied (Campbell, 1981; Chilman, 1980; Meredith et al., 1984).

The high positive response could also be due to the nature of the parental satisfaction instrument. The parental satisfaction scale used in this study consisted of only four very general questions. Overall, a mother may answer that she is satisfied; however, if more specific questions had been asked, a mother may have responded less favorably.

A third reason that so many mothers may have responded so positively to the questions could be due to social desirability (i.e., what they believed to be socially acceptable). These mothers were receiving assistance from the W.I.C. program. Although they were told that the questionnaires were confidential, they may have been concerned that it was important to answer the questions positively in order to avoid negative consequences. Perhaps future researchers should include a social desirability scale as a control variable to detect whether mothers answer the questions according to their true feelings as opposed to what they believe to be the socially desirable answer.

Another reason for the high positive response rate from these mothers could be due to the "honeymoon"
period. Many of these mothers were first time mothers (37 percent) with small infants. These mothers may still be enjoying the high from being a new parent. They may not have yet felt the reality of parenthood.

As stated in Chapter IV, linearity was not found with this population. The overwhelming response of positive answers to the parental satisfaction scale, caused a narrow range for the regression line. Such a result may distort the nature of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

The high level of parental satisfaction that was found to exist in this sample may also be a reason that so few variables were found to be significant predictors of parental satisfaction. Only three variables (i.e., marital status, age of the oldest child, and reason) of the eleven hypothesized variables were shown to be significant in predicting parental satisfaction.

Demographic variables were not found to be significant. Two family status variables, marital status and age of the oldest child, were significant. Only one parenting strategy variable, reason, was significant. This may indicate that a family's make up is an important factor in predicting parental satisfaction.
Even though the model used in this study was based on a thorough literature review, it was not found to be useful as an overall predictive model for this group of mothers. The mothers in this study were all participating in a federally funded W.I.C. program. The value systems, cultural beliefs, and expectations from life of these mothers may be different from those of other parent samples used in other studies.

Parental acceptance was found to be very high among this group of mothers. The lowest score a parent could receive was 4 (most rejecting) and the highest score was 16 (most accepting). No parent received a score lower than 10, and only 7% received scores lower than 12. This high acceptance rate could be due to several reasons. These mothers may be this accepting of their children. They are a self-motivated group of women. They have already shown their desire to care for their children by seeking help from the W.I.C. program. However, because these mothers are in a special program that gives food vouchers and assistance to them and their children, they may feel obligated to answer questions about their feelings toward their children in a positive manner.

Each individual variable will be discussed as to why it was or was not found to be a significant predictor
of parental satisfaction. Parental satisfaction will also be discussed as a predictor variable of parental acceptance.

Age

Maternal age was not found to be a predictor of parental satisfaction. This was contradictory to several studies mentioned in the research (Goldsteen & Ross, 1989; Mullis & Mullis, 1982; Ragozin et al., 1982; Umberson, 1989). In the present study, maternal age was obtained by asking the respondents to check appropriate categories. Unfortunately, these categories were broad in range (i.e., 15-25 years, 26-35 years, 36-45 years, 46-55 years, and 55 and over) and therefore did not capture the variation of maternal ages. A mother at the age of 15 or 16 likely would answer differently than a mother of 25. Thus, variance in age scores was suppressed by the way that the question was asked. More variation in the ages of the mothers may have shown that age was a significant predictor of parental satisfaction.

Education

Only 3 percent of the mothers did not go to high school. Over 75 percent of the mothers finished high school, and 45 percent went on to college. Many were still in school. The lack of significance of education
as a factor predicting parental satisfaction could be due to the fact that most of the mothers had the same level of education (e.g., 74 percent had between 11 and 14 years of schooling out of a range of 20 levels of attained education). The literature had shown that the most satisfied parents were those with a high school education (Hoffman et al., 1978; Veroff et al., 1981). The majority of the mothers surveyed in this study had a high school education and were very satisfied as parents. More variation in educational level may have shown education to predict parental satisfaction.

Employment Status and Occupational Prestige

Over 70 percent of the mothers were unemployed. However, many of them were students who were still able to pursue outside interests. The literature suggested that women who had to decrease their work load upon becoming mothers felt more distress and therefore, possibly less parental satisfaction (Wethington and Kessler, 1989). Many of the mothers in this study may not have ever worked. For such women, giving up a career or job that they loved in order to stay home with a child, was not a problem.

The women participating in the present study were mothers who were interested in their children's welfare
as suggested by the fact that they enrolled in the W.I.C. program in the first place. These mothers may have felt that staying home with their child was more valuable and, thus, were satisfied with the decision not to work.

For the mothers in this study who did work or who had a partner who worked, the level of parental satisfaction was not determined by the prestige of the job that either partner held. Many of the mothers in this study had occupations that rated low to mid level in prestige (53 percent were in the lower half of the prestige scale). Yet most of them were very satisfied with parenthood. The career expectations of these mothers may not be as high as some other mothers. The mothers in this study may come from families that never had high expectations for career or occupational prestige. If one expects less, one is often satisfied with less, or at least not as frustrated if one encounters lower levels of attainment (Henry, Peterson, & Wilson, in progress).

Marital Status

Marital status was predictive of parental satisfaction. Not surprisingly the results of this study suggested that being married was related to being a satisfied parent. This was in agreement with much of
the research. Umberson (1989) had found marital status
to be one of the strongest predictors of the quality of
the relationship between the parent and the child.
Single mothers tend to be more stressed and to interact
less favorably with their children (Mullis & Mullis,
1982).

Single mothers may also find their children less
satisfying than married mothers because they do not have
another person to give them support. Married women most
likely have a husband at home to share in the
responsibilities and care of the children. A single woman
may not have wanted a child, and it is possible that
having children interferes more with her social life.

Living Arrangements

Having another adult in the house did not have any
significant effect on parental satisfaction. Another
adult in the house may not always be a positive
situation. If a mother enjoys the company of the person
with whom she is living and receives emotional support
and help with the child from this person, then another
adult in the house may help predict parental
satisfaction. The scope of this study did not deal with
the relationships between the mothers and the other
people with whom they resided. Further research is
needed to explore the nature of this relationship and the effect it may have on parental satisfaction.

**Number of Children**

No significant relationship was found between the number of children a mother had and her level of parental satisfaction. Over two-thirds of the mothers in this study had one or two children. Perhaps there was too little variation in the sample for the number of children to predict parental satisfaction. Also, the scope of this study did not include such concepts as whether or not the mothers planned for these children or the desire for more children. More sophisticated research is needed to determine if satisfaction is predicted by the number of children or if the number of children is predicted by how satisfied the parents are with parenthood.

**Age of Oldest Child**

Although no curvilinear relationship was found between parental satisfaction and age of the oldest child, a linear relationship was noted. This was predicted by the literature. Pasley and Gecas (1984) suggested, in their study, that the most difficult age of childrearing was the adolescent period. The results of this study showed that the level of parental satisfaction could be predicted to decrease as the age of
the child increased. By definition and eligibility, the mothers in this program had at least one child under the age of five. Those that had adolescent children were dealing with children in two different developmental stages. Their time and energy had to be divided between a small preschool child and at least one growing adolescent who was seeking his or her own identity and independence. Possibly these mothers had other children in between, making their jobs even more difficult and stressful.

Parenting Strategies

Three parenting strategies (i.e., spank, reason, and praise) were tested for their relationship in predicting parental satisfaction. Only reason showed any relationship to parental satisfaction. Over 87 percent of the mothers agreed that they would use reason as a means of disciplining their child. Parents who reason with their children may not feel as frustrated and guilty about discipline and, therefore, may feel better about themselves and more satisfied as parents. Also, children of parents who use reason and explanation as discipline tend to have more favorable outcomes (Baumrind, 1973; Lerner & Galambos, 1985; Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

It is important, however, to be open to a bidirectional
explanation. For example, mothers may be more satisfied when their children behave in more acceptable manners and respond by using reason rather than other more punitive parent interactions.

Surprisingly, the parenting strategy spank did not show any relationship to parental satisfaction. About 44 percent of the mothers questioned stated that they would spank their child as a means of discipline. However, this did not seem to effect their level of parental satisfaction positively or negatively. There are two possible explanations for this. Possibly a mother is capable of using physical punishment on her child and still feeling very satisfied as a parent. Lower SES parents tend to use more physical punishment with their children (Gecas & Nye, 1974). If this is part of a cultural norm, then a mother would have fewer qualms about spanking her child when the child did something wrong. If there are lower levels of parental satisfaction this may be due more to guilt and frustration than to using physical punishment. The mothers enrolled in the W.I.C. program are mostly from lower SES families (Williams et al., 1990) and may feel relatively comfortable with this form of discipline.
Another explanation for the non-significance of the parenting strategy spank is that the instrument used to measure this parenting strategy was inaccurate. The respondent was only given the choice of spanking the child for a certain action. She was then asked to agree or disagree. If other options had been available, the mother may have chosen a different method of discipline.

An overwhelming number (92 percent) of mothers said they would praise their child in a given situation. Here again, the mothers were given only one option and asked to agree or disagree with the action. Most mothers would answer favorably as this would be the socially accepted response. However, this was not related to their level of parental satisfaction.

Reason was the only parenting strategy to show significance in predicting parental satisfaction. Spanking or praising one's children may be more of an habitual or automatic response to a situation. Reasoning requires thought and assessment of a situation. This may be why reasoning was more predictive of parental satisfaction than the other two parenting strategies.

Further research needs to be done on types of parenting strategies and the effects they have on parental satisfaction. Researchers need to look at the
four major parenting styles as discussed by Maccoby and Martin (1983) and relate these styles to parental satisfaction. Observational studies and interviews with parents, as well as questionnaire style studies should be conducted. Lower SES parents need to be studied separately from, but compared to middle and upper SES parents.

Cultural norms, value systems, and expectations from life may very well be different in mothers from different SES classes or from mothers of different ethnic backgrounds. Some cultures may find it more important to have their children while the women are very young, while other cultures may stress finishing higher education and establishing careers before having children. Large families may be very important for some cultures, whereas, population control may be a concern for parents of other cultures. These and other cultural differences need to be considered in future research.

Parental Satisfaction

Few of the tested variables affected parental satisfaction. However, parental satisfaction was found to be predictive of parental acceptance. Parents who are satisfied tend to accept their children. They feel more warmth toward their children. A more satisfied mother is
more sensitive to her child's needs and has a better relationship with her child (Lerner & Galambos, 1985). Mothers who are more satisfied may be more understanding of their children's behavior and accepting of their children regardless of their behavior.

Implications for Theory and Research

The review of the literature led one to believe that demographic variables, family status, and parenting strategies would affect parental satisfaction. In the present thesis, it was believed that the sample would have a low level of parental satisfaction as they were mostly low income, young, single mothers with children who were at risk (Williams et al., 1990). The results of this study did not support such a view. The mothers in this study had a very high level of parental satisfaction and were very accepting of their children.

The three variables which were significant predictors explained only 3 percent of the variance. Thus, many other untested factors remain which influence parental satisfaction. Mother-child interaction, child temperament and behavior, a mother's own experiences as child, and a mother's satisfaction with other areas of her life are all potential influences on parental
satisfaction. Further research needs to be done to see how these factors would affect parental satisfaction.

Parental satisfaction explained only 14 percent of the variance in parental acceptance. In addition to such factors as mother-child interaction, child temperament and behavior, and a mother's own life experiences, other factors may further explain parental acceptance. Whether or not this child was planned and/or wanted could be an important factor in determining parental acceptance. How well this child meets his or hers parents expectations and if the expectations are realistic could also be factors influencing parental acceptance/rejection. There are many possible factors that could influence parental acceptance/rejection of a child. More in depth research needs to be done to explore what other factors influence parental acceptance.

As well as using demographic, family status, and parenting strategy variables, researchers could also pose questions about the child's behavior, the mother's reaction to her child's behavior, and about how the mother felt about her own mother during her childhood. In future research, questions could also be asked about family planning, expectations of children, and the value of children to parents. These factors could then be
related to the PARQ in order to analyze the relationship with parental acceptance/rejection.

Symbolic interaction can be used to explain why the mothers in the W.I.C. program had such high levels of parental satisfaction and acceptance. Mother and child interactions are based on perceptions of each other and mutual expectations for each other's behavior (Peterson & Rollins, 1987). Parental satisfaction results when a child meets a mother's expectations. In this group of mothers, expectations may have been lower due to the life circumstances in which these families lived. These mothers may not expect specific behaviors from their children.

The life circumstances of the W.I.C. mothers used in this research are perhaps different than many middle SES mothers. The W.I.C. mothers probably have lower incomes and different values and cultural norms. These mothers are probably less likely to rush their children into early learning situations (i.e., preschool, swimming lessons, music lessons, gymnastics). They probably do not expect their children to read before first grade or to perform for the enjoyment of adults. The mothers in the W.I.C. program are most likely not the mothers who are reading all the child care and "how to" books. Lower
levels of expectation may contribute to higher levels of satisfaction (Wilson, Henry, & Peterson, in progress; Wilson & Peterson, 1988). Since these mothers are not expecting as much from their children, satisfaction with and acceptance of their children is easier to attain.

Causal-comparative research is needed to understand the similarities and differences between middle SES mothers and low SES mothers. It may be that upper and middle SES mothers expect too much from parenthood and too much from their children. In these families, children are being rushed into growing up faster and into performing at higher and higher levels (Elkind, 1988). Expectations that are set too high may result in less satisfaction when those expectations of upper and middle SES mothers cannot be realized. Since they don't have access to many of these opportunities (e.g., private schooling, speciality classes), lower SES mothers may not feel this pressure as much. Both sets of parents could be helped to better understand their own motivations as to what factors bring them the most parental satisfaction. It would be interesting to discover if the expectations of lower SES parents are different from those of middle and upper SES parents.
Implications for Public Policy and Practitioners

Educators, medical personnel, clergy, social workers, therapist, teachers, and child care providers can benefit from this research. Knowing which factors predict parental satisfaction could be useful in determining which mothers are more at risk for rejecting their roles as parents and for rejecting their children. Realizing that demographic factors, family status, and parenting strategies are not the only factors predicting parental satisfaction and acceptance is important. Professionals must look at all areas of mothers' lives to determine their risk for rejecting their children.

All mothers could benefit from parenting classes. There should be some way that mothers, and fathers too, are encouraged to take parenting classes at different times during the course of their child's development. This could begin at the time of birth and continue periodically throughout the school years. The government could set up publicly funded parenting classes and give incentives to encourage parents to attend. Classes for parents could be set up in churches and synagogues, service organizations, youth groups, or through medical clinics, community service centers, schools, and/or social agencies.
Professionals and parent educators need to be educated themselves as to what is important for parents to learn. Parenting classes should emphasize the need to enjoy one's children as well as the more widely disseminated information about child development and parenting techniques. Beginning immediately postpartum, classes given to new parents should include the emotional aspects of taking the baby home, as well as how to care for the baby's physical needs. Children are only children for a few years. Parents should learn how to enjoy those years and feel good about what they contribute to the life of a developing person.

How it feels to be a parent should be explored including negative as well as positive emotions. Parents should be made aware that parenthood does not always bring warm, loving feelings to them. Parenthood is hard, demanding, and not always rewarding work. If parents' expectations are not as high, then their disappointments will not be as great. Hence, satisfaction should increase.

The most important thing professionals and policy makers need to understand is that not all parents have the same goals and expectations for their children. Classes, policies, and programs should be set up with
these ideas in mind. Different socioeconomic statuses and
different cultures should be taught according to their
beliefs and their limitations.

Limitations

This study was influenced by several limitations. The sample of mothers in the W.I.C. program is not
representative of the entire population of parents. It is not even representative of all low SES mothers.
These mothers have special needs and have taken the steps
to find help for themselves. The mothers in this sample
all come from two regions of the United States (i.e.,
Montana and Los Angeles). Mothers in other areas of the
country may be different. Results of the study from
these mothers do not necessarily explain parental
satisfaction in other mothers.

The measure of parental satisfaction may also be a
limitation. Since only four general questions were
asked, the true scope of a mother's satisfaction could
not be assessed. One could only assess that the mother
was generally satisfied as a parent.

Self-report questionnaires in themselves are
limiting. Mothers may report what they believe to be
the socially acceptable answer as opposed to their
true feelings. Forced answer questionnaires also have
limitations. Mothers are forced to choose a response which might not be exactly what they wish to answer. True feelings and explanations may not be expressed.

One last limitation is in the type of analysis used. Regression analysis shows relationships. However, relationships do not legitimize assumptions of causality. Even the direction of influence between variables cannot be predicted without longitudinal and carefully controlled research designs. Although, the results in this study showed a relationship between parental satisfaction and parental acceptance, it cannot be determined if parental satisfaction is a predictor of parental acceptance or vice versa.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between certain demographic variables, family structure, and parenting strategies with parental satisfaction. In addition, this study examined the relationship between parental satisfaction and parental acceptance.

Only three variables were found to be predictive of parental satisfaction among mothers participating in the W.I.C program. Being married was found to be positively related to parental satisfaction. The age of the oldest
child was found to have an inverse relationship with parental satisfaction. The parenting strategy of reason was also found to have a positive relationship to parental satisfaction. However, these three variables only accounted for 3 percent of the variance in parental satisfaction. Such results clearly demonstrate the importance of identifying additional variables in order to explain parental satisfaction.

Parental satisfaction was found to be related to parental acceptance. This is important to professionals and policy makers. If parents are to be accepting of their children, they need to understand all aspects of parenting and be satisfied with themselves as parents.

The women participating in the W.I.C. program were clearly found to be quite satisfied as parents. This demonstrates that these mothers may have different expectations from their children than mothers in other studies. Cultural norms, value systems, and life expectations may very well be different in mothers from different SES levels or different ethnic backgrounds.

Future research needs to look at causal and comparative studies between low SES parents and middle and upper SES parents as to which factors influence parental satisfaction.
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Appendices
Appendix A

Flyer Informing Parents of Upcoming Questionnaire
BEING A PARENT CAN BE HARD. Sometimes it's hard to know just what to do. We are asking you to share your ideas with others. It won't take much of your time. Your answers will help us to help others. No one will know who answered the questions. We will not use information to identify anyone. You will continue to get WIC services whether or not you answer the questions. The form can be completed in your home and mailed to us postage free.

Thank you,

Nancy, Stephan and Sandy
from the Parenting Project
at Montana State University

"I said, DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN?"

COMING SOON!

We will be here beginning May 31st.
We look forward to seeing you then!
Appendix B

Letter of Instruction
February 10, 1989

Name Of Project: The Parenting Project

Principal Researcher: Dr. Nilufer Medora, Department of Home Economics, CSULB

Purpose: The purpose of this study is: (1) to determine how experiences and knowledge about children relate to parenting practices, and (2) to determine how the experience and knowledge about children are related to emotions, expectations, and satisfaction/dissatisfaction concerning parenting.

By participating in this study, you can learn more about yourself and your family life. We do not believe that there are any risks for you in answering the questionnaire. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide not to participate, please be aware that you may do so at any time. Completing this questionnaire is not a part of the requirement or a prerequisite to get aid from the WIC office.

Please answer each item honestly; there are no right or wrong answers to any questions. We are only interested in your parenting practices and beliefs about parenting. It should take you 15-25 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Please do not put your name on the questionnaire. Results of the questionnaires will be reported for groups only with all identifying information omitted. Your individual answers will not be reported to the WIC office or to others. After you have completed filling out the questionnaire, please hand the completed questionnaire to Amy. The results of this study will be available in early Fall, 1989. If you would like to read the report, copies will be made available in the WIC office.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the study, please call me at: (213) 985-4488. Thank you for participating. We sincerely appreciate your taking the time to help us with this study.

Nilufer P. Medora
Assistant Professor
Department of Home Economics
California State University, Long Beach

Amy Kuehn
Research Technician
Dept. of Home Economics
California State University, Long Beach
Appendix C

Consent Form and Pre-addressed Postcard
MSU PARENTING STUDY, 1988

I am a willing participant in the MSU Parenting Study and have been informed of the following items: (1) I have been informed of the following description of the project, its purpose, and benefits; (2) I have been given an explanation as to why I have been asked to participate; (3) I have been given an explanation of my specific involvement and potential risks, if any; (4) I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time that I desire; and (5) I understand that my responses will be kept anonymous.

________________________
Signature

Montana State University
Parenting Project
Serrick Hall
Bozeman, MT  59717

MSU Parenting Study
Serrick Hall
College of Nursing
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT  59717
Appendix D

Complimentary Brochure about Children
Children learn through play

Play is essential for children to grow and learn. What do children learn while they play? Watch them concentrate as they:
• figure out how things work
• pick up new words and ideas
• build strong muscles they can control
• use their imagination
• solve problems
• learn to cooperate with others

Children outgrow their clothes rapidly because their bodies are growing. In much the same way, children’s play changes as their minds and bodies develop.

The Parenting Project
Herrick Hall
Montana State University
Children Learn What They Play

If children play with fragile toys,
They learn to be overly cautious,
If children only play strongly competitive games,
They learn winning is all that counts,
If children read books about passive girls,
They learn girls are weak,
If children grow up with narrow role models,
They learn a limited view of their own possibilities,
If girls and boys play active games,
They learn their bodies are strong,
If girls and boys play with dolls,
They learn to be loving,
If girls and boys play with inventive toys,
They are inspired to create,
If girls and boys share chores at home,
They learn to be self-sufficient,
If girls and boys play with building toys,
They learn to reach higher and have ambition,
If girls and boys play together,
They learn to be friends as adults.
There are many types of play, all of which are valuable for growing children. Sometimes children (and adults) like to play alone. This is called solitary play. Children may work on puzzles, read books, draw pictures, ride bikes, or chew on teething rings.

Have you ever seen two children playing in the sandbox, one building sand castles and the other baking birthday cakes? This is called parallel play.

Perhaps you have noticed a group of children playing house, or involved in a board game, or operating a lemonade stand. Children can spend hours in cooperative play, which frequently takes the form of pretend or dramatic play.

Play tends to become more sophisticated as children grow up, but adult play is amazingly similar to children's. Sometimes we play solitaire, or read a novel, or all join in for a rousing volleyball game, or play charades. For many adults, work and play are intertwined.

What rules do children need when they play? As few as possible to foster productive play. Most problems with play are covered by these three simple rules:

1. People are not for hurting.
2. Conflicts are resolved by talking.
3. Everything must be returned to its proper place.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>What Children Are Like</th>
<th>Types of Good Toys and Suitable Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth to 3 months</td>
<td>Begin to smile at people; cry. Sleeps 14 to 17 hours; starts to use their arms.</td>
<td>Basket, large range, squeaky or musical toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sleeps and is awake about 10 hours; prefers comfort as seen.</td>
<td>Linoleum, nursery rumpet, paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6 months</td>
<td>Prefers parents and older siblings to other people</td>
<td>Bright patterns of toys being in baby's view; many business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exploring objects that have interesting sounds</td>
<td>Cardboard or cardboard boxes with high-contrast dimensions to stand on baby's view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 12 months</td>
<td>Remember simple events, learn new concepts; identify themselves, body parts, sounds of familiar people.</td>
<td>Brightly colored or shiny.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understands more than 20 common words; hears sounds of objects used by hands; feels objects with hands and puts them out of reach.</td>
<td>Soft stool, tunnel box, blocks with bright designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop friendships, share toys; learn to say no when asked to do something.</td>
<td>Toys that make noise when handled, squishy, or textured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 1/2 years</td>
<td>Learn to sit alone; start to play independently with toys.</td>
<td>Measuring cups, non-throw toys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use toys to explore and develop new words and sounds</td>
<td>Check, soft velvety boxes with bright patterns to grasp, chew, &amp; throw.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 1/2 to 2 years</td>
<td>Explore new objects; grow in strength and development.</td>
<td>Pictures of faces covered in plastic, hanging on child's head, unanswerable mower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May need help or become upset when strangers leave the room.</td>
<td>Fingerpuppets, simple songs, push-along.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 2 1/2 years</td>
<td>Enjoy new objects and activities; develop independence.</td>
<td>Books with bright designs or faces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoy playing alone; learn to say no when asked to do something.</td>
<td>Soft pillow, large range, large rubber ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1/2 to 3 years</td>
<td>Aids in learning new skills; develop coordination.</td>
<td>Wooden blocks, large soft block.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are becoming more independent when adults want them to do, but do not yet have the ability to control themselves.</td>
<td>Water toys that float.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 1/2 to 4 years</td>
<td>Enjoy new objects and activities; develop independence.</td>
<td>Rubber or large rubber balls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoy playing alone; learn to say no when asked to do something.</td>
<td>Soft pillows or wood vehicle with wheels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 1/2 to 5 years</td>
<td>Have a longer attention span; enjoy new objects and activities; develop independence.</td>
<td>Games like push-along.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions facing parents

As technology and society change, parents face some tough decisions about their children's play. Your own observations of children's play, and the guidelines here may help you make good decisions about play choices for your children.

What toys are educational? The more the child can do with the toy, the more likely it is to be truly educational. Children need to learn a lot about people and how things work before they are ready to count and learn to read. Make sure you offer play materials that give children choices and room to explore. Even a good primary school program bases its curriculum on play, not paper and pencils.

Is superhero play good for children? A little of it probably is. It can give children a sense of power and strength, of doing good deeds. But it can also escalate into hurting and out-of-control violence. Some adult direction may be needed to help children maintain control.

How much television should children watch? How much and what children watch are equally important. Some shows, such as nature specials or “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood,” can be positive learning experiences for children. Children learn best from testing out ideas and interacting with people and objects. Do the programs your children watch provide these opportunities?

Won't doll play make my son a sissy? We used to think that some play was just for boys, and other kinds of play were just for girls. But the world doesn't work that way anymore. Fathers are finding out just how wonderful it can be to really be involved with their children. Practicing this in childhood is a good beginning for a lifetime of satisfaction in parenting.
Cooked Playdough
1 cup flour
1 cup water
1 tablespoon oil
1 tablespoon alum
1/4 cup salt
2 tablespoons vanilla
Mix and cook over medium heat stirring constantly until dough reaches the consistency of mashed potatoes. Remove from heat and add a few drops of food coloring work in by kneading. Store in a plastic bag when cool.

Peanut Butter Fudge Dough
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup white corn syrup
1 1/4 cups nonfat powdered milk
1/4 cup powdered sugar
Mix and knead - form into balls.
Give your child a ball to mold and eat!

Gunk!
2 pounds cornstarch
3/4 cup water
food coloring
Add a few drops of coloring to the water and stir it into the cornstarch. When the cornstarch is dissolved, drop the whole batch onto a table top for children to play with! Store leftovers in a jar - add water if it dries out.
Appendix E
Reminder Flyer
MOTHERS: During your recent WIC appointment you received a yellow questionnaire from THE PARENTING PROJECT. We are hoping to hear from you as soon as possible. Please mail your questionnaire back to us or return it directly to the WIC office. We need YOUR information.

THANK YOU!!!
Appendix F

Parental Satisfaction Questionnaire
There are good things and not so good things about the experience of parenting. Please circle how you feel about the following statements. (Circle one)

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Overall, I am satisfied being the parent of this child.

2. Generally speaking, being the parent of this child has been one of the best things in my life.

3. As a parent, I enjoy spending a great deal of time with this child.

4. As a parent, I enjoy participating in and sharing many activities with this child.
Appendix G

Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire
Dealing with children day in and day out is a demanding job. Please rate yourself on the following items by putting a check mark in the blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TRUE OF ME</th>
<th>NOT TRUE OF ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost True</td>
<td>Sometimes True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I say nice things about my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I nag or scold my child when he/she is bad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I ignore my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I wonder if I really love my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I discuss general daily routines with my child and listen to what he/she has to say</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I complain about my child to others when he/she does not listen to me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I take an active interest in my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I encourage my child to bring friends home, and I try to make things pleasant for them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I make fun of my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I ignore my child as long as he/she does not do anything to disturb me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I yell at my child when I am angry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I make it easy for my child to confide in me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I am harsh with my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TRUE OF ME</td>
<td>NOT TRUE OF ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>True</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I enjoy having my child around me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I make my child feel proud when he/she does well</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I hit my child even when he/she may not deserve it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I forget things I am supposed to do for my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>My child is a burden for me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I praise my child to others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I punish my child when I am angry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I make sure my child has the right kind of food to eat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I talk to my child in a warm and affectionate way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I am impatient with my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>I am too busy to answer my child's questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I resent my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>I praise my child when he/she deserves it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>I am irritable with my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>I am concerned who my child's friends are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>I take real interest in my child's affairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>I say unkind things to my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>I ignore my child when he/she asks for help</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TRUE OF ME</td>
<td>NOT TRUE OF ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost True</td>
<td>Sometimes True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>I am unsympathetic to my child when he/she is having trouble</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>I make my child feel wanted and needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>I tell my child that he/she gets on my nerves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>I pay a lot of attention to my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>I tell my child how proud I am of him/her when he/she is good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>I hurt my child's feelings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>I forget events that my child thinks I should remember</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>When my child misbehaves, I make him/her feel I don't love him/her anymore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>I make my child feel what he/she does is important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>When my child does something wrong, I threaten or frighten him/her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>I like to spend time with my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>I try to help my child when he/she is scared or upset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>When my child misbehaves, I shame him/her in front of his/her playmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>I avoid my child's company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>I complain about my child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TRUE OF ME</td>
<td>NOT TRUE OF ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. I respect my child's point of view and encourage him/her to express it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. I compare my child unfavorably with other children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. When I make plans, I take my child into consideration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. I let my child do things he/she thinks are important even if it is inconvenient for me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. When my child misbehaves, I compare him/her unfavorably with other children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. I leave my child to someone else's care (e.g., a neighbor or relative)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. I let my child know he is not wanted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. I am interested in the things my child does</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. I try to make my child feel better when he/she is hurt or sick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. I tell my child I am ashamed of him/her when he/she misbehaves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. I let my child know I love him/her</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. I treat my child gently and kindly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. When my child misbehaves, I make him/her feel ashamed or guilty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. I try to make my child happy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H

Demographic and Family Status Questionnaire
The Parenting Project

1. Age: 1. ___ 15 to 25  2. ___ 26 to 35  3. ___ 36 to 45
   4. ___ 46 to 55  5. ___ 55 and Over.

2. What community/town do you live in? _______________________

3. Sex: ___ Male    ___ Female.

4. Race: 1. ___ White  2. ___ Black  3. ___ Hispanic
   4. ___ Asian  5. ___ American Indian
   6. ___ Other; __________________ Please Specify

5. What is the birthday of each of your children? (month and year)
   Boys ______________________________________
   Girls ______________________________________

6. Are you now married? ___ yes ___ no
   What year were you married? ______

7. Was your previous marriage ended because of: (check one)
   ___ divorce    ___ never married
   ___ desertion  ___ death

8. Who lives with you? (check those that apply)
   ___ spouse     ___ parent(s)
   ___ brother or sister ___ grandparent(s)
   ___ male friend ___ female friend

9. To what church do you belong? ________________________

10. Draw a circle around the number of years of schooling you have completed.
    
    
    
    
    Grade School  High School  College  Post Graduate
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

11. What is your occupation (for example, full-time homemaker, secretary, drug store clerk, hairdresser, student)?
    _____________________ In a few words, please tell us what you do.

12. What is your husband or partner's occupation (if he or she
    has one)? _____________________ In a few words tell us what he or she does.

    * * * *
Appendix I

Maternal Reactions to a Child's Deviant Behavior Questionnaire
Please circle the number that most closely approximates your answer to each question, recognizing that parents often respond differently to situations at different times. (Circle one)

1. If your child begins to whine and cry when you tell him/her she/he can't have a cookie, you would spank him/her.

2. If your child came in from playing the first time you call him/her, you would praise him/her for this.

3. If your child was jumping up and down on the furniture, you would try to reason with him/her about it.

4. If your child was "showing off" and embarrassing you in front of company, you would remove him/her from the room.

5. If your child interrupted your conversation with another person, you would go ahead and allow him/her to speak.

6. If your child was sharing his/her toys nicely with a friend, you would praise him/her for sharing.

7. If your child disobeyed your request that she/he apologize for hitting a friend, you would spank him/her.

8. If your child had just knocked over a large box of bobby-pins while bouncing a ball in the bathroom (an act she/he has been forbidden to do), you would make him/her clean up the mess and remove the ball for a specified period of time.
9. If you and your child were sitting in the den and you told him/her to get into bed and she/he had a tantrum, you would let him/her stay up.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. If your child crossed a street she/he was forbidden to cross, you would try to explain to him/her how dangerous that is.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. If your child refused to apologize for taking a toy away from a friend, you would spank him/her.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. If your child continued to beg for a candy bar while you were at the grocery store, you would ignore his/her pleading.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. If your child cleaned his/her plate at supper, you would tell him/her what a good boy/girl she/he was.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. If your child continued to cry when you would not allow him/her to have a cookie before supper, you would go ahead and let him/her have one this time.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. If your child was pushing or shoving one of his/her siblings or friends, you would try to explain to him/her how naughty that is.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. If your child thanked someone for giving him/her an ice cream cone, you would praise him/her for it.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. If your child was sitting on the family pet or pulling its tail, you would try to reason with him/her about how cruel that was.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. If your child broke a toy that belonged to a friend, you would send him/her to his/her room.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. If your child had just pulled all the books off a shelf and left them on the floor after you asked him/her to pick them up, you would spank him/her.

20. If your child kept sneaking candy after you asked him/her to stop, you would explain to him/her how sweets are bad for him/her and can cause cavities.

21. If your child "talked back" to you when you corrected him/her for something, you would spank him/her.

22. If your child continued to whine when you told him/her she/he could not go play with a friend, you would let him/him.

23. If your child used an obscene word which you had told him/her to stop using, you would send him/her to his/her room when she/he used the word.
Appendix J

Reliability Tables
Table 6
Reliability Analysis for the Parental Satisfaction Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Satisfaction</th>
<th>Scale Mean If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Alpha If Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha = .85

Standardized Item Alpha = .85

1See Appendix F
Table 7
Reliability Analysis for the Reason Scale from the Maternal Reactions to a Child's Deviant Behavior Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Mean If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Alpha If Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>8.19</td>
<td>21.22</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.70²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>21.79</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>9.01</td>
<td>21.91</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>8.92</td>
<td>21.16</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>8.25</td>
<td>17.75</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha = .66

Standardized Item Alpha = .68

¹See Appendix I

²Although the alpha for this scale would be higher if this item were deleted, the decision was made to retain this item in order to use the scale as it has been used in published research. The differences in the alphas were small enough that it would not be worth losing the integrity of the scale.
Table 8
Reliability Analysis for the Praise Scale
from the Maternal Reactions
to a Child's Deviant Behavior Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Mean If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Alpha If Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>13.17</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.72&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>11.78</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha = .70

Standardized Item Alpha = .72

<sup>1</sup>See Appendix I

<sup>2</sup>Although the alpha for this scale would be higher if this item were deleted, the decision was made to retain this item in order to use the scale as it has been used in published research. The differences in the alphas were small enough that it would not be worth losing the integrity of the scale.
Table 9
Reliability Analysis for the Spank Scale from the Maternal Reactions to a Child's Deviant Behavior Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item¹</th>
<th>Scale Mean If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Alpha If Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>15.13</td>
<td>44.65</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>15.92</td>
<td>40.53</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>15.90</td>
<td>42.19</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>16.72</td>
<td>41.52</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>16.97</td>
<td>42.37</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha = .82
Standardized Item Alpha = .82

¹See Appendix I
Table 10

Reliability Analysis for the Warmth Scale from the Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Mean If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance If Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Alpha If Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>24.20</td>
<td>32.70</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>23.86</td>
<td>31.60</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Alpha = .86
Standardized Item Alpha = .89

¹See Appendix G
Table 11
Reliability Analysis for the Aggression Scale
from the Parental
Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire

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<th>Scale Variance</th>
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<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
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Alpha = .84
Standardized Item Alpha = .84
^2See Appendix G

^2Although the alpha for this scale would be higher if this item were deleted, the decision was made to retain this item in order to use the scale as it has been used in published research. The differences in the alphas were small enough that it would not be worth losing the integrity of the scale.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Mean</th>
<th>Scale Variance</th>
<th>Corrected Item Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Alpha If Item Deleted</th>
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Alpha = .72
Standardized Item Alpha = .76
^3See Appendix G

^3Although the alpha for this scale would be higher if this item were deleted, the decision was made to retain this item in order to use the scale as it has been used in published research. The differences in the alphas were small enough that it would not be worth losing the integrity of the scale.
### Table 13
Reliability Analysis for the Reject Scale from the Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire

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Alpha = .63

Standardized Item Alpha = .65

¹See Appendix G

²Although the alpha for this scale would be higher if this item were deleted, the decision was made to retain this item in order to use the scale as it has been used in published research. The differences in the alphas were small enough that it would not be worth losing the integrity of the scale.
Table 14
Reliability Analysis for the PARQ Total Scale from the Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire

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Alpha = .81

Standardized Item Alpha = .81

\(^1\)These are the four subscales warmth, aggression, neglect, and reject.

\(^2\)Although the alpha for this scale would be higher if this item were deleted, the decision was made to retain this item in order to use the scale as it has been used in published research. The differences in the alphas were small enough that it would not be worth losing the integrity of the scale.
Vita

Ellen Cohen Brewer was born and raised in Norfolk, Virginia. She graduated in 1971 from University of North Carolina with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. From 1971 to 1973 Ellen worked as a post-partum and labor and delivery nurse at the University of Virginia Hospital in Charlottesville, Virginia. After moving to Northern Virginia in 1973, Ellen worked for a short time in the operating rooms at Alexandria Hospital and Fairfax Hospital. In 1975 she returned to nursing in labor and delivery where she has remained part-time ever since. Ellen now works also as an office nurse with an expectant mothers and women with gynecological problems.

Ellen has remained interested in issues and health problems relating to women and their children. She has volunteered her time at the Women’s Center and in the public schools. She is the mother of two teenage children and is actively involved in being a parent herself.

Ellen C. Brewer