

Adolescent Perspectives of Relationship Quality
and Daily Interactions With Their Parents

by

Russell Beazer

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Science

in

Family and Child Development

APPROVED:

S.M. Stith, Chair

E. McCollum

K.H. Rosen

July, 1998

Adolescent Perspectives of Relationship Quality
and Daily Interactions With Their Parents

by

Russell Beazer

Committee Chair: Sandra M. Stith

Family and Child Development

(ABSTRACT)

The body of research in the area parent-adolescent relationships has excluded certain variables and concentrated on the issue of conflict, with some consideration to time spent together and the affect in the relationship. This study included these variables and several others in an examination of 64 adolescents and their daily interactions with their parents and how these interactions relate to the overall quality of the relationship. The principal questions of this research were regarding the ability of time with parents, frequency of interactions, quality of interactions, parental affect during the interactions, importance of the relationship, and adolescent gender, to predict the overall quality of relationships between adolescents and their parents. The regression analysis found that parental affect and the frequency of interactions were capable of significant contributions to relationships with both parents. Bivariate analyses reveal many significant relationships between the research variables. The study suggests that these variables, particularly parental affect and the frequency of interactions, merit further attention in the analysis of parent-adolescent relationships. Comparisons between male (N = 25) and female (N = 39) adolescents' relationships were also made. Males spent significantly more time with their fathers and experienced significantly higher ratios of both positive parental affect and positive interactions with their fathers. On average, the adolescents report that the relationships with their parents were important and that overall quality was good. They also reported that 80 to 90% of their

interactions were positive.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Focus of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Objectives	3
Theoretical Framework	6
Definitions	9
Chapter Two: Literature Review	11
Time	11
Parental Affect	20
Importance of the Relationship	22
Interaction Quality	23
Chapter Three: Methods	25
Participants	25
Procedures	25
Measures	27
Data Analysis	30
Chapter Four: Results	32
Summary	39
Chapter Five: Discussion	41
Clinical Implications	47
Limitations	47
Future Research	48
Summary	49
References	51
Appendix A: Sample Letter to Schools	56
Appendix B: Informed Consent Form	57
Appendix C: Letter to Parents	59
Appendix D: Questionnaire	60

Appendix E: Table 1: Adolescent Time with Parents	65
Appendix F: Table 2: Correlations	66
Appendix G: Table 3: T test	67
Appendix H: Table 4: Regression Analysis	68
Vita	69

CHAPTER ONE: FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The adolescent period is one which has perplexed parents, psychologists, and adolescents themselves for many years. The relatively stable growth which was familiar during childhood is disrupted by biological and psychosocial factors which force the adolescent to adapt and renegotiate to new roles and responsibilities (Montemayor, 1983). The adolescent will encounter higher levels of excitability, arousal, and emotions which will affect behavior and relationships (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, 1990). It is during this time of rapid change and adjustment that the adolescent is expected to develop in central areas of identity, intimacy, autonomy, sexuality, and achievement (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Elmen & Offer, 1993).

This transformation from childhood to adolescence creates a disturbance felt not only by adolescents, but by their parents as well. The magnitude of this disturbance is still under some debate within the body of research that examines the relationships between adolescents and their parents, but the more recent findings indicate that it is not as stressful as was previously believed (Montemayor, 1983). Steinberg (1990) indicated that harmony is present and that most adolescents enjoy their relationships with their parents, as other researchers have found (Richardson, Galambos, Schulenberg, & Peterson, 1984). Blyth, Hill, and Thiel (1982) found that about ninety percent of teenagers identify parents as significant persons in their lives, and other researchers reported that adolescents express more satisfaction while their parents were present than in their absence (Montemayor & Brownlee, 1987). On the other hand, researchers have presented results which are somewhat contradictory to the notion that "harmony is more pervasive than contention" (Steinberg, 1990, p. 256). Buhrmester and Furman (1987) indicate that adolescents experience a decline in the desire for companionship with their parents. Steinberg (1989), when comparing preadolescents with adolescents, reported that adolescents experience an increase in conflict and distance in relationships with their parents, in addition to having fewer positive things to say to them and experiencing a decrease in closeness with them. He theorized that biological factors may play a part in these relationships and may create a reciprocal functions between closeness and autonomy. In another study Steinberg (1990) found

that adolescent relationships with their mothers included high levels of both conflict and discord. Cooper (1988) also reports that in both early and late adolescence there is an increase in both conflict and closeness reported by adolescents and their mothers. There is no clear explanation for the variation in results, or for the mutual existence of increased conflict and closeness within these relationships, if that is truly the case, but the contradicting research outcomes would indicate that there are many variables at work and that we currently do not understand in what ways each of them affects the relationship.

The focus of this study is to expand the examination of parent-adolescent relationships to include aspects which have been left out of previous research and determine their viability as contributing factors. One factor in particular is the amount of time that adolescents spend together with their parents. The present study asked adolescents questions about the time they spend with their parents, wanting to know how much time they spend together, how frequent are their interactions, and what these interactions are like for the adolescent. This study includes an examination of parental affect, the impact of daily interactions, and the amount of importance the adolescents place upon the relationship in an effort to understand more about the relationship quality between adolescents and their parents.

Statement of the Problem

Researchers have examined a variety of issues in the attempt to quantify and understand the parent-adolescent relationship. Some have explored the issue of power to determine the significance of its contribution to the parent-adolescent relationship (Grotevant & Cooper, 1986), as well as the adolescent's quest for autonomy and individuality, but most of the research in this area has focused on the occurrence of conflict in the relationship as an attempt to describe how well adolescents are relating to their parents (Gehring, Wentzel, Feldman, & Munson, 1990; Tubman & Lerner, 1994). Numerous researchers have examined this issue of parent-adolescent conflict, but the lack of a widely-accepted definition of conflict has led to various results, and an inconclusive report of the relationship (Montemayor, 1983), but it seems that most parents and adolescents report that the level of conflict in the relationship is within normal range

(Montemayor, 1986). As an authority who is frequently cited in the literature, Montemayor has perhaps identified the need to research other factors of the relationship in order to increase our understanding of how well parents and adolescents are getting along together. Based on his indications, and the inconsistency in the body of research, it is possible that continuing to research only the construct of parent-adolescent conflict, as significant as it may be as a factor of the relationship, may not be useful in accurately describing the full state of parent-adolescent relationships (Tubman & Lerner, 1994). Broadening the vein of research to include additional aspects of the relationship may help us identify the variables responsible for the inconsistencies in the extant literature. The inclusion of additional factors will also provide more understanding about why some parents and adolescents get along better than others.

Some of the factors which could be involved in determining the quality of parent-adolescent relationships have been greatly underrepresented, for no empirical reasons, in other investigations of this topic. We have learned that the adolescent period creates distance and conflict in the parent-adolescent relationship as the family system adjusts to the physical and social changes that are taking place (Montemayor, 1983), but our understanding of what takes place in the relationship, both internally and in the family system, is very limited. We know that adolescents and parents learn new patterns of interaction that will facilitate this change in the family's structure, but we have not identified all of the factors that become significant in the maintenance of parent-adolescent relationships. We do not understand why some adolescents maintain better relationships with their parents than other adolescents who have more conflict in relating to their parents. The literature review presented here will indicate that the issue of conflict has been researched extensively, but it would seem that many factors are at play in the determination of how well adolescents are getting along with their parents and that several of these have been left out of the body of research. The focus of this study is to examine the quality of parent-adolescent relationships and to determine the strength of several contributing factors that may be worthy of more investigation.

Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the parent-adolescent relationship by identifying some of the factors which have heretofore been left out of the research literature. Consideration of these factors and analyzing their ability to predict the overall quality of the relationship will increase our understanding of the relationship and help to distinguish the more significant factors from those which may be identified as playing only a peripheral role in the relationship. The focus of the present study is to answer these questions:

1. Do the amount of time adolescents spend with their mothers, frequency of interactions with their mothers, adolescent ratings of interaction quality with mothers, ratings of their mothers' affect, adolescent ratings of the amount of importance of their relationships with mothers, and the adolescent's gender relate to the adolescent's rating of the overall quality of their relationships with their mothers?
2. Do the amount of time adolescents spend with their fathers, frequency of interactions with their fathers, adolescent ratings of interaction quality with fathers, ratings of their fathers' affect, adolescent ratings of the amount of importance of their relationships with fathers, and the adolescent's gender relate to the adolescent's rating of the overall quality of their relationships with their fathers?

In addition to these two principal questions, several others were posed while conducting this research:

3. How much time do adolescents spend with their parents, based upon self-reports of the frequency and duration of interactions?
4. Based on adolescent reports, how many of the interactions with their parents are positive and how many are negative?
5. How do adolescents rate the affect of their parent(s) in each of these interactions?
6. How do adolescents rate the overall quality of their relationships with their parent(s)?
7. How important is it to adolescents that they interact with their parent(s)?

The research was designed to answer these questions using input from adolescents themselves so that their perspectives are added to the research in this area. This perspective will

hopefully add to our recognition of what the adolescent identifies as being important to the relationship and represent more than clinical observations and coding methods that have been used in past research. The research design also provides the benefit of asking the adolescents to recollect smaller time periods than have been requested in previous research, hopefully providing a more accurate account of their time use. This study will also record the frequency and duration of each interaction, recording them in hours and minutes, rather than a percentage of responses, as is the case with Experience Sampling Method (ESM). This method of collecting data requires the participants to carry pagers and to respond to specific questions when the pager is activated at random times of the day. Their responses are recorded as percentages of total responses, rather than in the number of minutes involved. It is the belief of many researchers that this method of data collection provides a fairly accurate representation of how adolescents time is spent. One of the issues of ESM is that odd hours of the day, late at night and early in the morning, are typically not included because of the inconvenience of paging persons outside of regular times. Another concern is that there is some failure in responding to all of the pages which are sent in a study. While the present study duplicates the measurement of adolescent time usage, it is hoped that the methodology selected will be able to include those “odd” hours.

It is hoped that the variables involved, the methods employed to measure them, and the inclusion of the adolescents’ reports rather than relying on an observer will increase our understanding of the essential aspects of parent-adolescent relationships. The results may allow us to be more focused in further research in this area by providing empirical bases for the inclusion of some variables and the exclusion of others. If it is found that the amount of time, the frequency of interactions, the quality of interactions, the parents’ affect, the amount of importance placed upon the relationship, or the adolescent’s gender are significantly related to the overall quality of the relationship then several things may occur. Subsequent research could utilize this information as we progress towards a useful knowledge of which factors are the most pivotal in these relationships. This information could then be used in parent education information to improve and maintain positive parent-adolescent relationships. The improved relationships would

benefit adolescents in several ways, including higher levels of competency and fewer problems as they develop (Wierson, Forehand, Fauber, & McCombs, 1989). These researchers report that good relationships with both parents could even help ameliorate any deficits in functioning that may result from divorcing parents.

Theoretical Framework

This study is primarily guided by developmental theories which describe the needs of children as they pass through the period of adolescence (Shaffer, 1989). The underlying belief is that children have specific needs during each phase of life, based upon what growth and development is expected to occur during that period. The phase of adolescence, like the others before it, has its own set of developmental achievements which should be reached within a reasonable time frame in order to optimize development (Ausubel, 1954). One of these tasks which is relevant to the present study is to begin living more as an adult in the areas of values, finances, and relationships. In order for adolescents to do this they must adjust their roles in their relationship with their parents, becoming more of an equal as time passes. Indeed the entire goal of adolescence is to turn the child into a functioning adult who is no longer dependent upon caregivers. This is an enormous adjustment for parents and adolescents as their roles transform, requiring frequent adaptation and renegotiation. The high number of adjustments makes it difficult for parents and their inexperienced adolescent to openly and conjointly execute because of the expectation that the adolescent begin acting independently of the parents. The effectiveness of these negotiations becomes essential in their lives due to the crucial amount of significance the relationship occupies in determining the adolescent's future course. Failure at this stage may have severe consequences for the adolescent and the parents alike.

It is clear that parents still have significant effects upon their teenage children, providing comfort and reinforcement to them in addition to the space necessary for the adolescent to expand into new responsibilities and possibly fail to accomplish the adult tasks placed before them (McCandless, 1979). The balance that must be maintained is fragile and difficult to achieve, for parents must facilitate the learning experience without causing the adolescent to feel rejected

(Ausubel, 1954) and without taking away the essential freedom of the adolescent to exercise appropriate amounts of autonomous decision-making and behavior. Determining what is appropriate is very difficult when considering all of the involved variables. Do they give increasing freedoms based on the adolescent's physical development, emotional maturity, school grades, level of financial independence, or the adolescent's determination to be independent? Or are the parents expected to consider all of these variables as they decide how much autonomy is appropriate to give to their growing child? The variations and changes seem infinite, and thus the resulting conflicts, disagreements, and fluctuating state of the relationship.

Emotions also play a part in the interactions, and adolescents must learn to use and control their advancing cognitive capabilities and increased awareness of emotions (Lloyd, 1985). It is difficult for them to resolve their own emotional issues, and even more difficult to be concerned about the emotions of others. Along with new emotions the adolescents must learn to cope with new concepts such as self-esteem and personal identity. The increased cognitive abilities makes them more responsible for having some insight into who they are, for establishing a value system, and to develop an identity.

These issues of transitioning roles, managing emotions, creating an identity, and shifting responsibilities to be more congruent with those changes, so that the adolescent and the parents can complete the expected developmental tasks, are central aspects of the present research. There are clearly numerous factors involved during this period and each contributes to the relationship and, therefore, to the outcome of the adolescent's development. The goal of the research is to better understand these factors and their contributions.

Family systems theories are also relevant to this study because they give additional support to the belief that daily interactions significantly impact the overall relationships which we maintain (Nichols & Schwartz, 1995). Systems theories are built on the recognition that systems exist (as a machine, a family, or a community) and that they work together to perform specific tasks. In order to accomplish the goals of the system the output must be continually analyzed and this information is fed back into the system to either maintain the current level of functioning or to

make adjustments so that the desired changes can occur. This is a continual process, and the system continues to regulate the output and make changes until it achieves the desired state. After the system is fine-tuned and functioning at its perceived optimal state, the system works to maintain that state and will make sacrifices in order to prevent changes and maintain equilibrium (Dallos, 1991). Identifying a family as a functioning system, and the desired outcome is the appropriate growth and development of the adolescent, then it becomes clear that the numerous, and fluctuating, variables mentioned above create a difficult task for the family system.

In order for the family system to be successful in its task it must be open to the outside and permit the exchange of information and resources (Broderick, 1993). It must also adhere to its own rules, regulate family functioning, and be attentive to the results being produced. The system must have a hierarchical order and must not deviate from this order. Having the goal of changing that hierarchical order by permitting the adolescent to assume more responsibility and independence from the system, however, makes it difficult to maintain order and follow the established hierarchy. Again, conflicts and changing roles create changes in the system and many variables are involved.

Family systems theory encourages the examination of the family as a system, focusing on the interaction of the family members rather than seeing them as disconnected parts of a system. Relationships are seen as circular rather than assuming that any part of the family system is entirely responsible for the outcomes it creates. Recognition that parents and adolescents are capable of having a mutual impact upon each other and the relationship is crucial to the theory and to this research (Dallos, 1991). The very purpose of this study is to learn more about the factors which play the most significant roles in these circular patterns of parent-adolescent interactions so that this information will in some manner be useful in adjusting and improving these relationships. Family systems theories also identify the roles of parents, as heads of the hierarchical system, to facilitate the proper growth and adjustment of their children, similar to other theories of development.

Definitions

The research will analyze the relationships between adolescents and their parents by including several aspects of the relationship and their interactions. One of these aspects that will be considered is the daily interactions that occur between them that establish the relationship and function to maintain it. For the purposes of this study, an **interaction** is defined as any amount of time spent generally in the same area, possibly doing something together, during which any type of communication, verbal or nonverbal, has taken place. This definition was offered to the participants for completing the questionnaire. The interactions were then categorized as either positive or negative. Other researchers (Brody, Stoneman, & Gauger, 1996; Flannery, Montemayor, Eberly, & Torquati, 1993) have provided the following definitions: A **positive interaction** requires that any of the following items occur, and that they represent the most prominent aspects of the interaction: Hugging, affectionate touching, praise, laughter, smiling, expressions of enthusiasm, concern, or approval, or a general sense of happiness or satisfaction. A **negative interaction** is defined as one in which any of the following events are more distinguished: Threats, insults, quarreling, sarcasm, name calling, criticism, doubting, yelling, protesting, frowning, sorrowful crying, hitting, physical struggling, teasing, or feelings of frustration, hatred, anger, or resentment. The present study accepted these definitions and used them as a reference, but they were not offered to the participants. The researcher explained to the participants that in the interest of understanding their perspective, they were permitted to decide for themselves which interactions were positive and which ones were negative. This was done with the belief that the participants were capable of easily making this distinction and that their own definitions would be very similar to the ones above.

Another way to examine the relationship is to consider the emotional climate of the interactions. The emotional climate, or affect, involved in this research is specific to what occurs within the parent-adolescent relationship and will be defined as affect. **Affect** refers to the verbal and nonverbal presentations of emotions during their interactions, and what will be recorded is the adolescents' perceptions of their parents' affect. The parents' affect, or emotional state, was again categorized as either positive or negative, and the adolescent participants were told to

separate them based on their own individual perceptions and definitions. It was believed that they were developmentally capable of following definitions which would be very similar to any academic one which might have been provided by the researcher and that their definitions would be based on their observations of their parents.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will present a review of the literature relevant to the research in the area of parent-adolescent relationships and to the specific aspects of these relationships which are under consideration for this particular study. The intent is to analyze previous research procedures, results and implications, and identify the necessity of the present research which is built upon and extends previous research. The results of this study will then provide the basis for future research.

The literature review will begin with the issue of time, specifically the amount of time that parents and adolescents spend together. The next section will present the issue of parental affect and what has been discovered in this area as far as its impact on the adolescent. The third section will discuss what little is known about adolescent perspectives of the importance of their relationships with their parents. This is followed by the issue of interaction quality and how important the daily interactions, both brief and long, are to the maintenance of the relationship. After these variables have been presented the questions that remain unanswered in the current literature and which are posed in the present study are identified. The final section of the literature review identifies the significance of the study and the areas in which it may have an impact.

Time

One factor which may be significant in the exploration of parent-adolescent relationships is the time which is invested in them. It is a common belief within our society that children need, but do not receive, enough time and attention from their parents (Shapiro, 1997). Demo and Ambert (1995) imply that there has been an erosion of social commitments within our culture, including a decrease in the importance of our family relationships, and that children and adolescents have suffered as a result of this change. Our families are producing fewer children, have less social and extended family support, and have an increased capability of providing their children with technology, transportation, community employment, and media devices which could further reduce the amount of time that they might spend with their parents (Daly, 1996; Demo &

Ambert, 1995; Larson, Richards, Moneta, Holmbeck, & Duckett, 1966; Small & Eastman, 1991). Family time has become similar to a “pit stop” in which the family members hurriedly dash in and out of the home to graze and to grab resources for the next event (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Daly, 1996). The time that families do spend together is often fragmented and coincidental, occurring only when their busy lives intersect.

The frenzied atmosphere becomes very apparent when one observes all of the advertisements for time-savers, shortcuts, and adaptations to the lack of time. Parents are spending more time at the office, come home tired, and find themselves being inconsistent with their children, which results in other problems (Shapiro, 1997). Teachers report an increase in discipline problems and classroom disruptions, and it has been said that the overall well-being of children has declined (Demo & Ambert, 1995). Achenbach and Howell (1993) found that there was an increase in behavioral and emotional problems in children ages 7 to 16 from 1976 to 1989. A sense of urgency for parents to spend quality time with their children has been created in the hope that these high quality interactions will compensate for the decrease in overall time and prevent maladaptive development (Shapiro, 1997; Shaw, 1992). The “myth” of quality time has many parents searching for this answer to their problems. This sense of not having enough time for parenting raises the questions of “What are the tasks which parents are to be accomplishing?” and “Are these tasks being completed in our society where the time allotted for parenting seems to be brief?” Let us examine the former question.

Steinhauer (1983) outlined the developmental needs of children and identified attachment, a bond of caring which endures even during times of separation, as the first basic need. Additionally, parents must also be adequate in perceiving the needs of their ever-developing children and continually adapting to those needs. A third need which children have of their primary care-givers is a transfer of values, morals, and impulse control. In order to serve as a model of these values, parents must be physically and emotionally available to their children on a regular basis. There can be no companionship and communication if there is no contact between family members (Guldner & Swensen, 1995). Steinhauer (1983) adds that parents must be

continually available in order to follow-through with their teachings, and that children will remain unsocialized without the regular physical and emotional availability of their primary care givers, but he also states that the quantity of time spent forming this attachment is less significant than the quality of time involved. On the other side of the issue, Warr (1993) cautions that the quantity of time can not be disregarded because small amounts of even high quality time may not be adequate, and Bryant (1992) states that the timing is also an important factor when examining the time that parents spend with their adolescents. Consideration should also be given to the timing of when these interactions occur, as well as the intensity of the effort involved. Perhaps we, as a society and as parents, are to understand that parenting is not accomplished merely by being present, or by providing short, steady bursts of “high quality” interactions, but rather by the continuity of active responsiveness.

In the framework that they have created for parenting adolescents, Small and Eastman (1991) recognize that adolescents have specific needs at this phase of development and identify them as functions and responsibilities of the parents. One of those duties is to protect the child. As children enter the phase of adolescence their need for protection changes, and parents today have clear concerns about the broad availability and accessibility of harmful substances, activities, and relationships within our society. Protecting adolescents from some of these situations requires that parents monitor the activities of their adolescents and instill in them the values and rules of self-conduct. Parental monitoring of adolescent activities has been found to be an important part of preventing problem behaviors. This does not mean that the parents must be present at all times, but they must show an active interest in their children’s lives.

Another parental task identified by Small and Eastman (1991) is that of advocating for their children. This is still true for growing adolescents as they become more involved in the community. Parents also have the responsibility for guiding and supporting adolescent development by setting limits and issuing consequences, offering information, using verbal and nonverbal communication, and modeling appropriate values and behaviors. Recognizing the magnitude and complexity of these parental tasks, one may ask the questions: How much time is

required of the parents in order to effectively complete these tasks? How will they know when these tasks are being completed? And what are the adolescents' perceptions about their parents' performance in these areas?

While we may not have a clear indication of how much time is required to be an effective parent, or how much effort parents must give in order to be effective, we do have some indications from the research about what can happen when parents are, or are not, accomplishing the tasks mentioned above. The parental tasks of being generally supportive, physically affectionate, and providing contact and companionship are components of what has been termed parental support (Gecas & Seff, 1995). This construct has been found to be positively associated with cognitive development, academic achievement, moral behavior, higher self-esteem, and an internal locus of control. The research also indicates that the lack of parental support is associated with negative outcomes such as delinquency, deviance, drug abuse, low self-esteem, and other problem behaviors. Steinberg (1990) reports similar results, indicating that adolescents who are close to their parents score higher than their peers on measures of self-reliance, independence, behavioral competence, school performance, and psychological well-being. These same teens also score lower on measures of depression, drug abuse, and deviant behavior.

When the variable of time is measured, adolescents who spend more time with their families, and less with their peers, have been found to receive higher grades, have fewer absences from school, and be perceived by their teachers as being more involved intellectually (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984). Warr (1993) stated that parents who spend time with their adolescents may find that this reduces problem behaviors in multiple ways. First, each moment spent with parents is one less moment that the adolescent can engage in delinquent activities and associate with negative peer groups. Secondly, time spent with parents may have a counterbalancing effect on delinquency by increasing the likelihood that the parental influence will be felt by the adolescent even when the parent is not present. Warr found in his research that adolescents who are closer to their parents have fewer friends who are delinquent, and are less delinquent themselves compared to their peers who are not as close with their parents. While

these researchers have indicated some of the positive benefits that can occur when parents spend increased time with their adolescents, they have given no indication about how much time is necessary in order to have these positive effects or to provide adequate parental support.

In a somewhat similar vein of research, Guldner and Swensen (1995) studied long-distance relationships among adults and found that there was no significant decrease in the relationship when couples spent less time together due to geographical separation. Time spent together may not always be a significant factor of adult relationships, but can the same be said about adolescent relationships with their parents? The extant literature does not answer this question and others about how much time parents should spend with their adolescents and how the amount of time is impacting the quality of the relationship. There is also the concern that the current efforts to maintain these relationships by arranging for quality time is not sufficient for the task. It is important for parents to know whether or not their efforts are successful. It is beyond the scope of this study to answer all of these questions, but it is hoped that by asking adolescents about the quality of their relationships with their parents we will be one step closer to understanding which factors are important to them.

The current research in the area of time spent together has examined the adolescent use of leisure time, which is said to play a critical role in emotional adjustment (Fine, Mortimer, and Roberts, 1990; Larson & Kleiber, 1993; Larson & Richards, 1989; Shaw, 1992), but only a few researchers have been able to identify how much time adolescents are spending with their parents (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Daly, 1996; Demo & Ambert, 1995; Larson, et al 1996), and even fewer have examined time spent together as a dimension of the quality of parent-adolescent relationships. The research in this area has not been limited by the developmental stage of the population according to Fallon and Bowles (1997), who state that from about 11 years of age adolescents are able to recall their perceptions about durations and quality of interactions with others, making time recollection a possible method of data collection. These authors also indicated that Montemayor (1982) was the only other researcher who had previously examined time as a dimension of the quality of the parent-adolescent relationship. Montemayor's time-use

methodology allowed him to gather daily reports from 64 adolescents about all of their activities, including their interactions with parents. The youths received telephone calls on randomly selected evenings and gave a complete account of the day's activities. They gave specific details on their interactions with parents, including the duration of each interaction, and whether or not it resulted in a conflict. A pretest of this methodology included reports from adolescents and their parents and found their reports to be highly correlated. He found that males spent an average of 13 minutes total during the three-day period with their mothers, 27 minutes with their fathers, and 37.6 minutes with both of them. Their female counterparts averaged 30.3 minutes with their mothers, 8.3 minutes with their fathers, and 40.6 minutes with both parents during the three-day period. Within these three days these 64 adolescents experienced a total of 68 conflicts, with means of .85 for males and 1.21 for females. This study did not include the adolescent's rating of the overall quality of the relationship, but it would be interesting to include this measurement and compare it with the time factor.

Other research was done by Fallon and Bowles (1997), who emphasized the importance of measuring the quality of time spent together, not just the quantity. They gave questionnaires to 299 adolescents which explored their intimate relationships over the past week. These Australian adolescents from a national sample were split into three age groups and asked to identify how much time they had spent with parents, and others, during which they felt free to talk intimately. They compared the responses of the three age groups and found that there is a continual decrease in time spent with parents as the adolescents aged. The 12 year old group reported spending the largest amount of time with either their mother or their father, and the oldest group, averaging 16 years of age, reported spending the least amount of time with either of their parents. This supports similar findings by Larson and Richards (1991). Due to the measurement of intimacy in the research by Fallon and Bowles (1997), there is no report of time spent in the presence of both parents. The entire sample averaged 472 minutes spent alone with their mothers in one week, and 321 minutes alone with their fathers. The present study collected reports from American teens and further augmented the work of Fallon and Bowles by measuring the overall quality of the

parent-adolescent relationships.

A questionnaire was also used by another study to determine the amount of time that adolescents spent with each member of the family (Shanahan, Elder, Burchinal, and Conger, 1996). These 451 seventh graders from farming and rural communities of the Midwest were asked to identify how much time they spent with family members during the weekdays and on the weekends by selecting items from a scale which went from 0 to 6 hours or more each day. They report that these adolescents spent an average of 14 hours per week with their families, but time with parents was not separated from this total. They also found a significant decrease in this average as the children became older

Another group of researchers used an interview format to ask their eighth grade participants to recall how much time they had spent with their parents during the previous week (Richardson, Abramowitz, Asp, and Petersen, 1986). These researchers included a category for each parent, and a third for time spent in the presence of both parents in one week. The responses from the 96 adolescents indicate a significant gender difference, with girls spending more time with their parents than boys during a one-week period. The boys spent 21 hours in the presence of both parents, 11 hours with their mothers, and 12 hours with their fathers. The girls in this study spent 25 hours with both parents in addition to 18 hours with their mothers and 14 hours with their fathers. While most of these youths described their relationships with their mothers and fathers as good, the authors mentioned no comparison between the quality of the relationship and the amount of time spent together.

Shaw (1992) also measured the amount of time spent between parents and their adolescents. She used data produced by 46 couples residing in eastern Canada in 1982. These participants kept time diaries for one weekday and one weekend day, each of these being selected as a "typical" day, and reported spending an average of two hours and 45 minutes per day in family time while both parents were present. Mothers in this sample reported spending an additional three hours and five minutes per day, on average, while fathers reported an additional 41 minutes. There is no indication of how much of this family time would be considered as time

with adolescents.

Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) used Experience Sampling Method (ESM) in their collection of data in 1977 from 74 high school students in the Chicago area who carried a pager and a notepad with them at all times. The participants were paged at one random period within each two-hour block of time during the day. This was a cue for them to write down where they were, who they were with, and what they were doing. The results were then categorized, grouped and described as the percentage in which the particular category was identified.

The youths in this study reported that 4.8% of their pages were received while in the presence of their parents and an additional 7.9% while their parents and siblings were present. They also reported that an additional 2.1% of their pages were received while they were in the presence of their parents and their peers together. This total of 14.8% of their reports occurring while with their parents should then indicate that adolescents spend nearly 15% of their waking hours with their parents, in one grouping or another. Assuming that the teenagers were awake for 18 hours a day, this comes to an average of 2.4 hours per day. It is worth noting that 31% of all pages received no response or documentation due to a variety of reasons.

Raffaelli and Duckett (1989) also used ESM with their sample of 401 5th through 9th graders who responded to pages which been sent according to a predetermined, but varying, schedule. Each participant received seven pages a day between the hours of 7:30 AM and 9:30 PM during the week long study. Each time participants were paged they were expected to complete a self-report form and indicate with whom conversation was taking place. The female participants reported on .8% of their pages that they had been conversing with one parent, and another 1.5% that they had been talking with a group of family members which may, or may not, include parents. The males reported significantly less conversations with their parents than the females. Only .4% of their reports included conversation with one parent and 1.0% with the family members group. These reported percentages of time spent in conversation are much smaller than the total amount of time reported above by Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) that parents and adolescents spent together. It would appear from the research that a very small

amount of the contact with parents is spent in conversation.

Other usage of ESM has found that time spent alone with mothers and alone with fathers did not significantly decrease during the eight year time period of fifth through the twelfth grades, but time with the family did decrease (Larson et al., 1996). Another change reported by the 220 suburban youths who participated in this research was their affect while in the presence of the family. For both boys and girls, affect dropped between the fifth and eighth grades but rose significantly from the ninth through the twelfth grades. The adolescents reported in the questionnaires that there was no relationship between time with family and the affect experienced during these interactions. Family time was also found to not be related to either family conflict or feelings of closeness with mothers and fathers. The present study attempted to augment the results of Larson et al by comparing the adolescent's time spent with parents, rather than time with family, to not only the overall quality of the relationship, but to the adolescent's ratings of each individual interaction. The measurement of relationship quality, however, was limited to ratings of affect during the interactions. None of the above-mentioned studies examined this broad aspect of the relationship in their research of this issue.

To summarize the above research about the amount of time adolescents spend with their parents, we find that only a few studies have separated time with parents from the total time with family, and that the average times reported varies greatly between studies. When comparing the average amount of time spent with mothers in one day, they range from 4 minutes for adolescent males and 10 minutes for females (Montemayor, 1982), to 67 minutes for the sample (Fallon & Bowles, 1997), to 1.6 hours for males and 2.6 hours for females (Richardson et al., 1986). Ranges for the average amount of time spent in fathers in one day go from 9 minutes for males and 3 minutes for females (Montemayor, 1982), to 46 minutes for the sample (Fallon & Bowles, 1997), to 1.7 hours for males and 2 hours for females (Richardson et al., 1986). The varying time ranges found and the methodologies employed, along with gender and aged differences, make it difficult to compare these times between studies so that average times might be computed and established. It will be of great interest to compare these findings with the results of the present

study.

Parental Affect

The emotional state of the relationship is another factor which may have some significance in the prediction of relationship quality, and has been described as a dimension of attachment (Paterson, Field, & Pryor, 1994). Researchers have explored the emotional state of parent-adolescent relationships in several ways. A large part of the research has involved the issue of marital distress (Katz & Gottman, 1994), but this research examines the impact of interparental affect upon the adolescent rather than consideration of the parental affect in the interactions between adolescents and their parents, as is the desire of the present study. Other attempts to accomplish this have placed emphasis on the conflict between adolescents and their parents, as mentioned above. Research has found that there is decreased closeness, fewer shared activities, increased distance and autonomy, and an increase in the number of conflicts during this phase of the life cycle (Steinberg, 1989; Steinberg, 1990). However, Tubman and Lerner (1994) state that it may be more beneficial to assess the parents' and adolescents' perceptions of the relationship instead of continuing to examine the entire relationship through the measurement of conflict alone. Their own research used the New York Longitudinal Study, a sample of convenience whose participants had been born between 1956 and 1962. These 133 participants were interviewed at the ages of 16 and 17, and observed while interacting with their parents. The adolescents and their parents rated both the emotional quality and interaction quantity within the relationship. The average rating of their interaction quantity was between low and medium, and the average rating of the emotional quality was fairly neutral, but just at the border of being negative. The adolescents gave a slightly higher rating to the emotional quality of each relationship (mother-child, father-child, and parents-child) than their parents did.

Another group of researchers interviewed 85 intact families with one child each in the fifth through ninth grades and coded the affect of the conversations that were observed (Flannery et al., 1993). They found that fathers expressed more neutral and less positive affect than mothers. These gender differences were also found when sons were compared to daughters. They also

reported that father-son dyads experienced more negative and less positive affect as the son matured through adolescence. This was the same finding in both the father-daughter dyads and the mother son dyads. The mother-daughter dyads experienced an increase in both positive and negative affect in their interactions. Similar results are reported by Steinberg (1990). These researchers found changes in affective expression across adolescence, but did not examine the association between affect and quality of the relationship. Flannery et al (1993) did report, however, that this factor may be related to time spent together, and while affective expression is reciprocal in nature, parental affect may be at the center of changes in family affect. They also indicate a need to extend the research in this area .

According to Larson and Richards (1994), parental affect becomes a method by which parents can model for their adolescents how to respond emotionally in various situations. Their research found significant correlations between the emotionality of specific subsets of their sample and the emotionality of their parents. Carson and Parke (1996) further assert that kids who are exposed to high levels of negative adult affect display increased problems, including difficulty regulating their own states of negative affect and increased difficult with peers, when compared to kids who experience lower levels of negative adult affect. Negative affect in parent-adolescent conversations was found to be associated with increased aggressive behavior and poor problem-solving skills being displayed by the adolescent (Forgatch, 1989).

In summary, examinations of parent-adolescent interactions indicate that they experience low to medium quality and that the affective component of these interactions is rated as neutral but leaning towards being negative (Tubman & Lerner, 1990). It has also been found that fathers emote more neutral affect than mothers and that sons are more neutral and less positive than daughters (Flannery et al., 1993). There is also a decrease in positive affect and an increase in negative affect over the adolescent period in all parent-adolescent dyads except for the mother-daughter dyad which experiences increases in both positive and negative affect.

Parental affect was included in the present study as a possibly significant contributor to the level of quality extant in parent-adolescent relationships, and should prove to be an interesting

factor when included with the factor of time. The measurement of positive and negative parental emotions, as perceived by the adolescent during daily interactions, may have additional implications if compared with ratings of the overall quality of the relationship, as was done in the present study.

Importance of the Relationship

How adolescents rate the importance of their relationships with their parents is also expected to have an impact on the quality of their relationship. The amount of importance would also seem to be related to the adolescent's interest in interacting with parents and being motivated to have good relationships with them. Unfortunately, not one of these topics was located within the body of adolescent research. The research includes some coverage of the adolescent motivation for individuality (Tubman & Lerner, 1994), emotional detachment from parents (Larson & Richards, 1991), autonomy (Elmen & Offer, 1993) and independence (Larson et al., 1996), but these do not describe the adolescent's motivation to be with the parent, establish certain aspects of a relationship, and seek out parental companionship. The present study included an investigation into the amount of importance the adolescent places upon the relationship with parents as a potentially significant contributor to the overall quality of the relationship. It is possible that some children do not want to spend any time with their parents. These adolescents may report poorer relationship quality.

Gender

Steinberg (1990), in his examination of gender within parent-adolescent relationships, found that there were differences based on both the gender of the adolescent and the gender of the parent. The mother-daughter relationships seemed to be the most emotionally active, reporting high levels of both discord and closeness. They also reported a high level of shared activity compared to the other dyads. The mother-son relationships also had high levels of discord and closeness, but shared fewer activities. Relationships between fathers and their sons were found to be emotionally flat compared to mother-son relationships. The same comparison was found to be true in father-daughter relationships. Other gender differences have been found in the perceived amount of conflict (Flannery et al., 1993), the amount of time spent together

(Montemayor, 1982), and the relationship between the parents' emotions and the adolescents' emotions (Larson & Richards, 1994). It appears that there is adequate support for the belief that parent-adolescent relationships are at least partially affected by the gender of the parent as well as the gender of the adolescent. The present study includes this variable in the examination of relationships.

Interaction Quality

Still another relevant factor may be the daily interactions which help to establish and maintain the relationship. Understanding what occurs during these various situations has motivated researchers to take several approaches towards measuring and quantifying the day-to-day interactions which occur while adolescents are in the presence of their parents. Several researchers have used ESM to examine the specific activities which are occurring and to place them in broad categories (Asmussen & Larson, 1991; Brown, 1990; Fine et al., 1990), but all of the data is described as part of family time, and activities spent with parents is not presented separately, making between-studies comparisons difficult.

Larson and Richards (1991) also included reports about adolescent activities in their use of ESM. They compared adolescent affect with the activities involved and reported that the 483 participants experienced more positive affect while they were away from home and while in pursuit of active leisure than at other times. Their research, like all of the others above, did not include a comparison between the types of activities adolescents did with their families, or parents, and the quality of relationships they enjoyed. There is no report from adolescents about how the types of activities they engage in with their parents affect the quality of their relationship.

Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) measured adolescent thoughts and found that negative thoughts occurred ten times more frequently than positive ones while these participants were in the presence of their families. There is no measurement, however, on how this impacts the quality of relationships with family members, or with parents. Larson et al (1996) assert the vital role of daily interactions in the maintenance of a relationship, but there are only a few studies within the vast body of literature about adolescents which examine the day-to-day interactions

with their parents. Most of the research has measured interaction quality by rating the expressed affect of the parents and adolescents. There is no existing outcome research, however, which compares these daily reports to the ratings of the overall quality of the relationship. Nor has there been an attempt to obtain the adolescent's rating of the quality of each interaction, which could be compared with the overall rating of the relationship.

There may also be a relationship between the adolescent's ratings of individual interactions and the perceived affect of the parent. And while there are several studies which have examined the amount of time that adolescents spend with their parents, their results vary greatly and provide no clear indication on how time spent together relates to the overall quality of the relationship. The current level of research is unable to provide any indication to parents about how much time and effort is necessary to effectively parent an adolescent child. There is also a lack of reports from the adolescents themselves regarding which relationship factors they believe to be important. These are several questions which will be addressed in the proposed study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Participants

The entire ninth grade populations of two separate middle schools were invited to participate in the research. These schools were from separate districts located within a major metropolitan area on the east coast. Of the 820 students in the population, a total of 64 students (8%) completed the questionnaire. The participants averaged 14.8 years of age and included 25 males and 39 females. Seventy-eight percent of the participants were white, 13% were Hispanic, and 2% of them were African-American. Eighty-four percent of them lived with both parents at the time of the study, while 10% were living in single-parent households (5% with mother only and 5% with father only). Three percent of the participants were living with a parent and a stepparent, 2% lived with one parent and another adult, and the final 2% placed themselves in the “other” category. When asked about their academic grades, 52% indicated that they receive mostly A’s and B’s, 27% indicated that they receive mostly A’s, 11% indicated that they receive mostly B’s and C’s, and 3% indicated that they receive mostly C’s and D’s.

Procedures

A letter (see sample letter, Appendix A) was mailed to two local school districts requesting permission for one researcher to visit the ninth grade English classrooms or the home rooms of each ninth grade student of the two schools that participated in the study. The school Superintendents and Principals each approved the research proposal prior to the researcher’s visits to the schools. One of the schools permitted the researcher to personally visit each of the identified classrooms to explain the research procedure and directly request the students’ participation, while the other school requested that its administration and teachers perform this task. The former resulted in a much higher percentage of completed questionnaires (24%) compared to the return rate of the latter school (5%). A similar use of school classrooms for obtaining participants was also used by Mortimer and Shanahan (1994). Each student in the class received information about participation in research at the time of the visit. They were informed of their rights to decline participation, to participate voluntarily, to discontinue at any time, and

the research procedures giving them anonymous participation. The students were informed that there would be no repercussions whatsoever if they declined participation, and they were informed of any possible risks of involvement (see Informed Consent Form, Appendix B). They were also informed of the confidential nature of all information given to researchers and the steps that would be taken to maintain confidentiality. No identifying information was requested of the participants, and no one other than the principal researcher has had access to the data provided by the adolescents.

Each student received two copies of the informed consent form (see Appendix B) providing an explanation of their rights as voluntary participants in the study, names and phone numbers of contact persons to whom they could direct questions, and the steps that would be followed to ensure the confidentiality of all data collected. The form was explained to them by the researcher in one of the schools and by their home room teachers in the other, and the students were asked to take both forms, and an accompanying letter (see Appendix C) home to their parents. Parents were expected to read the informed consent form and provide a signature only if they were willing to allow their child to participate in the research. Parents were permitted to contact the researchers and make any inquiries about participation in the study. Each form requested the signature of one parent and of the adolescent as an indication of consent to participate in the research, and both signatures were necessary for the student's participation. One copy of the consent form was returned to the teacher by the participant, and the other remained at home as a reference. The informed consent indicated to parents that they could have access to the general findings of the research, and that this could be sent to them at their request.

On a day that had been predetermined by the school, the researcher returned to the designated classrooms, or in the other case the following procedures were completed by the home room teachers. Students who had turned in signed consent forms were identified by the teacher, and each student received a research questionnaire (see Appendix D) which was carefully explained to the participants. Participants remained in the classroom under the supervision of the teacher to complete the questionnaire and were only required to have a writing utensil. They

were given 10 to 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire during class time while the researcher was available to answer questions about the questionnaire itself. Questionnaires were collected by the teacher and the researcher after they had all been completed. The questionnaires were placed in a sealed folder and stored securely during analysis. Signed consent forms were placed in a separate sealed folder and placed in a locked drawer.

Measures

Demographics

The questionnaire requested the student to provide basic demographic information, including gender, age, race, and family structure. The participants were also asked to indicate what type of grades they typically receive. This question is formatted after one which was used in previous research (Bischof, 1991). Some participants, depending on family structure, have more than one person who may be considered to be a parent, so each questionnaire permitted the adolescent to identify whether a biological parent or stepparent relationship was being rated in the study, as was done by Furman and Buhrmester (1985). Participants were requested to recollect the interactions with their parents, as they had identified them, which occurred on the previous day and on the most recent weekend day. These days were selected so as to include two typical days which would represent the week, similar to research completed by Shaw (1992). Each interaction was recorded individually on the questionnaire, and was followed by several questions. These additional questions are presented below.

Time Spent Together With Parents

In order to collect data about the amount of time spent in each dyad or triad, participants were asked “Who were you with?” for each interaction and were able to select one of three options: Father, Mother, or Both. The next question about the interaction was “How long did it last?” Space as provided under the columns of Hours and Minutes so that specific totals could be recorded.

Interaction Quality

Getting the adolescent’s perspective about the quality of each individual interaction was

accomplished by asking the question “How would you generally describe this time with your parents?” Space was provided so that each interaction could be rated as either Positive or Negative. Adolescents were requested to base define positive and negative interactions based on their own perceptions.

Parental Affect

The participants were also requested to include an evaluation of the emotional state of each of the parent, or parents, who were present during the interaction. The student was asked “How would you describe your parent’s mood?” and was expected to check the category of Positive or Negative. Identification of parental affect was again based on the perceptions of the adolescent in response to observable behavior of each parent.

Importance of the Relationship

Three questions were used to measure the amount of importance which adolescents place upon their relationships with their mothers and with their fathers. These questions were used by Warr (1993) who reported that they have strong face validity. These questions were used in his research to measure the closeness between adolescents and their parents, but because they ask the adolescent to consider the amount of importance placed on three specific aspects of the relationship, the current study used them to measure the adolescents’ ratings of the importance of the parental relationship. The adolescents were asked these questions about both the mother-adolescent dyad and the father-adolescent dyad. The questions were: “How important is it for you and your father(mother) to do lots of things together?”, “How important is it to you to get along well with your father(mother)?”, and “How important is it to you to have a father(mother) you can talk to about almost everything?”. For each question the adolescent could select one of three responses: Very important, Somewhat important, or Not important at all.

Overall Quality of the Parent-Adolescent Relationship

The adolescents were also asked several questions about the overall quality of their relationships with each parent. This construct was measured by asking the adolescents about their mother-adolescent relationships and father-adolescent relationships. Their responses could vary

from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very, very much; or very, very, close). The questions were presented as follows:

1. How much do you feel that you can turn to your father(mother) when you are in need of help or guidance?
2. How much do you feel that you can discuss your work and activities with your father(mother)?
3. How considerate are you and your father(mother) of each other's feelings?
4. How much do you and your father(mother) take care of one another?
5. Considering the ups and downs of lasting relationships, how much do you and your father(mother) generally get along?
6. In general, how close do you feel to your father(mother)?
7. In general, how satisfied are you in your relationship with your father(mother)?
8. How often do you feel affectionate towards your father(mother)?

The first two questions are similar to a portion of a scale used by Cicirelli (1980) who reported that the scale has an alpha reliability coefficient of .80 (Cronbach's alpha). The third question is a revised version of a scale item which was used by Esposito (1995). The last three questions were used by Risman and Kyung (1988) as an index of level of attachment within parent-child relationships. They report that the three questions have a reliability coefficient of .75. Reliability testing of the eight questions regarding relationships with fathers with this sample produced an alpha coefficient of .94, and the eight question scale for mothers with this sample also produced an alpha score of .94.

Desired Changes in the Relationship

The final questions were "If you could change ONE thing about your relationship with your parents, what would it be?" and "If you could change ANYTHING ELSE about your relationship with your parents, what would it be?" Participants were directed to check only one response to the first question, but could select an unlimited number for the second question, from the following 12 options: More time together, Less time together, More talking, Less talking,

More activities, Fewer activities, More understanding, More listening, and I wouldn't change anything. They were also permitted to choose the Other option which offered a single line for explanation. It was decided that responses such as more freedom, less intrusion, and fewer responsibilities, which would likely be popular responses, would not be included because they are more reflective of the roles and power imbalance of parent-adolescent relationships rather than reflecting on the relationship itself.

The final section of the questionnaire invited participants to offer any comments about the research, or any reactions to the questionnaire which might not have been requested in other sections. This section was appropriate for participants of this age who may wish to express themselves more than was permitted in the questionnaire.

Analysis

A simple totaling of the frequencies and durations of reported interactions was performed. The total number of minutes was added, including a conversion of each hour to 60 minutes. These times were averaged for the sample, the gender of the adolescent, and for the gender of the parent. The frequencies of positive and negative interactions were also totaled, and the percentage of interactions which were positive was calculated. Positive parental affect, and each indication of negative parental affect, was also totaled and used to calculate the percentage of these interactions in which the parent displayed positive affect.

The responses to the 3 questions regarding the amount of importance the adolescents attribute to their relationships with their parents were given the following values: Very important = 3, Somewhat important = 2, and Not important at all = 1. An average score for the amount of importance was produced by using these values.

Overall relationship quality was calculated by creating a mean score for each adolescent's responses to each of the two relationship scales. The scale goes from one to seven, with seven indicating higher relationship quality. Each of the variables will also be included in T tests to determine mean differences between the male and female adolescents gender.

Pearson product moment correlations were used to examine the bivariate relationships

between some of the variables in the study. The following variables were included in the correlational analysis: the percentage of fathers' affect which were positive, the percentage of interactions with fathers which were positive, the overall relationship quality with fathers, the importance of the relationships with fathers, the total amount of time spent with fathers, the total frequency of interactions with fathers, adolescent grades, the gender of the adolescent, the percentage of mothers' affect which were positive, the percentage of interactions with mothers which were positive, the overall relationship quality with mothers, the importance of the relationships with mothers, the total amount of time spent with mothers, and the frequency of interactions with mothers.

A regression analysis was performed for each subset of data in order to answer the principal questions of this research. One analysis was completed using the overall relationship quality with fathers as the dependent variable and the percentage of fathers' affect which were positive, the percentage of interactions with fathers which were positive, the total amount of time spent with fathers, the total frequency of interactions with fathers, the importance of the relationships with fathers, and the gender of the adolescent as the independent variables. The other identified the overall relationship quality with mothers as the dependent variable and the percentage of mothers' affect which were positive, the percentage of interactions with mothers which were positive, the total amount of time spent with mothers, the total frequency of interactions with mothers, the importance of the relationships with mothers, and the gender of the adolescent as the independent variables. Variance was calculated for each variable to determine its ability to predict the overall quality of parent-adolescent relationships.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Time

In order to compute the total amount of time spent with each parent the total amount of time that was spent in the presence of both parents was added to both of the other two categories (“time spent together with mom” and “time spent together with dad”). Male participants reported spending an average of 409 minutes with their mothers and 392 minutes with their fathers during the two-day period (see Table 1). The female participants reported spending an average of 291 minutes with their mothers and 283 minutes with their fathers. T tests were performed (see Table 2) and revealed that males averaged significantly more time with fathers than the females did ($t = 2.25, p < .05$). There were no other significant differences between adolescent males and females in the amount of time they spent with their parents.

The reported totals for weekday time and weekend time were used to estimate how much time adolescents spend with their parents and a daily average was calculated. If the times reported represent the typical day, then it was calculated that males would average 63 minutes per day with their fathers, 87 minutes per day with their mothers, and 117 minutes per day with both parents together during the week. Females would average 65 minutes per day with their fathers, 60 minutes with their mothers, and 71 minutes with both parents together. These estimates are different from those used in the calculations because the research questions required that time with both parents be included in the total time with fathers and the total time with mothers.

Interaction Quality

The participants reported a total of 404 interactions with their fathers and 484 interactions with their mothers, both of these totals include 235 interactions in which both parents were present. Of these interactions, 202 of them which occurred with both parents were positive (86%), 85% of interactions with fathers were positive, and 80% of interactions with mothers were positive. Looking at the interactions with mothers and fathers we find that males reported having positive interactions with their mothers 86% of the time and with their fathers 88% of the time. Females reported that 63% of their interactions with their fathers were positive and 89% of their

interactions with their mothers were positive. There was a significant difference in the percentages of positive interactions with fathers ($t = 2.54, p < .05$). Male participants reported an average of 10.3 interactions with their parents, 7.72 with their mothers and 6.36 interactions with their fathers. The female participants averaged 10.2 interactions with their parents, 6.62 interactions with their fathers and 7.66 interactions with their mothers.

Parental Affect

The sample reported having 356 interactions in which their fathers displayed affect that they described as positive and an additional 38 interactions in which it was described as negative, indicating that their fathers' affect was positive in 90% of their interactions. This also creates an average ratio of 9.4 interactions with positive affect displayed by the father to every one display of negative affect. Reports about interactions with their mothers include 407 interactions in which they describe their mothers' affect as positive, and 77 interactions in which it is negative, indicating 84%, or an average ratio of 5.3 positive displays of affect to every negative one. Males described their mothers' affect as positive in 82% of their interactions, and their fathers' affect as positive in 90% of their interactions. Females described their mothers affect as positive in 74% of their interactions and their fathers' affect as positive in 70% of those interactions. T tests (see Table 2) revealed that males' descriptions of positive affect in the presence of their fathers occurred significantly more often ($t = 2.09, p < .05$).

Importance of the Relationship

Average scores for the amount of importance they place on the relationship ranged from one to three, with three indicating more importance. Male scores averaged 2.33 when rating the importance of their relationships with their fathers and 2.53 when rating the importance of their relationships with their mothers. Females averaged scores of 2.22 when rating the importance of their relationships with their fathers and 2.40 when rating the importance of their relationships with their mothers. T tests indicate that no significant differences exist between the males and the females in their ratings of the importance of their relationships with their parents.

Overall Quality of the Relationship

The eight question scale about their relationships with their fathers and mothers created a score which was totaled and averaged for each participant. The scale ranged from one to seven, with a seven indicating a higher relationship quality. Male scores averaged 4.77 when rating the quality of their relationships with their fathers and 5.94 when rating the quality of their relationships with their mothers. Females averaged scores of 5.07 when rating the quality of relationships with fathers and 5.41 when rating the quality of relationships with mothers. T tests show that there are no significant differences between males' and females' ratings of relationship quality with their parents.

Correlations

Table 3 shows the results of the Pearson product moment correlational analysis that was done to examine the bivariate relationships between the variables in the study. Thirty-eight significant correlations out of a possible 90 were found. Five correlations would be expected to be significant by chance (at the .05 level of significance). Thus, the number of significant correlations is greater than the number expected by chance. The following results are presented in the table.

The percentage of fathers' affect being positive was found to be significantly correlated with eight of the thirteen other variables, i.e., the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .91, p < .01$); the relationship quality with fathers ($r = .55, p < .01$); grades ($r = .27, p < .05$); the percentage of mothers' affect identified as positive ($r = .76, p < .01$); the percentage of positive interactions with mothers ($r = .26, p < .05$); the relationship quality with mothers ($r = .68, p < .01$); time spent with fathers ($r = .30, p < .05$); the average frequency of interactions with fathers ($r = .31, p < .05$); and the frequency of interactions with mothers ($r = .32, p < .05$).

The percentage of positive interactions with fathers was found to be significantly correlated with eight of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of fathers' affect being identified as positive ($r = .91, p < .01$); relationship quality with fathers ($r = .52, p < .01$); the adolescent's gender ($r = .27, p < .05$); the percentage of mothers' affect identified as positive ($r = .62, p < .05$); the percentage of positive interactions with mothers ($r = .65, p < .01$); time spent with fathers ($r =$

.40, $p < .01$); the frequency of interactions with fathers ($r = .34$, $p < .01$); and the frequency of interactions with mothers ($r = .33$, $p < .05$).

The relationship quality with fathers was found to be significantly correlated with eight of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of percentage of fathers' affect being identified as positive ($r = .55$, $p < .01$); the percentage of fathers' affect being identified as positive ($r = .52$, $p < .01$); the grades of the adolescent ($r = .35$, $p < .01$); the percentage of mothers affect being identified as positive ($r = .33$, $p < .01$); relationship quality with mothers ($r = .57$, $p < .01$); time with fathers ($r = .27$, $p < .05$); the frequency of interactions with fathers ($r = .45$, $p < .01$); and the frequency of interactions with mothers ($r = .28$, $p < .05$).

The importance of the relationship with fathers was found to be significantly correlated with one other variable, i.e., the importance of the relationship with mothers ($r = .46$, $p < .01$).

The adolescent's gender was found to be significantly correlated with two of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .29$, $p < .05$) where 1 = male and 2 = female; and time with fathers ($r = -.30$, $p < .05$) where 1 = male and 2 = female.

Academic grades were found to be significantly correlated with four of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of the fathers' affect being described as positive ($r = .27$, $p < .05$); the relationship quality with fathers ($r = .35$, $p < .01$); the percentage of mothers' affect being described as positive ($r = .30$, $p < .05$); and time with mothers ($r = .32$, $p < .05$).

The importance of the relationship with mothers was found to be significantly correlated with two other variables, i.e., the importance of the relationship with fathers ($r = .46$, $p < .01$); and the frequency of interactions with mothers ($r = -.42$, $p < .01$).

The percentage of mothers' affect being described as positive was found to be significantly correlated with seven of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of fathers' affect being described as positive ($r = .67$, $p < .01$); the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .62$, $p < .05$); the relationship quality with fathers ($r = .33$, $p < .01$); grades ($r = .30$, $p < .05$); the percentage of positive interactions with mothers ($r = .44$, $p < .01$); the relationship quality with mothers ($r = .34$, $p < .01$); time with fathers ($r = .31$, $p < .05$); and the frequency of interactions with mothers ($r =$

.31, $p < .05$).

The percentage of positive interactions with mothers was found to be significantly correlated with three of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of fathers' affect being described as positive ($r = .26$, $p < .05$); the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .27$, $p < .05$); and the percentage of mothers' affect being described as positive ($r = .44$, $p < .01$).

The relationship with mothers was found to be significantly correlated with seven of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of fathers' affect being described as positive ($r = .68$, $p < .01$); the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .65$, $p < .01$); the relationship quality with fathers ($r = .57$, $p < .01$); the percentage of mothers' affect being described as positive ($r = .34$, $p < .01$); time with fathers ($r = .33$, $p < .01$); the frequency of interactions with fathers ($r = .43$, $p < .01$); and the frequency of interactions with mothers ($r = .37$, $p < .01$).

Time with fathers was found to be significantly correlated with eight of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of fathers' affect being described as positive ($r = .30$, $p < .05$); the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .40$, $p < .01$); the relationship quality with fathers ($r = .27$, $p < .05$); adolescent gender ($r = -.30$, $p < .05$) where 1 = male and 2 = female; the percentage of mothers' affect being described as positive ($r = .31$, $p < .05$); the relationship quality with mothers ($r = .33$, $p < .01$); time with mothers ($r = .29$, $p < .05$); and the frequency of interactions with fathers ($r = .70$, $p < .01$).

Time with mothers was found to be significantly correlated with two of the other variables, i.e., academic grades ($r = .31$, $p < .05$); and time with fathers ($r = .29$, $p < .05$).

The frequency of interactions with fathers was found to be significantly correlated with five of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of fathers' affect being described as positive ($r = .31$, $p < .05$); the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .34$, $p < .01$); their relationship quality with fathers ($r = .45$, $p < .01$); the relationship quality with mothers ($r = .34$, $p < .01$); and time with fathers ($r = .66$, $p < .01$).

The frequency of interactions with mothers was found to be significantly correlated with seven of the other variables, i.e., the percentage of fathers' affect described as being positive ($r =$

.32, $p < .05$); the percentage of positive interactions with fathers ($r = .33$, $p < .05$); relationship quality with fathers ($r = .28$, $p < .05$); the importance of the relationship with mothers ($r = -.42$, $p < .01$); the percentage of mothers' affect being described as positive ($r = .31$, $p < .05$); relationship quality with mothers ($r = .37$, $p < .01$); and the frequency of interactions with fathers ($r = .42$, $p < .01$).

In summary, the relationship between the fathers' affect and the percentage of interactions with them which were positive was very strong for the entire sample, but the relationship between the mothers' affect and the percentage of positive interactions with mothers was not as strong. The fathers' affect was also strongly related to the overall relationship quality with father, the adolescents' grades, the mothers' affect, a higher percentage of positive interactions with mothers, overall relationship quality with mothers, amount of time spent together with fathers, frequency of interactions with fathers, and frequency of interactions with mothers. The percentage of mothers' affect that was perceived as positive was also significantly related to all of these variables except for the frequency of interactions with fathers. There was a significant relationship between being a female adolescent and having a higher percentage of positive interactions with fathers, but being female was also negatively correlated to spending time with fathers. Another inverse relationship was that of frequency of interactions with mothers and the importance of the relationship with mothers.

The overall quality of the relationships with mothers and with fathers were also correlated with several of the other factors of this study. The explanation for finding strong correlations between the quality of the relationship between adolescents and their parents, the percentages of positive interactions and positive affect, and frequencies of interactions seems logical and lends some support to the literature about the need for quality time, and the literature which endorses the belief in the quantity of time together. Time spent together with fathers was correlated with fathers' affect, positive interactions, relationship quality with dad, mothers' affect, relationship quality with mothers, and frequencies of interactions with mothers and with fathers. Time spent together with mothers was not related to the same factors, but was related to grades, time with

fathers, and frequency of interactions with fathers. There seems to be some unpredictability to this variable.

Regression Analysis

In order to answer the primary research questions, two different hierarchical regression models were developed and regression procedures were run (see Table 4). The first of the primary questions was: Do the amount of time adolescents spend with their mothers, frequency of interactions with their mothers, adolescent ratings of interaction quality with mothers, ratings of their mothers' affect, adolescent ratings of the amount of importance of their relationships with mothers, and the adolescent's gender predict the overall quality of their relationships with their mothers? The results of the stepwise analysis indicated that the entire model predicted 40.3% of the variance in the quality of the relationship with mothers ($F = 19.26$, $df = 2,57$, $p < .001$). The only two variables which added significant variance to the prediction of relationship quality were the percentage of interactions in which the mothers' affect was described as positive and the total frequency of interactions with fathers.

The second primary question of this study was: Do the amount of time adolescents spend with their fathers, frequency of interactions with their fathers, adolescent ratings of interaction quality with fathers, ratings of their fathers' affect, adolescent ratings of the amount of importance of their relationships with fathers, and the adolescent's gender predict the overall quality of their relationships with their fathers? The correlational analysis revealed that positive interactions with fathers and percentage of fathers' affect described as positive were so highly correlated (.91) that there were concerns of multicollinearity. Thus, one of these variables, positive interactions with fathers, was left out of the regression analysis (see Table). The results of the stepwise analysis indicated that the entire model predicted 38.6% of the variance in the quality of relationships with fathers ($F = 18.21$, $df = 1,59$, $p < .001$). The only variables which added significant variance to the prediction were the percentage of interactions in which fathers' affect was described as positive and the total frequency of interactions with father.

Desired Changes in the Relationship

When asked to determine what one thing they would like to change about their relationships with their parents, the response most frequently chosen (27%) was “more understanding.” Twenty-three of the participants reported that they want “less arguing” and 22% indicated that they wouldn’t change anything. Eight percent selected “other” changes, six percent selected “more listening,” and the options of “more one-on-one time,” “more activities,” and “less time together” were each selected by a participant as the one change they would like to occur in their relationships with their parents. The options of “more talking,” “less talking,” and “fewer activities” were not selected. When the participants were permitted to select any or all of the above options “less arguing” was chosen by 23 of them (36%). “I wouldn’t change anything” was the next most popular response (27%), followed by “more listening” and “more understanding,” each being selected by 25% of the adolescents. “Less time together” was selected 12 times (19% of the participants), “less talking” and “more one-on-one time” were each selected by 14% of the adolescents, creating an interesting contradiction in desires. The other options were selected by six percent, or fewer, of the participants.

Summary

Several interesting results have been discovered and reported in the analysis of these variables. Time spent with parents was significantly correlated with several other variables, including the father’s positive affect, frequency of interactions, having more positive interactions, and relationship quality, but it did not contribute significantly to the prediction of overall relationship quality. Interaction quality with fathers was very highly correlated with the fathers’ percentage of positive affect. Adolescents reported that 80 to 89% of their interactions with their parents are positive even though parental affect is described as positive in only 70 to 90% of those interactions.

Males reports about the importance of their relationships with their parents were higher than females, though not significantly, and they showed greater ranges in rating the overall quality of their relationships with their parents. On a scale of one to seven, males’ average rating of their relationships with fathers was 4.77, but the average for mothers was 5.94. The females scores, by

comparison, were higher for fathers (5.07), but lower for mothers (5.41).

The regression analysis found that the mothers' affect and the total frequency of interactions were the only significant contributors to the prediction of relationship quality with mothers. The two significant variables in predicting relationship the quality of relationships with fathers were the percentage of fathers' positive affect and the total frequency of interactions with fathers. And finally, the participants reported that the changes they would most like to make in their relationships with their parents were more understanding, less arguing, and no changes at all.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

The principal questions of this research were regarding the ability of the time with parents, frequency of interactions, quality of interactions, parental affect during the interactions, importance of the relationship, and adolescent gender to predict the overall quality of relationships between adolescents and their parents. The statistical analysis found that the variables of parental affect and the frequency of interactions were capable of significant contributions. These variables are, therefore, necessary in considerations of parent-adolescent relationships.

The following results were found regarding the variable of time. Male adolescents reported spending an average of 6.5 hours with their fathers and 6.18 hours with their mothers during the two day period. The females reported spending an average of 4.7 hours with their fathers and 4.9 hours with their mothers. It is important to remember that this time period included one weekend day and one weekday. Using these average times to estimate an entire week (by multiplying weekday times by five and weekend times by two and adding the total as a weekly score) would indicate that adolescent males spend an average of 21.1 total hours in the presence of their fathers (3.0 hours per day) and 23.9 hours (3.4 hours per day) in the presence of their mothers in one week. Females would average 16.0 total hours (2.3 hours per day) in the presence of their fathers and 15.3 (2.2 hours per day) hours in the presence of their fathers. Some of this time overlaps as time with both parents, but including the timespent with both parents in each of the other two categories was necessary for the statistical analyses. It is interesting to note that males averaged more time with their mothers and significantly more time with their fathers than the females did. If the recorded times for one weekday and one weekend day are used to estimate average weekly times *without* adding the time with both parents to each of the other two times then we could assume the following would be true averages. Males would average 63 minutes per day with their fathers, 87 minutes per day with their mothers, and 117 minutes per day with both parents together. Females would average 65 minutes per day with their fathers, 60 minutes with their mothers, and 71 minutes with both parents together.

Because there is little empirical research comparing adolescent gender with the amount of

time spent with parents to support any such hypotheses, this study was conducted on the belief that the differences would not be consistent or that females would report a slightly higher amount of time with their parents as was found by Montemayor (1982) and also by Flannery et al (1993). Other comparisons between the two studies reveal large differences in the amount of time adolescents spent with their parents. The two-day means for the present study (males: 392 minutes with fathers and 409 minutes with mothers; females 283 minutes and 291 minutes with fathers and mothers respectively) were much larger than the three-day means reported by Montemayor (males: 21 minutes with fathers and 17 minutes with mothers; females 16 minutes and 24 minutes with fathers and mothers respectively) for all of the parent-adolescent categories. The difference may be a result of the different methods used to collect data. Perhaps his use of a telephone interview at the end of the day asking about the adolescent's activities resulted in more accurate recollection. It is possible that interviews may prompt reports which are closer to the actual time than asking them to recall their activities of the last few days in a questionnaire. The differences could also be the result of sampling methods and the types of adolescent populations available in the geographic areas selected. The population in Montemayor's research including a high percentage of a particular religious group, while the present study did not include this information in the demographic section of the questionnaire.

The results of the present study may also be compared to those of Fallon and Bowles (1997), who studied the amount of time spent with parents in intimate settings. By comparison, their sample of 12 to 16 year old adolescents in Australia spent an average of 45 minutes per day with their fathers and 67 minutes per day with their mothers. These averages are lower than those of the present study who, as a sample, spent an average of 163 minutes per day with their fathers and 169 minutes per day with their mothers as the total for all categories. The results of the current study may also be compared to those of Richardson et al (1986) whose research recorded adolescent time spent with mothers, fathers, and with both parents during a one-week period. Males in their sample averaged 1.6 hours per day with their mothers, 1.7 hours with their fathers, and 3.0 hours with both parents. The females averaged 2.6 hours per day with their mothers, 2.0

hours with their fathers, and 3.57 hours with both parents. Because they included data from the entire week, a comparison with the present study should use the estimate of weekly time rather than the two-day average which included one weekend day. The estimated daily averages from the present study are much lower in all cases except for the mother-son category, which was only half an hour lower.

It is not surprising that the amount of time spent together was significantly correlated with positive parental affect, positive interactions, time spent with the other parent, and relationship quality, but had no significant effect in predicting the overall relationship quality in the regression analyses. These findings support the belief of Small and Eastman (1991) that parents need not be continually present in order to be effective in their roles. Steinhauer (1983) suggested that parents must be continually available to their children, and that time spent together should focus more on quality rather than quantity. Following Bryant's suggestion (1992), it would seem that the quality and effectiveness of the time together is determined by when it occurs and how much effort is involved. Timing is important to the adolescent, and parents should be available for the more crucial aspects of life. It appears that the amount of time may not be nearly as significant as the frequency of interactions and knowing what times might be more crucial. Parents who make themselves available to interact more frequently with their adolescents, especially during critical times, may have better relationships with their adolescents than parents who spend a lot of time with their adolescents, but not at the right moments. Their relationships may also be better compared to parents who are unable to identify the crucial moments in their adolescents' lives. This does not mean that we can disregard the concept of spending more time with our adolescent, as Warr (1993) reminds us, but it does mean that being a parent is more than being present, and that the continuity of active responsiveness from parents may be more important than the amount of time. The present study supports this by finding that the frequency of interactions with mothers and with fathers contributed significantly to the prediction of overall relationship quality. It may be true that adolescent's define "quality time" by how accessible the parent is and how frequently the parent is available to interact during desired moments. Perhaps future research will

help determine how the adolescent defines those desired, or crucial moments and if the parents ability to connect with the adolescent is related to the overall relationship quality.

There were no significant relationships found between time spent with mothers and the frequency of interactions with them, but the correlation regarding fathers was significant. There seems to be enough evidence to support the idea that time spent together is a factor which has significance in some parent-adolescent relationships, but not all of them. Its significance as a variable in the relationship seems to be subject to other factors, but determining the interplay between these co-existing variables is beyond the scope of this research. The findings of the present study do indicate that time spent together is more likely to be related to parental affect and positive interactions than the importance of the relationship with either parent. The amount of time spent with fathers was found to be significantly correlated with the fathers' affect, frequency of interactions, the percentage of positive interactions, and relationship quality with fathers in addition to relationship quality with mothers and mothers' positive affect. Another revealing finding is the amount of time that fathers of these participants were spending with their children. In today's busy society where fathers are sometimes described as peripheral, disengaged, or too busy working to be with their kids, it seems somewhat surprising that these adolescents reported spending a fairly equal amount of time with their mothers and fathers. Table 1 shows that this time is not all lumped on to the weekend time, but that males and females spent an equal amount of time with their fathers during the week. One possible explanation for the nearly equal amount of time with mothers and fathers is that the metropolitan area of these families has a large focus on careers. It is possible that the adolescents in this research are from dual-career families and that their mothers and fathers both work and have a nearly equal amount of time to devote to family and parenting. If this is the case, then the total amount of time that these adolescents reported spending with their parents seems extraordinarily high. The sample also consisted of a high percentage of intact families, and perhaps this has had some impact on the amount of time spent together. Other variables may also be affected by this high percentage, such as relationship quality, amount of time spent together, and the importance of the relationship.

These results also remind us that adolescents consider their interactions with their parents to be positive about 80 to 86% of the time, and even higher in some parent-adolescent dyads. This confirms statements by Steinberg (1990) that harmony is more prevalent than contention in relationships, and by Montemayor (1983) that conflict occurs within normal ranges in most parent-adolescent relationships. It seems that the majority of research focuses on what is occurring in the minority of interactions, but the present study indicates that there is reason to look at other variables and move beyond measuring conflict as the sole determining factor. It is possible that by focusing on the negative aspects of relationships between adolescents and their parents we have neglected to learn from what is going right between them.

Parental affect is a variable which received substantial statistical support as a significant factor in parent-adolescent relationships. In addition to being significantly related to many factors, such as relationship quality, positive interactions, time with fathers, and frequency of interactions, it also received strong support in the regression analysis and was found to have significant effects in accounting for the variance in the relationship. This finding would support the theory that adolescents of this age are likely to have several options about how to spend their time and are capable of changing activities or environments which become displeasing to them, and that a negative emotional climate might cause them to leave any situation, whether it be with peers, parents, or other family members. Repeated occurrences of this cycle with their parents would then reinforce their selection of activities away from their parents or home. It is worth noting that there was a very strong relationship between parental affect and positive interactions. While there is some variation in why some interactions are positive and some are negative, these results represent the close connection between the two but are unable to indicate any directional causality.

There were also gender differences in the area of parental affect. While interactions with mothers were longer and more frequent, they also had higher percentages of negative interactions and negative affect. This may indicate that mothers are providing more attention to the daily issues with their adolescents compared to fathers, and that this is likely to result in more

disagreements. This may contradict the notion presented above about adolescents being able to remove themselves from negative parental affect and being reinforced for so doing. There must be other factors which might explain the trends reported in this study of adolescents spending more time with their mothers, placing more importance upon the relationship, and reporting higher overall quality relationships with them even though there is a higher percentage of negative interactions and negative parental affect. The attempt of this research was to begin identifying the factors which create strong relationships despite the existence of time constraints, conflict, and negative emotions. The high amount of positive interactions and positive emotions seem to be indicated, along with higher frequencies of interactions, as factors which may carry enough strength in the relationship to support interactions despite the more frequent occurrence of conflict and negative emotions compared to pre-adolescence and post-adolescence. Perhaps the intensity of the positive and negative emotions has something to do with the fluctuating relationship between affect, time, and relationship quality.

Adolescent ratings of the importance of the relationships with their parents were well within the range that would be expected. Relationships with mothers averaged ratings that were midway between somewhat important and very important. Relationships with fathers were lower, but near the same rating. It is not surprising to find that these adolescents had a tendency to rate the relationships with their mothers as more important (2.45) than the relationships with their fathers (2.27), but it becomes more interesting when considering that they spent an equal amount of time with each parent. It could be assumed that the amount of time spent with parents is not significant to adolescents and that they accept the time that is available, or offered from parents, no matter how much it is and do not seek more than this. Perhaps ratings of how much time adolescents sought with parents might have offered more understanding of these variables.

It was not surprising to find that the importance of the relationship was not highly correlated with other variables, other than the importance of the relationship with the other parent. The negative correlation between importance of the relationship with mothers and the frequency of interactions was surprising, however. There seems to be no explanation available for

this if it is more than a chance finding of this research. While there is no supporting data outside of the current study, it seems consistent with other results that adolescents rate relationships with both mothers and fathers as important. It is, however, difficult to explain why this variable remains so independent of other aspects of the relationship. Perhaps it is innate or related to interactions that take place beginning with infancy, perhaps it is necessary to the needs of this developmental stage, or there may be other explanations, but it seems clear that despite the existing level of relationship quality, adolescents place a high level of importance on the relationships with their parents. Perhaps future studies will add to the current level of exploration.

The overall quality of relationships was also higher for mothers (5.61 out of a possible 7) than for fathers (4.77). This variable was highly correlated with several others, such as parental affect, time together, frequency of interactions, and the percentage of positive interactions. And finally, when asked about changes they desired most in their relationships with their parents, the options they selected more frequently were more understanding, less arguing, and no changes desired. In respect to other changes they would like to make, less arguing, no changes desired, more listening, and more understanding were the most frequently chosen.

Clinical Implications

Some parents who bring their children to see counselors raise the concerns of wanting improved relations and wanting to be more connected with their adolescents. The hope of this study was to learn more about how adolescents view the relationships with their parents and provide more direction for future research in these areas. What this research has provided is the information that parental affect and the frequency of interactions may have an impact on the quality of parent-adolescent relationships. This information should be provided to parents as an example of what they can do to improve their relationships with their children. Some parents believe that their adolescents are beyond reach, or that there is nothing the parents can do to change the relationship. This research provides empirical support that may be used to the benefit of parents, educators, and counselors. It indicates that the areas of parental affect and frequency of interaction are areas which should receive attention when changes are desired in parent-

adolescent relationships because they are capable of predicting relationship quality.

While positive interactions are more typical, parents should be reminded that negative interactions and affect are not atypical and that it occurs even in relationships which are considered to be very good. This could serve to normalize the amount of conflict which falls within reasonable parameters and allow parents to be more focused on other aspects of the relationship.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study are greatly limited due to the small percentage of the ninth grade population of the two schools that completed the questionnaire. The research was unfortunately conducted during a very busy part of the school year and may have produced a better return rate if more time had been available. One of the schools was so busy that it was unable to distribute all of the consent forms which it had received, creating the strong possibility that some of the 820 students never even heard about the research, let alone received the information packet. This might have also had an impact on the types of students represented in the sample, depending on the classroom make up of the type of teacher who, for whatever reason, opted not to include his or her classroom in the schoolwide project. It is also possible that the questionnaire format creates further limitations (Montemayor, 1982) because of the limited response range and the inability to probe further about specific aspects of the relationship, aspects which could very well provide the desired information about how adolescents get along with their parents. The questionnaire also permits adolescents to be more uncertain or untruthful in their responses because there is no method of confirming their reports.

The enthusiastic reactions of the students who received instructions directly from the researcher leads to the assumption that a majority of them were interested in the research, but that requiring that they take the consent forms home for parental signatures and then bring them back to school reduced the rate of participation. If there was an ethical and safe way to remove these steps when collecting data from school students it would increase our social science research capabilities.

Future Research

This study has provided strong support for the continued research of parental affect and the frequency of interactions between adolescents and their parents. Now that there is evidence that these variables merit further investigation, continuing research would benefit from using a much larger sample that would include several age groups, including a pre-adolescent group for comparison. The comparison group could indicate what changes, if any, occur in the areas of parental affect, quality of interactions, timing of interactions, parental responsiveness, and the importance of the relationship as the child goes through adolescence. A more equal representation of genders may also create more clarity in why there are differences in the amount of time male and female adolescents spend with their parents.

The results from the present study could be used in qualitative research about how adolescents react to parental affect and how much it determines the quality of interactions. This research should include a measurement of the intensity of parental affect, analyzing its relationship with the overall quality of the relationship. The attempt to measure percentages of positive and negative interactions, as was done in this study, does not adequately describe the impact of parental affect. Further inquiry into the importance of the relationship, what causes it to fluctuate, determining whether the fluctuation is determined by the parent or the adolescent, and how much it fluctuates could also benefit our understanding on what motivates adolescents to maintain their relationships with their parents. Perhaps the answers to these questions lie in patterns that are established long before adolescence, and our search should begin earlier in childhood.

Regarding the issue of time together, perhaps we should focus more on timing of togetherness and determine which times have the most importance to the adolescent and how parents may recognize those crucial times. It may be discovered that the parent's ability to respond to the adolescent during those crucial times is related to the overall relationship quality. And consideration should be given to the adolescent's desire to seek, or not seek, time with parents. It doesn't seem to be an issue of time, but of timing. The initial question of "How much time does it take for parents to adequately raise their adolescents?" should be changed to "How

does timing of interactions affect the relationship?”

Relationships with mothers and relationships with fathers should also be compared and contrasted. Finding what is different between the two of them, as far as roles, functions, and adolescent expectations, may help us identify the aspects which create positive relationships or contribute to negative ones. which create the differences between the relationships which they maintain with their adolescents. If it is so that while the issue of time is related to relationship quality, but not contributing to it, then we need to ask what is occurring between mothers and their adolescents which creates higher ratings of relationship quality when compared to fathers. Perhaps the higher relationship quality is related to the level of involvement that mothers exhibit with their children. This could prove to be another interesting variable in future research.

Summary

While the variables in this research do not represent those which are most frequently included in the investigation of parent-adolescent relationships, they have been given adequate statistical support of being relevant to the issue. The factors of parental affect and the frequency of interactions were particularly meaningful, and were found in the regression analyses to make statistically significant contributions to the prediction of relationship quality with mothers and fathers. This information should be included in the instruction of parents, counselors, and educators so that these variables may be considered in efforts to assess and improve relationships. These variables should also be included in future research. The number of participants in the present study lack was not high enough for these results to be convincing, and replication is encouraged. Further consideration should be given to the timing of interactions and what function they serve to the adolescent that relate to the higher overall quality of the relationship. Gender issues should also be included in further research, as there were differences between male and female adolescents, and between mothers and fathers.

It is hoped that we will learn more about what is most crucial in the maintenance of positive parent-adolescent relationships. Even though the majority of interactions and relationships are considered to be positive, there are many families who would benefit from

further understanding about family interactions and the various factors of maintaining relationships.

References

- Asmussen, L., & Larson, R. (1991). The quality of family time among young adolescents in single-parent and married-parent families. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *53*, 1021-1030.
- Ausubel, D.P. (1954). Theory and problems of adolescent development. New York: Grune and Stratton.
- Bischof, G.P. (1991). Adolescent male sexual offenders' perceptions of their family characteristics. Unpublished master's thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
- Blyth, D.A., Hill, J.P., & Thiel, K.S. (1982). Early adolescents' significant others: Grade and gender differences in perceived relationships with familial and nonfamilial adults and young people. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, *11*, 425-450.
- Broderick, C.B. (1993). Understanding family process: Basis of family systems theory. London: Sage Publications.
- Brody, G.H., Stoneman, Z., & Gauger, K. (1996). Parent-child relationships, family problem-solving behavior, and sibling relationship quality: The moderating role sibling temperaments. Child Development, *67*, 1289-1300.
- Brooks-Gunn, J., & Reiter, E.O. (1990). The role of pubertal processes. In S.S. Feldman & G.R. Elliott (Eds.), At the threshold (pp. 16-53). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brown, B.B. (1990). Peer groups and cultures. In S.S. Feldman & G.R. Elliott (Eds.), At the threshold (pp. 171-196).
- Bryant, W.K. (1992). Human capital, time use, and other family behavior. Journal of Family and Economic Issues, *13*, 395-405.
- Buhrmester, D., & Furman, W. (1987). The development of companionship and intimacy. Child Development, *58*, 1101-1113.
- Carson, J.L., & Parke, R.D. (1996). Reciprocal negative affect in parent-child interactions and children's peer competency. Child Development, *67*, 2217-2226.
- Cicirelli, V.G. (1980). A comparison of college women's feelings toward their siblings

and parents. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 42, 111-118.

Cooper, C. (1988). Commentary: The role of conflict in adolescent-parent relationships. In M.R. Gunnar & G.A. Collins (Eds.), Development During Transition to Adolescence: Minnesota Symposium on Child Psychology, 21, 181-187.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Larson, R. (1984). Being adolescent. New York: Basic Books.

Dallos, R. (1991). Family belief systems, therapy and change. Milton Keynes, PA: Open University Press.

Daly, K.J. (1996). Families & time: Keeping pace in a hurried culture. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.

Demo, D.H., & Ambert, A.M. (1995). Parents and adolescents in a changing society: Challenges, problems, and perspectives. In D.H. Demo & A.M. Ambert (Eds.), Parents and adolescents in changing families (pp. 1-8). Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations.

Elmen, J., & Offer, D. (1993). Normality, turmoil, and adolescence. In P.H. Tolan & B.J. Cohler (Eds.), Handbook of clinical research and practice with adolescents (pp. 5-19). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Esposito, S.A. (1995). Cohesion and adaptability in the non-custodial father-child relationship: The effects of interaction quality. Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 23, 21-37.

Fallon, B.J., & Bowles, T.V. (1997). The effects of family structure and family functioning on adolescents' perceptions of intimate time spent with parents, siblings, and peers. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 26, 25-43.

Fine, G.A., Mortimer, J.T., & Roberts, D.F. (1990). Leisure, work, and the mass media. In S.S. Feldman & G.R. Elliott (Eds.), At the threshold (pp. 225-252). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Flannery, D.J., Montemayor, R., Eberly, M., & Torquati, J. (1993). Unraveling the ties that bind: Affective expression and perceived conflict in parent-adolescent interactions. Journal of Social and Interpersonal Relationships, 10, 495-509.

Forgatch, M. (1989). Patterns and outcome in family problem-solving: The disrupting effect of negative emotion. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *51*, 115-124.

Furman, W., & Buhrmester, D. (1985). Children's perceptions of the personal relationships in their social networks. Developmental Psychology, *21*, 1016-1024.

Gecas, V., & Seff, M.A. (1995). Families and adolescents: A review of the 1980s. In D.H. Demo & A.M. Ambert (Eds.), Parents and adolescents in changing families (pp. 13-28). Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations.

Gehring, T.M., Wentzel, K.R., Feldman, S.S., & Munson, J. (1990). Conflict in families of adolescents: The impact on cohesion and power structures. Journal of Family Psychology, *3*, 290-309.

Grotevant, H.D., & Cooper, C.R. (1986). Individuation in family relationships. Human Development, *29*, 82-100.

Guldner, G.T., & Swensen, C.H. (1995). Time spent together and relationship quality: Long-distance relationships as a test case. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, *12*, 313-320.

Katz, L.F., & Gottman, J.M. (1994). Patterns of marital interaction and children's emotional development. In Parke and Kellam's (Eds.) Exploring family relationships with other social contexts (pp. 49-74). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Larson, R., & Kleiber, D. (1993). Daily experience of adolescents. In P.H. Tolan & B.J. Cohler (Eds.), Handbook of clinical research and practice with adolescents (pp. 125-145). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Larson, R., & Richards, M.H. (1991). Daily companionship in late childhood and early adolescence: Changing developmental contexts. Child Development, *62*, 284-300.

Larson, R., & Richards, M.H. (1994). Family emotions: Do young adolescents and their parents experience the same states? Journal of Research on Adolescence, *4*, 567-583.

Larson, R., Richards, M.H., Moneta, G., Holmbeck, G., & Duckett, E. (1996). Changes in adolescents' daily interactions with their families from ages 10 to 18: Disengagement and

transformation. Developmental Psychology, *32*, 744-754.

Montemayor, R. (1982). The relationship between parent-adolescent conflict and the amount of time adolescents spend alone and with parents and peers. Child Development, *53*, 1512-1519.

Montemayor, R. (1983). Parents and adolescents in conflict: All families some of the time and some families most of the time. Journal of Early Adolescence, *3*, 83-103.

Montemayor, R., & Brownlee, J.R. (1987). Fathers, mothers, and adolescents: Gender-based differences in parental roles during adolescence. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, *16*, 281-291.

Mortimer, J.T., & Sabahan, M.J. (1994). Adolescent work experience and family relationships. Work and Occupations, *21*, 369-384.

Nichols, M.P., & Schwartz, R.C. (1995). Family Therapy: Concepts and methods (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Paterson, J.E., Field, J., & Pryor, J. (1994). Adolescents' perceptions of their attachment relationships with their mothers, fathers, and friends. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, *23*, 579-600.

Raffaelli, M., & Duckett, E. (1989). "We were just talking...": Conversations in early adolescence. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, *18*, 567-582.

Richardson, R.A., Abramowitz, R.H., Asp, C.E., & Petersen, A.C. (1986). Parent-child relationships in early adolescence: Effects of family structure. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *48*, 805-811.

Richardson, R.A., Galambos, N.L., Schulenberg, J.E., & Petersen, A.C. (1984). Conflict and the family environment. Journal of Early Adolescence, *4*, 131-153.

Risman, B.J., & Kyung, P. (1988). Just the two of us: Parent-child relations in single-parent homes. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *50*, 1049-1062.

Shaffer, D.R. (1989). Developmental psychology: Childhood and adolescence (2nd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Shanahan, M.J., Elder, G.H. Jr., Burchinal, M., & Conger, R.D. (1996). Adolescent paid labor and relationships with parents: Early work-family linkages. Child Development, *67*, 2183-2200.

Shapiro, L. (1997). The myth of quality time. Newsweek, *129*, 62-69.

Shaw, S.M.. (1992). Dereifying family leisure: An examination of women's and men's everyday experiences and perceptions of family time. Leisure Sciences, *14*, 271-286.

Small, S.A., & Eastman, G. (1991). Rearing adolescents in contemporary society: A conceptual framework for understanding the responsibilities and needs of parents. Family Relations, *40*, 455-462.

Steinberg, L. (1989). Pubertal maturation and parent-adolescent distance: An evolutionary perspective. In G.R. Adams, R. Montemayor, & T.P. Gullotta (Eds.), Biology of adolescent behavior and development (pp. 71-97). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Steinberg, L. (1990). Autonomy, conflict, and harmony in the family relationship. In S.S. Feldman & G.R. Elliott (Eds.), At the threshold (pp. 255-276). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Steinhauer, P.D. (1983). Assessing for parenting capacity. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, *53*, 468-481.

Tubman, J.G., & Lerner, R.M. (1994). Continuity and discontinuity in the affective experiences of parents and children: Evidence from the New York Longitudinal Study. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, *64*, 112-125.

Warr, M. (1993). Parents, peers, and delinquency. Social Forces, *72*, 247-264.

Wierson, M., Forehand, R., Fauber, R., & McCombs, A. (1989). Buffering young male adolescents against negative parental divorce influences: The role of good parent-adolescent relations. Child Study Journal, *19*, 101-115.

Appendix A

Letter to School

As a master's degree candidate at Virginia Tech's Graduate Center in Falls Church, I am conducting a study of how adolescents experience their relationships with their parents. I am interested in recruiting students from George Mason Middle and High School which is located next door to the Graduate Center. The location of the school and the representation of families from various cultural backgrounds make this a good site for research and for mutual collaboration between the two schools.

I would like to recruit students from any grade or class as you see practical but, as per our conversation, recruiting participants from the 9th grade English classes would simplify the procedures. The purpose of the study is to examine the time that teenagers spend with their parents and to better understand what the adolescents think about the time with their parents. The questionnaire (please see the attached form) will ask for some demographic information such as race and academic grades. They will be also be rating the quality and activities of each interaction, in addition to responding to a few questions about their relationships with their parents. Obtaining this information from the perspective of the adolescent should prove to be quite beneficial.

The project would require that I visit the classrooms for brief periods on two or three times to explain the research, pass out consent forms and letters to parents (see the attached letter), then collect the consent forms. Any student would be required to return a consent form which has been read and signed by the student and a parent before being allowed to participate. Confidentiality of the research is also a concern, that is why very little personal information would be asked of the students. The questionnaire which I would like to use does not require any identifying information other than age, gender, ethnicity, and school grades. Names and addresses of the participants or their parents would not be requested. Only myself and my advisor would have access to the information which would be collected. The consent forms and simple questionnaires would be securely stored until they become obsolete, at which point they would be destroyed.

My research proposal is being sent to Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) and will not be acted upon without approval from them. The IRB requires that my research proposal be accompanied by one letter from your school and another one from the Falls Church school district, each indicating your agreement to participate in the project. I recognize that there are negative aspects to taking students away from academic pursuits. I would appreciate having the opportunity to tell you more about this study and to answer any questions you may have about it.

Thank you for your attention to my petition.

Sincerely,

Russell Beazer
Researcher
703-538-8470

Appendix B

Participant Informed Consent

Title of the Study: Adolescent Perspectives of Daily Interactions With Their Parents

Investigator: This study is being conducted by Russell Beazer, candidate for the master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. His advisor is Dr. Sandi Stith. Russell can be reached at 703-538-8470.

F. Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the time that teenagers spend with their parents and to better understand not only how much time they do spend together, but what the adolescents think about the time with their parents. It is expected that about 70 of the ninth grade students at George Mason will participate in the project in addition to 300 ninth grade students of another local school district.

II. Procedures

In giving your student permission to participate in the study, you have consented to let the above researcher provide your child with a questionnaire regarding his or her typical time use. The researcher has been to your student's classroom to explain the study and pass out these consent forms. On the day of the study the teacher will identify the participants and pass out the questionnaires while the researcher waits outside the room. The students will have about ten minutes to complete them before they are collected by the researcher. The questionnaire includes three fill in the blank questions and one open-ended question, but the body of it uses multiple choice questions.

III. Risks

Because of the nature of this project and the age of the participants, we do not anticipate any risks.

IV. Benefits of the Project

The goal of this project is to help us understand what youths think is important in their relationships with their parents. A summary of these findings will be helpful to counselors, teachers, parents, and teenagers as well as to the broader literature on adolescent development. We will be happy to share this summary with you at the conclusion of the study. Please contact Russell Beazer at the number given at the end of this form if you would like to receive this summary.

V. Confidentiality

All information which is offered to this project will be treated with complete confidentiality. Your child's name will not appear on the questionnaires, which will be kept separate from the completed consent forms, allowing students to participate in complete anonymity. Only the researcher and his advisor will have access to the completed questionnaires and consent forms. They will be placed in separate folders and locked in a file cabinet located in the Department of Family and Child Development through the duration of the project (until publication of the results). All data will be analyzed in group form so that responses of any

individual cannot be known. Reports will only include summaries of group data.

VI. Compensation

Other than our sincere appreciation, no guarantee of benefits is being made to encourage you to participate in this study.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

If at any time you or your child change your minds about participating in the study, you are encouraged to withdraw your consent and to cancel your participation. There will be no negative repercussions to your child should you choose to withdraw.

VIII. Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for projects involving human participants at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and by the Department of Family and Child Development.

IX. Participant's Responsibilities

I have read and understand the Informed Consent and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this project.

If I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project.

Student's Signature

Date

X. Parental Consent

I have had all of my questions answered and hereby give my consent for my child to participate in this project.

Parent's Signature

Date

Should I have any questions about this research, I will contact:

Russell Beazer
Researcher
703-538-8470

Sandi Stith
Faculty Advisor
703-538-8460

Jerry Cline
IRB Research Division
703-538-8492

Appendix C

Letter to Parents

Dear Parent:

I am a graduate student at Virginia Tech's Northern Virginia Graduate Center, which is located next door to George Mason. I am conducting a study of how adolescents experience their relationships with their parents, and several classes from George Mason are being included. Your child's class is being asked to take part of the study, so I would appreciate a few moments of your time to describe the project and ask for your consent for your child to participate. Students will not be allowed to participate unless they return the Consent Form with a parent's signature as well as their own. Two copies of the Consent Form have been sent home with your student, one is for your records, the other is to be returned after you and your child have signed them. I suggest that you take a few moments to read the Consent Form with your child before making your decision.

This study was approved by Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board, along with the Falls Church School District and George Mason school. Other steps to ensure the quality of the study, and the confidentiality of the participants, are explained in the Consent Form. Phone numbers are also given so that you may contact me or my advisor if you have any questions. The general procedures and information about the anonymous questionnaire are also provided in the Consent Form.

I thank you for your time and appreciate your courtesy in providing support for this project. Please feel free to call if you have any concerns or unanswered questions.

Sincerely,

Russell Beazer

Appendix D

Relationship with Parents Survey

1. I am: Male Female

2. My age is _____

3. I consider myself (check only one): White Black Asian
 Hispanic Native American Other

4. I live with (check only one): Both parents Parent and another adult
 Mother only Father only Parent and stepparent
 Guardian(s) Grandparent(s) Other

5. What kind of grades do you usually get? (check ONE)
 Mostly A's Mostly B's & C's Mostly D's
 Mostly A's & B's Mostly C's Mostly D's & F's
 Mostly B's Mostly C's & D's Mostly F's

6. The next few questions will ask you about your relationship with your father, but some people may also have stepfathers or other male guardians. Who will you be referring to when you answer these questions and fill out the time sheet? (check one)
 Father Stepfather Other male guardian

7. How important is it for you and your father to do lots of things together? (check one)
 Not important at all Somewhat important Very important

8. How important is it to you to get along well with your father? (check one)
 Not important at all Somewhat important Very important

9. How important is it to you to have a father you can talk to about almost everything? (check one)
 Not important at all Somewhat important Very important

10. How much do you feel that you can turn to your father when you are in need of help or guidance? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)

11. How much do you feel that you can discuss your work and activities with your father? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)

12. How considerate are you and your father of each other's feelings? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
13. How much do you and your father take care of one another? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
14. Considering the ups and downs of lasting relationships, how much do you and your father generally get along together? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
15. In general, how close do you feel to your father? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
16. In general, how satisfied are you in your relationship with your father? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
17. How often do you feel affectionate towards your father? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
18. The next few questions will ask about your relationship with your mother, but some people may also have stepmothers or other female guardians. Who will you be referring to when you answer these questions and fill out the time sheet? (check one)
 Mother Stepmother Other female guardian
19. How important is it for you and your mother to do lots of things together? (check one)
 Not important at all Somewhat important Very important
20. How important is it to you to get along well with your mother? (check one)
 Not important at all Somewhat important Very important
21. How important is it to you to have a mother you can talk to about almost everything? (check one)
 Not important at all Somewhat important Very important
22. How much do you feel that you can turn to your mother when you are in need of help or guidance? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
23. How much do you feel that you can discuss your work and activities with your mother? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)

24. How considerate are you and your mother of each other's feelings? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
25. How much do you and your mother take care of one another? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
26. Considering the ups and downs of lasting relationships, how much do you and your mother generally get along together? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
27. In general, how close do you feel to your mother? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
28. In general, how satisfied are you in your relationship with your mother? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
29. How often do you feel affectionate towards your mother? (circle the correct NUMBER)
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very, very much)
30. If you could change ONE thing about your relationship with your parents, what would it be? (check only ONE)
- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More time together | <input type="checkbox"/> Less time together | <input type="checkbox"/> More talking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less talking | <input type="checkbox"/> More activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Fewer activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less arguing | <input type="checkbox"/> More one-on-one time | <input type="checkbox"/> More listening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More understanding | <input type="checkbox"/> I wouldn't change anything | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain): _____ | | |
31. If you could change ANYTHING ELSE about your relationship with your parents, what would it be? (check ALL that apply)
- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More time together | <input type="checkbox"/> Less time together | <input type="checkbox"/> More talking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less talking | <input type="checkbox"/> More activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Fewer activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less arguing | <input type="checkbox"/> More one-on-one time | <input type="checkbox"/> More listening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More understanding | <input type="checkbox"/> I wouldn't change anything | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain): _____ | | |

32. Think back on the most recent school day (yesterday) that you spent time with the parent(s) you identified above. Please think carefully about each of these times together, the activity you were doing, and how long it took. Now use a numbered line below to list each of these times, no matter how short, and answer the following questions about these periods. For example, if you spent 10 minutes casually talking to your mother (or female guardian) while eating breakfast, it could be recorded like the example on the first line of this time sheet.

	Who were you with? (check one per row)			How long did it last?		What were you doing? *	How would you generally describe this time with your parent(s)? (check one)		How would you describe your parent's mood? (check one)	
	Father	Mother	Both	hours	minutes	Use options below	positive	negative	positive	negative
ex.		✓			10	C	✓		✓	
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										

*Select ONE of the following activities that you spent most of this time doing and place the letter in the above column:

- (a) studying (b) eating (c) socializing (d) chores and errands (e) watching TV (f) transportation
- (g) personal care (h) using the computer (i) listening to the radio (j) resting (k) reading
- (l) sports, games, and other leisure (m) serious discussion (n) church (o) other

33. Think back on a typical day from this last weekend, a day when you spent time with the parent(s) you identified above. Please think carefully about each of these times together, the activity you were doing, and how long it took. Now use a numbered line below to list each of these times, no matter how short, and answer the following questions about these periods.

	Who were you with? (check one per row)			How long did it last?		What were you doing? *	How would you generally describe this time with your parent(s)? (check one)		How would you describe your parent's mood? (check one)	
	Father	Mother	Both	hours	minutes	Use options below	positive	negative	positive	negative
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										

*Select one of the following activities that you spent most of this time doing and place the letter in the last column:

- (a) studying (b) eating (c) socializing (d) chores and errands (e) watching TV (f) transportation
- (g) personal care (h) using the computer (i) listening to the radio (j) resting (k) reading
- (l) sports, games, and other leisure (m) serious discussion (n) church (o) other

34. If you have any additional comments, or if you would like to express your reactions to any part of this survey, please use the space below.

Appendix E
Table 1

The number of minutes adolescents spent with each of their parents during a weekday and a weekend day. Males, N=25. Females, N=39.

	Weekday Total	Weekend Day Total	Total	Average Time per Adolescent	Total Time in the Presence of Parent (includes time spent with both parents)	Average Number of Minutes in the Presence of Parent (includes time spent with both parents)
Males' Time with Fathers (without mothers)	1245	2415	3660	146 (2.4 hours)	9805	392 (6.5 hours)
Males' Time with Mothers (without fathers)	2342	1750	4092	164 (2.7 hours)	10237	409 (6.2 hours)
Males' Time with Both Parents	2765	3380	6145	246 (4.1 hours)		
Females' Time with Fathers (without mothers)	2906	1660	4566	117 (2.0 hours)	11047	283 (4.7 hours)
Females' Time with Mothers (without fathers)	2214	2653	4867	125 (2.1 hours)	11348	291 (4.9 hours)
Females' Time with Both Parents	2174	4307	6481	166 (2.8 hours)		

Appendix F
Table 2
Mean frequencies, percentages, and totals and T test comparisons
between adolescent males' (N=25) and females' (N=39)

	Male Adolescents	Female Adolescents	T	P
Overall quality of the relationship with fathers	4.77	5.07	-.72	.12
Overall quality of the relationship with mothers	5.94	5.41	1.71	.09
Percentage of the interactions in which fathers' affect is described as positive	90.46	69.65	2.09	.04
Percentage of interactions in which mothers' affect is described as positive	82.37	73.67	1.09	.28
Time spent with fathers	374.92	256.51	2.25	.03
Time spent with mothers	371.74	307.65	1.18	.25
Total frequency of interactions with fathers	6.36	6.62	-.29	.77
Total frequency of interactions with mothers	7.72	7.66	.06	.95
Importance of the relationship with fathers	2.33	2.22	.72	.48
Importance of the relationship with mothers	2.53	2.40	1.00	.32
Percentage of positive interactions with fathers	88.33	62.83	2.54	.01
Percentage of positive interactions with mothers	85.59	88.61	-.16	.87

Appendix G. Table 3: Correlations of Time, Interactions, Affect, Importance of the Relationship, Relationship Quality, Gender, and Grades

	% of Dad's Affect Being Positive	% of Positive Interactions w/ Dad	Relationship Quality with Dad	Importance of Relationship w/ Dad	Gender of the Adolescent	Grade	Importance of Relationship w/ Mom	% of Mom's Affect Being Positive	% of Positive Interactions w/ Mom	Relationship Quality with Mom	Time with Dad	Time with Mom	Freq. of Interactions with Dad	Freq. of Interactions w/ Mom
% of Dad's Affect Being Positive	.													
% of Positive Interactions with Dad	.907**	.												
Relationship Quality w/ Dad	.550**	.522**	.											
Importance of Relationship with Dad	.130	.167	-.006	.										
Gender of the Adolescent	-.220	.268*	.094	-.091	.									
Grades	.273*	.169	.345**	.197	.222	.								
Importance of Relationship with Mom	-.147	-.155	-.164	.456**	.126	.058	.							
% of Mom's Affect Being Positive	.673**	.615*	.325**	-.074	.126	.299*	-.053	.						
% of Positive Interactions with Mom	.262*	.274*	.142	-.074	.017	.207	-.032	.443**	.					
Relationship Quality with Mom	.684**	.645**	.565**	.150	.195	.015	-.140	.342**	.103	.				
Time with Dad	.303*	.400**	.265*	.240	-.303*	.140	.015	.310*	.201	.332**	.			
Time w/ Mom	.040	.152	-.032	.130	-.197	.322*	-.070	.161	.052	.162	.288*	.		
Frequency of Interactions with Dad	.308*	.342**	.447**	.066	.038	.094	-.175	.189	-.008	.430**	.659**	-.052	.	
Frequency of Interactions with Mom	.321*	.331*	.280*	-.130	-.008	.204	-.415**	.307*	.118	.365**	.120	.061	.423**	.

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

Appendix H
Table 4
Results of Multiple Regression Analyses (N = 64)

Variables	r	r Square	Adjusted r Square	F	Degrees of Freedom	p
Relationship with Mothers	.64	.40	.38	19.26	2, 57	.001
Adolescent Gender						.396
Importance of the Relationship with Mothers						.995
% of Interactions in which Mothers affect is Positive						.001
% of Positive Interactions						.905
Time with Mothers						.694
Frequency of Interactions						.001
Relationship with Fathers	.62	.39	.37	18.21	2, 58	.001
Adolescent Gender						.95
Importance of the Relationship with Fathers						.395
% of Interactions in which Fathers affect is Positive						.001
Time with Fathers						.30
Frequency of Interactions						.001

VITA**RUSSELL G. BEAZER**

EXPERIENCE**Family Trauma Services, Alexandria, VA.**

Senior Counselor - Attend weekly meetings as a member of the Management Team to resolve agency matters such as program development and implementation, agency expansion, licensing, marketing, personnel issues, and quality assurance. Attend weekly meetings for case planning and evaluation. Perform weekly audit of all client progress notes.

Home-Based Counselor I - Provide intensive home-based individual and family counseling for children, adolescents and their families. Perform behavioral tracking and modification, crisis intervention, formulation and evaluation of treatment plans. Co-facilitate groups for parolees and adolescent sex offenders. Also experienced with ADHD, conduct disorder, and MR children. Responsible for inter-agency coordination with treatment team members. Received training in Wraparound services and outcome measures.

Center for Family Services. Virginia Tech. Falls Church, VA.

Family Therapist Intern - Provide family, couples, and individual therapy while receiving live supervision from licensed professionals. Apply Family Systems theories in working with domestic violence, depression, parent-child problems, and other issues. Provide assessment, diagnosis, and treatment for mental illnesses and relational problems.

Completion of more than 500 hours of direct client contact and 300 hours of supervision, as approved by AAMFT.

Phoenix Children's Hospital, Phoenix, AZ.

Youth Counselor - Provide structure and behavior modification for children and adolescents in an inpatient psychiatric unit. Responsible for assessment, crisis intervention, and implementation of patient treatment plans. Lead program oriented groups and plan activities which teach social skills, self-esteem, and cooperative play. Certified by Arizona Department of Health Services.

Developmental Behavioral Consultants, Tempe, AZ.

Residential Treatment Specialist - Responsible for behavior modification, crisis intervention, and program formation/implementation for dually-diagnosed children and adolescents. Confer with psychiatrist on client medication. Certified in medication administration. Selected to open a new group home.

Advocate - Responsible for the physical, social, and programming needs of one client. Selected twice to work with clients deemed as too difficult for other staff members.

EDUCATION

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Falls Church, VA

Master's of Science - Marriage and Family Therapy

Completion of over 50 credits of practicum and course-work in Family Systems theories,

DSM-IV, substance abuse, domestic violence, and ethics. Completed thesis research involving parent-adolescent relationships. Thesis defended on July 13, 1998.

Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. 1994

Bachelor of Science - Psychology. Dean's List.

ADDITIONAL

Served a two year mission in Portugal for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Held various leadership positions. Counseled families towards an enhanced way of life. Read, write, and speak Portuguese.

Knowledge of Windows 95, Word and WordPerfect. Volunteer as Varsity Scout troop committee member, Sunday school teacher, and aid for Special Olympics and Foundation for Blind Children. Research assistant at Arizona State University.