

PARENT AND CHILD PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTING PRACTICES: DO DIFFERENCES
MATTER FOR CHILD OUTCOMES?

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
North Dakota State University
of Agriculture and Applied Science

By

Ali Nila

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major Department:
Human Development and Family Science

November 2015

Fargo, North Dakota

North Dakota State University
Graduate School

Title

PARENT AND CHILD PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTING PRACTICES:
DO DIFFERENCES MATTER FOR CHILD OUTCOMES?

By

Ali Nila

The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *disquisition* complies with North Dakota State University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Dr. Joel Hektner

Chair

Dr. Sean Brotherson

Dr. Wendy Troop-Gordon

Approved:

11/20/2015

Date

Dr. Joel Hektner

Department Chair

ABSTRACT

The aim of the current study was to examine whether differences in perceptions of parenting have an effect on child outcomes. Data were taken from an Early Risers study, which incorporated the Early Risers evidence-based competence enhancement program, offering skills training and support to children with adjustment problems and parents. The sample of 110 consisted of well-adjusted children and children with adjustment problems. Parenting practices were measured by child and parent reports, and child outcomes were reported by the child's teacher. Child and parent reports did not correspond, and results indicated the parent report of spanking predicted child's aggression. Results also found that differences in reports of spanking predicted aggression, and differences in reports of yelling predicted decreases in the child's attention and concentration. The current study's findings suggest the importance of parent education on alternative forms of discipline.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my advisor, Dr. Joel Hektner, who helped me immensely in the process of completing my degree. Thank you for sacrificing your time and giving guidance at all times throughout this journey. It is very much appreciated. Thank you to my committee members, Dr. Sean Brotherson and Dr. Wendy Troop-Gordon for your commitment and patience in seeing this project to completion. Thank you for your time and your guidance.

Thank you to Dr. Trude Hendrickson for encouraging me when I didn't quite see the end in sight and assuring me I would finish. Thank you Dr. Amy Phillips for standing by me and reminding me that I am a capable woman and that hard work pays off. Thank you Theresa Anderson for being a constant companion through my journey in Fargo and encouraging me in difficult times.

Thank you to my partner, Josue Salazar for your support and understanding through this journey.

Last, but definitely not least, thank you to all my colleagues who have provided support and encouragement through phone calls, day long writing sessions, and people time when necessary. Thank you to Elizabeth Schwartz, Lindsey Boes, Ashley Walsdorf, Jared Kellerman, and other members of my cohort.

DEDICATION

This is first and foremost dedicated to God, who has taken me further than I could ever imagine, had me question and deliberate over important matters of His heart, and who has allowed me to discover who I am.

This is also dedicated to my mother, Alejandra Varela Centeno, who is an intriguing woman of courage to have traveled so far and endured so much to make my dream come true. Thank you Mami for never hesitating to sacrifice yourself for the sake of your daughters. I cannot imagine a better woman to be my mother that has encouraged, motivated, and sympathized with me as much as you have through this difficult journey. Thank you for letting me know I could be anything I ever wanted to be.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
LIST OF TABLES	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODS	14
RESULTS	20
DISCUSSION	28
CONCLUSION	39
REFERENCES	40

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Results Comparing Parent and Child Reports.....	20
2. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations Among Child-, Teacher-, and Parent-reported Variables.....	21
3. Correlations Among Child and Parent Difference Scores and Child Outcomes.....	22
4. Correlations Between Child and Parent Reports and Difference Scores.....	23

INTRODUCTION

Much research has been conducted on the subject of parenting practices such as positive attention (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Barry, Frick, & Grafeman, 2008; Gadeyne, Ghesquière, & Onghena, 2004; Schrodtt, 2006; Scott, Briskman, & Dadds, 2011; Wei & Kendall, 2014) and harsh discipline (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Barnett, Kidwell, Leung, 1998; Barry et al., 2008; Wimsatt, Fite, Grassetti, & Rathert, 2013). Parenting practices have often been assessed via child reports (Scott et al., 2011; Wei & Kendall, 2014), parent reports (Dallaire et al., 2006; Wei & Kendall, 2014; Wimsatt et al., 2013), and both child and parent reports (Barry et al., 2008; Dallaire et al., 2006; Guion, Mrug, & Windle, 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012). There has been some research evidencing child and parent perceptions of parenting behavior to be in agreement (Barry et al., 2008; Graham & Weems, 2015; Scott et al., 2011), but other studies have found child and parent perceptions to be conflicting (Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012).

Parenting practices have been shown to have effects on child outcomes of academic activity (Amato & Fowler, 2002), family involvement (Holder & Coleman, 2009), aggressive behavior (Gadeyne, et al., 2004; Wei & Kendall, 2014), depressive symptoms (Barry et al., 2008; Wimsatt et al., 2013), and intrapersonal strength (Putnick et al., 2008). Examining the effect that differences in reports may have on the child's outcomes could point to possible buffers or risks for the child. In order to understand the differences in perceptions of parenting practices, the theoretical frameworks of Attachment theory, Cybernetics and Systems theory, and Moffitt's theory will also be discussed.

The present study intends to examine the effects on the previously mentioned child outcomes through the observations of child and parent reports. The current study will observe whether the average level of parent reports differed from the average level of child reports

regarding positive and negative parenting practices. Should significant differences in the average level of reports between children and parents be apparent within the sample, the current study will examine the effects of these differences on the child outcomes of academics, family involvement, aggressive behavior, depressive symptoms, and intrapersonal strength.

In an attempt to examine predictors of child outcomes, many studies have focused on the subject of parenting behaviors in an effort to understand what may predict positive or negative effects on child outcomes (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Guion et al., 2009; Wimsatt et al., 2013). Researchers have often utilized child and parent reports as a method of examining perceptions of parenting practices (Barry et al., 2008; Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012). Some researchers have found that child and parent reports of parenting practices are correlated (Barry et al., 2008; Scott et al., 2011), while other researchers have found the reports were not related (Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012).

Researchers have reasoned various factors that could contribute to the occurrence of discrepancies between parent and child perceptions of parenting behavior. One study (Guion et al., 2009) found that discrepancies in reports among African American participants could have been due to parenting practices impacted by cultural or socioeconomic differences. Related to the study's findings, Guion et al. (2009) discussed that discrepancies in harsh discipline reports may be because parents who report frequently practicing these behaviors see their actions as nurturing to help their child adapt. Another study (Gaylord, Kitzmann, & Coleman, 2003) mentioned that discrepancies in parent-adolescent dyads may suggest developmentally appropriate autonomy, but that parent-child discrepancies may suggest greater problems. Some of these greater problems Gaylord et al. (2003) allude to could be evident within the family system, in how the family functions and how the perceptions of each member may differ. Still there has been past

research showing that child and parent perceptions of parenting are in agreement, and other studies evidencing non-corresponding reports leading to effects on child outcomes.

Two studies showed similar correlations between child and parent reports of parenting behavior (Barry et al., 2008; Scott et al., 2011). Both studies examined child and parent reports of positive and negative parenting using the same measure, and found significant positive correlations. Barry et al. (2008) found reports from both informants to be correlated on positive parenting, involvement, and corporal punishment. Scott et al. (2011) also evidenced significant positive correlations between child and parent reports of positive and negative parenting.

Child and parent reports on parenting behavior that did not correspond were found to have effects on child outcomes. Reidler and Swenson (2012) examined whether discrepancies of youth and mother reports on positive and negative relationship quality and self-disclosure of youth were related to youth internalizing and externalizing adjustment. Reidler and Swenson (2012) found that youth reported slightly more of positive and negative relationships quality than mothers reported, and youth also reported less self-disclosure than mothers. Reidler and Swenson's (2012) findings implicated that the higher youth's discrepancy scores, indicating perceiving the mother-youth relationship as more positive than mothers reported, found a decrease in child reports of internalizing problems.

Another study (Guion et al., 2009) also found that youth made more positive reports of parenting than their parents and was associated with higher levels of social competence and lower levels of internalizing problems a year later. For African American parent-child pairs, there was low agreement in reports of harsh discipline and parent-child discrepancies were not as strongly associated with later internalizing problems as parent-child discrepancies were with Caucasians.

Past literature that has examined a broad range of positive and negative parenting practices as having an effect on child outcomes. The current study has focused on research which has defined positive parenting practices to include positive affection and responsiveness to the child's needs (Gadeyne et al., 2004), praise, physical affection, and time spent with the child (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Fine, Voydanoff, & Donnelly, 1993). Negative parenting practices researched have included inconsistent discipline, poor monitoring and supervision (Scott et al, 2011; Wimsatt et al., 2013), and yelling and spanking (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Fine et al., 1993). The current study was particularly interested in spanking and yelling as negative parenting practices, which are also referred to as harsh discipline. Previously mentioned reports of positive and negative parenting practices were of interest to the current study, as well as the effects that differences in these reports may have on child outcomes.

Positive and negative parenting practices have been linked to child outcomes of internalizing symptoms such as depression and anxiety (Barry et al., 2008; Dallaire et al., 2006), externalizing behavior such as aggression (Gadeyne et al., 2004), academic skills (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Holder & Coleman, 2009), family involvement (Holder & Coleman, 2009), and intrapersonal strength (Putnick et al., 2008). For example, some researchers have found depressive symptoms to be negatively related to positive parenting practices (Barry et al., 2008; Dallaire et al., 2006). Depression and anxiety have indicated an inverse association with child reports of parents' acceptance (Wei & Kendall, 2014). Also, Wimsatt et al. (2013) found low levels of depressive symptoms occurred when there were low levels of corporal punishment and high levels of positive communication or support.

On the other hand, child and parent reports of depression indicated a positive correlation with child and parent reports of negative parenting (Barry et al., 2008). Wimsatt et al. (2013)

discussed striking results of positive communication and corporal punishment received from the same caregiver to yield the highest level of child depressive symptoms. Wimsatt et al. (2013) mentioned that when corporal punishment is exercised by the parent inconsistently, the child is likely to internalize the negative attention received from the parent, despite positive communication or support received from the same parent. This was supported by the result that when positive communication was beneficial to the child, corporal punishment still evidenced a strong negative association with internalizing symptoms (Wimsatt et al., 2013). Wimsatt's (2013) results indicate there is still a lasting effect of negative parenting on the child's outcomes even in the presence of positive parenting.

Research has also revealed that the level of positive parenting has effects on child outcomes of depression. Wei and Kendall (2014) found that child reports reflecting lower acceptance from their mother significantly predicted higher scores of anxiety and depression. In Wei and Kendall's study there were no negative parenting practices specifically related to spanking or yelling, but low levels of positive parenting (e.g., acceptance) were associated with negative effects on the child's emotional health. Dallaire et al. (2006) also concluded that lower levels of positive parenting were related to more symptoms of depression for the child. Some researchers found levels of depressive symptoms to be high when there were low levels of positive communication or support, irrespective of the level of corporal punishment (Wimsatt et al., 2013).

Parenting practices have also affected the outcome of child aggression and academic skills. Externalizing behavior in the study of Wei & Kendall (2014) included aggressive behavior, social problems, and thought and attention problems. Correlations revealed the child's report of mother and father's acceptance was inversely related to the child's externalizing

behavior (Wei & Kendall, 2014). Aggression also negatively affects the child's ability and opportunity to form relationships with other children, an important part of the child's development and success. Aggressive behavior may also be a deterrent for engaging in family activities in public or at home. Wei and Kendall (2014) have found support for the conclusion that as positive parenting increases, externalizing behavior decreases.

In addition to decreasing aggressive behavior and social problems, thought and attention problems also decrease in the presence of increasing positive parenting (Wei & Kendall, 2014). Thought and attention problems pose a barrier to children in the environment of school, impacting the child's ability to engage in schoolwork, stay motivated, and exercise study skills. It is clear there is an association between positive parenting behaviors and child externalizing behavior such as thought and attention problems (Wei & Kendall, 2014).

Past researchers have echoed the importance of the effects of positive parenting in improving and supporting the healthy development of children. Results from previous studies have indicated school performance to be positively associated with parental support (Amato & Fowler, 2002), and significant results were found for high math achievement when there was high support (Gadeyne et al., 2004). Studies have indicated that parental support was negatively associated with behavior problems (Amato & Fowler, 2002), and evidence of fewer behavior problems were experienced by children whose parents provided higher levels of support and lower levels of restrictive control (Gadeyne et al., 2004). School performance was also found to be positively related to support and negatively related to harsh punishment or discipline (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Gadeyne et al., 2004). Also, behavior problems were negatively related to harsh punishment practices among young school-aged children (Amato & Fowler, 2002).

Regarding the current study's interest in the child's family involvement defined as a sense of belonging within the family, Holder and Coleman's (2009) study reported factors that affected a child's happiness. Children's reports that they were an important family member were revealed to be significantly correlated with the child's happiness. Holder and Coleman's (2009) regressions indicated that children who reported they were an important part of the family, were not a disappointment to family, and parents did not expect too much from them, had the highest ratings of happiness.

Evidence from previous studies has supported the influence and impact of parenting practices on child outcomes of academic activity (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Gadeyne et al., 2004; Wei & Kendall, 2014), family involvement (Holder & Coleman, 2009), aggressive behavior (Gadeyne et al., 2004; Wei & Kendall, 2014), depressive symptoms (Barry et al., 2008; Wimsatt et al., 2013), and intrapersonal strength (Putnick et al., 2008). Positive parenting practices have also supported positive relations with the same child outcomes in promoting the healthy development of children (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Gadeyne et al., 2004; Holder & Coleman, 2009). The current study aims to examine whether child and parent reports of parenting practices are correlated, and whether differences predict child outcomes should possible differences in reports exist. Understanding the differences in perceptions of parenting behavior and the effects on child outcomes can be understood through the following theoretical frameworks.

Theory

It is important to consider Attachment theory in order to understand differences in child and parent perceptions of parenting behavior, which later affect child outcomes (Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012). Attachment theory is often discussed as playing an important role in the early stages of an infant's life with little attention paid to the continuing importance

and presence of attachment behaviors in school age children. Indeed, as the child ages early attachment behavior such as the child's need for proximity to the caregiver becomes less exaggerated and necessary. However, child attachment is still evident in the gesture of a five or six year old child wanting to hold their parent's hand or approaching the parent in times of distress (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby (1969) discussed that through the mutual influence child and parent have on each other an interactional pattern is developed through the child and parents' contributions. Bowlby (1969) proposed that children learn and develop what he referred to as "internal working models," which guide the child in how to respond to the caregiver, either to bring the caregiver closer to share an experience or draw the caregiver closer in times of distress (Bowlby, 1969). Although attachment has been explained mainly through the behaviors of both child and parent, what is often left out is the child and parents' perceptions of the behavior of the other to guide one's own response and interactions. Parents are able to understand the child's needs or desires and parent accordingly, and perceive their own parenting behaviors and the immediate effect on the child. Based on previous successful interactions in which the child perceives the parent to be responsive, the school age child continues to perceive that the parent is able to fulfill needs and desires. As previously discussed, school age children still continue to engage the parent in secure attachment behaviors such as seeking comfort in distress (Bowlby, 1969). Studies have also demonstrated a child's ability to perceive parenting behavior (Barry et al., 2008; Dallaire et al., 2006) and the effects on child development (Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012).

For example, Bacro (2012) found that a child's attachment to his or her father was a significant predictor of the child's global sense of self-esteem and language mastery. Children were asked the degree to which each parent was responsive and available, could be relied on in

stressful moments, and the child's own comfort and interest in communicating with each parent. Bacro (2012) discussed how the child's attachment relationships impacted the child's view of themselves in respect to attachment figures and perceived competence in different aspects of the child's life. Bacro's (2012) study illustrated the importance and effect of attachment in early middle school on child development.

The development and progression of a secure attachment between child and parent are preceded by the successful practice and repetition of positive parenting. Literature has supported the impact of positive parenting behaviors on the development areas of the child's academic performance and behavior problems (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Gadeyne et al., 2004). Past research on parental support and avoidance of harsh discipline has also indicated positive impacts on other aspects of the child's development. For example, Amato and Fowler (2002) concluded that positive outcomes for children included better mental health, higher school grades, more positive self-concepts, fewer behavior problems, and greater social competence.

However, when parenting practices are not consistent toward the development of a secure attachment, this can lead to negative child outcomes. Children who struggle to develop healthy aspects of attachment or have experienced parenting practices that are more negative than positive may learn they cannot rely on parents for the emotional support or guidance they need. Children who experience the environment as hostile, through harsh or excessive discipline from parents or caregivers, tend to learn to expect hostility from other adults and peers. For example, children disciplined through the use of physical punishment also learn to respond with aggression (Hudley & Novac, 2007). Hudley and Novac (2007) discussed the influence of harsh environments in producing enduring instances of elevated stress, leading the child to misperceive social interactions from others as dangerous or hostile. Thus, the child's perception of the home

environment as unsafe hinders and stifles the child's development of healthy attachment and social skills with others.

Attachment styles are learned and produced over time in the cycles of interactions between parent and child. If both child and parent perceptions of positive parenting behaviors are in agreement (e.g., the parent initiates spending time in activities that interest the child and the child requests more time with the parent), positive outcomes for the child would be expected. However, if the child and parent perceptions are not in agreement (e.g., parent spans child to intentionally curb bad behavior, child perceives discipline as being bad), child outcomes could be harmful to development. Wimsatt et al.'s (2013) previously mentioned study brings to light the effects of positive attention and corporal punishment on the child's mental health. Wimsatt et al. (2013) described how positive communication (e. g., discussing with the child the need for safety when the child runs out into the street) and corporal punishment (e.g., spanking) from the same caregiver can effect a child's mental health. Despite the presence of positive communication or attention, corporal punishment from the same parent perceived by the child may be negatively internalized by the child. When taken together, high levels of negative and positive parenting behaviors yield the highest level of depressive symptoms for child. Parents providing high levels of corporal punishment may try to compensate for negative parenting behaviors by providing high levels of positive parenting behaviors. Support from Wimsatt et al.'s study (2013) indicates the importance of the child's perception of parenting behavior and the effects on the child's mental health.

Differences in perceptions of parenting behaviors and the effects on child outcomes can also be understood from the perspective of Systems theory and Cybernetics. Nichols (2010) describes how the cybernetic system is similar to the family system in how it operates and

interprets information from the feedback loops in the system. The negative feedback loop updates the system on its status and the means to get back on the course, and the positive feedback loop affirms the current direction that is being taken by the system (Nichols, 2010). Likewise, the family system can be alerted by a negative feedback loop displayed by a sudden change in aggressive behavior by the child. The negative feedback loop indicates that measures need to be taken to restore the whole system to its previous state. Parents, as members of the system, may attempt to address and correct the behavior of the child through harsh discipline, and the aggression from the child may subside. The receding aggressive behavior serves as positive feedback, affirming the parent's perception that harsh discipline worked to reduce the child's aggression. On the other hand, the child perceives receiving harsh discipline in response to attempting to alert the parents something is wrong within the system (e.g., aggressive behavior). Nichols (2010) goes on to explain how the family can also be viewed from the perspective of Systems theory, where the whole system consists of all the family members. In order to understand one part of the system, it is necessary to examine the whole system and the relationships between the members (Nichols, 2010). Effects on child outcomes can then be understood through the differences in perceptions of parenting practices, which also illuminate the nature and interactions of the parent-child relationship. A study of parent-child dyads further illustrates the interactional patterns within a family system.

Williams, Kertz, Schrock, and Woodruff-Borden (2012) conducted a study observing interactional patterns of anxious and non-anxious parent-child pairs. Results indicated non-anxious parents were more likely to react with warmth such as humor, praise or complimenting, or teaching when their non-anxious child previously initiated a controlling behavior such as directing, or excluded the parent. Children in non-anxious parent-child dyads were also more

likely to respond with warmth when warmth was elicited by their parents. However, anxious parents were more likely to respond with an aversive behavior such as put-downs or interruptions when their anxious child initiated controlling behavior. In response to the aversive behavior given by the parent, the anxious child responded with aversive behavior. This study demonstrates the bidirectional influence of the child's behavior toward the parent and the parent's behavior toward the child.

Another theory to help explain differences in perceptions of parenting and the following effects on child outcomes is Moffitt's theory (1993). Moffitt's (1993) theory concerning the development of delinquent behavior echoes the importance of an individual's environment in the early stages of life, particularly regarding children experiencing problem behaviors. Moffitt argued that the individual's environment and socialization is a key factor in what Moffitt calls the Life-Course-Persistent route (1993). In a model developed by Moffitt, environmental and physiological factors are included to show the influence of these factors in producing impairments in a child's intellectual ability, motor development, and social skills, in addition to the child's presentation of antisocial behavior (Moffitt, 1993). Moffitt (1993) pointed to a disruption in the child's socialization process as influencing engagement in delinquent behavior. Paternoster and Brame (1997) discussed how parents' negative and unproductive responses to a child with challenging and antisocial behaviors may leave the parent overwhelmed, thus causing a break in the socialization process. This break in the socialization process influences the likelihood of the child in engaging in criminal or delinquent behavior over her/his lifespan. According to Moffitt (as cited in Paternoster & Brame, 1997), the poor quality of socialization experienced by the child with challenging behavior learns in interacting with the parent does not lead to improvements in socialization later in life. Children with poor socialization have

difficulty meeting academic and social expectations; young children with difficulties continue to experience difficulties as they transition into adulthood.

Paternoster and Brame (1997) and Moffitt (1993) point to the socialization process as influencing the development of delinquent behavior, which includes the interactions between parents and children. Similar to the attachment style created through repeated patterns of interaction over time, the socialization process also teaches the child what to expect when problem behavior is displayed.

Attachment theory, Systems theory, and Moffitt's theory contribute to the understanding of differences of perceptions of parenting behaviors and the effects on child outcomes.

Current Study

The current study defines positive attention from parents as winking, smiling, praising, giving approval, and showing physical affection, and also includes involvement such as taking the child to events, or games, or going on walks, and spending time with the child. The present study will examine whether children's and parents' average level of reports of positive attention and harsh discipline items differ. If there are differences in the reports of positive attention within the sample, additional tests will be conducted to distinguish which reports of parenting practices predict child outcomes. Child outcome variables to be tested include aggression, depression, family involvement, intrapersonal strength, and academic enablers, to be discussed in further detail.

METHODS

Overview

Data utilized in the current study were obtained by the Early Risers Skills for Success study conducted by Joel Hektner (2010) from 2008 through 2009 in a mid-size Midwestern U.S. city that was relatively homogenous in racial and ethnic background, being primarily Caucasian. Early Risers, an evidence-based competence enhancement program, offered skills training and support to early-elementary children with adjustment difficulties and their parents. The implementation of the program was adapted with half of the participants consisting of well-adjusted children. Children who were well-adjusted were paired with children with adjustment problems to work and learn cooperatively throughout all skills training sessions.

Participants in the Early Risers program were recruited from 3 schools, and the control group participants were recruited from 2 schools. Prior to the summer program, participants were screened and recruited, and baseline assessment data were collected. The first follow-up assessment was conducted in the fall of the subsequent school year.

Survey data from teachers, parents, children, and classmates were collected at five time points before, during, and for one year after the program. The data obtained and used in the current study were from when the children were ages 6 to 8. Data used for analysis was taken from the 3rd and 4th wave, which contained parallel questions about parenting behaviors for both child and parent reports.

Participants

Participants included 190 children in elementary school and their families with attrition over time, resulting in a total of 110 participants once the study had completed the last wave of data. Children took home consent forms to be allowed to be nominated by their teachers. Once

given consent, teachers provided a list of children nominated for showing adjustment problems associated with aggressive/disruptive and/or withdrawn behavior, and a list for behaviorally, emotionally, and socially well-adjusted children. For each nominated child on each list, the teacher completed the Aggression Scale and the Withdrawal Scale from the Behavioral Assessment System for Children-2 Teacher Rating Scale (BASC-2-TRS; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004). Any child who obtained a gender-specific *T*-score at or above 60 on either the Aggression or Withdrawal scale and with a concurring nomination was eligible to participate as a child “with difficulties” (WD). Any child who obtained scores on both scales below 60 and with a concurring nomination was eligible to participate as a “well-adjusted” (WA) child. Teachers were instructed not to nominate children who had serious developmental, emotional or behavioral disturbances that required restrictive educational classroom placements or who needed ongoing extensive mental health services.

To enroll children in the full study, a project representative met with the parents of the children who were identified as eligible. The representative described the study in detail, provided consent materials for the full study, and obtained written informed consent for participation in the study. In the program condition, the full intervention was described to parents. In the control condition, parents were told that the study involved repeated assessments only. In both conditions, parents were told whether their child qualified for the study on the basis of showing adjustment problems or successful adjustment. The children were not given this information.

Measures

Parent practices. To indicate the specific practices they used with their children, parents completed 16 items adapted from The Parent Discipline Scales (Conduct Problems Prevention

Research Group, 2001). One subscale measured the parent's use of positive attention. On a scale from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*) parents rated their use of strategies related to the stem "When your child has done something that you like or approve of, how often do you...." One of the four items was "Say something nice about it, praise or approval?" Alpha in the current comparison sample was .77. The Alpha value for the harsh discipline scale was .42. Alphas below .60 were deemed unacceptably low, and thus we chose to separate items of spanking and yelling instead of combining the items into a harsh discipline scale. The harsh discipline items included those that were asked in relation to the stem "When your child does something that he or she is not allowed to do or that you don't like, how often do you..." The items include "Yell or scold," "Send your child out of the room or to time out," and "Spank your child."

Children's perceptions of parent practices. Children in the study reported on their parent's behavior with subscales parallel to the parent report of positive attention and harsh discipline items. The alphas were .64 and .56, respectively. Alphas below .60 were deemed unacceptably low, and thus we chose to separate items of spanking and yelling instead of combining the items into a harsh discipline scale.

Child behavior. Teachers reported child behavior using the Aggression Scale and the Depression Scale from the Behavioral Assessment System for Children-2 Teacher Rating Scale (BASC-2-TRS; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004). The other scales, utilized from the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale, were the Family Involvement Scale and the Intrapersonal Strength Scale (BERS; Epstein, 2004).

All of the scales from the Behavioral Assessment System for Children-2 Teacher Rating Scale (BASC-2-TRS; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004) gave the response options of *Never*, *Sometimes*, *Often*, and *Almost Always* for teachers reporting on the occurrence of behavior

observed from the child within the last several months. The Aggression scale had teachers report on items such as, the child “threatens to hurt others.” Alpha in the current comparison sample was .94. The Depression scale contained items such as, the child “is sad.” Alpha in the current comparison sample was .87.

The scales of Family Involvement and Intrapersonal Strength were taken from the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS; Epstein, 2004) and allowed teachers to report on the child’s observed behavior within the last 3 months. Both scales included the response scale from 3 (If the statement is *very much like* the student) to 0 (If the statement is *not at all like* the student). Teachers were to report on items such as “demonstrates a sense of belonging to family” and “participates in family activities” regarding the Family Involvement scale, and “is self-confident” regarding the Intrapersonal Strength scale. Alphas in the current comparison sample were .93 and .94, respectively.

Teachers also reported child behavior according to the Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (ACES; DiPerna & Elliott, 2000). Teachers answered the Academic Enablers scale, which was a composite variable computed as the average of the academic engagement, study skills, interpersonal skills, and motivation scales. Teachers were to report on the child’s academic skills in accordance with grade-level expectations. Teachers responded to items such as “accepts suggestions from teachers.” Alpha in the current comparison sample was .91.

We considered .60 to be an acceptable level for the alpha values of each scale. For the scales that were below .60, we used individual items instead of scale scores.

Analysis Plan

First, in order to assess whether the average level of child reports of positive attention or harsh discipline differed from the average level of the corresponding parents’ reports, a series of

paired-samples T-tests were conducted. Pearson correlations were also conducted on 3rd wave parent and child reports and 4th wave teacher reported child outcomes.

Multiple regressions were conducted with outcome variables taken from the 4th wave of data to show change over time, and predictor variables taken from the 3rd wave of data. Academic Enablers, aggression, depression, Intrapersonal Strength, and Family Involvement served as the outcome variables. Parent and child reports of positive attention and harsh discipline items served as the predictor variables. In order to avoid artificially strong associations due to shared method variance, the teacher report was used to measure the outcomes.

Difference scores were calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference in scores on reports of positive attention and harsh discipline items. Multiple regressions were analyzed on the outcome variables, with the difference scores serving as the predictor variables. Another set of regressions were also be conducted to include the 3rd wave outcome variable as a predictor variable in the regression that is testing the same outcome variable from the 4th wave.

Additional correlations were conducted on the 3rd wave difference scores and the 4th wave child outcomes, as well as the 3rd wave parent and child reports and 3rd wave difference scores. Correlations were conducted with the 4th wave child outcomes in order to observe if the 3rd wave predictors were related to increases or decreases in the child outcomes over time or whether the predictors were related only to that point in time. Correlations including the 3rd wave of reports and the difference scores were conducted to evaluate which informant reports held a stronger correlation with each particular difference score.

The 3rd wave parent or child report that indicated a stronger correlation with the corresponding 3rd wave difference score was then used for additional regressions in order to determine if child outcomes are dependent on the difference in reports or dependent on the

parent or child reports alone. Regressions controlled for the raw scores by including the difference scores of parenting practices and the parent or child score more strongly correlated with the difference score as predictors of the child outcomes. Regressions conducted included the 3rd wave parent or child report and 3rd wave difference score as predictors of 4th wave child outcomes.

RESULTS

Correlations and regression analyses were conducted using SPSS 21.0.

Testing Parent and Child Perceptions as Predictors of Child Outcomes

The paired t-tests indicated that parents and children differed in reports of parenting practices. Reports indicated that children reported more frequent spanking, parents reported more frequent yelling, and parents reported giving positive attention more frequently than children reported receiving it. See Table 1.

Table 1.

Results Comparing Parent and Child Reports

	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Pair 1 Parent Spank - Child Spank	-.21	-2.37	127	.020
Pair 2 Parent Yell - Child Yell	.46	3.28	128	.001
Pair 3 Parent Positive Attention – Child Positive Attention	1.11	10.88	129	.000

Note. All variables measured at the third wave.

A Pearson correlation was conducted on the positive attention scale and harsh discipline items, as reported by child and parent, in order to determine whether child and parent reports were correlated. Results indicated child reports of positive attention were not correlated with parent reports of positive attention, $r(128) = .12, p = .160$. Also, child reports of harsh discipline items of spanking and yelling were not correlated with parent reports of harsh discipline items, $r(126) = .00, p = .978$, and $r(127) = .07, p = .422$, respectively. However, child and parent reports were consistent within informant. See Table 2.

Pearson correlations conducted on 3rd wave difference scores and 4th wave child outcomes revealed the difference score of spanking to be significantly positively related to

Table 2.

Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations Among Child-, Teacher-, and Parent-reported Variables

Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
<u>Child report 3rd wave</u>											
1. yell	1.00										
2. spank	.30**	1.00									
3. positive attention	-.00	-.00	1.00								
<u>Parent report 3rd wave</u>											
4. yell	.07	-.10	-.09	1.00							
5. spank	.13	.00	-.03	.08	1.00						
6. positive attention	.06	.07	.12	-.18*	.00	1.00					
<u>Teacher report 4th wave</u>											
7. aggression	.01	.12	.07	-.09	-.03	.12	1.00				
8. depression	.03	.07	.02	-.04	.14	.00	.64**	1.00			
9. family involvement	-.05	-.18	.02	.07	-.12	.05	-.47**	-.51**	1.00		
10. Academic Enablers	.11	-.04	-.25**	.11	.03	.06	-.43**	-.43**	.59**	1.00	
11. Intrapersonal Strength	-.01	-.09	.05	-.02	-.03	.08	-.42**	-.53**	.84**	.63**	1.00
Mean	2.24	1.41	3.43	2.71	1.16	4.56	48.93	49.55	12.64	41.64	11.62
Standard Deviation	1.37	0.99	1.09	0.93	0.43	0.49	10.51	9.99	2.91	8.23	3.22

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

aggression. The difference score of positive attention was also found to be significantly positively related to Academic Enablers. See Table 3.

Table 3.

Correlations Among Child and Parent Difference Scores and Child Outcomes

Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
<u>Difference scores 3rd wave</u>								
1. spank	1.00							
2. yell	-.06	1.00						
3. positive attention	.10	.08	1.00					
<u>Teacher report 4th wave</u>								
4. aggression	.19*	-.05	-.09	1.00				
5. depression	-.01	-.03	-.03	.64**	1.00			
6. family involvement	-.15	-.09	-.09	-.48**	-.51**	1.00		
7. Academic Enablers	.01	-.04	.21*	-.43**	-.43**	.59**	1.00	
8. Intrapersonal Strength	-.05	-.09	-.12	-.42**	-.53**	.85**	.63**	1.00
Mean	0.46	1.29	1.23	48.93	49.55	12.64	41.64	11.62
Standard Deviation	0.92	1.02	1.04	10.51	9.99	2.91	8.23	3.22

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

Correlations between 3rd wave parent and child reports and 3rd wave difference scores indicated that child report of spanking was significantly positively related to the difference spanking score. The child's positive attention report was also significantly related to the positive attention difference score, although the association was negative. Last, the parent's report of yelling was positively significantly related to the yelling difference score. See Table 4.

Table 4.

Correlations Between Child and Parent Reports and Difference Scores

Variable	spank difference	yell difference	positive attention difference
<u>Child report</u>			
1. spank	.88**		
2. yell		-.05	
3. positive attention			-.88**
<u>Parent report</u>			
4. spank	.30		
5. yell		.43**	
6. positive attention			.18*

Note. All variables measured at the third wave.

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

Aggression. A series of multiple regression analyses were additionally conducted to evaluate which reports of positive attention or harsh discipline items served as predictors of aggression. Child and parents' harsh discipline items of spanking and yelling, and positive attention reports were tested as predictors of aggression. The regression indicated the third wave parent report of spanking to be a significant, positive predictor of aggression, $\beta = .36, p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .38, indicating that approximately 15% of the variance in aggression was accounted for by the model. Adding the third wave teacher report of aggression as a predictor of aggression in the regression analysis indicated that it was significantly, positively related to aggression in the fourth wave, $\beta = .84, p = .000$. The previous significant correlation between the parent report of spanking and aggression then became non-significant, $\beta = .08, p = .137$. In the second analysis including aggression in the third wave as a predictor variable, previous aggression was controlled for. The non-significant result for spanking when previous aggression was controlled could imply that children displaying

aggressive behavior are likely to be spanked more, and not only that spanking makes aggressive behavior more likely from a child. All other factors that were tested including child harsh discipline yelling or spanking items, or positive attention were not significant predictors of aggression.

Depression. The regression conducted for depression did not result in any significant child or parent predictors. The third wave depression variable was found to be a significant positive predictor of later depression in the fourth wave, $\beta = .73, p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .74, indicating that approximately 54% of the variance in depression can be accounted for by the model. All other factors that were tested including positive attention, and spanking and yelling items were not significant predictors of depression.

Academic enablers. Only the child's report of positive attention was found to be a significant, negative predictor for Academic Enablers, $\beta = -.27, p = .006$ in the first regression. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .31, indicating that approximately 9.6% of the variance in Academic Enablers can be accounted for by the model. The child's report of positive attention was still found to be negatively significant after adding Academic Enablers from the third wave, $\beta = -.15, p = .022$. Academic Enablers from the third wave was found to be a significant positive predictor, $\beta = .76, p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .80, indicating that approximately 64% of the variance in Academic Enablers can be accounted for by the model. All other factors that were tested including the parent's report of positive attention and spanking and yelling items were not significant predictors of Academic Enablers.

Family involvement. There were no significant predictors of family involvement in the first regression conducted. Results showed previous family involvement to be a significant positive predictor of later family involvement, $\beta = .68, p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation

coefficient was .70, indicating that approximately 50% of the variance in family involvement can be accounted for by the model. All other factors that were tested including positive attention, and spanking and yelling items were not significant predictors of family involvement.

Intrapersonal strength. Results in the regression involving parent and child reports of positive attention and harsh discipline indicated no significant predictors for intrapersonal strength. Intrapersonal strength from the third wave was a significant positive predictor for intrapersonal strength in the fourth wave for child and parent reports, $\beta = .78, p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .78, indicating that approximately 61% of the variance in intrapersonal strength can be accounted for by the model. All other factors that were tested including positive attention, and spanking and yelling items were not significant predictors of intrapersonal strength.

Testing Differences in Perceptions as Predictors of Child Outcomes

Absolute values of difference scores were computed for child and parent report predictor variables of positive attention and harsh discipline items of spanking and yelling. Regressions were conducted for all 5 of the outcome variables and the absolute difference scores of positive attention and harsh discipline items. The first set of multiple regressions included only the outcome variable and the difference score predictor variables and the second set included the third wave outcome variables as predictor variables.

Aggression. The difference score of the spanking item was the only significant positive predictor of aggression in the first regression, $\beta = .21, p = .027$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .23, indicating that approximately 5% of the variance in aggression can be accounted for by the model. Previous aggression in the third wave was a significant positive predictor of later aggression, $\beta = .88, p = .000$, and the difference score of spanking then became

non-significant, $\beta = -.01$, $p = .788$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .87, indicating that approximately 75% of the variance in aggression can be accounted for by the model.

For the additional regressions that were conducted to determine if child outcomes were dependent on difference of reports or the report of the parent or child on parenting, aggression was one of the few outcomes that indicated significant predictors. When the child report of spanking was added as a predictor along with the difference score of spanking, the difference score of spanking remained significant, $\beta = .44$, $p = .021$.

Depression. Results indicated no significant predictors for depression in the first regression; however, previous depression was a significant positive predictor of later depression, $\beta = .75$, $p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .74, indicating that approximately 54% of the variance in depression can be accounted for by the model.

Academic enablers. The difference score of positive attention was a significant positive predictor of Academic Enablers, $\beta = .20$, $p = .035$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .21, indicating that approximately 4% of the variance in Academic Enablers can be accounted for by the model. Academic Enablers in the third wave was found to be a significant positive predictor of later scores on Academic Enablers, $\beta = .78$, $p = .000$. The difference score of positive attention became non-significant, $\beta = .09$, $p = .153$ and the difference score of the yelling item was found to be a negative, significant predictor of Academic Enablers, $\beta = -.13$, $p = .031$. The difference score of the yelling item was not found to be a significant predictor in the previous regression. The sample multiple correlation coefficient for Academic Enablers and the yelling item difference score combined was .78, indicating that approximately 60% of the variance in Academic Enablers can be accounted for by the model.

For the additional regressions that were conducted to determine if child outcomes were dependent on difference of reports or the report of the parent or child on parenting, Academic Enablers was one of the few outcomes that indicated significant predictors. When the child report of positive attention was added as a predictor along with the difference score of positive attention, the difference score of positive attention became non-significant, $\beta = -.20, p = .316$. The child report of positive attention then became significant negative predictor of Academic Enablers, $\beta = -.46, p = .023$.

Family involvement. The regression on difference scores revealed no significant predictors for family involvement. Previous family involvement was a significant positive predictor of later family involvement, $\beta = .68, p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .70, indicating that approximately 48% of the variance in family involvement can be accounted for by the model.

Intrapersonal strength. The regression on the difference score for intrapersonal strength did not indicate any significant predictors, but previous intrapersonal strength was positively associated with later intrapersonal strength, $\beta = .77, p = .000$. The sample multiple correlation coefficient was .78, indicating that approximately 60% of the variance in intrapersonal strength can be accounted for by the model.

DISCUSSION

Past research has shown evidence of correlating child and parent reports of parenting practices (Barry et al., 2008; Graham & Weems, 2015; Scott et al., 2011), and other researchers have found reports on parenting practices that do not correspond (Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012). Past literature has shown parenting practices to have an effect on child outcomes relating to academics (Amato & Fowler, 2002), family involvement (Holder & Coleman, 2009), aggression (Gadeyne et al., 2004), depression (Wimsatt et al., 2013), and intrapersonal strength (Demaray & Malecki, 2002; Felson & Zielinski, 1989). Research has also found impacts on child outcomes to exist when there are differences between child and parent reports of parenting (Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012). The initial aim of the current study was to determine if child and parent perceptions on positive attention and harsh discipline parenting practices were correlated.

The correlations between parent and child reports on parenting practices showed that child perceptions of parenting practices were not in agreement with parent perceptions. Past research has found similar results of child and parent perceptions of parenting practices not correlating, and that differences in reports were related to differences in child outcomes (Guion et al., 2009; Reidler & Swenson, 2012).

The paired t-tests indicated that parents and children differed in their perceptions of parenting practices. Children overall perceived more spanking occurring than parents. Parents perceived more yelling and more positive attention than children perceived.

Additional correlations done to determine the direction of the discrepancy indicated children to be more varied in their reports. Correlations done on parent and child reports in the 3rd and difference scores in the 3rd wave showed that children tended to report higher or lower

than parents. When children reported spanking as low, they were in agreement with parents, but when children rated spanking occurred frequently, parents reported spanking rarely happened. The biggest discrepancy was when children reported spanking happening frequently.

Also, the strong negative correlation between the child report of positive attention and the difference score of positive attention showed the child and parent to be in agreement when the child rated positive attention high. However, when the child rated positive attention as low, disagreement between child and parent was shown, as most parents still rated positive attention high.

Through these correlations, it is evident that children are more variable in their reports of parenting practices. Parents had a tendency to report little or no spanking and much positive attention. These results may point to a reporting bias of parents in order to show that they do not practice harsh discipline practices as often or by reporting that positive attention is almost always present with their child. While this reporting bias may be intentional, parents may also believe they are accurately reporting their parenting practices that might have otherwise been observed by other informants.

Aggression

Before controlling for previous levels of aggression, parents who reported using spanking as a parenting practice had children who displayed aggressive behavior, as reported by the teacher. When previous aggression was controlled, teachers who reported observing aggressive behavior from a child continued to see aggressive behavior displayed from the child later on. One explanation offered previously when spanking was no longer associated with the child's aggression, was that parents might be more likely to spank when a child displays aggressive behavior. Also, aggressive behavior displayed by the child may be more likely if the child is

spanked. Li, Putallaz, and Su (2011) found father and mother coercive control of spanking to be positively correlated to boys' aggression, both overt and relational. Results also indicated that a father's coercive control was positively correlated with relational aggression for girls. This study (Li et al., 2011) indicates the relation of spanking to a child's aggression, and although the findings of the current study did not directly point to the link between harsh discipline and aggression, further analysis is necessary.

Another possible explanation for the non-significance of the spanking item could be that parents underreport their use of corporal punishment. Holden, Williamson, and Holland's (2011) study incorporated audio recordings to evaluate the use of corporal punishment. The authors found parents used corporal punishment with little warning, half of parents were evidently angry in the time of conflict, punishment happened during a stressful period of the day, and 73% of children misbehaved again within 10 minutes of having received physical discipline. The parents in the study (Holden et al., 2011) likely wanted to appear as if they followed the researchers' guidelines in deciding when to use corporal punishment, but the recordings indicated otherwise.

The difference score regression showed that when parents and children differed in their perceptions of the frequency of spanking, aggression was more likely to be displayed by the child. When controlling for previous aggression, however, the perception differences parent and children had in the frequency in spanking did not show the same relation to aggression. As the previous regressions indicated, teachers who reported observing aggression in a child at one point in time, continued to observe the aggressive behavior later on.

In the additional regressions including the child report of spanking and the difference score of spanking as predictors of aggression, the child's perception of spanking did not have an impact on aggression. However, the difference in reports of spanking did matter and have an

impact on the child's aggression. When the parent and child differed in perceptions of the frequency of spanking, teachers reported observing aggression from the child. Regarding the aggression outcome, differences in the perceptions of spanking ultimately impacted the outcome and the independent perceptions of spanking did not matter.

Depression

No predictors were found for depression in the current study, although prior reports of depression indicated children who experienced depression in the 3rd wave continued to experience and display symptoms of depression in the 4th wave. The current study's findings indicate that parent and child reports of parenting may not have mattered for the sample. The current study did not find perceptions of parenting practices to be associated with child depression, although past research has found associations between parenting behaviors and symptoms of childhood depression (Hazel, Oppenheimer, Technow, Young, & Hankin, 2014; Wimsatt et al., 2013). Hazel et al. (2014) found that youths' experience of higher levels of relationship quality with parents was related to lower mean levels of depressive symptoms. Parental support was found to provide a buffer against stress the youth experienced, and this finding was consistent across middle childhood to adolescence (Hazel et al., 2014).

There were no significant predictors of depression in the regression analysis including difference scores. The current study's findings indicate that the differences in parent and child reports of parenting may not have mattered for the sample regarding the child outcome of depression.

Academic Enablers

Positive attention perceived by the child was associated with a negative effect on the child's attention and focus, concentration, and motivation. The child's perception of positive

attention remained a negative predictor even when previous scores on attention and focus, concentration, and motivation were controlled. Both findings were unusual considering past literature has found positive parenting to have a positive association with a child's concentration, focus, and motivation (Putnick et al., 2008). Putnick et al. (2008) found the child's report of parenting acceptance to be positively correlated with the child's self-report of scholastic competence.

For the additional regressions that were conducted to determine if child outcomes were dependent on differences in perceptions or on absolute levels of perceptions, the child report of positive attention was shown to have an influence. In this particular regression, differences in perceptions of positive attention did not impact the child's attention, concentration, and motivation. Instead the child's report of positive attention did seem to matter for the child's attention, concentration, and motivation.

The more the child and parent perceptions differed on the frequency of yelling, lower scores of the child's concentration, focus, and motivation were reflected in the analysis. This difference in perception of yelling usually meant that the child perceived less yelling occurring than the parent but experienced lower levels of attention, concentration, and motivation.

Family Involvement

No predictors of family involvement emerged in the current study. Family involvement demonstrated continuity over time, when previous family involvement was positively related to family involvement later on. In other words, children who participated in family activities continued to participate in family activities later on. No predictors were found for family involvement concerning the difference scores in perceptions of parenting. Family involvement indicated continuity over time and parent and child differences in the frequency of parenting

behaviors did not have an impact. However, Holder and Coleman's study (2009) found that children's sense of their importance as a family member was correlated with their happiness. Holder and Coleman's study (2009) suggests that children being able to consider themselves as an important member can improve their well-being.

Intrapersonal Strength

Initial analysis of Intrapersonal strength revealed no predictors. Also, subsequent analysis of child and parent perception differences on intrapersonal strength, including self-confidence found no predictors. Previous Intrapersonal strength was positively related to Intrapersonal strength later on, showing continuity over time. Teachers who reported observing Intrapersonal strength displayed by the child, later reported observing Intrapersonal strength by the same child. The current study's findings did not replicate past research that has found parenting practices linked to having an influence on a child's self-confidence (Demaray & Malecki, 2002; Felson & Zielinski, 1989). Demaray and Malecki (2002) found subscales measuring support from classmates, friends, parents, and teachers to significantly correlate with the child's confidence. Felson and Zielinski's (1989) study indicated that a parent's praise affected the self-esteem of both girls and boys. Parental practices of physical affection and girls feeling that they could talk to their parents about problems made high self-esteem for girls more likely (Felson & Zielinski, 1989).

Limitations

One of the first limitations of the study was the small, homogeneous sample ($n = 110$) from a mid-size Midwestern U.S. city, consistently primarily of Caucasians. The sample size might have been too meager to yield predictors that other research has supported between parenting practices and child outcomes. Prospective participants who did not participate in the

study by choosing not to return a consent form might have altered the findings had they contributed to the data. Other research has found differences between participants from diverse cultures regarding the influence of parenting practices on child outcomes (Demaray & Malecki, 2002). For example, Demaray and Malecki's (2002) study of different types of support from parents, teachers, classmates, and peers found that Native American students reported receiving less support from parents than African American, Caucasian and Hispanic students. Perceptions of parent support for African American students were significantly higher than that of Caucasian students. Differing levels of support across different ethnic groups might also point to differences in child development.

Measures analyzed in the study did not include control or other discipline practices, which have been measured by other studies to have influence on the child's well-being (Amato & Fowler, 2002). Other factors not included in the analysis were whether the child came from a single- or two-parent home, parent education level, family's income status, and marital conflict (Li et al., 2011).

Another limitation of the study was the child outcomes were reported from only teachers, which varied from year to year, and the observations may not have reflected much change in the child's behaviors. Having multiple observers who reported on each of the five child outcomes might have produced some of the results replicated from past research (Demaray & Malecki, 2002; Felson & Zielinski, 1989; Hazel et al., 2014). Teachers as the main observers of the child's behavior might have also had their own biases regarding the specific behaviors expected from each child.

No tests were conducted between groups of well-adjusted children and children with adjustment problems to evaluate if there were any significant differences or predictors of child

outcomes. Analysis targeting differences between groups might have illuminated some results indicating which parenting practices might have increased the problem behaviors of children with adjustment problems.

Previously mentioned measures having an influence on parenting practices such as marital conflict (Li et al., 2011), parent pathology (Williams et al., 2012), and other parent demographics should be included in future studies to evaluate the impact these measures have on child outcomes.

Some of the child outcomes possibly needing further research were the child and parents' perceptions of harsh discipline practices in regards to aggression and Academic Enablers. Although predictors were initially found for aggression, the predictors of the parent spanking report and the difference score of spanking were not consistent over time. Parent and child differences in perceptions of parenting practices were not associated with depression, family involvement, and intrapersonal strength child outcomes in the current study. Although past studies have supported links between parenting practices and depression, family involvement, and intrapersonal strength, future research might include a wider range of parenting practices or factors outside of parenting that might influence these child outcomes.

Additional regressions for aggression and Academic Enablers that included the parent or child raw score and the difference score as independent variables showed that in one instance the differences in perceptions between the parent and child did matter for aggression, and in another instance the child report mattered for Academic Enablers. Teachers, parents, and even clinicians can be aware of the implications and role spanking may play within the child-parent relationship, and in regards to aggression displayed by the child. In the current study, the child's perception of positive attention implied that the lower positive attention the child perceived in receiving from

the parent, the higher the attention, concentration, and motivation was experienced by the child. As this finding is not replicated in previous research related to positive parenting practices and a child's academic skills or performance (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Gadeyne et al., 2004), further research may benefit from exploring what other factors play a role in affecting the child's perception of positive attention.

Variations in analyses conducted may also answer more questions about parenting practices' serving as buffers or antecedents to the development of problem behavior in school age children. Other future directions for studies focusing on positive parenting and harsh discipline would benefit from obtaining a larger and diverse sample size to generalize to larger populations, and implementing consistent multiple observers of child participant behavior.

Implications

Although the current study did not replicate previous research findings regarding parenting practices' impact on child outcomes of concentration and motivation in school, aggression, depression, family involvement, and intrapersonal strength, the difference in child and parent perceptions remains an important aspect of research. Parent and child differences in perceptions of parenting practices were not associated with depression, family involvement, and intrapersonal strength child outcomes in the current study. Parent and child differences in perceptions did not show an influence on family involvement and intrapersonal strength child outcomes. Family involvement and intrapersonal strength showed consistency over time for the child, which implies that parent and child differences in perceptions of parenting don't seem to matter or have an influence.

Results from the regressions of aggression and Academic Enablers imply that teachers, parents, and even clinicians can be aware that child and parent differences in perceptions of

spanking matter when it comes to aggression. For all caregivers or adults involved in a child's life it is important to understand the role that spanking may play within the child-parent relationship, and in regards to aggression displayed by the child. Also, the child's report of positive attention indicated an influence on the child's attention, concentration, and motivation. In the current study, the lower positive attention the child perceived receiving from the parent, the higher the attention, concentration, and motivation was experienced by the child. For parents, adults, and teachers involved in any child's life there may be other factors that are impacting the child's perception of positive attention. As each child is different and may require different needs in each environment, parents, teachers, and clinicians could work together to improve home and school environment for a child who may be struggling to keep attention, concentration, and motivation consistent in school.

Differences in perceptions of parenting are important for parents and teachers of school-age children to be aware of. It is particularly essential for parents to understand how their parenting practices affect their child's development. Teachers of school age children would benefit in understanding that the child's experience of parenting practices might be affecting behavior displayed in the classroom and not necessarily having to do with school environment. Teachers might then be able to advocate for the child in getting the help the child needs in the classroom and speaking with parents about possible resources for the benefit of the child.

In the current study, parent report of frequency of spanking and the parent and child difference in perceptions of the frequency of spanking were not consistent over time. However, previous research has linked harsh discipline practices to aggression. Corporal punishment has been a long practiced discipline in parenting and evidence of the prevalence of physical discipline was found in the study of Straus and Stewart (1999). Straus and Stewart found that of

parents interviewed in 1995, 94% reported using some type of corporal punishment the previous year with children aged three to four years old. The most severe form of corporal punishment, hitting the child with a belt or paddle, was greatest among children aged five to 12 (Straus & Stewart, 1999). Hicks-Pass' (2009) review of corporal punishment literature found that overall the theme was that the frequency of harsh physical discipline can be damaging and ineffective. Parent education about types of discipline practices that are effective in correcting child behavior and do not result in negative effects on the child's well-being would benefit parents who practice corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Information regarding corporal punishment would be helpful to teachers of school age children in distinguishing corporal punishment from child physical abuse.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to explore child and parent perceptions of parenting behaviors and the influence on outcomes in school age children. Positive parenting and harsh discipline practices have been found to influence child development in academic skills (Amato & Fowler, 2002), intrapersonal strength (Demaray & Malecki, 2002; Felson & Zielinski, 1989), family involvement (Holder & Coleman, 2009), and the persistence of problem behaviors such as aggression (Gadeyne et al., 2004; Li et al., 2011) and depression (Hazel et al., 2014; Wimsatt et al., 2013). The current study found child and parent reports did not correspond and most analyses performed did not replicate previous findings of expected influence of parenting practices on child development. However, differences in perceptions were significantly associated with some outcomes. Limitations discussed for the study were size and diversity of the sample, exclusion of variables that might have had an influence on the reported parenting behaviors, and age of the child participants in accurately reporting parenting behavior. Future directions would be to obtain a larger sample size for expected associations between parenting influences on child development, and inclusion of measures in analysis affecting parenting practices. It is important to continue to research child and parent perceptions of parenting behavior in order to further promote healthy child development and prevent problem behaviors in school age children.

REFERENCES

- Amato, P. R., & Fowler, F. (2002). Parenting practices, child adjustment, and family diversity. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*, 703-716.
- Bacro, F. (2012). Perceived attachment security to father, academic self-concept and school performance in language mastery. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 21*, 992-1002. doi: 10.1007/s10826-011-9561-1
- Barnett, D., Kidwell, S. L., Leung, K. H. (1998). Parenting and preschooler attachment among low-income urban African American families. *Child Development, 69*, 1657-1671. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.1998.tb06183.x
- Barry, C. T., Frick, P. J., & Grafeman, S. J. (2008). Child versus parent reports of parenting practices: Implications for the conceptualization of child behavioral and emotional problems. *Assessment, 15*, 294-303. doi: 10.1177/1073191107312212
- Bowlby, J. (Ed.). (1969). *Attachment* (Vol. 1). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group (2001). *About My Parent*. Retrieved from www.fasttrackproject.org
- Dallaire, D. H., Pineda, A. Q., Cole, D. A., Ciesla, J. A., Jacquez, F., LaGrange, B., & Bruce, A. E. (2006). Relation of positive and negative parenting to children's depressive symptoms. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 2*, 313-322. doi: 10.1207/s1537442jccp3502_15
- Demaray, M. K., Malecki, C. K. (2002). Critical levels of perceived social support associated with student adjustment. *School Psychology Quarterly, 17*, 213-241. doi: 10.1521/scpq.17.3.213.20883

- DiPerna, J. C. & Elliott, S. N. (2000). *The Academic Competence Evaluation Scales* (K-12 ed.). San Antonio, TX: The Psychological Corporation.
- Epstein, M. H. (2004). *Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale*, 2nd Ed. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.
- Felson, R. B. & Zielinski, M. A. (1989). Children's self-esteem and parental support. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 51, 727-735. doi: 10.2307/352171
- Fine, M. A., Voydanoff, P., & Donnelly, B. W. (1993). Relations between parental control and warmth and child well-being in stepfamilies. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 7, 222-232.
- Gadeyne, E., Ghesquière, P., & Onghena P. (2004). Longitudinal relations between parenting and child adjustment in young children. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 33, 347-358.
- Gaylord, N. K., Kitzmann, K. M., & Coleman, J. K. (2003). Parents' and children's perceptions of parental behavior: Associations with children's psychosocial adjustment in the classroom. *Parenting: Science and Practice*, 3, 23-47.
doi: 10.1207/S15327922PAR0301_02
- Graham, R. A. & Weems, C. F. (2015). Identifying moderators of the link between parent and child anxiety sensitivity: The roles of gender, positive parenting, and corporal punishment. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 43, 885-893.
doi: 10.1007/s10802-014-9945-y
- Guion, K., Mrug, S., & Windle, M. (2009). Predictive value of informant discrepancies in reports of parenting: Relations to early adolescents' adjustment. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 37, 17-30. doi: 10.1007/s10802-008-9253-5

- Hazel, N. A., Oppenheimer, C. W., Technow, J. R., Young, J. F., & Hankin, B. L. (2014). Parent relationship quality buffers against the effect of peer stressors on depressive symptoms from middle childhood to adolescence. *Developmental Psychology, 50*, 2115-2123. doi: 10.1037/a0037192
- Hektner, J. M. (2010). *Early Risers Skills for Success in Fargo Public Schools: 2008-2009*. Final Report. North Dakota State University.
- Hicks-Pass, S. (2009). Corporal punishment in America today: Spare the rod, spoil the child? A systematic review of literature. *Best Practices in Mental Health, 5*, 71-88.
- Holder, M. D. & Coleman, B. (2009). The contribution of social relationships to children's happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 10*, 329-349. doi: 10.1007/s10902-007-9083-0
- Hudley, C. & Novac, A. (2007). Environmental influences, the developing brain, and aggressive behavior. *Theory into Practice, 46*, 121-129. doi: 10.1080/00405840701233008
- IBM Corp. Released 2012. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 21.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.
- Li, Y., Putallaz, M., Su, M. (2011). Interparental conflict styles and parenting behaviors: Associations with overt and relational aggression among Chinese children. *Merrill Palmer Quarterly, 57*, 402-428. doi: 10.1353/mpq.2011.0017
- Moffitt, T. E. (1993). Adolescence-limited and life-course persistent antisocial behavior: A developmental taxonomy. *Psychological Review, 100*, 674-701.
- Nichols, M. P. (2010). *Family therapy: Concepts and methods. 9th Edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

- Paternoster, R. & Brame, R. (1997). Multiple routes to delinquency? A test of developmental and general theories of crime. *Criminology*, 35, 49-84.
doi: 10.1111/j.1745-9125.1997.tb00870.x
- Putnick, D. L., Bornstein, M. H., Hendricks, C., Painter, K. M., Suwalsky, J. T. D., & Collins, W. A. (2008). Parenting stress, perceived parenting behaviors, and adolescent self-concept in European American families. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22, 752-762.
doi: 10.1037/a0013177
- Reidler, E. B. & Swenson, L. P. (2012). Discrepancies between youth and mothers' perception of their mother-child relationship quality and self-disclosure: Implications for youth- and mother-reported youth adjustment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 41, 1151-1167.
doi: 10.1007/s10964-012-9773-8
- Reynolds, C. R., & Kamphaus, R.W. (2004). *BASC-2: Behavioral Assessment System for Children, 2nd Edition Manual*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.
- Schrodt, P. (2006). The stepparent relationship index: Development, validation, and associations with stepchildren's perceptions of stepparent communication competence and closeness. *Personal Relationships*, 13, 167-182.
- Scott, S., Briskman, J., & Dadds, M. R. (2011). Measuring parenting in community and public health research using brief child and parent reports. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 20, 343-352.
- Straus, M. A. & Stewart, J. H. (1999). Corporal punishment by American parents: National data on prevalence, chronicity, severity and duration, in relation to child and family characteristics. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 2, 55-70.

Wei, C. & Kendall, P. C. (2014). Child perceived parenting behavior: Childhood anxiety and related symptoms. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy, 36*, 1-18.

doi: 10.1080/07317107.2014.878175

Williams, S. R., Kertz, S. J., Schrock, M. D., & Woodruff-Borden, J. (2012). A sequential analysis of parent-child interactions in anxious and nonanxious families. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology, 41*, 64-74. doi: 10.1080/15374416.2012.632347

Wimsatt, A. R., Fite, P. J., Grassetti, S. N., & Rathert, J. L. (2013). Positive communication moderates the relationship between corporal punishment and child depressive symptoms. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 18*, 225-230.

doi: 10.1111/j.1475-3588.2012.00682.x