

Texas Southern University

Digital Scholarship @ Texas Southern University

Theses (Pre-2016)

Theses

5-2007

Effects of Parent- Child Interpersonal Relationship on Substance Use

Candice Marie Shivers

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.tsu.edu/pre-2016_theses

Recommended Citation

Shivers, Candice Marie, "Effects of Parent- Child Interpersonal Relationship on Substance Use" (2007). *Theses (Pre-2016)*. 102.
https://digitalscholarship.tsu.edu/pre-2016_theses/102

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses at Digital Scholarship @ Texas Southern University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses (Pre-2016) by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship @ Texas Southern University. For more information, please contact haiying.li@tsu.edu.

EFFECTS OF PARENT-CHILD INTERPERSONAL
RELATIONSHIP ON
SUBSTANCE USE

THESIS

BY

CANDICE MARIE SHIVERS

2007

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY



3 9070 00297670 0

EFFECTS OF PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION ON ABLA TOWARD THE
WILLIAM F. FULTON

1970

Presented by David Paul Johnson to the Department of the

the School of Education of the University of Texas

at Texas Southern University

by

Charles H. H. H. H.

Texas Southern University

1970

Approved by

James H. H. H. H.
Department of the

James H. H. H. H.
Department of the

EFFECTS OF PARENT-CHILD INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP ON
SUBSTANCE USE

THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Master of Arts Degree in the Graduate School
of Texas Southern University

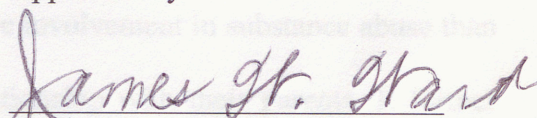
By

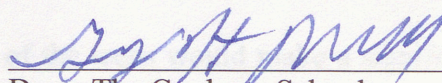
Candice Marie Shivers, B.A.

Texas Southern University

2007

Approved By


Chairperson, Thesis Committee


Dean, The Graduate School

EFFECTS OF PARENT-CHILD INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP ON SUBSTANCE USE

By

Candice Marie Shivers, M.A.

Texas Southern University, 2007

James Ward, PhD, Advisor

A total of 400 surveys were given at random to 200 African American adults and 200 African American teens between the ages of 14-18 years old. A focus group of 5 adults and 5 teens was also conducted. The teens and the adults were not related to ensure the comfort for the children and allowed them to be open and honest about their views. The reason for focusing on this particular age group of children is because it is the period in the child's life that peer pressure plays an important part on some of the decisions the child will make.

The research was to find out if children who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents are less likely to have involvement in substance abuse than those who do not have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents. It further examined whether boys were more likely than girls to become involved with substance use or abuse. It also aimed to determine if the age of the teens would make a significant difference in substance abuse. The results of the study showed that those adolescents who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents did not use any substance. Also it was shown that male adolescents used substances more than the female adolescents and that there was not a statistical difference in the age variation of substance abuse.

Approved By

TABLES OF CONTENTS

James W. Ward
Chairperson, Thesis Committee

11/26/07

Date

Committee Member

Date

Committee Member

11/26/07

Date

Committee Member

11/26/07

Date

Committee Member

11/26/07

Date

TABLES OF CONTENTS

VITA	iv
------------	----

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
------------------------	---

CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. LITERARY REVIEW	4
3. DESIGN OF THE STUDY	11
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	15
5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	27

APPENDIX

A. CHILDREN'S SURVEY	32
B. PARENTS' SURVEY	34

REFERENCES	36
------------------	----

VITA

August 3, 1980..... Born-Hearne, Texas

2002..... B.A., Sam Houston State
University
Huntsville, Texas

2004..... Legal Assistant
O'Connor & Associates, L.L.C.

Major Field..... Speech Communication

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my mother for being such an inspiration to me during my whole writing process. She kept from giving up when I felt like I could not continue to write. To those who, in some way, assisted in the completion of my project: Houston Area Urban League, Nu-Lites, Reginald Barclay, Dr. James W. Ward, Dr. E. Bun Lee, Dr. C. Chris Ulasi, and Dr. Dashiel J. Geyen. I thank each and every one of you.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Parent and Child's Interpersonal Relationship and the Effects it Has on the Child's Involvement with Substance Use

Parent and child communication plays an important part in determining if the child will commit illegal acts. Researchers have been trying to determine how significant communication within a family structure is, and it has been proven that drug use is a major issue rising among adolescents in the United States. Parents tend to have the greatest influence on the behavioral development of their adolescent children, so the parent and child relationship shows why some adolescents tend to use drugs and others do not. Without a rewarding relationship with their parents a child's adolescent behavior, which is the way a child behaves during their puberty period, will go in a negative direction.

An interpersonal relationship is the social relationship between two or more people. This is the relationship that is the bond of the parent and child. It could be stated that a child that has a close interpersonal relationship with their parent(s) tends to try to keep the positive image to maintain parental approval. On the other hand, it could be assumed that a child who is neglected may act out in negative ways to get, what they may consider, the unattainable attention they lack from their parents. Fitzpatrick, et al. (1996) notes in their study that positive family environments minimizes oppositional behavior, helps to form skilled interpersonal interactions, and secures a positive attachment between parent and child. A parent(s) and child who maintain a positive and rewarding relationship may deter any substance use during adolescence. The child may feel that when his/her parent(s) allow an open form of communication to exist between them, it

may stop him/her from wanting to become less involved with illegal substance use. The substance abuse referred to in this thesis mean the over use of an illegal substance such as marijuana or alcohol.

Purpose of the Study

Three research questions were set out to be answered.

RQ1: Are children who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents less likely to be involved in substance abuse than those who do not have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents?

RQ2: Are males more likely than females to become involved with substance use and abuse?

RQ3: Are younger adolescences are more prone to experiment with a substance than older adolescences?

In order to have a better look into the effectiveness of interpersonal relationship between parents and their children, this research focused on the children between the ages of 13-19 years of age. The interest on this particular age group is because children at this age are vulnerable to peer pressure. This study was done in subdivisions of the Houston, Texas focusing on just African American teens, and not focusing on a particular social status or marital status of the parents in order to control sampling bias. The focus of the research was to look at all statuses of the adolescents in order to see if all children in each status group had similar characteristics.

Definition of Terms

There will be terms presented within this research that will be used quite frequently. To gain a better understanding of what will be presented, an explanation of the important terms will be given.

One of the most important terms that will be used is **communication**. Communication is defined as the exchange of information between individuals, e.g. by means of speaking, writing, or using a common system of signs or behavior. With communication people are able to express how they feel with each other through different forms of symbol expression.

Opened or Closed Communication is the styles of communication that can be used in communication patterns. **Opened Communication** is the form of communication when there is more expressiveness when communicating with someone (Clark & Shields, 1997). **Closed Communication** is when there is a lack of expressiveness in the communication with another party (Clark & Shields, 1997). Opened or closed communication can help in the family relations and governing of family dynamics.

Last, **Interpersonal Communication** is the social relationship between two or more people. Interpersonal communication helps to set the standards of the relationships between parents and their children.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adolescence brings a variety of challenges for youths as they seek to establish an autonomous identity. This literature review chapter is divided into three sections: (1) the definition of interpersonal relationship within a family setting, (2) the importance of communication between parents and children, and (3) the relationship between parents and children's communication behavior on substance use. At the end of this chapter it will be apparent to see the relevance of this study and why it was considered an important study to conduct.

The Definition of an Interpersonal Relationship Within a Family Setting

Interpersonal behavior between people is a widely debated area in the field of social psychology, and it plays an important factor in the field of communication. If two people are communicating with each other, they are setting the dimensions of their relationship. It has been stated that, "Communication is critical in developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships" (Taylor & Atman, 1987). Whether a person is conscious of it or not, they are always expressing details of their relationship to the other person (Littlejohn & Foss, 2005).

This concept does not just play into the factor of two adults or two children, but it is used in the shaping of a relationship between a parent and child. The communication pattern is not random, but is an ongoing process that is cumulative over time from schemas that were developed to determine how the family would communicate. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002) noted that Baldwin's model for relationship schemas consists of three subsets of knowledge: Self-schema, other-schema, and interpersonal scripts.

Self-schema is the process in which the person has their own set of thoughts and beliefs. Therefore the adolescents are allowed to think for themselves and have their own thoughts on issues. Self-Schema consists of the self thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and beliefs (Baldwin, 1992). The second, other-schema, is how a person uses another person's thoughts to guide their thoughts. In other words, based on the perception the parent may have on certain issues will shape the child's behavior and thoughts. Other-schema consists of the thoughts and perceptions of others and their thoughts. The child will also have expectations for their own behaviors and outcomes (Baldwin, 1992). Last, interpersonal-script is a set of expectations that governs behavior. This schema pre-sets the behavior patterns a child may have. Interpersonal-script allows the child to have knowledge of behavioral sequence to interpret social situations and form expectations about behavior or plan behavior (Baldwin, 1992).

Once the schemas have been determined, family communication patterns (environments) are more recognizable. Within these environments it is governed as to the information and relation aspect of the communication between the parent and child. Mcleod and Chaffee have been noted as defining the two dimensions of family communication (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990; Fitzpatrick, Marshall, Leutiwiler, & Krcmar, 1996): conformity orientation and conversation orientation.

The first dimension, conformity orientation, is when the child has to have the same beliefs as the parent. But the second dimension, conversation orientation, the child is allowed to have their own opinions and are allowed to express their views (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990; Fitzpatrick, Marshall, Leutiwiler, & Krcmar, 1996). This then begins to play an important part in the family types and styles of communication.

If a family is high in both conformity orientation and conversation orientation, they are considered consensual (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990; Fitzpatrick, Marshall, Leutiwiler, & Krcmar, 1996). They encourage their children to openly discuss issues and to express their views, but in the end they child must agree with their parents. Pluaralistic families, on the other hand, allow their children to have their own views without having to conform to the parent's view (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990; Fitzpatrick, Marshall, Leutiwiler, & Krcmar, 1996). Last, protective and laissez-faire families, both down play interaction with the children. A protective family emphasizes more on the child's conformity with the parent, where as, laissez-faire families does not. Both of these types of families are low on conformity orientation and conversation orientation (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990; Fitzpatrick, Marshall, Leutiwiler, & Krcmar, 1996).

Importance of Communication Between Parents and Children

Communication between parents and children can play an important factor in determining if the child will commit delinquent acts, such as, substance use. When looking at this factor differences arise according to the child's age and sex, but there may also be issues according to the parents' marital status or social status. The communication between parents and children is considered to be the most important ingredient in their interpersonal relationship.

It has been noted that some families may create patterns of communications to help them organize predictable modes of behavior amongst each other (Galvin & Brommel, 1991). If the parents create an open form of communication with their children, the children will be more open in expressing how they feel with their parents and know that they are able to talk about anything. In this form of open communication

the parents should feel more comfortable in initiating the talk about an issue like substance use because with the openness in their communication they are able to exchange ideas about issues that bother both of them. Clark and Shields (1997) stated that as the intimacy of communication between the parent and the child increased the likelihood that the child will commit delinquent acts decrease. And his conclusion came to be that communication is not what mainly influences delinquency, but rather the focus of the communication.

This in turn led to the studies of wanting to know which communication style, open or problem, helps to lower the adolescents' delinquent behaviors such as substance use. When there is open communication there is a lower level of the delinquent involvement with substance use. Whereas if the problem communication is higher between the parent and child delinquent acts are higher, so the child may be more prone to using a substance because of the lack of communication. It has been shown that when a child has an open form of communication with either parent that the child will be associated with less serious forms of delinquency, but if the adolescent has a problem communicating with either parent, there is a possible chance that the child will engage in delinquency (Clark & Shields, 1997).

Another important study by Andrews, Hops, Ary, Tildesley, and Harris (1993) found that when parents made statements not condoning substance use that the adolescents were more likely not to use them. In the study conducted by Kelly, Comello, and Hunn (2002) suggested that active involvement in discussions in which the children perceive that they have input into behavioral norms will decrease the likelihood that the children will view the norms as externally imposed; this, in turn, will increase the

likelihood that they will behave in accordance with the norms. When the parents communicate the values that they hold most important it may help the adolescents become less associated with substance use. Therefore, the children will listen when their parent(s) and talk to them about the use of substances such as alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, or sniffing gas or glue.

Relationship Between Parents and Children's Communication Behavior on the Issue of Substance Abuse

Now that the issue of the importance of the communication between parents and their children has been explained, a discussion of how the parent(s) and child may view the relationship that they have with each other. Considering who the adolescents may seek advice from on substance use has to be weighed. Some children may say that they will go to a friend of the same age, their siblings, and then their parents. How parents approach their child when trying to discuss substance use may also play an important factor.

Adolescents with the lowest drug use reported that at least three people have talked to them about the dangers of specific substances (Kelly, Comello, & Hunn, 2002). The youth may then consider parental sanction to be the main reason they choose not to use a substance. For the adolescents who choose not to engage in substance use, parents who give more praise and encouragement, set rules, and let the child know that they have gained that their trust. The child then in turn, does not want to betray their parent's trust by trying to maintain this trust and tries to make their parents happy in anyway possible.

Looking at the other side of the spectrum, some youth that have the parents who are emotionally distant and offer less praise or encouragement, and limit settings often

turn to substance use to cry out for the attention they long for (Coombs & Landsverk, 1988). The youth is acting out in ways to gain the unattainable attention they want their parents to show to them. A growing body of clinical research derived from the social learning theory shows social control to be most effectively attained when esteemed leaders (emotionally close parents) specify unambiguous conduct norms and then regularly provide praise, attention, or other appropriate rewards to reinforce conforming behavior.

The parent's thoughts on what is right or wrong appears to be especially important because the elements of good communication is that there is a mutual understanding and agreement on meaningful issues. The more problems there are with the communication styles between the parents and their children may help contribute to the adolescent's substance use. Parents should want to communicate more often with their children than anyone else about substance abuse, to ensure that their children are getting the right information on substance use. When children are growing up they trust their parents, more than anyone else, as the credible source for information about what they need to know. And if the parent is coming to the child with information on an issue that they feel is important the child will know that the parent knows exactly what they are talking about. When the parent does not communicate to a child, it is just as if the parent is giving does not care. But when there is a positive connection between the parent and child's communication it has been cited that the child participates in health-promoting behaviors, but also resists negative peer pressure (Wills, Vaccaro, & McNamara, 1992). When there is lack of communication and uneasiness to communicate, child does not find it easy to express themselves to their parents they tend to engage in delinquent acts such

as substance use. Neiderhiser, Pike, Hetherington, and Reiss (1998) found that less self-expression with parents was also anticipated to predict lower academic achievement and selection of more drug-using friends. "In particular, it was predicted that adolescents self-expression with parents would play a more significant role in selection of friends, achievement motivation, and substance use," (Neiderhiser, Pike, Hetherington, & Reiss, 1998). "If a parent does not exercise direct controls, their ability to communicate with the child may become more important; without good communication, the child appears to more susceptible to delinquency," (Clark & Shields, 1997).

In summary, adolescence brings a variety of challenges for youth as they seek to establish their autonomous identity, but with the help and guidance of parents they will be able to follow the right path without using any type of substance. There has to be an understanding about the importance of the communication between the parent and child. The research questions state: RQ1: Are children who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents less likely to be involved in substance abuse than those who do not have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents?; RQ2: Are males more likely than females to become involved with substance use and abuse?; RQ3: Are younger adolescences are more prone to experiment with a substance than older adolescences?

The communication between a parent and child is not easy to start or maintain, but with the correct topics and the openness that should be allowed it may deter some adolescents from what to participate in substance use.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The study presented is thought to help with the understanding of adolescent substance use based on the interpersonal relationship that is held with the parents in the child's life. In order to gather information for this study two surveys were given. One survey was given to the children and another survey was given to the adults. In addition, a focus group was held consisting of 5 children and 5 adults who were not related to each other.

The research questions are: RQ1: Are children who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents less likely to be involved in substance abuse than those who do not have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents?

RQ2: Are males more likely than females to become involved with substance use and abuse?

RQ3: Are younger adolescences are more prone to experiment with a substance than older adolescences?

Sample

The sample consisted of 200 teenagers from urban neighborhoods in Houston, Texas. The children in this sample were not in relation to the parents that participated in the survey. This allowed for more honest answers from the children who participated. The neighborhoods represented a highly diverse population, inclusive of urban, suburban, and rural communities. The samples were convenience sample from all grade levels 9th-12th and there was a near-equal representation of males and females. The sample of children came from the local churches within the neighborhoods and the Houston Area Urban League's weekend tutoring program. Each child had to obtain parental consent before

participating in the survey. The children did not come from a certain social class of family and were all actively enrolled in schools.

The main focus of this study was more on family structures. The children were chosen at random, and all had the option of not participating in the survey if they did not want to. There were several procedures implemented before and during the data collection. This was thought to be able to help encourage participation and minimize response bias. The children were given the surveys (Appendix A) that contained 26 items and allowed to go elsewhere to complete. Upon completion each student placed the surveys into an isolated box so that their identities would not be revealed.

The questionnaires measured issues like substance use, types of substances used, number of times they are used, and communication with the parents, and closeness of the families. Then for comparison purposes, the youth's answers were be divided into four groups according to their past and current use of substances: 1) those who have never experimented with a substance; 2) those who abstained, but had used in the past; 3) those who used during the past month, but only infrequently less than weekly between on and up to four times a month; 4) those who used substances everyday or several times a week. These answers were then evaluated to gain an understanding of the data collected. After each response was broken into the four groups; those groups were then broken down into the frequency of communication with their parents.

A survey was also given to 200 parents of teenagers in urban neighborhoods in Houston, Texas. The parents in this sample were not related to the children who participated in the survey. The samples were chosen at random from local churches and the Houston Area Urban League. There was a near equal representation of social and

marital status of the parents. All had the option of not participating in the survey if they do not want to participate.

The participants were given a questionnaire (Appendix B) that contained 23 items. The questionnaire included items on the communication with their children, time spent with the children, behavioral problems with their children, and closeness of the families. Then for comparison purposes, the parent's answers were divided into three groups according to their communication with their child: 1) those who communicate regularly with their children; 2) those allow an open or closed style of communication; and 3) those who think their children are using a substance. These answers were then evaluated to gain an understanding of the data collected from the parents.

After the completion of the surveys, there was a focus group held that consisted of a total 5 parents and 5 adolescents combined. They were chosen at random from those who completed a questionnaire and wanted to participate in the focus group. The children and the parents were not related to each other to ensure an honest conversation flow from the children participating. The focus group evaluated the opinions of the parents and children on the communication patterns between each other and the issue of substance use and abuse.

The data were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science Program (SPSS). The results cross-tabulations and chi-square tests using the formula to examine the association of major variables.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were 200 adolescent surveys and 200 parent surveys given out for this study. The children's surveys focused more toward the adolescents who used or tried a substance to try and pin point if communication breakdown in the home was the reason for the substance use. The parents' surveys focused on the everyday lifestyle that existed within the household. Everyone given the survey was African American.

Survey of Teenagers

Data gathered from this survey revealed a great deal about the communication within African American households and the positive or negative effects it can have on the adolescents. The sample, as shown in Table 1, consisted of 48% boys and 52% girls. They expressed how an open relationship with their parents could help control the decisions that they made in their lives.

Table 1

Representation of Boys and Girls

<u>Gender</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Boys	97	48%
Girls	103	52%
Total	200	100%

N: Number of participants; %: percentage of sample

Research Question 1

Research question one asks are the children who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents less likely to be involved in substance abuse than those who do not have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents? Data gathered

from the surveys given (appendix A) revealed that children who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parent(s) are significantly associated with the child not getting involved with substance use and abuse. As one moves towards a less close interpersonal relationship, there is a greater tendency to engage in more serious substance use that could lead to substance abuse. Therefore, close interpersonal communication with their parent(s) is associated with the child not getting involved with substance use and abuse. Table 2 suggests that 42% of the teens in the sample tried illegal substances, while 58% did not.

Table 2

Substance Use Correlation with Communication with Parents on Daily Basis

	Have you tried any type of substance?	
<u>Communication with Parents</u>	<u>Yes %</u>	<u>No %</u>
Always	14	47
Sometimes	60	55
Never	5	2
Occasionally	5	12
Total	84	116
%	42%	58%

$$\chi^2=17.57, df=3, p<.001$$

These results indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between the amount of time the adolescents spend communicating with their parents and their use of a substance. In other words, teens that have a good relationship with their parents did not try a substance.

The next key question of the survey asked if the child would ever discuss with their parent(s) about their use of a substance. Looking at the results based upon each child's age the results were near the same. Within the age groups 35.1 percent said they would discuss with their parents, whereas 64.1 percent said they would never discuss with their parents about their substance use as compared in Table 4. When comparing the results based on if they communicated with their parents on a daily basis, it is shown in Illustration 1 that 15.3 percent of 45 of the children surveyed who do communicate with their parents on a daily basis will not discuss their substance use with their parents.

Table 4
Age Representation of Discussing Substance Use with Parents

	Will you ever discuss with your parents about your use of substances?	Will you ever discuss with your parents about your use of substances?
<u>Age</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
13-15	20	32
16-17	21	32
18-19	5	20
Total	46	84
%	35.1%	64.1%

$$x^2=4.67, df=2, p=.32$$

The results showed that regardless of their age the adolescents would not be likely to discuss substance usage with their parents. Young and old teens would not discuss substance use with their parents.

During the focus group discussion the leading question given covered how children viewed discussing issues with their parent(s) and if they felt that it made a difference or not in situations that they may face when dealing with everyday life. Many of the children that participated in the focus group felt that if they could discuss many issues, like substance use and abuse, would not try it or would discuss with their parent(s)

about their use. Some of the parents felt that even if they talked with their children that they still had to worry about them trying a substance.

Each child was then asked if they felt that they needed help quitting a substance would they go to their parents. Of the children surveyed 50.3% said they would go to their parent(s) for help instead of their parents. (Illustration 2)

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked are males more likely than females to become involved with substance use and abuse? There was a comparison of substance use based on the gender of the child. Only 19% of females surveyed had tried a substance, whereas, 23% of the males surveyed had tried a substance. (Table 6)

Table 6

Substance Use Based on Gender

<u>Gender</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Boys	46	23%
Girls	38	19%
Total	84	42%

$$x^2=2.27, df=1, p=.13$$

The survey further probed whether teens would discuss their substance use with their parents. The results showed that 38% of females talked about substance their substance use with their parent(s), and 40.5% of males talked about their substance use with their parent(s).

This test showed that more male adolescents have tried a substance than female adolescents. There is not a significant gender difference.

During the focus group one out of three of the girls present had tried a substance and both of the guys present had tried a substance. The girls that had not tried a substance said they credited it have a close relationship with both parents and wanting to uphold the trust they know their parents have for them.

Research Question 3

Research question 3 asks are younger adolescences are more prone to experiment with a substance than older adolescences? The age range of the children surveyed was from ages 13-19 years old. The question asked to try and prove this hypothesis was if the adolescent had tried a substance or not. In Table 8 it shows that older adolescents were more than likely going to try a substance than the younger adolescents.

Table 8

Age Compared to Substance Use

<u>Age</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
13-15	22	11%
16-17	42	21%
18-19	20	10%
Total	84	42%

$$\chi^2=8.38, df=2, p=.01$$

The study showed that the older an adolescent is, the more prone they are in becoming involved with a substance. Therefore Hypothesis 3 is disproved.

The data gathered in Table 8 was then placed into a chi-square test. This test showed that older adolescents are more than likely to do a substance than a younger adolescent.

Survey of Parents

While conducting the study may other factors were found to play into the relationship of the parent and child. These finding were based on the 200 surveys that parents took. The finding showed that 98% of the parents felt that they did not have major problems within their household that required a lot of attention. It was also shown that 99% of the parents felt that the style of communication they used with their children was effective in keeping their relationship with their child intact.

The questions began to lead into if their children had issues with drug, where would they go for help. As shown in Illustration 4 it shows that a majority of the parents, 38%, would take their child to a drug rehabilitation center for help with substance use and abuse problems. Each parent surveyed said that they felt as if they could approach their child to discuss matters such as a drug related issue. (Table 10)

Table 10

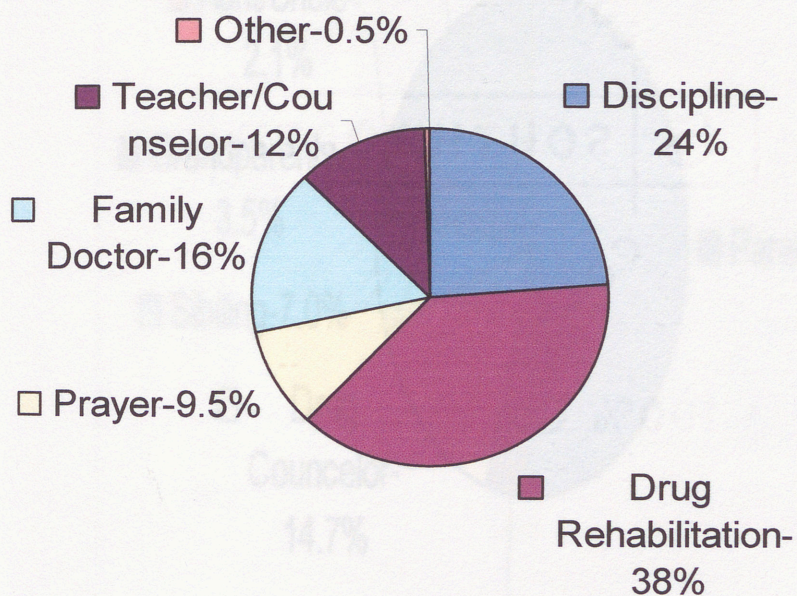
Communication in Correlation to Parent's Education Back Ground

<u>Education Level</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
High School	61	30.5%
Some College	91	45.5%
Bachelor's Degree	47	23.5%
Master's Degree	1	0.5%
Total	200	100%

$$x^2=.16, df=2, p=.92$$

The data gathered in Table 10 was then placed into a chi-square test. This test showed that more adults with an education higher than a high school diploma would communicate more with their children about substance use.

Parents' Choice for Help With Drug



Discipline-24%

Drug
Rehabilitation-
38%

Prayer-9.5%

Family Doctor-
16%

Teacher/Counse
lor-12%

Other-0.5%

Help for Substance Use and Abuse

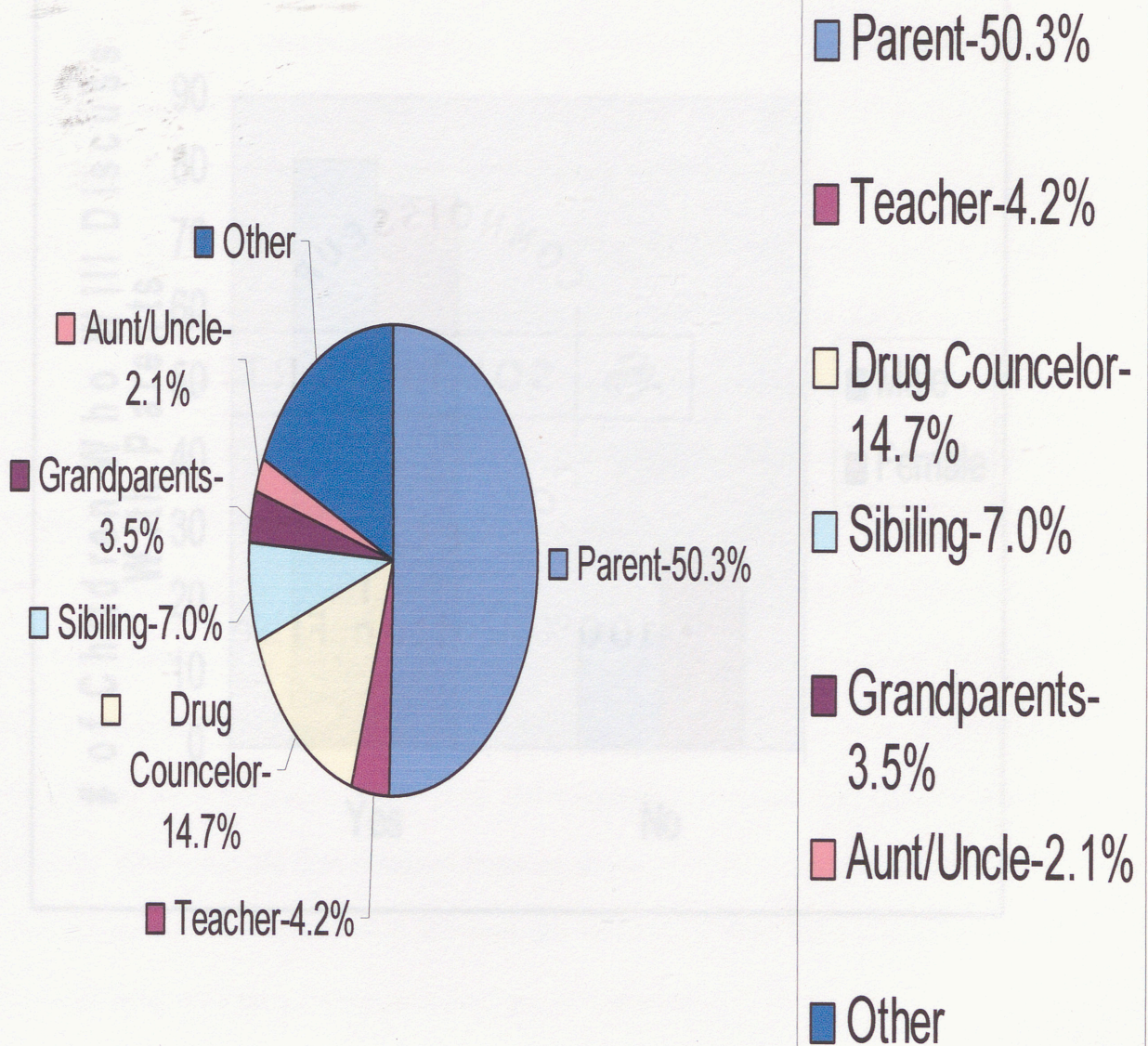
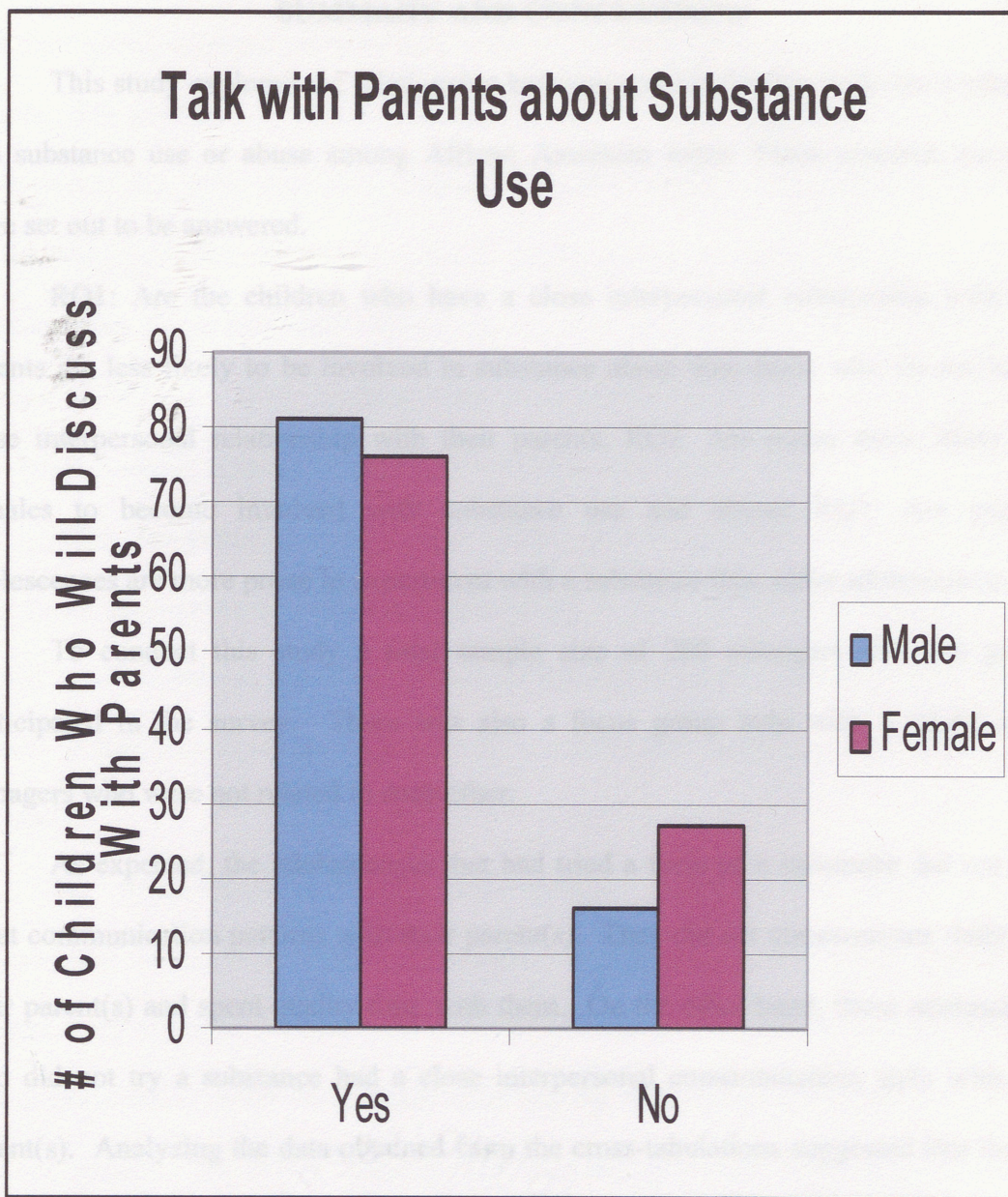


ILLUSTRATION 3



CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the relationship between communication with one's parent(s) and substance use or abuse among African American teens. Three research questions were set out to be answered.

RQ1: Are the children who have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents are less likely to be involved in substance abuse than those who do not have a close interpersonal relationship with their parents; RQ2: Are males more likely than females to become involved with substance use and abuse; RQ3: Are younger adolescences are more prone to experiment with a substance than older adolescences?

To conduct this study a total sample size of 200 teenagers and 200 parents participated in the survey. There was also a focus group help with 5 adults and 5 teenagers who were not related to each other.

As expected, the adolescences that had tried a form of a substance did not have great communication patterns with their parent(s). They did not communicate daily with their parent(s) and spent quality time with them. On the other hand, those adolescences who did not try a substance had a close interpersonal communication style with their parent(s). Analyzing the data obtained from the cross-tabulations suggested that there is a correlation between relationship between the amount of time the adolescents spend communicating with their parents and their use of a substance.

Looking at the gender of the adolescent, the females had a more personal relationship with their parent(s) and thus showed less involvement with substance use or abuse. The females feel more of a need to keep a positive image with their parent(s).

Also the study showed that older adolescences were more subjected than younger adolescences to try a substance. Older adolescences may feel a need to keep an image with their peers, whereas, younger adolescences are more guided and influenced by their parents. The information gained from the chi-square test performed shows on research question two that more male adolescents have tried a substance than female adolescents. On the other hand, the information gained from the chi-square test performed on research question three shows that older adolescents are more than likely to use a substance than younger adolescents. When looking at the study conducted by Clark and Sheild (1997), their study supports research questions one and two with similar results.

When the parent(s) do not show control, communication with their child may need to be implemented. When communication is bad, the adolescent may be more enticed to substance use and abuse. Based on the past research conducted by Parker and Benson (2004), they found the same correlated results, thus supporting what was found in this study.

The implications from the study provide evidence that having a close interpersonal relationship with the parent(s); a child will not become involved in substance use or abuse. Further studies could be conducted to prove if age barriers or the lack of information on the parent's part play into the roles of the communication patterns between parent(s) and child. When a child is in the adolescent stage of their life, they face a variety of challenges and obstacles. They want to be their own person with their own identity, and with the help from their parent(s) they will be guided down the right path without having to be faced with the being involved in substance use and abuse.

Limitations

When conducting the study there were some problems encountered that affected the results of the study. One problem was the surroundings of the testing environment. The survey was conducted in the setting of a churches, youth activity centers, and household. This was done to try and reduce bias, but sample size participants were often distracted by their thoughts of confidentiality limitations. Another major problem was answers going unanswered by some of the participants. Many of the participants did not answer the entire questions on the survey. This made some of the results harder to be determined.

The results came out the way they did because of the many factor that were present in the study, partly based on the problems encountered when doing the survey. The sample was from predominantly lower and middle class neighborhoods, hence implicating that other studies should be conducted in an even distribution of all socio-economic classes. Also the study should be conducted in a less distracting environment to ensure the completion of the test. The findings that were found are valid and useful. Even though there were differences between interpersonal relationships, age, and gender; the results show that good interpersonal relationships between parent(s) and children are an important factor in preventing substance use or abuse.

Appendix A

Dear Student:

Thank you for your participation in this study. This is very important in helping understanding the correlation between the parent-child relationship and the child's substance use or abuse. Please answer each question carefully and honestly. Your answers will not be shared. It is completely confidential.

Part 1

1. What is your ethnicity?
African American _____ Hispanic _____ Caucasian _____ Indian _____ Other _____
2. What is your sex?
Male _____ Female _____
3. What is your age?
13-15 _____ 16-17 _____ 18-19 _____
4. What is your grade level?
8th _____ 9th _____ 10th _____ 11th _____ 12th _____
5. How many people live in your house?
1-3 _____ 4-5 _____ 6-7 _____ 7-9 _____ 9-up _____
6. What number child are you?
Oldest _____ Middle _____ Youngest _____
7. Have you ever tried any type of substance (i.e. cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana) for any specific reason?
Yes _____ No _____
8. How often do you use this substance? _____
9. When was the last time you used a substance? _____
10. Which substances do you use the most often? (i.e. cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana)

11. Have you thought of trying a new substance?
Yes _____ No _____
12. Have you used a harder substance that was harder to obtain?
Yes _____ No _____

Appendix A

Dear Student:

Thank you for your participation in this study. This is very important in helping understanding the correlation between the parent-child relationship and the child's substance use or abuse. Please answer each question carefully and honestly. Your answers will not be shared; it is completely confidential.

Part 1

1. What is your ethnicity?
African American____ Hispanic____ Caucasian____ Indian____ Other____
2. What is your sex?
Male____ Female____
3. What is your age?
13-15____ 16-17____ 18-19____
4. What is your grade level?
8th____ 9th____ 10th____ 11th____ 12th____
5. How many people live in your home?
1-3____ 3-5____ 5-7____ 7-9____ 9-up____
6. What number child are you?
Oldest____ Middle____ Youngest____
7. Have you ever tried any type of substance (i.e. cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana) for any specific reason?
Yes____ No____
8. How often do you use this substance? _____
9. When was the last time you used a substance? _____
10. Which substances do you use the most often? (ie: cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana)

11. Have you thought of trying a new substance?
Yes____ No____
12. Have you tried a harder substance that was harder to obtain?
Yes____ No____

13. Where did you try the substance? _____

Part 2

14. How often do you and your parent(s) have quality time together?

Always__ Sometimes__ Never__ Occasionally__

15. How often do you communicate with your parent(s) on a daily basis?

Always__ Sometimes__ Never__ Occasionally__

16. How often do you communicate with your parent(s) about personal issues?

Always__ Sometimes__ Never__ Occasionally__

17. Do you feel like you get enough attention at home?

Yes__ No__

18. Have your parent(s) talked to you about substance use or abuse?

Yes__ No__

19. If not your parent(s), who do you rely on for information about substance use or abuse? _____

20. How often do you talk to this person about this issue?

Always__ Sometimes__ Never__ Occasionally__

21. Do you feel that if your parent(s) would have talked to you more about substance use or abuse that you would not have tried any drug?

Yes__ No__

22. Do you feel like you turned to a substance because of lack of attention at home?

Yes__ No__

23. Will you ever discuss with your parent(s) your use of a substance?

Yes__ No__

24. Do you think that you could quit using the substance?

Yes__ No__

25. If you feel you need help quitting your substance use will you seek help?

Yes__ No__

26. Where would you go for help? _____

Appendix B

Dear Parents:

Thank you for your participation in this study. This is very important in helping understanding the correlation between the parent-child relationship and the child's substance use or abuse. Please respond to each question carefully and honestly. This survey is completely confidential.

1. How old are you? ☐ 30-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 60 or older
2. Your sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female
3. What is your level of education? ☐ High School ☐ Some college ☐ Bachelors degree ☐ Masters degree ☐ PH.D.
4. What is your marital status? ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed
5. What is your average income? ☐ Less than 20k ☐ 20k-50k ☐ 50k-60k ☐ 60k-up
6. How many children do you have living at home? ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5 ☐ 5-7 ☐ 7-up
7. How many children, age 18 or under, do you have? _____
8. Are there a lot of problems that exist in your household? ☐ yes ☐ no
9. Do you support your children in everything that they do? ☐ yes ☐ no
10. How often do you communicate with your children on a daily basis? ☐ Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐ Occasionally
11. How much time do you set aside to talk to your children? _____
12. Is there a lot of success in the communication style you choose to use with your children? ☐ yes ☐ no
13. How often do you find your children communicating to you about personal issues? ☐ Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐ Occasionally
14. Do you feel that your children communicate with other people on personal issues instead of you? ☐ Yes ☐ no
15. Do your children rely on you for information about substance use or abuse? ☐ yes ☐ no
16. How often do they discuss this issue with you? ☐ Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐ Occasionally

17. Do you feel that if you talk to your child about substance use or abuse that it will keep them from trying drugs? __Yes __no
18. Do you think your children use substances as a cry for attention from you? __Yes __no
19. Will you ever approach your children to discuss important matters as this? __Yes __no
20. If you thought your child was using drugs, where would you go for help? _____
21. Can you tell me of some experiences you have had dealing with your children?
22. What are some of the activities that you participate with your children in?
23. Can you give me an example of a disagreement you may have with your children?

REFERENCES

- Andrews, J. A., Hops, H., Ary, D., Tildesley, E., & Harris, J. (1993). Parental influence on early adolescent substance use: Specific and nonspecific effects. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 13(3), 285-310.
- Baldwin, M. W. (1992). Relational schemas and the processing of social information. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 461-484.
- Barbato, C., Graham, E., & Perse, M. (2003). Communicating in the family: An examination of the relationship of family communication climate and interpersonal communication motives. *Journal of Family Communication*, 3, 123-149.
- Clark, R. D., & Shields, G. (1997). Family communication and delinquency. *Adolescence*, 32 (125), 74-81.
- Coombs, R. H., & Landsverk, J. (1988). Parenting styles and substance use during childhood and adolescence. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 50, 473-482.
- Fitzpatrick, M. A., Marshall, L. J., Leutwiler, T. J., & Krcmar, M. (1996). The effect of family communication environments on children's social behavior during middle childhood. *Communication Research*, 23, 379-406.
- Galvin, K., & Brommel, B. (1991). *Family communication: Cohesion and change*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Hartley, P. (1999). *Interpersonal Communication*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, J.E., & Zunguze, S. T. (1998). The relationship of family structure to adolescent drug use, peer affiliation, and perception of peer acceptance of drug use. *Adolescence*, 33 (132), 811-822.
- Kelly, K. J., Comello, M. L., & Hunn, C. P. (2002). Parent-child communication, perceived sanctions against drug use, and youth drug involvement. *Adolescence*, 37, 775-787.
- Koerner, A. F., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (2002). Toward a theory of family communication. *Communication Theory*, 12, 70-91.
- Koesten, J., & Anderson, K. (2004). Exploring the influence of family communication patterns, cognitive complexity, and interpersonal competence on adolescent risk behaviors. *Journal of Family Communication*, 4, 99-122.
- Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (2005). *Theories of Human Communication* (8th). New York: Thomson/Wadsworth.

- Neiderhiser, J. M., Pike, A., Hetherington, E. M., & Reiss, D. (1998). Adolescent perceptions as mediators of parenting: Genetic and environmental contributions. *Developmental Psychology, 34*, 1459-1469.
- Parker, J. S., & Benson, M. J. (2004). Parent-Adolescent Relations and Adolescent Functioning: Self-Esteem, Substance Abuse, and Delinquency. *Adolescence, 39*, 519-530.
- Ritchie, L. D., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (1990). Family Communication Patterns: Measuring Intrapersonal Perceptions of Interpersonal Relationships. *Communication Research, 17*, 523-544.
- Sokol-Katz, J. & Dunham, R. (1997). Family structure versus parental attachment in controlling adolescent deviant behavior. *Adolescence, 32*, 199-216.
- Taylor, D. A. & Altman, I. (1987). Communication in interpersonal relationships: social penetration processes. *Interpersonal Process: New Direction in Communication Research, 257-277*.
- Van Beest, M. & Baerveldt, C. (1999). The relationship between adolescents' social support from parents and from peers. *Adolescence, 133*, 193-201.
- Wills, T., Vaccaro, D., & McNamara, G. (1992). The role of life events, family support, and competence in adolescent substance use: A test of vulnerability and protective factors. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 20*, 349-374.

ROBERT J. TERRY LIBRARY
TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY



3 9070 00297670 0

10/16/2008

V 148396 4 44 00



THE GROUP - IN

