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SHAME AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR IN CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

By

Robert Tom Muller

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ABSTRACT

SHAME AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR IN CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

By

Robert Tom Muller

This document is the report of a family study conducted at Michigan State University. Two issues were addressed in this project: (1) Which factors predict the experience of shame over using corporal punishment on one's children? Some of the factors included were spouse's shame over use of corporal punishment, authoritarian parenting attitudes, self esteem, and race; (2) Is there evidence to suggest that corporal punishment increases child aggressive behavior (based on social learning theory), or do temperamentally aggressive children receive more corporal punishment? Two samples of parents participated in this research. These consisted of 1536 parents of 983 college students, and 172 parents involved with the self help group, Parents Anonymous. Parents completed questionnaires in their homes. College students completed questionnaires in classrooms. Data were analyzed using confirmatory factor analyses, multiple regressions, and path analyses.

For Eva, Louis, and my Tango partner, Diane

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Within the first few months of my graduate education at Michigan State University, I became familiar with the work of Professor John E. Hunter (or as his students affectionately refer to him...Jack). Although I was intrigued and impressed by his mathematical brilliance, as well as his vast knowledge of psychology, these were not the main factors in my decision to work with him. Instead, I was drawn to Jack primarily because he reminded me of one of my first Talmud (Jewish oral law) teachers, Rabbi Gurvitz. Like my former Rabbi, Jack has been an inspiration to me. He has guided my thinking, and has encouraged me to be both creative as well as meticulous. He has been invested in my work, and has been a true mentor to me. Finally, he has taught me that it is possible to be passionate about psychological research, even after more than 30 years in the field. I will miss working with Jack.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Professor Gary Stollak, who has served as co-chairperson for my dissertation committee. Gary's warm sense of humour and his calming, supportive style greatly facilitated the execution of this project. Gary provided enormous clinical expertise from his years as a child psychologist, and this

proved invaluable in connecting the study to the issue of clinical relevance. Over the years, he has been a teacher and friend.

Additionally, I would like to thank Professor Hiram E. Fitzgerald, and Professor Ellen Whipple, both of whom provided tremendous research expertise in both child development as well as child maltreatment. Their specific, insightful, and practical suggestions were constructive and highly facilitative in the timely completion of this project.

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In the 30 or so years that have elapsed since C. Henry Kempe's publication of the Battered Child Syndrome (Kempe, Silverman, Steele, Droegemueller, & Silver, 1962), numerous papers have appeared on the topics of corporal punishment and child maltreatment. The field is now characterized by a multidisciplinary approach, in which the sciences of psychology, sociology, pediatrics, and psychiatry have all made significant contributions. Furthermore, professionals such as social workers, attorneys, and judges have also become very involved in this area.

This dissertation presents the results of a research study conducted at Michigan State University. The point of this investigation was to address two issues in the area of corporal punishment, that have not yet been examined in prior psychological research. The first issue has to do with the experience of carrying out corporal punishment. Prior studies have not systematically investigated the parents' experiences in utilizing corporal punishment. In this study, the following questions were asked. "Would different parents have very different feelings about their prior use of corporal punishment?" "What would lead some parents to feel shame regarding these behaviors?" "What

would inhibit the manifestation of shame regarding physically punitive parenting?"

The second issue has to do with the behaviors themselves. Prior studies have been inconsistent in the causal assumptions they have made regarding the intergenerational manifestation of physical child punishment. In this regard, the following questions were asked. "Does the aggressive behavior of the child lead to greater use of physical punishment as a means of stabilizing that child's behavior?" or "Does the use of corporal punishment upon a child influence the development of aggressive child behavior?" In most prior studies, associations that have been found between the two relevant variables have been assumed to be in a particular causal direction. However, the direction of effects has not been tested directly.

In this study, I have been careful to use the term "corporal punishment" where relevant. This term is meant to be a purely descriptive label, referring to the use of physical punishment directed toward the corpus (body) of a child. A variety of labels have been used to characterize the use of physical means of disciplining children. The term "battered child" was brought into the medical lexicon by the 1960s by such researchers as C. Henry Kempe (1962) and Ray Helfer. The phrase "child abuse" is found commonly in pediatrics journals. "Child maltreatment" appears to be

one of the terms of choice among many developmental psychologists. The major problem with such terminology is that there is little agreement as to what the words mean. A study by Rausch and Knutson (1991) found that among subjects who reported parental behaviors that were judged by the researchers to be "abusive," only 26.6% considered themselves to have been "abused." Furthermore, the term "abuse" carries with it considerable ambiguity and moral connotation, which may bias research. For example, a study by Waterman and Foss-Goodman (1984) investigated the issue of victim blame in the area of "child sexual abuse." They asked subjects if they had ever been "molested" as a child. It is possible that such a term could lead to idiosyncratic interpretation by participants, rendering conclusions suspect.

In the current project, two samples were chosen. These consisted of a nonclinical as well as a clinical group. The former refers to nonclinical families. For this group, data were gathered on students at Michigan State University, as well as the fathers and mothers of such students. For the clinical sample, data were gathered on parents who were involved with the self help group, Parents Anonymous. The point of using two samples was to increase the external validity (generalizability) of the findings.

The data that were gathered on the families of college students, allowed for capitalization on multiple

perspectives. The fathers, mothers, and students each reported the extent of corporal punishment used upon the child (student). Wherever possible, the analyses made use of these multiple perspectives in coding variables.

The write-up of this thesis is structured in the following manner. Chapter 2 presents the methods and the measurement procedures that were used in gathering data on both samples. This includes the sample features, recruitment procedures, and analyses of the measurement model. Chapters 3 addresses the issue of parental shame regarding prior use of corporal punishment. Chapter 4 addresses the issue of intergenerational transmission of corporal punishment. Chapters 3 and 4 are each divided into 3 sections. The sections are: (a) introduction to all literature relevant to the specific issue; (b) results of analyses that were geared toward the specific issue; (c) discussion of findings.

In order to understand this document most clearly, I would suggest reading in the following order. Introductions to chapters 3 and 4, chapter 2 (all), chapter 3 (all), and chapter 4 (all).

CHAPTER 2: METHOD AND MEASUREMENT

Method

Subjects

Two samples of parents participated in this research. Sample 1 consisted of the 1536 parents (732 fathers, 804 mothers) of 983 college students. For sample 1, median age was 47 years. Ethnic background for Caucasian, Black, and Hispanic subjects was 90.4%, 3.6%, and 1.3% respectively. The largest religious categories endorsed were Roman Catholic (n = 689), Presbyterian (n = 156), and Lutheran (n = 145). The median respondent considered him/herself to be "fairly" religious. Average level of schooling completed was "some high school." The modal occupation category endorsed was "skilled manual employee."

College students consisted of 983 participants (295 males, 688 females) in psychology classes at Michigan State University. Median age was 18.0 years. Ethnic background for Caucasian, Black, and Hispanic subjects was 86.8%, 6.1%, and 1.9% respectively. The largest religious categories endorsed were Roman Catholic (n = 414), Presbyterian (n = 88), and Lutheran (n = 74). The median respondent considered him/herself to be "somewhat" religious. Average level of schooling completed was "some college." The modal occupation category endorsed was "clerical or sales worker, technician, or proprietor of a very little business."

Sample 2 consisted of 172 parents from parents anonymous (P.A.) self-help groups (35 fathers, 137 mothers). The following information about the characteristics of P.A. parents was derived from a series of informal interviews with directors of P.A. groups nationwide. Reliabile norms on P.A. parents have not yet been compiled. Parents Anonymous is self-help organization for parents who abuse (or fear they may abuse) their children. It is an organization for parents who are at high risk for carrying out physical abuse on their children. Parents may refer themselves to treatment or they may be referred by the court if viewed as necessary. The group charges no fee for service and relies exclusively on volunteers. Parents who participate vary from those who are passive, and have poor verbal skills to those who are more active, verbally skilled, and somewhat psychologically minded. The group provides promise of anonymity to parents. There is a "sponsor" of the group who acts as a support system for parents. The sponsor must ensure that the group has a place to meet, that parents have transportation to meetings, and other logistics.

For sample 2, median age was 32 years. Ethnic background for Caucasian, Black, Hispanic, and Oriental subjects was 73.3%, 6.4%, 7.0%, and 2.9% respectively (8.1% reported "other"). The largest religious categories endorsed were Baptist (n = 43), Roman Catholic (n = 42), and

Lutheran (n = 13). The median respondent considered him/herself to be "fairly" religious. Average level of schooling completed was "some high school." The modal occupation category endorsed was "clerical or sales worker, technician, or proprietor of a very little business."

Materials

(1) Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1989; Straus & Gelles, 1989). In order to provide an indication of the respondent's childhood experience with physically punitive parenting, an adapted version of the CTS was used. Several items were taken from the Assessing Environments III Questionnaire (AEIII; Berger, Knutson, Mehm & Perkins, 1988). Subjects were asked to indicate their parents' behaviors or tactics toward them in conflict situations. The measure used in this study listed 16 possible ways to deal with conflict ranging from discussing the issue calmly to using a knife or gun. Conflict tactics were reported separately for each parent. Frequencies were reported on a 4-point intensity scale where 0 = never; 1 = once; 2 = twice; 3 = three times or more. All subjects (college students and parents) were asked to indicate each of their own parents' conflict tactics during the course of their entire childhood (32 items in total).

The CTS items used here are as follows: "Discussed an issue calmly;" "Got upset, but cooled down quickly;" "Sulked or refused to talk about an issue;" "Stomped out of

the room, house, or yard;" "Threw something at you;" "Pushed, grabbed, or shoved you;" "Slapped you or spanked you;" "Hit or tried to hit you with something;" "Kicked, bit, or hit you with a fist;" "Caused bruises or cuts to you;" "Beat you up;" "Started choking you;" "Burned or scalded you;" "Caused medical or dental injury to you;" "Tied you up, or locked you in a closet;" "Threatened you with a knife or gun, or used a knife or gun on you;"

In contrast to the assertions of Wyatt and Peters (1986), self-report questionnaires appear to be a valid method of reporting histories of severe physical punishment. Although the CTS has not been used typically for the purposes of assessing childhood experience of corporal punishment, the recent research of Berger and colleagues (Berger, Knutson, Mehm, and Perkins, 1988) demonstrated that if parental punitiveness is broken down in terms of specific behaviors, subjects are able to provide self-reports that are reliable and valid measures of their childhood experiences of corporal punishment.

In the current study, the CTS has 3 subscales. These are minor violence, severe violence, and very severe violence. Coefficient alpha reliabilities for the severe violence index have been demonstrated to be about $r = .49$ (Straus, 1989). Muller (1991) demonstrated a reliability coefficient of $r = .77$ when the 3 subscales were combined into one. Both the severe violence index and the very

severe violence index are considered to be measures of child abuse (Straus, 1989). The construct validity of the CTS has been reasonably well documented. For example, there is broad consensus that stress increases the risk of child maltreatment. Research using the CTS has yielded results consistent with that theory (Straus, 1989).

Using the CTS, the extent to which each parent in sample 1 used corporal punishment upon the student was evaluated from multiple perspectives (the parents' and the students'). The intercorrelation of the perspectives of each family member can be found in appendix 1.

(2) The Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) is a 10-item measure of self-esteem. The items are self-descriptive statements to which subjects indicate extent of agreement by means of a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Five items are reverse scored. The items are as follows: "I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others;" "I feel I have a number of good qualities;" "All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure (reverse scored);" "I am able to do things as well as most other people;" "I feel I do not have much to be proud of (reverse scored);" "I take a positive attitude toward myself;" "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself;" "I wish I could have more respect for myself (reverse scored);" "I certainly feel useless at

times (reverse scored);" "At times I think I am no good at all (reverse scored)."

Rosenberg (1965) reported a coefficient of reproduciblility of .92. Silber and Tippett (1965) found a test-retest coefficient of .85 for 28 college students over a 2-week period.

(3) In order to measure empathic disposition, an adapted version of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1980, 1983) was used. The original measure consisted of four subscales, each tapping some aspect of the global concept of empathy. The empathy subscales consisted of: (a) perspective-taking (PT), (b) fantasy (FS), (c) empathic concern (EC), and (d) personal distress (PD). The PT scale assesses the tendency to adopt spontaneously the psychological point of view of others; the FS scale taps respondents' tendencies to transpose themselves imaginatively into the feelings and actions of fictitious characters in books, movies, and plays. The EC scale assesses "other-oriented" feelings of sympathy and concern for unfortunate others. The PD scale measures "self-oriented" feelings of personal anxiety and unease in tense interpersonal settings. Parallel-forms reliabilities for these subscales have ranged from .71 to .77, while test-retest reliabilities ranged from .62 to .71 (Davis, 1980). Davis (1983) found the PT scale to be positively correlated (r = .40) with the Hogan Empathy Scale (Hogan, 1969). Davis

(1983) also found the FS and EC scales to be positively correlated (mean *r*s of .52 and .60 respectively) with the Mehrabian and Epstein Empathy Scale (Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972). Muller (1991) found evidence of a unidimensional factor structure tapping a global empathy construct, except for items from the personal distress subscale.

For the purposes of the current study, items from the personal distress subscale were excluded. Three items from each of the 3 remaining subscales were included (9 items in total). These items were selected since they demonstrated the highest standard deviations (Muller, 1991). Subjects responded to each of the self-descriptive statements on an intensity scale. The items from the Perspective Taking subscale are: "If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments (reverse scored);" "When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to 'put myself in his shoes' for a while;" and "Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how *I* would feel if I were in their place." The items from the Fantasy subscale are: "I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel;" "Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me (reverse scored);" and "After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters." The items from the Empathic Concern subscale are: "Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems

(reverse scored);" "Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal (reverse scored);" and "I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person."

(4) The Aggressive Behavior Scale (ABS) is a set of items developed for this study, in order to measure lifetime aggressive behavior. One subscale measured the respondent's tendency to behave aggressively as an adult. A second subscale measured the respondent's aggressive behaviors as a child. Many items from the first subscale were derived from the Antisocial Behavior Checklist (Zucker, Noll, & Fitzgerald, 1986). This instrument lists various behaviors and asks the number of times the respondent has acted in such a fashion ranging from never (0 times) to often (more than 10 times in the respondent's life. Fitzgerald, Jones, Maguin, Sullivan, Zucker, and Noll (1991) reported reliability coefficients of r = .90 among prison inmates, and r = .80 to .85 for undergraduate students.

In measuring aggressive adult behavior, subjects were asked to indicate the behaviors that they have manifested from age 11 until now. The items are: "Taken part in a gang fight;" "Beaten up another person;" "Broken street lights, car windows, or car antennas just for the fun of it;" "Been arrested for any non-traffic police offense;" "Hit another person in an argument;" "Argued at length with clerical or secretarial workers;" "Yelled uncontrollably at

someone you care about;" "Got caught speeding;" and "Said very cruel or humiliating things to someone."

For items that measure aggressive child behavior, respondents indicated the extent to which they recall manifesting such behaviors as a child (under 11 years of age). Many of these items were derived from the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983) and the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS; Hops, 1985); one item was taken from Malamuth et al. (1991). The 10 items are as follows: "Fought or argued with your brothers or sisters;" "got into fights or arguments with children at school;" "had temper tantrums, where you yelled and jumped up and down;" "teased other children;" "destroyed property such as tearing books or breaking toys;" "played with matches or started little fires;" "hurt or killed animals or birds for the fun of it;" "stole something from a store or from your parents;" "skipped school;" and "had 1 or more friends who got in trouble with the law for minor offenses (e.g., fighting or running away)." The last item has been shown to be strongly correlated with various dimensions of delinquency, including the frequency and persistence over time (Smith, Visher, & Jarjoura, 1991). That item has also been described as the "best single predictor of total self-report delinquency" (Hindelang, Hirschi, & Weis, 1981, p. 205; Malamuth et al., 1991).

(5) Four items from The F Scale (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950) were selected specifically for the purposes of measuring general level of punitiveness. Subjects were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with the statements presented. Subjects responded on a Likert scale. The items are: "Nobody ever learned anything really important except through suffering;" "An insult to our honor should always be punished;" "Homosexuals are hardly better than criminals and ought to be severely punished;" "Most of our social problems would be solved if we could somehow get rid of the immoral, crooked, and stupid people." The F scale has come under considerable criticism (see Rokeach, 1960) for measuring authoritarian "right-wing" values. In order to represent punitive "left-wing" values, 4 additional items were written. This brief scale entitled the Left-Wing Punitiveness Scale consisted of the following items: "Sex crimes, such as rape deserve more than mere imprisonment;" "Large companies that pollute our waters and fail to recycle should be forced to pay a fine;" "There should be a ban on testing nuclear weapons;" "Products that are tested on animals should be heavily taxed."

(6) Beliefs in authoritarian parenting were measured by the Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scale (APAS) developed for the purposes of this investigation. The scale is based partially on items derived from the Child Rearing

Practices Report (CRPR; Block, 1965) and on items from the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ; Buri, Louiselle, Misukanis, & Mueller, 1988). An examination of the factor structure and reliability of the CRPR can be found in Davies, Zucker, Noll, and Fitzgerald (1991). The original CRPR measure uses a Q-sort methodology. However in the current study, items were administered using a paper-and-pencil questionnaire. A measurement analysis of the PAQ can be found in Jackson (1991). In the current study, subjects indicated the extent of their agreement with each of the 14 items. The Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scale is designed to measure several components of authoritarian parenting beliefs, consistent with Baumrind (1971, 1989). These components are as follows:

(a) The extent to which the parent believes that children should conform or obey unquestioningly to the desires of the parent. Items that make up this subscale are: "Children should be expected to do what parents want;" "Parents should teach children who is boss in the family;" "Children should not disagree with their parents;" "Children should meet the expectations of their parents out of respect for authority;"

(b) The extent to which the parent believes that misbehaving children should be punished. Items from this subscale are: "If children fail to meet their parents' expectations, they should be punished;" "Noisy children

should be punished by being put off somewhere by themselves for a while;" "Scolding and criticism makes children improve;" "When children misbehave, parents should let them know how ashamed and disappointed they are;"

(c) The extent to which the parent believes in the value of physical punishment as a means of disciplining children. These items are: "Hitting a young child on the bottom is a good way of disciplining that child;" "Children who keep secrets from their parents should be spanked;" "If children are quarreling with their brothers and sisters, they should be physically punished by the parents;"

(d) The extent to which the parent believes in physical punishment as a means of disciplining children, even when that physical punishment is severe. These items are: "Sometimes parents need to beat up their children to teach them a lesson;" "If children don't get a whipping once in a while, they will become spoiled rotten;" "Children who talk back to their parents (smart alecks) deserve to be beaten up."

As a further means of testing the extent to which the parent believes in physical punishment as a means of disciplining children, part of the Child Abuse Scenarios Questionnaire (CASQ) (Muller, 1991) was administered. The CASQ was based partially on the research of Stollak, Scholom, Kallman, and Saturansky (1973). The version used in the current research consisted of 1 scenario depicting a

situation of severe use of corporal punishment. The scenario is as follows:

> Jonathan Krazdin, an 8 year old boy was in his room loudly hitting his dog with a plastic baseball bat. The dog was in pain. Sam Krazdin, Jonathan's father, called several times for Jonathan to stop. Jonathan would not stop. He threw a toy at his father and yelled: "Make me!" Sam Krazdin pulled the plastic bat out of Jonathan's hands, and hit Jonathan with it several times. Jonathan later developed bruises.

Following the scenario, subjects indicated the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with 3 statements. Responses for each of the items were made on a 7-point Likert scale. Muller (1991) found a parallel-form reliability coefficient of $\underline{r}$ = .89 for these 3 items. The statements are:

(a) Sam Krazdin's behavioral response toward Jonathan was justified.

(b) Sam Krazdin's actions toward Jonathan were appropriate to what Jonathan did.

(c) Sam Krazdin really had no alternatives other than what he did.

(7) Belief in authoritative parenting (Baumrind, 1971, 1989) was measured by means of 6 items adapted from the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri et al., 1988). The 6 items are entitled the Authoritative Parenting Checklist (APC). These items are: "Reasons for family policies should be discussed with the children;" "Whenever children think that rules and restrictions are unreasonable, parents

should encourage a verbal give-and-take;" "Children need discipline and guidance that is accompanied by love;" "Parents and children should talk about family rules together;" "A good way to teach a child self-control is to talk to that child calmly;" "When a parent is guiding a child's behavior, he/she should always be careful to respect that child."

(8) As part of the questionnaire that was aimed at assessing parenting attitudes, 7 additional items were included in order to assess the extent to which the person believes in nurturant parenting. Four of the items were adapted from the Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR; Block, 1965). Subjects rated agreement with each statement on an intensity scale. Items are as follows: "If you are caring and nurturant with a child, that child will develop well;" "Children should be given comfort and understanding when they are scared or upset;" "Parents should express affection by hugging, kissing, and holding their children;" "Parents should tell their children that they appreciate it when their children try hard;" "Parents should joke and play with their children;" "Children are born good;" and "Parents should say 'I love you' to their children."

(9) The Child Abuse Shame Scale (CASS) is a questionnaire developed (for this study) for the purposes of measuring shame over past physically punitive parenting. The measure is introduced as follows:

No matter how well parents and children get along, there are times when they disagree, and get annoyed with each other. Parents and children use many different ways of trying to settle differences between them. Sometimes parents feel ashamed of themselves because of what they have done in the past in raising their children. Sometimes they feel a sense of guilt and regret. They may believe they did things that were wrong in raising their children; they believe they made mistakes, and they wish they had a second chance to do things differently. We will list some of the things that you might have done when you had a problem with your child(ren). We want to know how ashamed you might feel over things you might have done in the past. Think about each of these parenting behaviors, and tell us how much you feel ashamed of yourself (guilty, regretful, remorseful) over having done this behavior. If you have never done a particular behavior, then you can say that. Please answer each question using the following scale.

The scale ranged from 0 (don't feel ashamed at all) to 4 (feel extremely ashamed). Number 5 on the scale was used to indicate never having done this particular parenting behavior. The measure listed 16 disciplinary parenting behaviors, ranging from nonabusive to severely abusive. Each item was derived from the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1989; Straus & Gelles, 1989) or from the Assessing Environments III Questionnaire (Berger, Knutson, Mehm & Perkins, 1988).

The items are as follows: "Discussed an issue calmly with your child(ren);" "Got upset, but cooled down quickly;" "Sulked or refused to talk about an issue;" "Stomped out of the room, house, or yard;" "Threw something at your child(ren);" "Pushed, grabbed, or shoved your child(ren);" "Slapped or spanked your child(ren);" "Hit or tried to hit your child(ren) with something;" "Kicked, bit,

or hit your child(ren) with a fist;" "Caused bruises or cuts to your child(ren);" "Beat up your child(ren);" "Started choking your child(ren);" "Burned or scalded your child(ren);" "Caused medical or dental injury to your child(ren);" "Tied up, or locked your child(ren) in a closet;" "Threatened your child(ren) with a knife or gun, or used a knife or gun on your child(ren);"

Following the 16 items mentioned above, parents were assessed regarding the extent to which they feel ashamed over potentially sexually abusive behaviors. Subjects read the following sentence:

> We would also like to know how you feel about having done each of the following parenting behaviors. Once again, think about each of these parenting behaviors, and tell us how much you feel ashamed of yourself over having done this action. If you have <u>never</u> done a particular behavior, then you can say that.

Following this sentence was a list of 6 items from Berger, Knutson, Mehm, & Perkins (1988) and from the research of Ginsburg et al. (1989). These items are: "engaged in sexual activity with your child(ren);" "fondled the sexual parts of your child(ren);" "sexually touched your child(ren) through their clothing;" "had sexual intercourse with your child(ren);" "tried to get your child(ren) to watch pornographic movies with you;" "showed your child(ren) your genitals in a sexual way." Following each of these statements, the respondent is asked to indicate the extent to which s/he feels ashamed using the

scale discussed above.

(10) Demographic Questionnaire (DQ). This measure was developed for the purposes of the current study. Socio-economic status was assessed by several items which ask the respondents to indicate each of their parents' levels of occupation (using the Hollingshead Index; Mueller & Parcel, 1981), education, and income. Subjects were asked to provide similar socio-economic information about themselves. They were asked about their age, their gender, their subject status (i.e., whether they are an M.S.U. student, father or mother of an M.S.U. student, father or mother of a non-M.S.U. student), their racial and religious backgrounds, whether they consider themselves to be religious, how often they pray, and whether they think their religious beliefs have influenced how they raise (or would raise) their children.

(11) Sexual Abuse Scale (SAS). Childhood experience of sexual abuse was measured using adapted items from the AEIII (Berger, Knutson, Mehm, & Perkins, 1988) and from the research of Ginsburg et al. (1989). In addition, several items were derived rationally. There are six items in total. Respondents were asked to indicate on a frequency scale the number of times the following occurred (from each of their parents separately): "tried to engage you in sexual activity;" "fondled your sexual parts;" "sexually touched you through your clothing;" "got you to have sexual

intercourse with him/her;" "forced you to watch pornographic movies;" "showed you his/her genitals in a sexual way."

The current study had a total of 159 items for parents and 137 items for college students. Prior to carrying out this study, the lengthiness of the questionnaire was evaluated. The current set of items was compared in length to the questionnaire administered routinely in parents anonymous groups. The "Self-Assessment Schedule" completed by all P.A. parents has approximately 80 items as well as 5 half-page essays. The current questionnaire did not appear to be more onerous or lengthy than the Self-Assessment Schedule. Both questionnaires require approximately 15 to 25 minutes to complete.

Procedure

Parents Anonymous (PA) Groups. The Parents Anonymous organization was solicited in the following fashion. A full review and acceptance process was conducted by the research committee of Parents Anonymous National. Once this project was accepted, contact was established with executive directors of P.A. central state offices as well as group leaders. In total, 13 central state offices and 17 specific groups across the U.S., Canada, and England agreed to take part. At Parents Anonymous, group leaders administered questionnaire packets to all interested parents who

completed the answers either during a specific time allotted by the group or at home.

Following their participation, P.A. central offices and group leaders were sent a one page summary of the results of this study. They were encouraged to distribute these handouts to all parents who participated, or who are interested in this research.

University Sample. In order to obtain extra credit by participating in research, 983 psychology undergraduates elected to sign up in the current study entitled "Family Attitudes Survey." Participants reported to a specific pre-arranged lecture hall. Every student received 3 envelopes. Envelope 1 contained Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS) and the Sexual Abuse Scale (SAS) (referring to the student's father and mother separately); also, it contained the Self-Esteem Scale, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI), the Aggressive Behavior Scale (ABS), the F Scale, the Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scale (APAS), the Child Abuse Scenarios Questionnaire (CASQ), the Authoritative Parenting Checklist (APC), the Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR), and the Demographic Questionnaire (DQ). Envelopes 2 and 3 respectively contained the complete packet of questionnaires for the respondent's father and mother to complete. Each of those packets contained the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS) and the Sexual Abuse Scale (SAS) (referring to the parent's own father and mother

separately); also, they contained the Self-Esteem Scale, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI), the Aggressive Behavior Scale (ABS), the F Scale, the Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scale (APAS), the Child Abuse Scenarios Questionnaire (CASQ), the Authoritative Parenting Checklist (APC), the Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR), the Child Abuse Shame Scale (CASS), and the Demographic Questionnaire (DQ).

Envelopes 1, 2, and 3 had the same ID number. Bubble sheets accompanying each of the 3 packets had the same ID number already pencilled in. Students were informed of the voluntary and anonymous nature of this research. Next, they were instructed to open the first envelope and complete the enclosed questionnaires, on the bubble sheets provided. Their responses were collected. Subjects were then informed that they have earned credit for research participation. Next, they were told that if they wish, they may continue participation for further credit by addressing the 2 envelopes (each containing a set of questionnaires for their parents to complete) and returning these materials to the researchers for mailing. "Parents" were defined for students as the caregiver(s) with whom they have lived most of the time until they were 17 years old. They were told that their parents will have no access to information the students have given us so far; that their parents will receive no other information other than what is in the

packet; that all parents are receiving these questionnaires regardless of what the students say about them; and that they should feel free to look through the packet of questionnaires to make sure they feel comfortable with the questionnaires.

Students and parents of students were informed that for each parent who returns a completed packet of questionnaires, students would receive additional research credit. Students were told that the only thing linking them to their parents is a randomly assigned identification number, and that they should mark down their ID numbers so that they can come claim research credit if their parents participate. Presenting this study to students and to parents as though parental participation would increase the credit received by students, was done in order to increase incentive for parents to participate. In fact, all students received full research participation credit regardless of the extent of their parents' participation.

Students were given a location and time to persue in order to receive a full explanation of the results of this study. This consisted of a one page summary distributed by secretarial staff at the department of psychology at Michigan State University. Students were encouraged to share this handout with their parents.

For both parent groups, participants received the same packet of questionnaires. All participants were instructed

to complete answers on the bubble sheets provided in each packet. Packets had an accompanying self-addressed, business reply envelope.

Response Rates

Sample One (Parents of College Students). The response rates for sample 1 are presented separately for fathers and mothers, and furthermore separately for parents on the two extreme ends of the corporal punishment scale. Parents at either end of the scale will be referred to as "abusive" and "nonabusive." Parents were defined as abusive if the student reported that the parent carried out any of the behaviors from the "Very Severe Violence Index" of the CTS (Straus, 1989; Straus & Gelles, 1989). This includes any item ranging from "Kicked, bit, or hit you with a fist" to "Threatened you with a knife or gun; or used a knife or gun on you." Response rates were calculated separately for the so-called abusive and nonabusive groups for the following reason; that is, in order to confirm the assumption that both groups of parents were equally likely to participate in this study.

For the current purpose (response rate calculation), parents were divided into abusive and nonabusive parents by means of the student report only. The parents were excluded from defining themselves as abusive or nonabusive here, because there would be no way of knowing the abuse status of any parent who did not return the questionnaire, because

that parent failed to return the questionnaire. Using an outside observer (the student) circumvents this problem. Of course, this creates an additional problem that only students rated their parents here, and the parents did not rate themselves.

The first issue addressed in terms of response rates is the percentage of students who agreed to have questionnaires sent to their parents. Out of a base of 983 students and 1928 parents, the percentage of students allowing the participation of their fathers and mothers were 86.2% and 91.9% respectively. Consequently, the total number of parents mailed questionnaires was $n = 1750$. Among abusive ($n = 164$) and nonabusive ($n = 796$) fathers, the percentages were 81.1% and 88.7% respectively (Chi square (1) = 7.12, $p < .01$). Among abusive ($n = 101$) and nonabusive ($n = 867$) mothers, the percentages were 94.1% and 91.7% respectively (Chi square (1) = .68, $p > .20$).

Next, of parents who were mailed questionnaires, what proportion completed and returned them? For fathers and mothers the percentages were 88.3% and 90.9% respectively. The total number of parents who returned completed questionnaires was $n = 1569$. Among abusive and nonabusive fathers, the percentages were 84.2% and 89.5% respectively (Chi square (1) = 3.14, $p > .05$). Among abusive and nonabusive mothers, the percentages were 82.1% and 92.1% respectively (Chi square (1) = 10.31, $p < .01$).

Thus it appears that among sample one, for all conditions, the response rates for the questionnaire data were above 80%, and did not differ largely for abusive and nonabusive parents.

Sample Two (Parents Anonymous). Out of 1030 P.A. parents who were given packets, 172 returned completed questionnaires (16.8%). Recall that 30 groups participated in this research. The response rates were broken down by group. The groups ranged in terms of participation from 0% to 100%. The mean group response rate was 23.4% with a standard deviation of 26.1%. This standard deviation is significantly higher (chi square (29) = 482.3, $p < .001$) than what it would have been (that is, 6.4%) if the groups had differed from one another only by chance. The large range and standard deviation across groups in response rates may suggest that parents were drawn from groups that varied widely in terms of motivation for participation.

Response rates could not be calculated separately for abusive and nonabusive P.A. parents because there was no outside observer to define abusiveness for this group.

Measurement

Measurement analyses were conducted separately for the 2 samples. Constructs hypothesized to be unidimensional were tested using the confirmatory factor analysis procedure.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Several earlier researchers (Hunter & Gerbing, 1982; Hunter, Gerbing, & Boster, 1982) have suggested that in order to conclude that a scale is structurally unidimensional, the correlations among the items should conform to the covariance structure (Joreskog, 1978) of a unidimensional measurement model as evaluated by a confirmatory factor analysis. In such a case, the correlation matrix should be consistent with two product rules (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982; Hunter & Gerbing, 1982); internal consistency and external consistency (parallelism). If the correlations among the items within a cluster form a Spearman Rank 1 matrix, they are said to be internally consistent (Green, Lissitz, & Mulaik, 1977). Items are externally consistent if their correlations with all variables outside the cluster are directly proportional to one another (Hunter, Gerbing, & Boster, 1982).

In order to analyze the measurement model of the current investigation, one estimation procedure was used. A multiple-groups centroid factor analysis (confirmatory factor analysis) was calculated using PACKAGE (Hunter &

Cohen, 1969; Hunter, Gerbing, Cohen, & Nicol, 1980). Communalities were computed by iteration within each cluster. The cluster solution was sought by successively repartitioning the items until the criteria of unidimensionality was achieved for each cluster. Clusters were considered unidimensional only if they met criteria for both internal as well as external consistency. Items not meeting these criteria were removed from the scale. This approach to confirmatory factor analysis has been demonstrated (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982) to be more statistically powerful than Joreskog's (1978) full information maximum likelihood method, especially in cases where there is misspecification of the factor model.

In the following section, the results from the confirmatory factor analyses are presented. Appendix 2 presents the specific item analysis of the confirmatory factor analysis. It lists each item from each scale, intercorrelations between the items, correlations between each item with every factor, all factor loadings, Cronbach alpha coefficients, and exactly which items were dropped from each scale (see appendix 2).

Tables 1, 2, and 3 present summaries of the confirmatory factor analyses. The results are presented for parents of college students, college students, and P.A. parents in tables 1, 2, and 3 respectively. The tables list each scale, the construct measured by the scale, the number

of items rejected due to inadequate internal or external consistency, and the range in factor loadings for the remaining items on each scale.

Table 1

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Parents of College Students

Scale	Construct Measured	# of Items Rejected	Range in Factor Loadings
1. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Father	0	.41 to .79
2. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Mother	0	.51 to .76
3. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Father	1	.35 to .85
4. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Mother	1	.58 to .83
5. Sexual Abuse Scale	Sexual Abuse from own father	6 (all)	none
6. Sexual Abuse Scale	Sexual Abuse from own mother	6 (all)	none
7. Slf-Esteem Scl.	Self Esteem	1	.44 to .73
8. Interpersonal Reactivity Index	Empathy	4	.38 to .56
9. Aggressive Behavior Scale	Aggressive Tendencies	5	.30 to .62
10. The F Scale	"Right-Wing" Punitiveness	0	.36 to .61
11. "Left-Wing" Pun. Scale	"Left-Wing" Punitiveness	1	.34 to .54
12. Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scl.	Authoritarian Parenting Beliefs	4	.40 to .64
13. Authoritative Parenting Checklist	Authoritative Parenting Beliefs	0	.49 to .79
14. Child Rearing Practices Rpt.	Nurturant Parenting Beliefs	2	.36 to .67
15. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Minor Violence	0	.73 to .90
16. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Very Severe Physical Violence	0	.76 to .97
17. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Sexual Abuse	6 (all)	none
18. Hollingshead Index	Socio-economic status	1	.55 to .95
19. Demographic Questionnaire	Religiosity	0	.65 to .82

Table 2

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results
for College Students

Scale	Construct Measured	# of Items Rejected	Range in Factor Loadings
1. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Father	0	.52 to .80
2. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Mother	0	.52 to .81
3. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Father	0	.51 to .82
4. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Mother	1	.58 to .79
5. Sexual Abuse Scale	Sexual Abuse from own father	6 (all)	none
6. Sexual Abuse Scale	Sexual Abuse from own mother	6 (all)	none
7. Slf-Esteem Scl.	Self Esteem	0	.58 to .81
8. Interpersonal Reactivity Index	Empathy	2	.31 to .63
9. Aggressive Behavior Scale	Aggressive Tendencies	3	.47 to .61
10. The F Scale	"Right-Wing" Punitiveness	0	.35 to .60
11. "Left-Wing" Pun. Scale	"Left-Wing" Punitiveness	1	.47 to .54
12. Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scl.	Authoritarian Parenting Beliefs	4	.46 to .59
13. Authoritative Parenting Checklist	Authoritative Parenting Beliefs	0	.52 to .76
14. Child Rearing Practices Rpt.	Nurturant Parenting Beliefs	1	.40 to .68
15. Hollingshead Index	Socio-economic status	1	.57 to .79
16. Demographic Questionnaire	Religiosity	0	.68 to .83

Table 3

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Members of Parents Anonymous

Scale	Construct Measured	# of Items Rejected	Range in Factor Loadings
1. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Father	0	.60 to .95
2. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Mother	0	.67 to .92
3. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Father	0	.59 to .84
4. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Mother	0	.50 to .74
5. Sexual Abuse Scale	Sexual Abuse from own father	1	.83 to .94
6. Sexual Abuse Scale	Sexual Abuse from own mother	1	.91 to 1.0
7. Slf-Esteem Scl.	Self Esteem	3	.56 to .79
8. Interpersonal Reactivity Index	Empathy	5	.21 to .47
9. Aggressive Behavior Scale	Aggressive Tendencies	6	.41 to .71
10. The F Scale	"Right-Wing" Punitiveness	0	.47 to .70
11. "Left-Wing" Pun. Scale	"Left-Wing" Punitiveness	0	.42 to .69
12. Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scl.	Authoritarian Parenting Beliefs	4	.46 to .69
13. Authoritative Parenting Checklist	Authoritative Parenting Beliefs	1	.47 to .80
14. Child Rearing Practices Rpt.	Nurturant Parenting Beliefs	1	.48 to .68
15. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Minor Violence	0	.65 to .82
16. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Very Severe Physical Violence	1	.52 to .92
17. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Sexual Abuse	6 (all)	
18. Hollingshead Index	Socio-economic status	1	.53 to .86
19. Demographic Questionnaire	Religiosity	0	.59 to .72

The final clusters from the confirmatory factor analysis are displayed next. Three tables present the scale means, standard deviations, and parallel forms reliabilities (calculated by way of standardized Cronbach alpha coefficients). Tables 4, 5, and 6 present these results for parents of college students, college students, and P.A. parents respectively.

Table 4

Scale Means, Standard Deviations, and Parallel Forms Reliabilities for Parents of College Students

Scale	Construct Measured	M	SD	Alpha
1. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Father	.82	.79	.72
2. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Mother	.87	.82	.72
3. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Father	.09	.32	.81
4. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Mother	.06	.25	.82
5. Slf-Esteem Scl.	Self Esteem	4.89	.83	.84
6. Interpersonal Reactivity Index	Empathy	3.89	.90	.64
7. Aggressive Behavior Scale	Aggressive Tendencies	.95	.58	.79
8. The F Scale	"Right-Wing" Punitiveness	1.39	.92	.57
9. "Left-Wing" Pun. Scale	"Left-Wing" Punitiveness	3.81	1.08	.43
10. Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scl.	Authoritarian Parenting Beliefs	1.52	.77	.82
11. Authoritative Parenting Checklist	Authoritative Parenting Beliefs	5.29	.62	.81
12. Child Rearing Practices Rpt.	Nurturant Parenting Beliefs	4.52	.45	.62
13. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Minor Violence	1.35	1.13	.88
14. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Very Severe Physical Violence	2.26	1.41	.90
15. Child Abuse Shame Scale	Minor Violence Toward Child	.56	.23	.63
16. Hollingshead Index	Socio-economic status	5.48	1.11	.76
17. Demographic Questionnaire	Religiosity	2.18	.93	.78

Table 5

Scale Means, Standard Deviations, and Parallel Forms Reliabilities for College Students

Scale	Construct Measured	M	SD	Alpha
1. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Father	.79	.82	.77
2. Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Mother	.82	.84	.78
3. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Father	.07	.24	.82
4. Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Mother	.08	.30	.75
5. Slf-Esteem Scl.	Self Esteem	4.60	.95	.90
6. Interpersonal Reactivity Index	Empathy	3.95	.88	.69
7. Aggressive Behavior Scale	Aggressive Tendencies	1.06	.71	.81
8. The F Scale	"Right-Wing" Punitiveness	1.68	.95	.56
9. "Left-Wing" Pun. Scale	"Left-Wing" Punitiveness	4.23	1.07	.51
10. Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scl.	Authoritarian Parenting Beliefs	1.61	.82	.83
11. Authoritative Parenting Checklist	Authoritative Parenting Beliefs	5.43	.56	.80
12. Child Rearing Practices Rpt.	Nurturant Parenting Beliefs	3.42	.45	.68
13. Hollingshead Index	Socio-economic status	5.80	1.04	.76
14. Demographic Questionnaire	Religiosity	1.85	.95	.79

Table 6

Scale Means, Standard Deviations, and Parallel Forms Reliabilities for Members of Parents Anonymous

Scale		Construct Measured	M	SD	Alpha
1.	Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Father	1.19	1.09	.88
2.	Cnflct Tactics	Minor Violence from own Mother	1.52	1.12	.85
3.	Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Father	.42	.73	.87
4.	Cnflct Tactics	Very Severe Viol. from own Mother	.37	.61	.85
5.	Slf-Esteem Scl.	Self Esteem	4.01	1.27	.87
6.	Interpersonal Reactivity Index	Empathy	3.62	1.01	.45
7.	Aggressive Behavior Scale	Aggressive Tendencies	.99	.68	.84
8.	The F Scale	"Right-Wing" Punitiveness	1.54	1.19	.70
9.	"Left-Wing" Pun. Scale	"Left-Wing" Punitiveness	4.40	1.14	.62
10.	Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes Scl.	Authoritarian Parenting Beliefs	1.73	.97	.88
11.	Authoritative Parenting Checklist	Authoritative Parenting Beliefs	5.34	.58	.79
12.	Child Rearing Practices Rpt.	Nurturant Parenting Beliefs	3.43	.62	.79
13.	Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Minor Violence	2.57	1.20	.83
14.	Child Abuse Shame Scale	Shame over Very Severe Physical Violence	3.35	1.01	.86
15.	Child Abuse Shame Scale	Minor Violence Toward Child	.71	.31	.71
16.	Hollingshead Index	Socio-economic status	3.69	1.37	.65
17.	Demographic Questionnaire	Religiosity	2.21	.88	.70

Once the confirmatory factor analysis procedure was completed, two sets of (attenuation corrected) factor by factor correlation matrices of the final clusters were generated. The first cluster matrix (see appendix 3) is for the college sample (students, fathers, and mothers).

This first cluster matrix, derived from the confirmatory factor analyses, were calculated with the variability due to student gender held constant. The main reason for this procedure was that it was posited that student gender itself may influence several of the other variables in the matrix such that the apparent relationships between these other variables would be reflections of spurious effects alone. For example, if male children were more aggressive, and they were more likely to be punished physically, then the apparent relationship between child aggressiveness and corporal punishment could be a spurious effect. In fact, the partial correlation matrix that was derived was virtually identical to the original one. As such, student gender appears to have had no systematic linear confounding effects on the correlations in these data. The original correlation matrix derived from the confirmatory factor analysis, as well as the partial correlation matrix can be found in appendix 3.

The second set of cluster matrices (see appendix 4) contains the correlations for all parents in the Parents Anonymous sample.

The factor by factor correlation matrices presented in appendices 3 and 4 were used as input in the ensuing regression and path analyses.

CHAPTER 3: FACTORS PREDICTING SHAME OVER PRIOR USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Introduction

The current chapter is an examination of individual differences among parents in the extent to which they experience shame over their prior use of corporal punishment. The introduction to this issue is structured in the following manner. First, I will present the background research, that focuses on group characteristics of parents using high levels of corporal punishment. This will be followed by an introduction to individual differences in the behaviors of such parents. Next, I will introduce theory and research in psychology on the issue of shame. This will be followed by an introduction to individual differences in the experience of shame over parents' use of corporal punishment. Next, I will present a discussion of several factors that may be hypothesized to predict shame over parents' use of corporal punishment. Finally, a path model of the relationships between many of these factors will be presented.

Background Research: Group Characteristics of Parents Using High Levels of Corporal Punishment

One of the most commonly reported characteristics of such parents is that of history of corporal punishment. Several researchers have pointed out a relationship between having received severe corporal punishment, and exercising

such punishment (e.g., Carroll, 1977; Gillespie, Seaberg, & Berlin, 1977; Isaacs, 1981; Kempe & Kempe, 1978; Lieh-Mak, Chung, & Liu, 1983; Webster-Stratton, 1985). Many of the investigations have been oriented toward observing personality characteristics (Friedrich & Wheeler, 1981) of parents using rigorous corporal punishment. Some studies have found such parents to be lower on self-esteem (Green, Gaines, & Sandgrund, 1974; Melnick & Hurley, 1969; Spinetta & Rigler, 1972), higher on mistrust (Kenel, 1976), lower on need to be nurturant (Melnick & Hurley, 1969), more dependent upon his/her children for nurturance and caring (Spinetta & Rigler, 1972), higher on impulse control problems (Azar, 1986), more physiologically and emotionally responsive to stimulation (Frodi & Lamb, 1980; Wolfe, Fairbank, Kelly, & Bradlyn, 1983), and more likely to use the defenses of denial, splitting, and projection (Brennan, Andrews, Morris-Yates, & Pollock, 1990; Prodgers, 1984). Research in this area has investigated the cognitive ability of parents using high degrees of corporal punishment. Such parents appear to be lower on IQ scores (Azar & Wolfe, 1989; Kaufman & Zigler, 1989; Pianta, Egeland, & Erickson, 1989). Some of the research delineating characteristics of parents using severe corporal punishment has looked at cognitive perceptions and attributions (Azar, 1986). Several studies have found such parents more likely to perceive normal child behaviors as problematic and malevolent (Bradley & Peters,

1991; Bauer & Twentyman, 1985; Larrance & Twentyman, 1983). Several investigators have found interpersonal characteristics of parents using rigorous corporal punishment. Such parents demonstrate a tendency to relate to others in a more aggressive manner (Oldershaw, Walters, & Hall, 1986), and they seem to isolate themselves from others (Colletta, 1979; Muller, Fitzgerald, Sullivan, & Zucker, 1991). A number of studies have found situational stress to be associated with severe use of corporal punishment (Gill, 1970; Gelles, 1973; Justice & Justice, 1982; Milner & Wimberley, 1980; Muller et al., 1991; Passman & Milhern, 1978; Wolfe, 1985).

Individual Differences in the Behavior of Parents Using High Levels of Corporal Punishment

Over the last 30 years, researchers have tried to identify the variety of ways in which individuals who exercise high levels of corporal punishment are different from "normal" parents. The majority of the aforementioned research studies are examples of that approach. However, in their zeal to identify group characteristics of such parents, the study of individual differences among these parents has fallen by the wayside. Parents who use corporal punishment (particularly severe degrees of corporal punishment) are characterized in the literature as a singular group of unusual persons. They are not viewed as

persons who may come from a host of backgrounds, and who may vary greatly in their psychological experiences.

Fritz (1989) asserted that in the early 1970s, a dichotomization occurred among social service providers. That is, certain agencies were formed that were "for the child" (such as Child Protective Services), while other agencies (such as Parents Anonymous) were "for the parent." Many researchers, such as child psychologists, pediatricians, or social workers, come from a tradition of concern for child welfare. It may be this tradition of concern for child safety has led to the characterization of parents who use rigorous corporal punishment as a disturbed group, and has led to investigations of the psychopathologies of that group, rather than to investigations of individual differences among such parents.

While the vast majority of the research literature has been oriented toward looking at characteristics of parents using severe corporal punishment, a small literature has developed recently on individual differences among such parents. In the majority of these studies, the goal was to observe parents for the purposes of categorizing them behaviorally in the context of some taxonomic system.

Based on clinical experience, Bowdry (1990) identified a typology of parents who use high levels of corporal punishment. She presented 6 different typologies. These were: (a) excessive corporal punishment; (b) misguided

attempts at education; (c) excessive corporal punishment with the primary problem being emotional abuse and rejection of the older child; (d) the battered child; (e) the serial batterer; and (f) sadistic or torturous abuse. The primary problem with her system is that there appears to be tremendous overlap among categories that are presumed to be distinct. For example, categories d, e, and f are merely specific instances of category a.

In a behavioral study, Oldershaw, Walters, and Hall (1989) videotaped the social interactions of 73 mothers labelled "abusive" with their children. Based on the observed parenting styles, three subgroups of mothers were identified by the method of cluster analysis. These were: (a) emotionally distant parents, who display fewer positively oriented behaviors. These persons issues commands in extremely flattened affective tones; (b) intrusive parents, who rely on power-assertive parenting techniques, such as threats; and (c) hostile parents, who display high rates of ignoring or humiliating of their child. They also revealed a great deal of disapproval. However, they did not apply excessive physical force.

The two aforementioned investigations examined individual differences among parents who use severe corporal punishment, but they have done so primarily by way of behavioral categorization. The behavioral interactions

between parents and children were observed, and the parents were categorized into some typology.

Theory and Research on Shame

Few psychologists have conducted comprehensive studies in order to understand the issue of shame. Over the last 10 years, a small number of theorists have posited several explanations of the phenomenon of shame. Among the most ambitious attempts is that of Kaufman (1992). He argued that shame originates interpersonally, primarily in significant relationships and actual shame experiences, but that it later becomes internalized so that the individual is able to activate the affect of shame without a specific shame-inducing interpersonal event. In Kaufman's view, the internalized experience of shame is such that the individual feels exposed with an accompanying self-consciousness. The individual has a piercing awareness of the self as fundamentally deficient in some vital way as a human being. The person is watching him/herself in painful scrutiny. Furthermore, it feels as though others are watching, and viewing the individual as lacking and deficient. To live with shame is to feel alienated and never quite good enough to belong. Interestingly, in a discussion of physical abuse, Kaufman (1992) stated that there is "shame about being an abusive parent (p. 182)." But, at no point did he elaborate on this assertion.

In attempting to understand the origins of shame, Gillman (1990) asserted that shame is first and foremost experienced as body shame. Mother-toddler interactions have been observed in order to explain the development of the child's sense of body shame. Yorke, Balogh, Cohen, Davids, Gavshon, McCutcheon, McLean, Miller, and Szydlo (1990) observed that toddlers (approximate age = 2 years) initially showed little concern about wetting accidents. The authors found that while children showed some surprise, they did not appear distressed by their actions. Furthermore, mothers appeared to experience shame long before the children did. The authors argued that from the child's point of view, the awareness of external disapproval from an adult precedes the child's experience of shame.

It is important to distinguish between shame and guilt (Bulka, 1987). Kaufman and Raphael (1987) suggested that guilt accompanies transgression and the implicit threat is one of punishment. In contrast, shame accompanies failure, and the implicit threat is abandonment. Guilt may be viewed as immorality shame. In other words, with guilt, there is an ethical judgment of immorality.

Individual Differences in the Experience of Shame over Use of Corporal Punishment

Very little research has been carried out on whether there are differences among parents in how they view their use of corporal punishment. The few studies that have been

carried out in this area suggest the following. There may be differences in the extent to which parents feel shame over their use of physical punishment. Some may experience their actions as justified and appropriate; while others may feel a sense of personal failure and deficiency as a parent.

Dietrich, Berkowitz, Kadushin, and McGloin (1990) interviewed 73 "physically abusive" parents in order to assess individual differences in the parents' tendencies to justify their behaviors. The authors found that in 58.9% of the cases, the parent expressed feeling remorse for their use of physical punishment, with the remaining parents indicating no remorse. In addition, in 62.5% of the cases, the parent indicated feeling justified, with the remainder feeling not justified. These results imply that parents may vary a great deal in the extent to which they feel shame over their prior use of corporal punishment.

Paulson, Strouse, and Chaleff (1980) conducted a post-hoc examination of group therapy notes. They discussed various anecdotal responses given by 52 court referred "physically abusive" parents. The authors found that many of the parents were overtly unwilling to acknowledge responsibility for their actions, and instead gave many statements justifying their behaviors. Examples of such statements were: "I did it, but there was a reason;" "I thought spanking was the only way to discipline;" "I was provoked, and my child had to learn for the good of his

character, just as I had to learn as a child (Paulson et al., 1980, p. 245)." In contrast, some of the parents were anxious to make up for their behavior. They would send to the foster home all of the child's existing toys. Moore (1983) suggested that many parents who use severe corporal punishment feel self-disgust regarding their treatment of their children. Brown (1980) posited that it is possible for abusive parents to suffer greatly in recognizing the magnitude of their acts.

In the current study it was proposed that parents may differ in the extent to which they experience shame over their prior use of corporal punishment. This investigation was geared toward understanding which factors best predict such parental shame. The specific predictors, and the theories and research justifying their inclusion are presented next.

Factors Predicting Shame Over Prior Use of Corporal Punishment

I have asserted that parents may experience different levels of shame regarding the use of corporal punishment. The current chapter is a comprehensive investigation of specific factors that may predict such individual differences in shame. A presentation will now follow of the specific predictors that were included.

Extent of Parents' Use of Corporal Punishment

It may be proposed that parents will feel greater shame regarding their use of corporal punishment if the extent of their corporal punishment is very great. It is possible that the use of milder degrees of such punishment would be insufficient to trigger a personal sense of inadequacy as a parent. Dietrich, Berkowitz, Kadushin, and McGloin (1990) found that among parents who used severe corporal punishment on their children, greater loss of temper toward the child was associated (beta = -.34) with less justification of the physically punitive disciplinary response. Pickering (1991) asserted that when a parent's use of "coercive" punishment reaches a threshold, the parent's self perception shifts to that of "being mean;" and this perception is often exaggerated when the parent witnesses the child's distress. Pickering (1991) posited that these perceptions lead to a sense of parental guilt. In the current investigation, it was asserted that as parents' use of corporal punishment becomes increasingly severe, parents' levels of shame over using corporal punishment will increase.

Corporal Punishment from Parents' Own Parents

It has been suggested that individuals who experienced corporal punishment in their own childhoods are more likely to justify the use of such parenting methods. Studies of young adult college students suggest that individuals who have experienced severe corporal punishment in their

childhoods are more likely to justify physically punitive parenting responses (r = .18; Muller, 1991), and to choose potentially injurious disciplinary responses in analog parenting tasks (r = .27; Zaidi, Knutson, & Mehm, 1989). In contrast, Dietrich, Berkowitz, Kadushin, and McGloin (1990) did not find a significant association (no effect size reported) between receiving severe corporal punishment as a child and feeling justified in one's own prior use of severe corporal punishment. The current study looked at the extent to which parents' reports of their childhood experience of corporal punishment predicted their shame over their use of corporal punishment.

Spouse's Shame Over Use of Corporal Punishment

Cybernetic theory (see e.g., Bateson, 1936/1958; Keeney, 1983) suggests that couples operate within a particular system. In that system, individuals influence one another by means of feedback. For example, in "positive feedback," an argument may escalate as words run back and forth between members of a system. In this way, family members influence one another in terms of affect and behavior. Several theorists (Erchak, 1984; Straus, 1973) have outlined cybernetic models of family violence, arguing that through feedback, an escalation of violence occurs.

It may be proposed that through a process of feedback and communication, members of a couple will influence one another. While part of this process of mutual influence

will include the escalation of family violence, it is possible that husbands and wives also influence one another in terms of how each feels about his/her prior behaviors. In the current study, it was proposed that the extent to which one's spouse experiences shame over use of corporal punishment will predict one's own shame.

Lifetime Aggressive Behavior

Several theorists (e.g., Eagly & Steffen, 1986) have suggested that there is an association between aggressive behavior and beliefs in the appropriateness of such behavior Eagly and Steffen (1986) suggested that a greater tendency to aggress may be associated with a lower tendency to experience guilt and anxiety regarding one's aggressive behavior. They explained that people behave aggressively to the extent that their beliefs about the consequences of aggression legitimize aggression and that people behave unaggressively to the extent that their beliefs inhibit aggression. They based their assertions upon expectancy value theory (Feather, 1982; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In this view, an attitude toward a behavior is a determinant of engaging in the behavior. It is important to note that this viewpoint argues that aggressive behavior is a consequence of expectancies. Alternatively, it is possible to put forth a different direction of effects. Aggressive behavior may be viewed as an antecedent. In this scheme, it is suggested that individuals who generally demonstrate less aggressive

behavior should be more likely to feel a sense of shame and personal failure, when observing their own use of corporal punishment upon their children.

Punitive and Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes

This variable was based upon the conceptualization of parenting styles derived by Baumrind (1971, 1989). Authoritarian parents believe that children should conform to a rigid set of standards set by parents. They believe that parents are the sole decision-makers, and children should be expected to obey unquestioningly. Often they use severely punitive methods of discipline. Baumrind (1989) stated that authoritarian parents value obedience as a virtue and favor punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will at points at which their children's actions or beliefs conflict with their standards of acceptable conduct. Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, and Fraleigh (1987) found that among 7,836 adolescents, authoritarian parenting style was negatively associated (r = -.21) with students' school grades.

In the current study, it was proposed that parents who have more authoritarian and punitive parenting beliefs would be more likely to be comfortable with their own use of corporal punishment as a parenting strategy; hence, should feel less shame over their use of such punishment.

Authoritative and Nurturant Parenting Attitudes

This variable was also based upon the theory and research of Baumrind (1971, 1989). As with authoritarian parents, authoritative parents also guide their children firmly, but they attempt to explain their reasoning and allow their children input into decision-making. In addition, their firm discipline and control are accompanied by love, warmth, and support (Baumrind, 1971, 1989). A recent analysis of Baumrind's (1971, 1989) authoritarian/authoritative distinction can be found in a study by Jackson (1991). Dornbusch et al. (1987) found that among 7,836 teens, authoritative parenting style was associated (r = .11) with students' school grades. In a study of 4,100 adolescents (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991), authoritative parenting (in contrast to authoritarian parenting was mildly associated with the teens' self-reliance (r = .06), social competence (r = .07), and academic competence (r = .07).

In the current research, I proposed that parents who demonstrate greater beliefs in the value of authoritative and nurturant parenting should feel a greater sense of shame over their use of corporal punishment on their children.

Self Esteem

In discussing the issue of shame, Kaufman (1991) argues that some individuals are more susceptible to the experience of shame than others. In particular, persons who lack a

self affirming capacity, are at greater risk for experiencing the affect of shame on a regular basis. Individuals who can affirm themselves from within, that is, persons with greater self esteem, are able to restore good feelings about the self, when those feelings have been distrupted by others. In Kaufman's view, the development of adequate self esteem can prevent the internalization of shame.

Abrams (1990) compared self esteem to shame. He characterized self esteem as a stable and abiding sense of one's own self worth over the long term. In contrast, shame has its origins in a disapproving shamer, to which the individual becomes psychically connected once the shame experience is internalized (Abrams, 1990). In the current study, it was suggested that parents who have a poorer sense of self esteem would tend to manifest greater levels of shame regarding their prior use of corporal punishment.

Socio-economic Status (SES)

It may be argued that parents coming from households of lower socioeconomic status (SES) have a greater tendency to have authoritarian belief systems. In fact, several researchers have found that socioeconomic status (SES) is associated negatively with an authoritarian parenting beliefs. Trickett, Aber, Carlson, & Cicchetti (1991) studied 132 children (4 to 8 years old) and their mothers. The authors found a negative association between SES and

Authoritarian Control (r = -.22, beta = -.15). In a study of 451 families, each of which included a 7th grader, Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, and Chyi-In (1991) found a negative correlation (r = -.10) for mothers between SES and beliefs in using corporal punishment for purposes of parenting. The current investigation assessed the extent to which socioeconomic status predicted parental shame over use of corporal punishment.

Race

Several studies indicate that variables such as racial or ethnic background influence the tendency to use corporal punishment and influence attitudes toward childrearing. Lindholm and Willey (1983) demonstrated that in a sample of over 4100 cases reported to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, rigorous use of corporal punishment was highest in black families. In their sample of reported cases of physical abuse, 24% were black (10% of the population was black), while 43% of the sampled cases were caucasian (53% of the population was caucasian). Interestingly, Lindholm and Willey (1983) found that hispanic and caucasian children, especially females, were more likely to be sexually abused than were black children. In a study of 7,836 adolescents, Dornbusch et al. (1987) found that Black subjects rated their parents' childrearing styles to be more authoritarian (r = .26) than did Caucasian students.

Researchers have also demonstrated racial differences in child-rearing attitudes. Reis, Barbera-Stein, and Bennett (1986) studied 210 parents who were recruited from preventive services agencies. They found that Afro-American parents, compared to Caucasians, scored higher on punitive childrearing attitudes (r = .17). The current investigation assessed the extent to which race predicted differences in parental shame over use of corporal punishment.

Religiosity

The religiosity construct has been divided into two components, intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity. This distinction formed the basis for the I-E scale developed by Feagin (1964) and by Allport and Ross (1967). Intrinsic religiosity is a dimension of religious involvement in which religion serves as its own end or goal. An example of an intrinsic item is: "I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life." Extrinsic religiosity is a form of involvement in which religion is a means to some other end or goal. Frequent church goers tend to fall into this group (Chau, Johnson, Bowers, Darvill, & Danko, 1990). An example of an extrinsic item is: "One's place of worship is most important as a place to formulate good social relationships." A number of investigations have looked at the religiosity construct. Gorsuch (1988) reviewed several studies showing that persons high on extrinsic religiosity tend to be more authoritarian, rigid,

racist, and conventional than individuals low on extrinsic religiosity. Allport and Ross (1967) found that persons high on both kinds of religiosity are the most racist of all.

In the current study, it was proposed that parents who demonstrate higher levels of religiosity would have a more authoritarian value system. Hence, they should experience less shame over using corporal punishment in raising their children.

Hypotheses

1. As parents' use of corporal punishment becomes increasingly severe, parents' levels of shame over using corporal punishment would increase.
2. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children, would feel less shame over using corporal punishment.
3. The extent to which one's spouse experiences shame over use of corporal punishment would predict one's own shame.
4. Individuals who generally demonstrate less aggressive behavior should be more likely to feel a sense of shame when noting their own use of corporal punishment upon their children.
5. Parents who have more authoritarian and punitive parenting beliefs would feel less shame over their own use of corporal punishment.

6. Parents who demonstrate greater beliefs in the value of authoritative and nurturant parenting should feel a greater sense of shame over their use of corporal punishment.

7. Parents who have a poorer sense of self esteem would tend to manifest greater levels of shame regarding prior use of corporal punishment.

8. Parents of lower socioeconomic status should feel less shame over their use of corporal punishment.

9. Afro-American parents, in comparison with Caucasian parents, would feel less shame over prior use of corporal punishment.

10. Parents who demonstrate higher levels of religiosity would experience less shame over using corporal punishment.

A Proposed Path Model Explaining Shame over use of Corporal Punishment

In the previous section, we looked at several possible factors that may be said to predict shame over use of corporal punishment. Based on prior theory and research, it was possible to organize several of these predictors into a cohesive process model. Figure 1 presents a path by which parents may or may not come to experience shame regarding their physically punitive behaviors.

Childhood Experience of Corporal Punishment

In figure 1, it was suggested that an important exogenous factor may be childhood experience of corporal punishment. Parents who themselves were recipients of

physically punitive parenting may experience their actions differently from those who did not. Specifically, it may be suggested that the former group would be more likely to endorse the acceptability of such behavior.

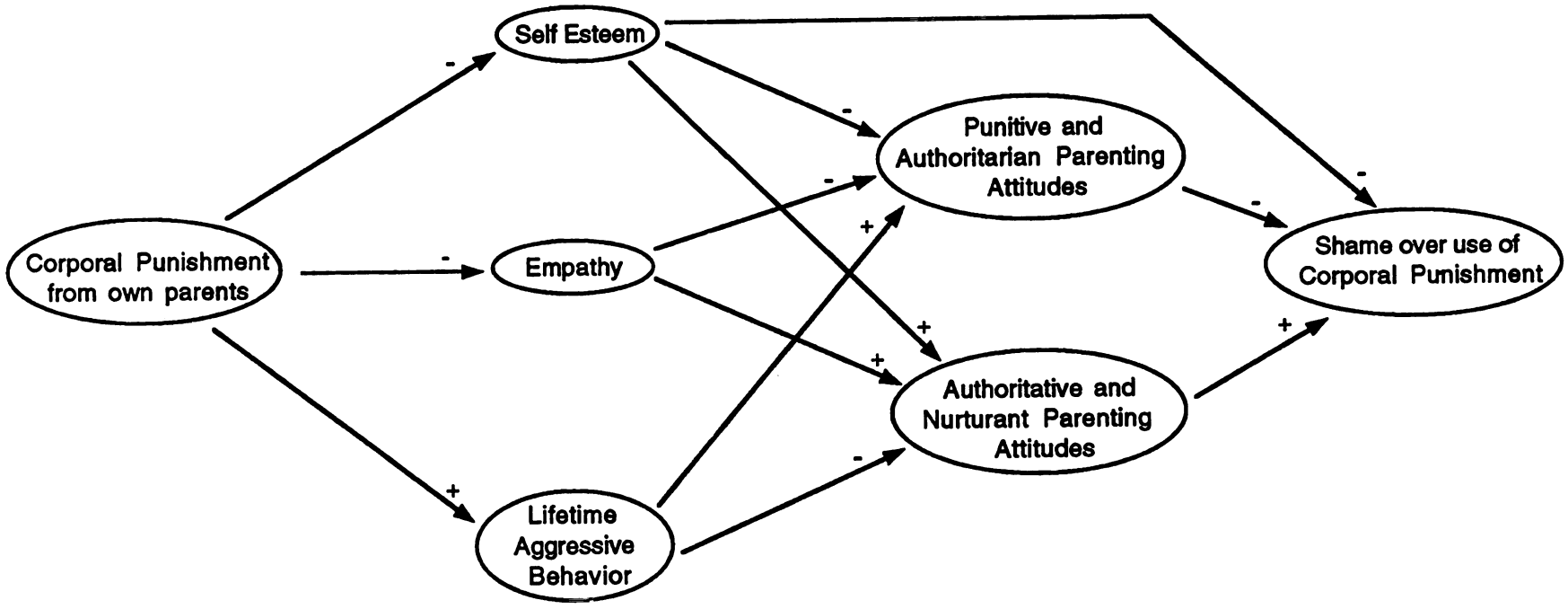


Figure 1: A proposed path from having experienced corporal punishment as a child to feeling shame over use of corporal punishment (among parents)

Several studies of young adult college students suggest that individuals who have experienced severe corporal punishment in their childhoods are more likely to blame other victims of child abuse for violent interactions (Muller, 1991), to justify severe physically punitive parenting responses (r = .18; Muller, 1991), and to choose potentially injurious disciplinary responses in analog parenting tasks (r = .27; Zaidi, Knutson, & Mehm, 1989). Furthermore, such individuals are less likely to express concern about the severity of other children's experiences of rigorous corporal punishment (r = -.14; Ginsburg, Wright, Harrell, and Hill, 1989). Recipients of spousal violence, compared to controls, were more likely to hold responsible other recipients of marital violence (r = .43; Corenblum, 1983). It is important to note that Waterman and Foss-Goodman (1984) found that adult survivors of child sexual abuse were less likely than controls to blame other victims of child sexual abuse (r = -.14). However in the Waterman et al. study, subjects were asked if they were ever "molested" as a child. The use of such obvious language may have influenced subject response.

In the current study, it was predicted that parents who report experiencing more corporal punishment as a child would demonstrate higher levels of punitive and authoritarian parenting attitudes, and less belief in authoritative and nurturant parenting; hence they should

indicate less shame over past physically punitive parenting.

Mediating Variables

Self-Esteem. Several mediating variables may be proposed to intervene in the relationship between childhood experience of corporal punishment and extent of shame regarding one's own physical punitiveness. One of these variables is self-esteem (see figure 1).

A few studies have suggested that children who have received severe physical punishment demonstrate lower self-image and regard themselves with self-deprecation and contempt (Cohen, 1984; Green, 1982). Hjorth & Ostrov (1982) found that such adolescents (ages 12-16 years) had poorer overall self-image than did matched controls. Allen and Tarnowski (1989) found that severely physically punished children (ages 7-13 years), compared to matched controls, demonstrated lower levels of self-esteem. Muller (1991) found that adults who were former recipients of greater levels of corporal punishment scored higher on self-derogation (r = .36). In the current research it was predicted that childhood experience of severe physical punishment may lead to lower levels of self-esteem.

The influence of self-esteem on attributions of responsibility was investigated by Muller (1991). In that study of college freshman, support was found for the prediction that individuals who self-derogate would have a greater tendency to justify physically punitive behavior.

It may be argued that subjects who had a poor self-image, viewed others as negatively as they viewed themselves; hence subjects considered those others as deserving of punishment.

In the current study, it was suggested that persons with low self-esteem, should express higher levels of punitive and authoritarian parenting, fewer beliefs in authoritative and nurturant parenting, and hence less shame over past use of corporal punishment. Furthermore, it was proposed that self-esteem would lead to an antagonistic effect (Hunter, 1986) whereby persons with lower levels of self-esteem should have a greater tendency to feel shame in general, and hence should feel more shame regarding past physically punitive parenting behavior.

Empathy. A second mediating variable (see figure 1) is empathy. Earlier research has shown that child recipients of severe corporal punishment score significantly lower on measures of empathy than controls (r = -.62 in Main & George, 1985; see Miller & Eisenberg, 1988). In a longitudinal investigation, Koestner, Franz, and Weinberger (1990) found that various nurturant parental behaviors directed toward children aged 5, predicted empathic behaviors in those individuals at age 31 (approximate r = .20). Straker and Jacobson (1981) found children who had received higher levels of physical punishment to have significantly lower levels of empathy on the Affective

Situations Test (Feshbach & Roe, 1968). The effect size was $r = -.72$.

Prior investigators have studied the extent to which observer empathy influences attributions of responsibility. Deitz and colleagues found that individuals demonstrating low levels of empathy toward rape victims were more likely to blame such victims for the event (approximate $r = -.31$ in Deitz, Blackwell, Daley, & Bentley, 1982; approximate $r = -.19$ in Deitz, Littman, and Bentley, 1984). Coller and Resick (1987) reported a statistically nonsignificant relationship ($r = -.14$) between these two variables, when observer empathy was "manipulated." Muller (1991) found that among college students, individuals who demonstrated lower levels of empathy (paper and pencil measure), were more likely to endorse attributions of responsibility to victims of physical abuse ($r = -.28$).

In the current study, it was suggested that parents who have experienced greater levels of corporal punishment in their childhoods would demonstrate lower levels of empathy. Such person who show less empathy should be more likely to express greater beliefs in the value of punitive and authoritarian parenting, and fewer beliefs in authoritative and nurturant parenting. Hence, they should feel less shame over their own prior use of corporal punishment.

Aggressive Behavior. Several studies indicate that children who are reared with severe corporal punishment are

more likely to demonstrate aggressive responses toward others. McCord (1988) found that men who had been raised by aggressive parents, compared to controls, were more likely to manifest antisocial behavior and become criminals (r = .37). Investigating families, Trickett and Kuczynski (1986) found that child recipients of severe corporal punishment (between the ages of 4 and 10) committed more transgressions of an aggressive nature (r = .32). These children were more likely to accompany noncompliant responses with refusals, anger, and other forms of opposition. Kratcoski and Kratcoski (1982) found formerly maltreated adolescents were more likely to direct violence toward significant others. Muller, Fitzgerald, Sullivan, and Zucker (1991) found that severe physical punishment of children predicted those children's aggressiveness among alcoholic families (approximate r = .48). Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, and Chyi-in (1991) found evidence for a path model suggesting that harsh parental discipline would lead to a hostile personality in the survivor (r = .18), which in turn would lead that survivor to demonstrate harsh disciplining techniques (approximate r = .30). Similarly, Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, and Tanaka (1991) demonstrated support for a path model suggesting that among college students, having undergone severe physical punishment would predict higher scores on measures of prior delinquency (beta = .38), which

would predict higher scores on current attitudes of violence against women (beta = .19).

In figure 1, it was suggested that among parents, those who have experienced more corporal punishment as children, should manifest more aggressive behaviors. Persons manifesting higher levels of aggressive behavior should be more likely to believe in the value of punitive and authoritarian parenting, and less likely to indicate belief in authoritative and nurturant parenting. Consequently, they should feel less shame over their previous use of corporal punishment.

Hypotheses

11. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children would have lower levels of self esteem.

12. Parents with less self esteem should express more punitive/authoritarian beliefs.

13. Parents with less self esteem would have less nurturant/authoritative beliefs.

14. Parents indicating lower levels of self esteem should express more shame over prior use of corporal punishment.

15. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children would have lower levels of empathy.

16. Parents with less empathy should express more punitive/authoritarian beliefs.

17. Parents with less empathy would have less nurturant/authoritative beliefs.

18. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children would have higher levels of lifetime aggressive behavior.

19. Parents with more lifetime aggressive behavior should express more punitive/authoritarian beliefs.

20. Parents with more lifetime aggressive behavior would have less nurturant/authoritative beliefs.

21. Parents indicating more punitive/authoritarian beliefs should experience less shame over use of corporal punishment.

22. Parents indicating less nurturant/authoritative attitudes would experience less shame over use of corporal punishment.

Results

Descriptive Statistics on the Variable of Shame

Descriptive statistics were carried out in order to assess the extent of parents' variability on shame over prior use of corporal punishment. This variable ranged from 0 (not at all ashamed) to 4 (extremely ashamed). Results from sample one (parents of college students) will be presented first. The findings were as follows: Mean = 1.80, SD = 1.27. This shows that the average parent in this sample indicated feeling "fairly ashamed," with one standard deviation below and above the mean going from "not at all ashamed" to "very ashamed." Results from sample two (P.A. parents) are presented next. The findings were as follows: Mean = 2.96, SD = 1.11. This shows that the average parent in this sample indicated feeling "very ashamed," with one standard deviation below and above the mean going from "fairly ashamed" to "extremely ashamed." Thus, there appears to be variability on shame in both samples, with sample one demonstrating more variability (F (1535, 171) = 1.31, $p < .05$) than sample two.

Regression Analyses

Sample 1 (Parents of College Students)

The goal of this set of analyses was to look at which factors are the best predictors of parents' shame over use of corporal punishment. In this sample, it was possible to obtain a separate perspective on the extent of each parent's

use of corporal punishment from father, mother, and child (student). As such, results are presented separately for parent and child perspectives.

Tables 7 and 8 present the correlations and beta weights for each factor predicting shame over use of corporal punishment for fathers and mothers separately. Table 7 presents the results obtained when the student rated the extent to which each parent used corporal punishment. Table 8 presents the results obtained when each parent rated the extent to which s/he used corporal punishment.

Table 7

Correlations and Beta Weights for Each Factor Predicting Fathers' and Mothers' Shame over Use of Corporal Punishment (with the Student Rating the Parent on Predictor #1)

	Extent of Shame Experienced			
	Parents of College Students			
	Fathers (n=732)		Mothers (n=804)	
Predictors	r	beta	r	beta
1. Extent to which Parent used Corporal Punishment on Student	.02	.04	.03	.04
2. Corporal Punishment from Each Parent's own Parents	-.02	-.08	.05	-.01
3. Spouse's Shame over Own use of Corporal Punishment	.27*	.22*	.27*	.25*
4. Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.08*	.10	.10*	.11*
5. Punitive & Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes	-.20*	-.11*	-.24*	-.26*
6. Authoritative & Nurturant Parenting Attitudes	.16*	.19*	.09*	.04
7. Self Esteem	-.14*	-.25*	-.22*	-.26*
8. Socioeconomic Status	.15*	.13*	.01	.04
9. Race (Low = White; High = Black)	-.21*	-.13*	-.07*	.01
10. Religiosity	-.12*	-.08	-.03	.05
Multiple R =		.46*		.45*

* $p < .05$

N.B. Student as data source: Predictor #1
Spouse as data source: Predictor #3
Parent as data source: Predictors #2,4-10, & dependent variable (shame)

Table 8

Correlations and Beta Weights for Each Factor Predicting Fathers' and Mothers' Shame over Use of Corporal Punishment (with the Parent Rating Him/Herself on Predictor #1)

	Extent of Shame Experienced			
	Parents of College Students			
	Fathers (n=732)		Mothers (n=804)	
Predictors	r	beta	r	beta
1. Extent to which Parent used Corporal Punishment on Student	.39*	.55	.36*	.42
2. Corporal Punishment from Each Parent's own Parents	-.02	-.27	.05	-.08
3. Spouse's Shame over Own use of Corporal Punishment	.27*	.15*	.27*	.13
4. Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.08*	.04	.10*	.04
5. Punitive & Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes	-.20*	-.26*	-.24*	-.35*
6. Authoritative & Nurturant Parenting Attitudes	.16*	.11	.09*	.04
7. Self Esteem	-.14*	-.21*	-.22*	-.21*
8. Socioeconomic Status	.15*	.08	.01	.04
9. Race (Low = White; High = Black)	-.21*	-.09*	-.07*	.02
10. Religiosity	-.12*	-.03	-.03	-.02
Multiple R =		.61		.56

* $p < .05$

N.B. Spouse as data source: Predictor #3
Parent as data source: Predictors #1,2,4-10, & dependent variable (shame)

Sample 2 (P.A. Parents)

The purpose of the following set of analyses was to look at which factors are the best predictors of parents' shame over use of corporal punishment, among a group of parents who are at high risk for carrying out severe physical punishment on their children. In this sample the only perspective on familial interactions and use of physical force was that of one parent from each family. Consequently, results are presented from that perspective alone.

Table 9

Correlations and Beta Weights for Each Factor Predicting Fathers' and Mothers' Shame over Use of Corporal Punishment (with the Parent Rating Him/Herself on Predictor #1)

	Extent of Shame Experienced			
	P.A. Parents			
	Fathers (n=35)		Mothers (n=137)	
Predictors	r	beta	r	beta
1. Extent to which Parent used Corporal Punishment on Student	.38*	.49*	.23*	.24*
2. Corporal Punishment from Each Parent's own Parents	.01	.17	.03	-.08
3. Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	-.14	.13	.11	-.13
4. Punitive & Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes	-.27*	-.44*	-.36*	-.39*
5. Authoritative & Nurturant Parenting Attitudes	.23	.35*	.34*	.35*
6. Self Esteem	-.33*	-.45*	-.15*	-.23*
7. Socioeconomic Status	-.06	-.19	-.03	-.24*
8. Race (Low = White; High = Black)	a	a	-.23*	-.15*
9. Religiosity	-.14	-.12	.10	.08
Multiple R =		.74*		.62*

* $p < .05$

a value unavailable due to insufficient variability in this comparison

N.B. Parent as data source: Predictors #1-9 & dependent variable (shame)

Path Analyses

The primary goal of the path analyses was to look at the process by which childhood experience of corporal punishment may or may not lead to the experience of shame regarding the use of corporal punishment on one's own children. Intervening variables in this process were hypothesized to be: self esteem, empathy, lifetime aggressive behavior, punitive and authoritarian parenting attitudes, and authoritative and nurturant parenting attitudes.

Path analyses were conducted only on the data for sample 1. The primary reason for this was that the sample size of the P.A. parent group (sample 2) was so much smaller than that of the families of college students (sample 1). A path analysis is considerably more likely to be valid on a larger sample size. The primary reason for this is that the predictions made in a path analysis are based not only on the direction, but also on the magnitude of the correlation coefficients (Hunter & Gerbing, 1982). Spurious deviations in correlation magnitude that are due to sampling error may lead to erroneous conclusions regarding goodness of fit at each point along the causal chain. For this reason, the current study restricted use of path analysis to the considerably larger sample size.

The correlations derived from the confirmatory factor analyses were used as input into the path analysis program.

The relevant correlations are presented in tables 10 and 11 for fathers and mothers respectively.

Table 10

Correlations used in the Path Analyses

Measure	Fathers (n=732) 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00						
2. Self Esteem	-.11	1.00					
3. Empathy	-.12	.31	1.00				
4. Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.43	-.17	-.33	1.00			
5. Authoritative & Nurturant Parenting Attitudes	.01	.31	.38	-.13	1.00		
6. Punitive & Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes	.11	-.28	-.33	.11	-.48	1.00	
7. Shame over use of Corporal Punishment	-.02	-.14	.02	.08	.16	-.20	1.00

N.B. For $r > .06$, or $r < -.06$, $p < .05$.
Father as data source: Variables 1-7.

Table 11

Correlations used in the Path Analyses

Measure	Mothers (n=804) 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00						
2. Self Esteem	-.06	1.00					
3. Empathy	-.04	.32	1.00				
4. Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.48	-.08	-.20	1.00			
5. Authoritative & Nurturant Parenting Attitudes	-.03	.27	.39	.03	1.00		
6. Punitive & Authoritarian Parenting Attitudes	.01	-.15	-.28	.02	-.31	1.00	
7. Shame over use of Corporal Punishment	.05	-.22	.06	.10	.09	-.24	1.00

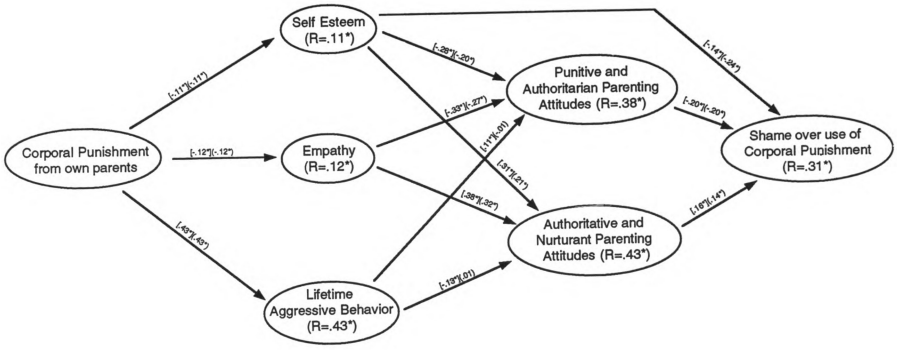
N.B. For $r > .06$, or $r < -.06$, $p < .05$.
Mother as data source: Variables 1-7.

The model presented in figure 1 was subjected to direct test using the technique of path analysis. However, prior to presenting the results of the path analysis, it is instructive to inspect the correlation tables above (tables 10 and 11) in order to assess the extent to which the coefficients correspond in direction and magnitude to those predicted in figure 1. Notice that for fathers, every correlation predicted in figure 1 (12 direct links) turned out statistically significant and in the predicted directions. To view this, compare figure 1 to the results in table 10. For mothers, 11 out of 12 predictions from figure 1 were in the predicted directions; and 9 out of 12 were statistically significant. Compare figure 1 to the results in table 11.

The path coefficients were estimated using the traditional procedure of ordinary least squares. The program used was the routine PATH found in PACKAGE (Hunter & Cohen, 1969; Hunter, Gerbing, Cohen, & Nicol, 1980). This program generates path coefficients for recursive path models, when a correlation matrix of the relevant variables (factors) is inputed. Correlations need to be corrected for attenuation. Here, the correlations from tables 10 and 11 were used as input.

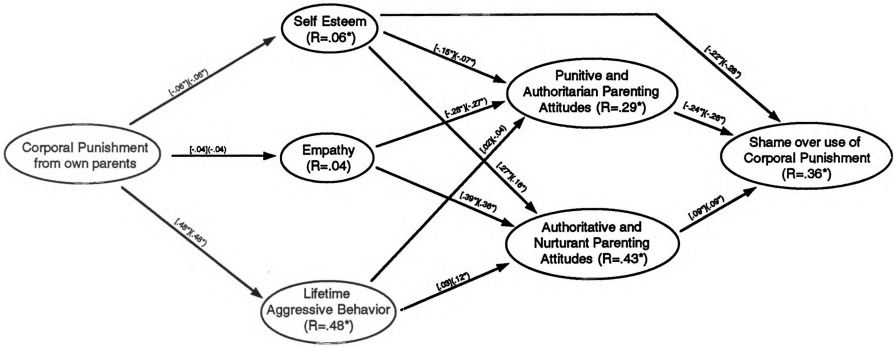
The results of the path analysis demonstrated that the model presented in figure 1 was not consistent with the data for fathers nor for mothers. The chi square test for

overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data for fathers (chi square (9) = 63.99, $p < .001$), and for mothers (chi square (9) = 34.97, $p < .001$). The multiple R for the shame variable was R = .31 and R = .36 for fathers and mothers respectively. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figures 2 and 3 for fathers and mothers respectively.



[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* p<.05

Figure 2: The path model for fathers with correlations and path coefficients between constructs

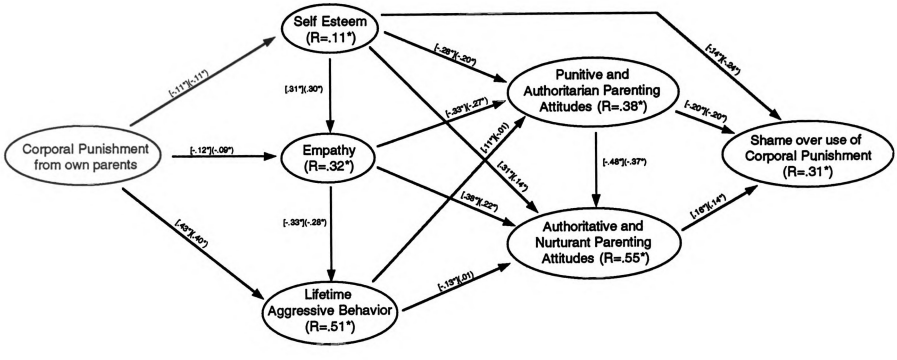


[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* p<.05

Figure 3: The path model for mothers with correlations and path coefficients between constructs

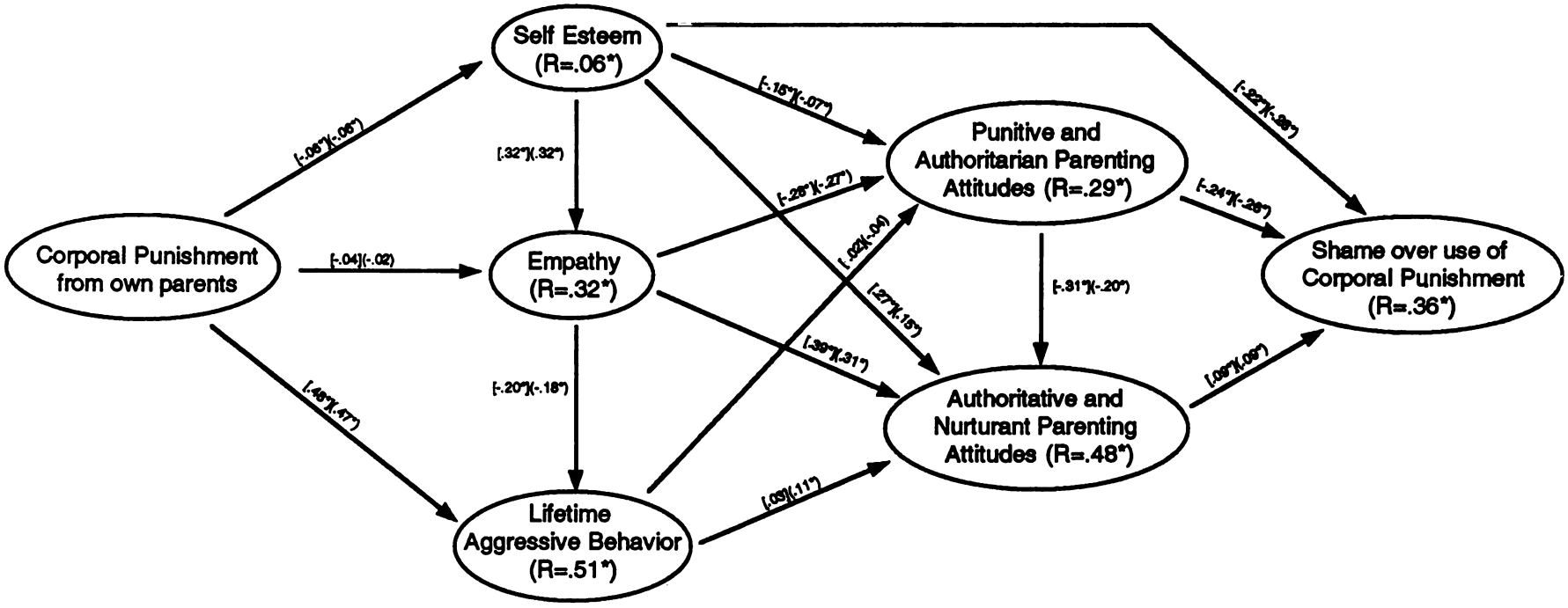
In order to generate a model that more closely fit the data, the path model was modified somewhat. The changes in the model were guided by an attempt to reduce the size of the error terms (i.e., the differences between the actual and the reproduced correlation coefficients). The modifications were as follows. A direct link was entered between: (a) self esteem and empathy, (b) empathy and lifetime aggressive behavior, and (c) punitive/authoritarian and authoritative/nurturant attitudes.

Figures 4 and 5 (fathers and mothers respectively) represent the models that were generated. The results of the path analyses indicate that the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not reveal a significant difference between the model and the data for fathers (chi square (6) = 3.95, $p > .68$), nor for mothers (chi square (6) = 2.61, $p > .85$). The multiple R for the shame variable remained R = .31 and R = .36 for fathers and mothers respectively. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figures 4 and 5 for fathers and mothers respectively. These indicated models that provided good fit for the data.



[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* p<.05

Figure 4: The path model for <u>fathers</u> that provided best fit to the data



[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* p<.05

Figure 5: The path model for <u>mothers</u> that provided best fit to the data

Using the goodness of fit technique discussed in Bentler and Bonett (1980), it was possible to assess the extent to which each model represented an improvement over the other. For fathers, the revised model was considerably superior to the original model (NFI = .94; NNFI = 1.06). Similarly, for mothers, the revised model represented considerable improvement over the original model (NFI = .93; NNFI = 1.19).

Summary of Results

The results of this portion of the study are summarized in this section. Table 12 lists each hypothesis discussed previously in detail, and indicates whether that hypothesis was corroborated, not corroborated, or corroborated in part.

Table 12

Summary of Results

Hypothesis	Level of Support in the Data
1	Partially corroborated; corroborated when parent perspective was used to define corporal punishment
2	Not corroborated; very low effect sizes
3	Corroborated
4	Not corroborated; low equivocal effect sizes
5	Corroborated
6	Corroborated
7	Corroborated
8	Partially corroborated; corroborated for parents of college students only
9	Corroborated
10	Partially corroborated; effects were generally in the predicted direction, but low
11	Corroborated
12	Corroborated
13	Corroborated
14	Corroborated
15	Partially corroborated; corroborated for fathers; low nonsignificant effect sizes in predicted direction for mothers
16	Corroborated
17	Corroborated
18	Corroborated
19	Partially corroborated; effect sizes small, but in predicted direction for fathers
20	Partially corroborated; effect sizes small, but in predicted direction for fathers
21	Corroborated
22	Corroborated

Discussion

Prior to a discussion of the findings, I will present a review of each of the specific hypotheses along with a statement regarding whether that hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypotheses

1. As parents' use of corporal punishment becomes increasingly severe, parents' levels of shame over using corporal punishment would increase. This hypothesis was corroborated when parents' perspectives were used to define corporal punishment, but not when students' perspectives were used.
2. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children, would feel less shame over using corporal punishment. This hypothesis was not corroborated because of very low effect sizes.
3. The extent to which one's spouse experiences shame over use of corporal punishment would predict one's own shame. This hypothesis was corroborated.
4. Individuals who generally demonstrate less aggressive behavior should be more likely to feel a sense of shame when noting their own use of corporal punishment upon their children. This hypothesis was not corroborated due to low equivocal effect sizes.
5. Parents who have more authoritarian and punitive parenting beliefs would feel less shame over their own use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated.

6. Parents who demonstrate greater beliefs in the value of authoritative and nurturant parenting should feel a greater sense of shame over their use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated.

7. Parents who have a poorer sense of self esteem would tend to manifest greater levels of shame regarding prior use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated.

8. Parents of lower socioeconomic status should feel less shame over their use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated for parents of college students only.

9. Afro-American parents, in comparison with Caucasian parents, would feel less shame over prior use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated.

10. Parents who demonstrate higher levels of religiosity would experience less shame over using corporal punishment. This hypothesis was partially corroborated. The effects were generally in the predicted direction, but very low.

11. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children would have lower levels of self esteem. This hypothesis was corroborated.

12. Parents with less self esteem should express more punitive/authoritarian beliefs. This hypothesis was corroborated.

13. Parents with less self esteem would have less nurturant/authoritative beliefs. This hypothesis was corroborated.

14. Parents indicating lower levels of self esteem should express more shame over prior use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated.

15. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children would have lower levels of empathy. This hypothesis was corroborated for fathers. There were low nonsignificant effect sizes in the predicted direction for mothers.

16. Parents with less empathy should express more punitive/authoritarian beliefs. This hypothesis was corroborated.

17. Parents with less empathy would have less nurturant/authoritative beliefs. This hypothesis was corroborated.

18. Parents who experienced more corporal punishment as children would have higher levels of lifetime aggressive behavior. This hypothesis was corroborated.

19. Parents with more lifetime aggressive behavior should express more punitive/authoritarian beliefs. This hypothesis was partially corroborated for fathers, for whom effect sizes were small, but in the correct direction. For mothers effect sizes were nonsignificant.

20. Parents with more lifetime aggressive behavior would have less nurturant/authoritative beliefs. This hypothesis was partially corroborated. Effect sizes were small, and in the correct direction for fathers, but not mothers.

21. Parents indicating more punitive/authoritarian beliefs should experience less shame over use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated.

22. Parents indicating less nurturant/authoritative attitudes would experience less shame over use of corporal punishment. This hypothesis was corroborated.

Parental Range in Shame Response

The main point of this chapter was to address the issue of shame over prior use of corporal punishment. The first question asked was: "Would different parents have very different feelings of shame regarding their prior use of corporal punishment?" The findings indicated that indeed, parents vary considerably in the extent to which they feel ashamed. These results are very similar to those of Dietrich, Berkowitz, Kadushin, and McGloin (1990) as well as those of Paulson, Strouse, and Chaleff (1980). In the current study, a large number of parents ranged from very low to very high levels in their endorsements of shame. Parents in sample one (parents of college students) appeared more heterogeneous in their experiences than did parents in sample two (P.A. parents). This finding is understandable in light of the fact that parents involved with Parents

Anonymous tend generally to be experiencing similar parenting problems.

Factors Predicting Shame Over Prior Use of Corporal Punishment

Given that parents appeared to demonstrate a wide range of shame endorsements, the next question addressed by this research was the following: "What factors would lead parents to feel shame regarding their use of corporal punishment?" and "What would inhibit the manifestation of shame regarding physically punitive parenting?" The results indicated that regardless of perspective and sample, the factors that were generally good predictors of shame were: punitive/authoritarian parenting attitudes, self esteem, and spouse's shame over use of corporal punishment.

Baumrind (1971, 1989) conceptualized authoritarian parents as persons who believe that children should conform to a rigid set of standards set by parents. She stated that such parents often use severely punitive methods of discipline. In a similar vein, the current research found that such parents tend to feel less shame regarding their use of physical punishment. As such, their attitudes and their emotional responses appear to be in some degree of concordance.

Discussing self esteem, Kaufman (1991) argued that persons who have a self affirming capacity, are at lower risk for experiencing the affect of shame on a regular

basis. The present findings suggest that such a process may be applied to parenting. Persons who have a good sense of self esteem may experience less shame regarding their use of physical discipline. In reflecting upon their prior behaviors, such parents are less likely to feel a sense of remorse or regret.

Cybernetic theorists (Bateson, 1936/1958; Keeney, 1983) have suggested that couples influence one another by means of feedback. In the current study, the results indicated that the spouse's experience of shame for corporal punishment, predicted one's own shame. Thus, while part of the feedback that goes on between couples may influence the escalation of violent behavior (Erchak, 1984; Straus, 1973), it appears that couples may influence one another in terms of how each feels about his/her prior behaviors as well. It should be noted that one alternate interpretation of these data is that the correlation between husbands' and wives' shame levels is a reflection of the general similarity between members of a couple that attracted each to the other in the first place. However, regardless of the reason for the similarity in emotional response, it appears that one can partially predict a parent's level of shame from that of the spouse.

The three consistently large predictors of shame over corporal punishment were punitive/authoritarian parenting attitudes, self esteem, and spouse's shame over use of

corporal punishment. One may infer from these findings that the family in which there is likely to be the lowest level of shame over use of corporal punishment is one in which there is a set of parents who have authoritarian value systems and who have considerable self esteem. Furthermore, in such a family, the lower level of shame will tend to coexist for both of the parents.

One finding is most notable for its demonstration of a very weak association. The correlation between experiencing corporal punishment from one's own parents and one's shame over use of corporal punishment was not significant. This was the case regardless of perspective or sample. Prior research (Dietrich, Berkowitz, Kadushin, & McGloin, 1990) did not find an association between receiving severe corporal punishment as a child and feeling justified in one's own prior use of severe corporal punishment. The current results are consistent with those of Dietrich et al. (1990).

It is interesting to note that while the childhood experience of corporal punishment did not predict shame over use of corporal punishment, spouse's shame did. This finding is interesting in light of the heavy emphasis placed on the importance of parental behaviors in predicting various aspects of corporal punishment. The current results suggest that a cybernetic or family systems approach may

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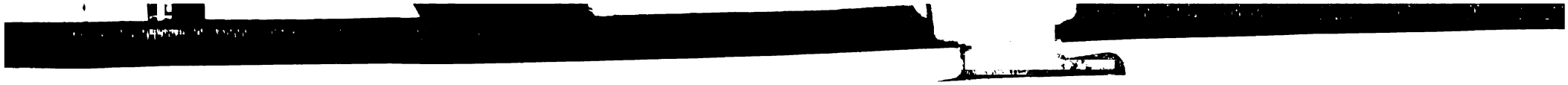
prove more fruitful in predicting how individuals feel about their former use of parental discipline.

The importance of exploring ethnic differences in the area of child maltreatment has been demonstrated by several researchers (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Lindholm & Willey, 1983). Reis, Barbera-Stein, and Bennett (1986) found that Afro-American parents, compared to Caucasians, scored higher on punitive childrearing attitudes. The current study generally corroborated the findings of earlier research. Black parents were less likely to express feelings of shame regarding prior use of corporal punishment. Most noteworthy, was the finding that Afro-American fathers in particular, expressed less shame than Caucasian fathers. Earlier studies have not explored this race by gender interaction.

One of the current findings demonstrated the radical change in findings when perspective was altered. The results were very different when the extent of corporal punishment utilized, was rated by the student (child) or by the parent. When the student did the rating, there was no association between the extent of corporal punishment behaviors and the extent of shame over the behaviors. When the parent did the rating, there were large relationships between those two variables (for both samples). One way of explaining these results may be that the more parents are ashamed of themselves for carrying out acts of corporal



punishment, the more they are able to remember the behaviors. In contrast, perhaps having actually used corporal punishment on one's children has no real effect on how one feels about the behaviors.

The Path Model Explaining Shame over use of Corporal Punishment

The path model proposed in figure 1 predicted the sign (+ or -) of 12 specific correlations. The results demonstrated that for fathers, all 12 correlations were statistically significant, and in the predicted directions. For mothers, 11 out of 12 correlations were in the hypothesized directions. However, 9 of these correlations were statistically significant.

As discussed earlier, the current results did not demonstrate a significant correlation between corporal punishment experienced as a child and shame over use of physical punishment. In the context of the path analyses, an indirect link was predicted between these two variables. The findings indicated that for both fathers as well as mothers, the models that best fit the data, in fact, assumed an indirect link between these two variables.

One set of predictions, implicit in figure 1, that were only partially consistent with the data, were those surrounding lifetime aggressive behavior. Consistent with several theorists (Kratcoski & Kratcoski, 1982; Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991; McCord, 1988; Muller,

Fitzgerald, Sullivan, & Zucker, 1991; Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Chyi-in, 1991; Trickett & Kuczynski, 1986), corporal punishment from one's own parents predicted level of lifetime aggressive behavior. However, the relationships between aggressive behavior and the parenting variables (authoritarian, authoritative, and shame) were very small. It appears that lifetime aggressive behavior is not a very important mediating variable in the process by which one comes to experience shame over use of corporal punishment.

Much better predictors were self esteem and empathy. Consistent with the findings of previous research, corporal punishment from one's parents appears to be negatively associated with self esteem (Allen & Tarnowski, 1989; Cohen, 1984; Green, 1982; Hjorth & Ostrov, 1982; Muller, 1991) and with empathy (Koestner, Franz, & Weinberger, 1990; Main & George, 1985; Straker & Jacobson, 1981). Furthermore, self esteem and empathy each seemed to be fairly good predictors of parenting beliefs. Similar to the findings of Muller (1991), persons with low self esteem tended to endorse greater beliefs in authoritarian parenting, as well as fewer beliefs in authoritative parenting. So too, persons with lower levels of empathy tended to indicate greater beliefs in authoritarian parenting, and fewer beliefs in authoritative parenting (Deitz, Blackwell, Daley, & Bentley, 1982; Deitz, Littman, & Bentley, 1984; Muller, 1991).

The model presented in figure 1, and corroborated in the path analyses, assumed that individuals who tend to adopt authoritarian or punitive value systems, may apply this value system to the parenting situation. If a parent's behavior (corporal punishment) is consistent with his/her value system (authoritarian beliefs), shame is unlikely to be felt. Alternatively, persons who adopt a more authoritative or nurturant value system, may apply this set of beliefs to the parenting situation. When a person demonstrates behaviors (corporal punishment) that are discordant with their values (authoritative/nurturant parenting attitudes), they may feel ashamed of themselves. Kaufman and Raphael (1987) suggested that shame accompanies a sense of failure. Parents who believe in the value of authoritative and nurturant parenting may view their own use of corporal punishment as evidence of personal failure, leading to the affect of shame.

Clinical Relevance of the Current Findings

A number of clinical psychologists have developed treatment programs in order to prevent the practice of child maltreatment or to treat families in which child abuse takes place. In one very ambitious program, David Wolfe (1991) has established an approach designed to address a broad population with a wide variety of parenting deficits. In his program, parents are taught child management and parental sensitivity techniques. They are also encouraged

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to take part in the establishment of peer group supports. Parents are educated on methods of discipline and anger management as well. In a study conducted by Olds and Henderson (1989), the authors put together a home visitation program grounded in ecological theory. Parental involvement began during pregnancy and continued into infancy. Parent education by nurses was an important component. Informal supports were increased for mothers. Also, parents were educated regarding formal services in the area such as planned parenthood.

Different treatment programs have different assumptions regarding the nature of child maltreatment. Recently, child maltreatment prevention programs have assumed family dysfunction, rather than individual psychopathology. For example, in Wolfe's (1991) prevention program, the author stated that: "Child abuse is viewed throughout this book as a symptom of family dysfunction. This view requires that we look beyond the nature of the specific acts of aggression or the individual aggressor, to determine the overall patterns of family functioning" (p. 46). Olds and Henderson (1989) also assumed that child maltreatment is a familial problem. Consequently, they suggested that child abuse prevention programs always include home visitation as a key element.

One of the results of this study has a bearing upon current clinical practice in the prevention of child maltreatment. That is the finding that one of the strongest

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predictors of an individual's shame over use of corporal punishment was his/her spouse's level of shame. As noted above, it may be the case that spouses influence each other in terms of how each feels about his/her prior disciplinary behaviors. Or spouses may share similar values and emotional responses regarding their own use of corporal punishment. These conclusions appear to be consistent with the assumptions currently held by many clinicians developing family based child maltreatment prevention programs.

Another way in which the current study is relevant to clinical work has to do with the experience of corporal punishment. Recall that several earlier studies (e.g., Paulson et al., 1980) found individual differences in the extent to which parents experience their prior use of physical punishment as appropriate. Some parents experience their actions as justified and appropriate; while others feel a sense of personal failure and deficiency as a parent. For example, Dietrich, Berkowitz, Kadushin, and McGloin (1990) found large individual differences in the extent to which "physically abusive" parents expressed feeling remorse for their use of severe physical punishment. The current study corrorborated these results.

Given the finding that parents appear to vary considerably in the extent to which they feel a sense of shame over their prior use of corporal punishment, one could ask how that may affect treatment outcome. One may

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speculate that programs aimed at preventing further physical maltreatment in the home, would be considerably more successful with the kind of parent who feels ashamed of their prior actions and is therefore motivated to change. Up to now, research has not addressed this question. Thus, future clinical studies could investigate the extent to which parental shame over use of corporal punishment may predict success in child abuse treatment programs.

A final point regarding the issue of clinical relevance of the current study is as follows. This investigation found substantial individual differences in the extent of parent shame over use of corporal punishment. What is unclear currently is the point at which those differences develop. It is possible that these differences develop early on. For example, one might speculate that the same people who feel considerable shame over their use of corporal punishment felt shame for expressing aggressive behavior as children. On the other hand, there may be no such continuity from childhood to adulthood. Future studies may be oriented toward addressing this issue. Furthermore, psychodynamic therapists working with parents who had been "physically abusive" with their children, could make it a point to consider the development of the parents' feelings of shame regarding their aggressive behaviors.

CHAPTER 4: THE INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Introduction

One of the most commonly reported characteristics of physically punitive parents is that of history of maltreatment. Several researchers have pointed out a common finding in the literature, the high concordance between being a recipient of severe corporal punishment and carrying out similar behavior on one's own children (e.g., Carroll, 1977; Gillespie, Seaberg, & Berlin, 1977; Isaacs, 1981; Lieh-Mak, Chung, & Liu, 1983; Webster-Stratton, 1985), the so-called "cycle of abuse" (Kempe & Kempe, 1978).

It is important to note that the "cycle of abuse" may be somewhat overstated. Gil (1970) indicated that only 14% of the mothers and 7% of the fathers in cases of maltreatment had been recipients of severe corporal punishment in their own childhoods. Quinton and Rutter (1984a, 1984b) studied parents with serious and persistent parenting difficulties. Of these parents, 61% had experienced 4 or more childhood adversities such as frequent beatings, while 16% of controls suffered such adversities. Kaufman and Zigler (1987) noted that only one third of adults who had received rigorous corporal punishment went on to do so with their own children. Furthermore, Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, and Chyi-In (1991) examined the correlation between grandparent harsh discipline and parent

harsh discipline. They reported correlations ranging from .13 to .31.

Coming out of the research tradition that emphasized the intergenerational transmission of physically punitive parenting were several studies demonstrating the relationship between experiencing corporal punishment in one's childhood and manifesting subsequent aggressive behaviors. These investigations typically have assumed the operation of social learning principle. In that view, aggressive actions and use of corporal punishment are behaviors learned from one's parents. Several studies indicated that children who receive severe corporal punishment are more likely to demonstrate aggressive responses toward others. McCord (1988) found that men who had been raised by aggressive parents, compared to controls, were more likely to manifest antisocial behavior and become criminals (r = .37). Investigating families, Trickett and Kuczynski (1986) found that child recipients of severe physical punishment (between the ages of 4 and 10) committed more transgressions of an aggressive nature (r = .32). These children were more likely to accompany noncompliant responses with refusals, anger, and other forms of opposition. Kratcoski and Kratcoski (1982) found formerly maltreated adolescents were more likely to direct violence toward significant others. Muller, Fitzgerald, Sullivan, and Zucker (1991) found that severe physical punishment of

children predicted those children's aggressiveness among alcoholic families (approximate r = .48). Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, and Chyi-in (1991) found evidence for a path model suggesting that harsh parental discipline would lead to a hostile personality in the survivor (r = .18), which in turn would lead that survivor to demonstrate harsh disciplining techniques (approximate r = .30). Similarly, Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, and Tanaka (1991) demonstrated support for a path model suggesting that among college students, having undergone rigorous corporal punishment would predict higher scores on measures of prior delinquency (beta = .38), which would predict higher scores on current attitudes of violence against women (beta = .19).

All of the studies on aggressive behavior cited above make certain implicit assumptions. They are based on an environmental model of behavior. Specifically, it is assumed that if physically punitive parents end up with aggressive children, it is because the child has learned some pattern of response. It may be suggested, alternatively, that the child had a predisposition toward aggressive behavior, and that the punitive parental behavior is a response to the child.

Several investigations suggested that children that are more difficult to manage end up receiving greater levels of severe corporal punishment. Smith (1984) proposed that verbally aggressive children may be at high risk for

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physical punishment. In an investigation of 570 German families, Engfer and Schneewind (1981) found that having a child that is rated by the parent as difficult to handle, and who manifests conduct disorder problems in school (i.e., a "problem child") is the best predictor (beta = .29) of mothers' use of corporal punishment. Herrenkohl, Herrenkohl, and Egolf (1983) studied case records of 825 physical maltreatment incidents, occurring in 328 families. Parents were asked for the reason the incident took place. The results indicated that parents cited child misbehaviors such as refusals, fighting, "immoral" behaviors, aggressiveness, as leading to greater (r = .19) use of severe corporal punishment. Muller, Caldwell, and Hunter (in press) gave parenting scenarios to 897 college students. These scenarios varied in the extent to which the children in the vignettes demonstrated provocative, incorrigible behaviors. In all scenarios, parents resolved conflict with the children by way of corporal punishment. The investigators found that for provocative children, compared to nonprovocative, use of considerable corporal punishment was viewed as an appropriate parenting response (eta = .40).

The studies cited above assume that corporal punishment can be a response to aggressive child behavior, rather than its cause. The two sets of studies described here use very different assumptions to explain the same associations. However, these prior studies have failed to <u>test</u> the causal

pathway of the intergenerational transmission of corporal punishment and aggressive behavior.

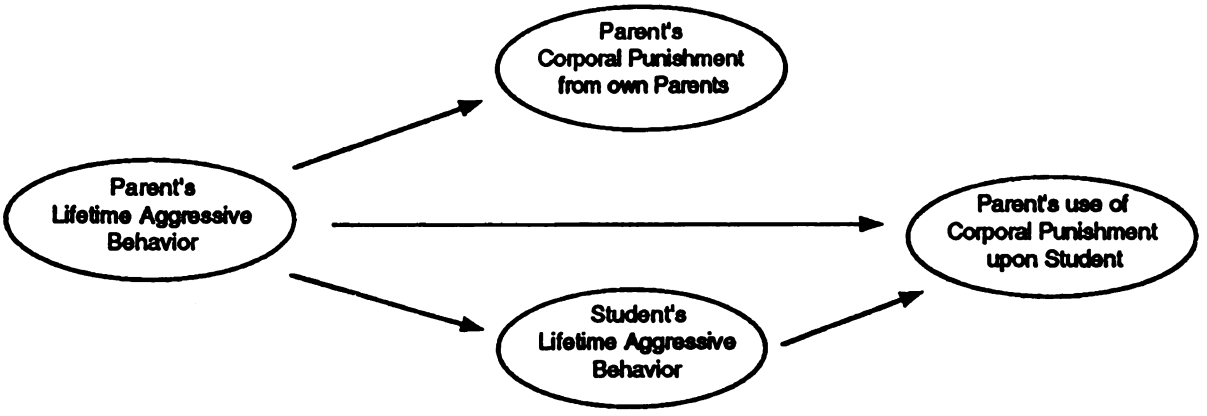
In figure 6, two models with very different assumptions are presented as explanations of the intergenerational transmission of corporal punishment. Model A suggests that the corporal punishment received by any individual (parent or child) is a consequence of his/her previous aggressive behaviors. Thus, for people who are currently parents, their former aggressive behaviors influenced the likelihood of their receiving corporal punishment from their own parents. Students' aggressive behaviors influenced the likelihood of their receiving corporal punishment from their own parents.

Model B suggests directly the opposite. An individual's tendency to manifest aggressive behavior across the lifespan is a consequence of prior corporal punishment received from the parents. Thus, for people who are currently parents, greater levels of corporal punishment given by their own parents influenced greater manifestation of their own aggressive behaviors. Similarly, students who received corporal punishment from their parents are more likely to manifest subsequent aggressive behaviors.

The purpose of this portion of the study was to test the consistency of each of these models with the cross-generational data collected for 983 college students and their 1536 parents. No specific hypotheses were proposed

for this study. Instead, the question asked was as follows. To what extent are Models A and B consistent with the data?

MODEL A



MODEL B

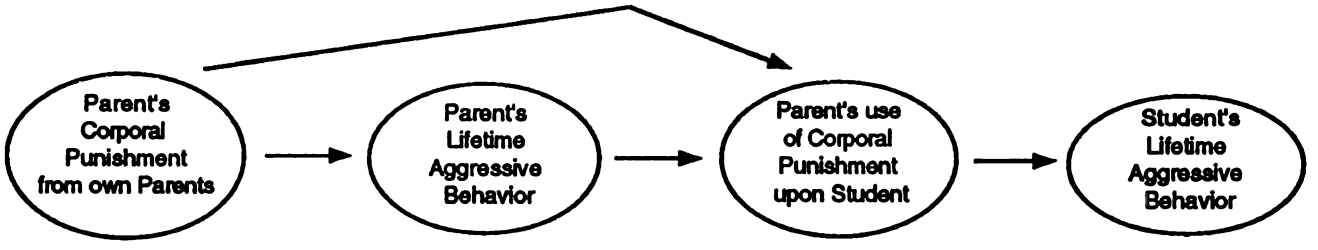


Figure 6: Two models of the intergenerational transmission of corporal punishment

Results

The goal of these analyses was to assess the extent to which the intergenerational transmission of corporal punishment can be explained by either Models A or B (see figure 6). The analyses were oriented toward evaluating the statistical strength of each of these models. That is, to assess which of the two models is more consistent with the data. Several path analyses were used as the statistical procedure.

Here, path analyses were conducted only on the data for sample 1, because only that sample contained cross-generational data (i.e., data for parents as well as children).

The correlations derived from the confirmatory factor analyses (see appendix 3) were used as input into the path analysis program. The relevant correlations are presented in tables 13-18. The correlations are presented separately for fathers, mothers, and all parents (fathers and mothers combined). The correlations that combine all parents were derived by way of a second order confirmatory factor analysis. In this procedure, the factors for fathers were combined with the factors for mothers making higher order "parents" variables.

Because the data used in these analyses were gathered for several members of the same family, it was possible to use multiple perspectives to define certain variables. In

particular, the extent of corporal punishment used upon the child was assessed from the father's, mother's, and student's points of view. Thus, each of the three correlation tables mentioned above (fathers, mothers, and all parents) could be calculated separately for each perspective (student, parent, and student + parent). At the bottom of tables 13-18 are listings of whose perspectives went into defining each variable.

Table 13

Correlations used in the Path Analyses
(Variable #3 coded from student's perspective)

Measure	Fathers (n=732) 1	2	3	4
1. Father's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Father's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.45	1.00		
3. Father's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.20	.16	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.03	.17	.45	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Father as data source.
Variable 3: Student as data source.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Measure	Mothers (n=804) 1	2	3	4
1. Mother's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Mother's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.55	1.00		
3. Mother's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.33	.25	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.15	.20	.43	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Mother as data source.
Variable 3: Student as data source.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Table 14

Correlations used in the Path Analyses
(Variable #3 coded from student's perspective)

Measure	Parents (n=1536) 1	2	3	4
1. Parent's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Parent's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.55	1.00		
3. Parent's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.27	.19	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.11	.20	.50	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Father and Mother as data sources.
Variable 3: Student as data source.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Table 15

Correlations used in the Path Analyses
(Variable #3 coded from parent's perspective)

Measure	Fathers (n=732) 1	2	3	4
1. Father's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Father's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.45	1.00		
3. Father's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.48	.43	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.03	.17	.16	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Father as data source.
Variable 3: Father as data source.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Measure	Mothers (n=804) 1	2	3	4
1. Mother's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Mother's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.55	1.00		
3. Mother's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.43	.54	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.15	.20	.14	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Mother as data source.
Variable 3: Mother as data source.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Table 16

Correlations used in the Path Analyses
(Variable #3 coded from parents' perspectives)

Measure	Parents (n=1536) 1	2	3	4
1. Parent's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Parent's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.55	1.00		
3. Parent's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.49	.45	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.11	.20	.17	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Father and Mother as data sources.
Variable 3: Father & Mother as data sources.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Table 17

Correlations used in the Path Analyses
(Variable #3 coded from student's + parent's perspectives)

Measure	Fathers (n=732) 1	2	3	4
1. Father's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Father's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.45	1.00		
3. Father's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.40	.34	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.03	.17	.36	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Father as data source.
Variable 3: Father and student as data sources.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Measure	Mothers (n=804) 1	2	3	4
1. Mother's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Mother's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.55	1.00		
3. Mother's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.46	.48	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.15	.20	.34	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Mother as data source.
Variable 3: Mother and student as data sources.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

Table 18

Correlations used in the Path Analyses
(Variable #3 coded from student's + parents' perspectives)

Measure	Parents (n=1536) 1	2	3	4
1. Parent's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00			
2. Parent's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.55	1.00		
3. Parent's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.36	.29	1.00	
4. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.11	.20	.50	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Father and Mother as data sources.
Variable 3: Father, Mother, & Student as data sources.
Variable 4: Student as data source.

The models presented in figure 6 were subjected to direct test using the technique of path analysis. The path coefficients were estimated using the traditional procedure of ordinary least squares. The correlations from tables 13-18 were used as input.

Path Analyses Results

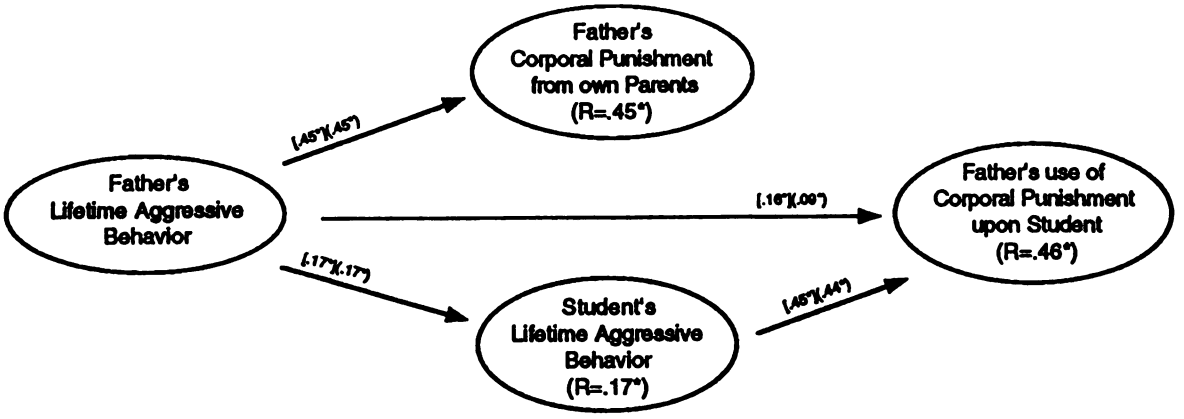
As mentioned above corporal punishment from the parent to the student was defined using three different perspectives. That is, student, parent, and student + parent. The path analyses were examined separately for correlation matrices calculated using each of the three perspectives.

Student's Perspective. The results of the path analysis are presented for fathers first. The findings indicated the following for Model A. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 3.84, $p > .146$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .13 for the missing link between father's corporal punishment from his own parents and father's use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 2.82, $p > .244$. The largest error term was .10 for the missing link between father's lifetime aggressive behavior and student's lifetime

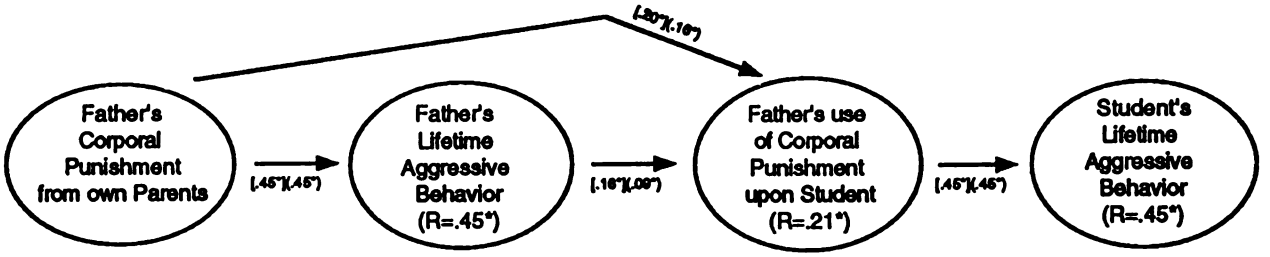
aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 7.

Using the goodness of fit technique discussed in Bentler and Bonett (1980), it was possible to assess the extent to which Model B represented an improvement over Model A. For fathers, Model B represented an improvement as follows: NFI = .27; NNFI = .55).

MODEL A



MODEL B



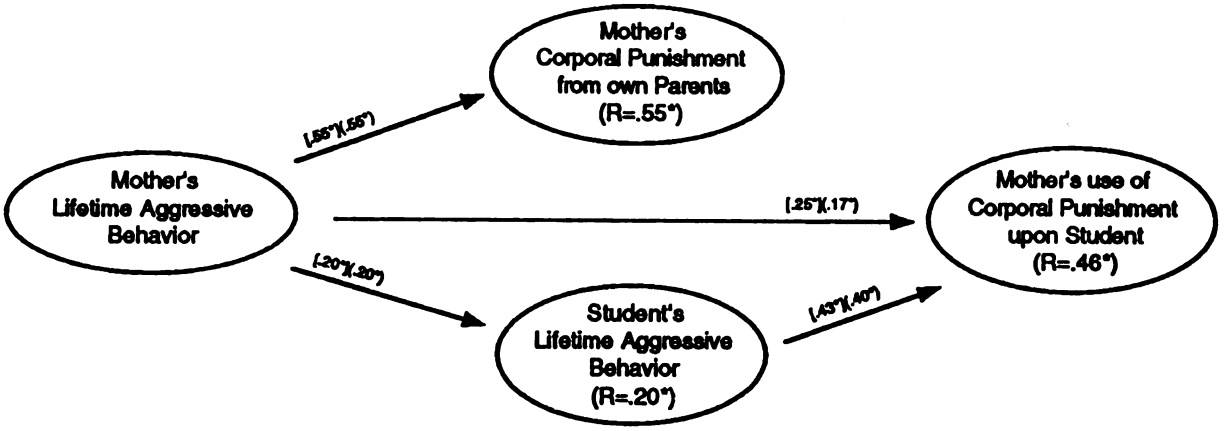
[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 7: The path models for <u>fathers</u> with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (student's perspective on Variable 3)

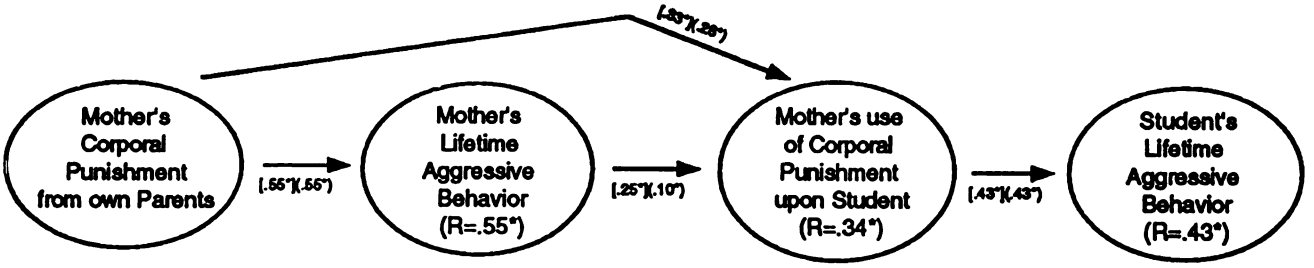
Next, the results of the path analysis are presented for mothers. The findings indicated that Model A was not consistent with the data. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 8.91, $p < .012$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .19 for the missing link between mother's corporal punishment from her own parents and mother's use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 1.65, $p > .438$. The largest error term was .09 for the missing link between mother's lifetime aggressive behavior and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 8

The Bentler and Bonett (1980) goodness of fit index indicated that for mothers, Model B represented an improvement over Model A as follows: NFI = .81; NNFI = 1.05).

MODEL A



MODEL B



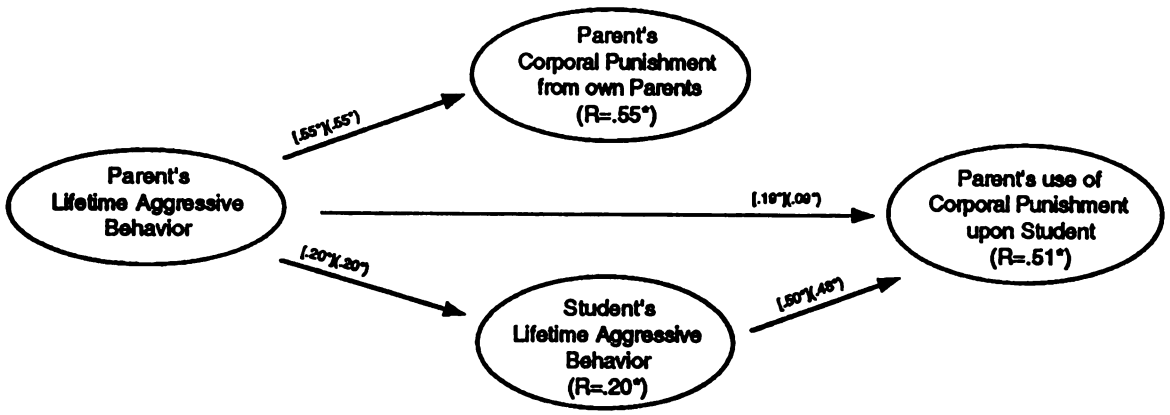
[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 8: The path models for <u>mothers</u> with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (student's perspective on Variable 3)

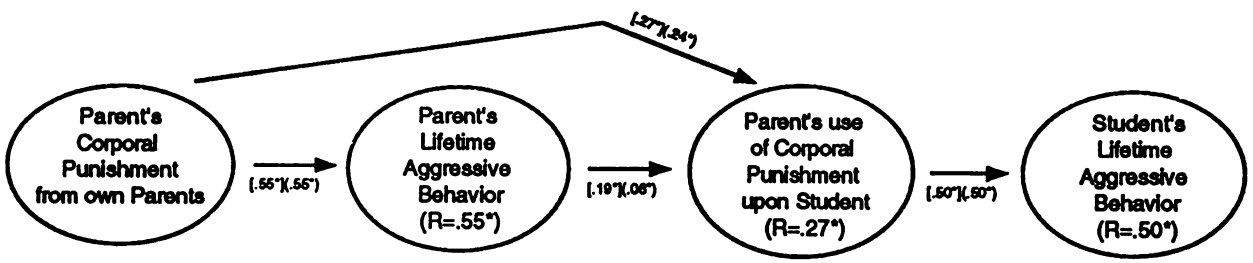
Finally, the results of the path analysis are presented for parents in general (i.e., fathers and mothers combined). The findings indicated that Model A was not consistent with the data. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 12.43, $p < .002$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .17 for the missing link between parents' corporal punishment from their own parents and parents' use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 5.14, $p > .076$. The largest error term was .11 for the missing link between parents' lifetime aggressive behaviors and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 9.

The Bentler and Bonett (1980) goodness of fit index indicated that for parents in general, Model B represented an improvement over Model A as follows: NFI = .59; NNFI = .70).

MODEL A



MODEL B



[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 9: The path models for <u>parents</u> (mothers and fathers) with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (student's perspective on Variable 3)

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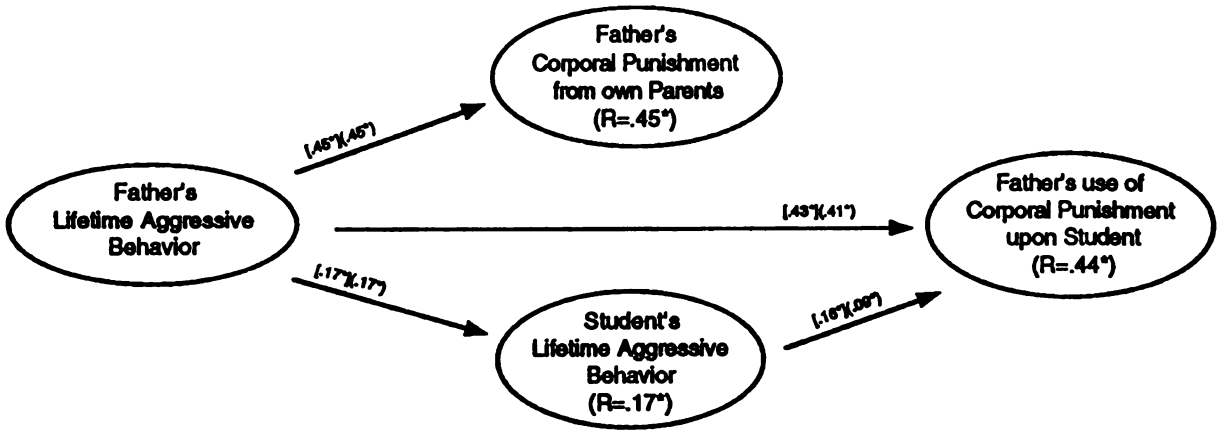
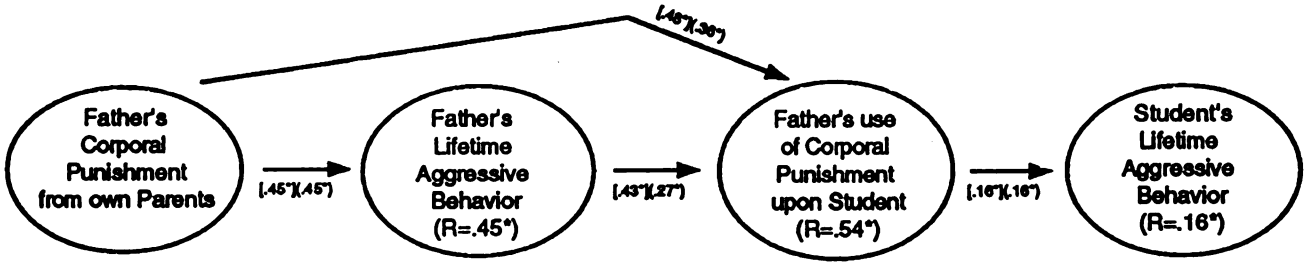
Parents' Perspectives. Once again, the results of the path analysis are presented for fathers first. The findings indicated that Model A was not consistent with the data. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 15.11, $p < .001$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .29 for the missing link between father's corporal punishment from his own parents and father's use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 2.67, $p > .263$. The largest error term was .10 for the missing link between father's lifetime aggressive behavior and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 10.

Using the goodness of fit technique discussed in Bentler and Bonett (1980), it was possible to assess the extent to which Model B represented an improvement over Model A. For fathers, Model B represented an improvement as follows: NFI = .82; NNFI = .95).

MODEL A



MODEL B



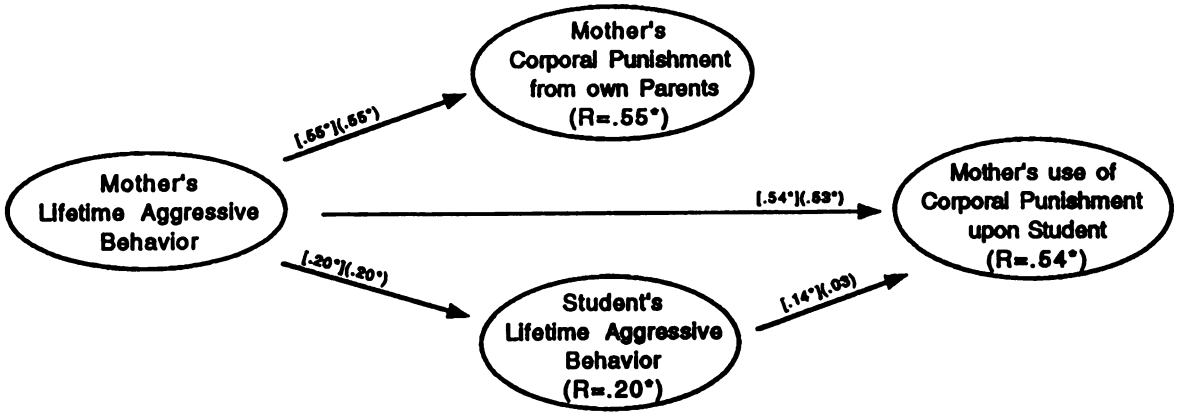
[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 10: The path models for <u>fathers</u> with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (parent's perspective on Variable 3)

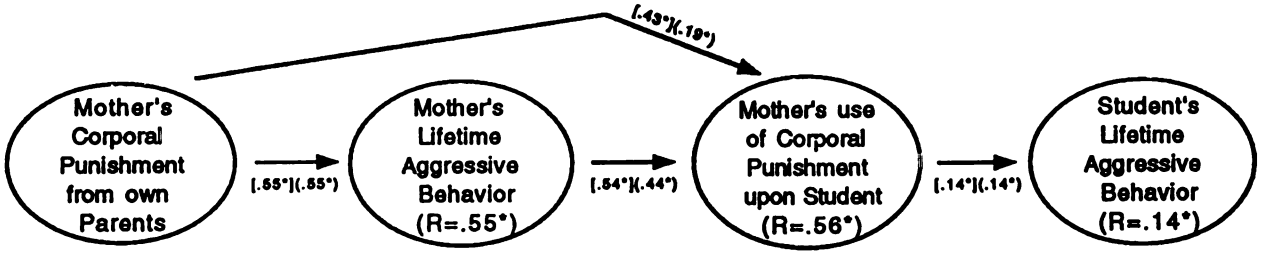
Next, the results of the path analysis are presented for mothers. The findings indicated the following for Model A. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 3.60, $p > .165$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .13 for the missing link between mother's corporal punishment from her own parents and mother's use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 4.77, $p > .092$. The largest error term was .12 for the missing link between mother's lifetime aggressive behavior and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 11.

The Bentler and Bonett (1980) goodness of fit index indicated that for mothers, Model A represented an improvement over Model B as follows: NFI = .25; NNFI = .42).

MODEL A



MODEL B



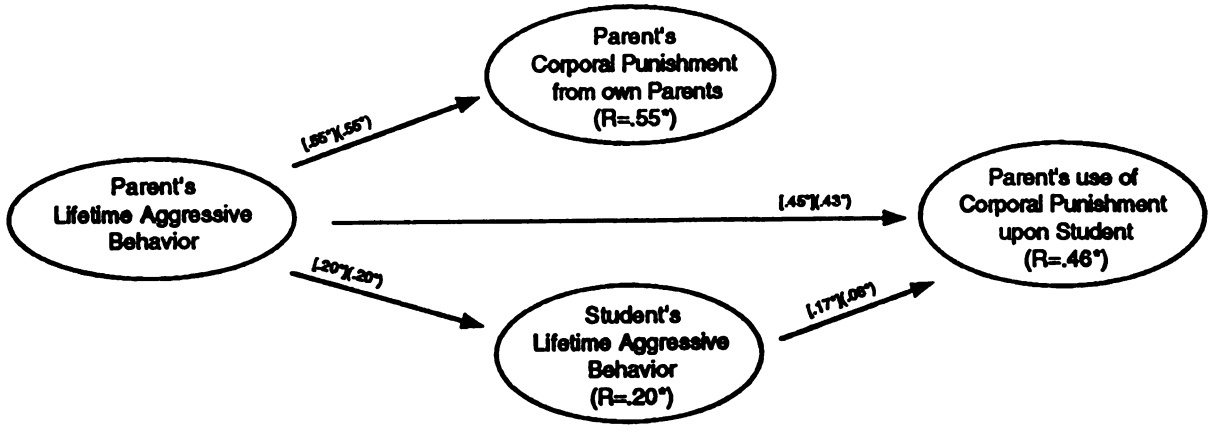
[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 11: The path models for mothers with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (parent's perspective on Variable 3)

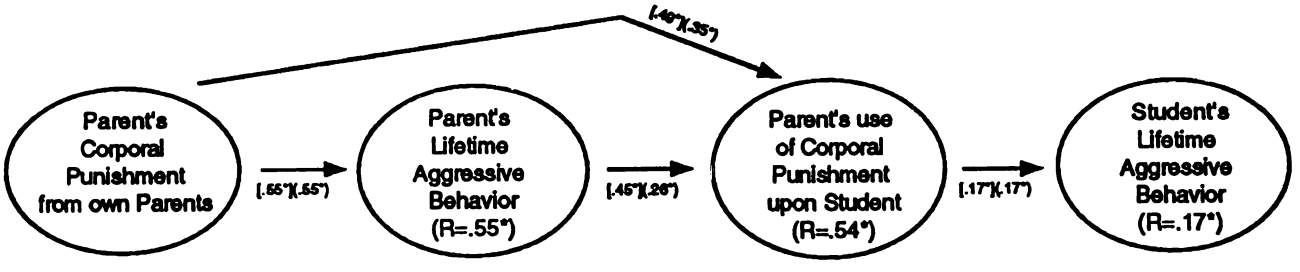
Finally, the results of the path analysis are presented for parents in general (i.e., fathers and mothers combined). The findings indicated that Model A was not consistent with the data. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 21.98, p = .000). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .24 for the missing link between parents' corporal punishment from their own parents and parents' use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 7.02, p < .030). The largest error term was .12 for the missing link between parents' lifetime aggressive behaviors and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 12.

The Bentler and Bonett (1980) goodness of fit index indicated that for parents in general, Model B represented an improvement over Model A as follows: NFI = .68; NNFI = .75).

MODEL A



MODEL B



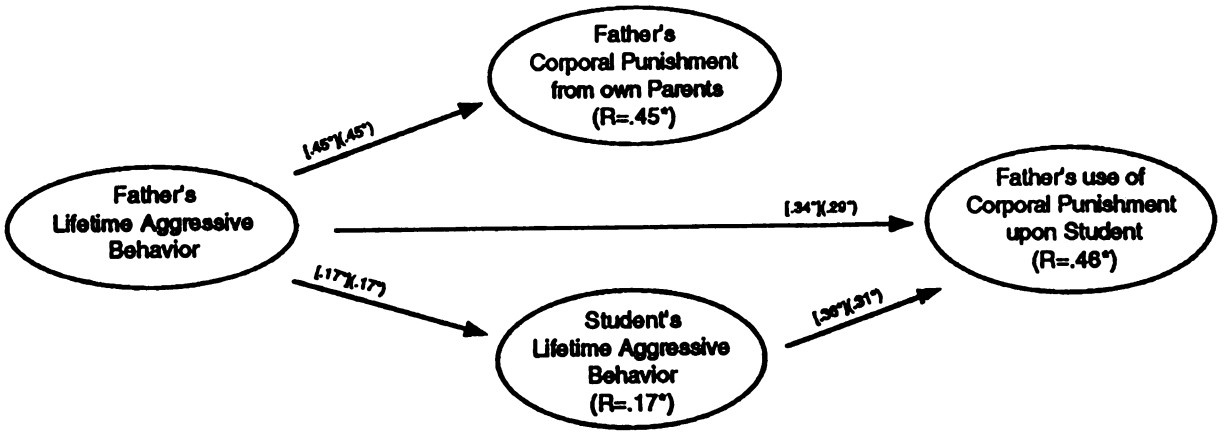
[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 12: The path models for <u>parents</u> (mothers and fathers) with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (parent's perspective on Variable 3)

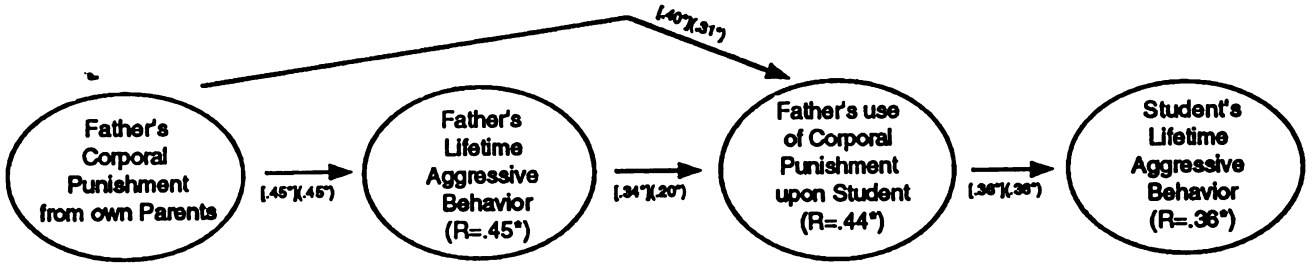
Student's + Parents' Perspectives. The results of the path analysis are presented for fathers first. The findings indicated that Model A was not consistent with the data. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 14.39, $p < .001$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .25 for the missing link between father's corporal punishment from his own parents and father's use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 3.83, $p > .147$. The largest error term was -.11 for the missing link between father's corporal punishment from his own parents and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 13.

Using the goodness of fit technique discussed in Bentler and Bonett (1980), it was possible to assess the extent to which Model B represented an improvement over Model A. For fathers, Model B represented an improvement as follows: NFI = .73; NNFI = .85).

MODEL A



MODEL B



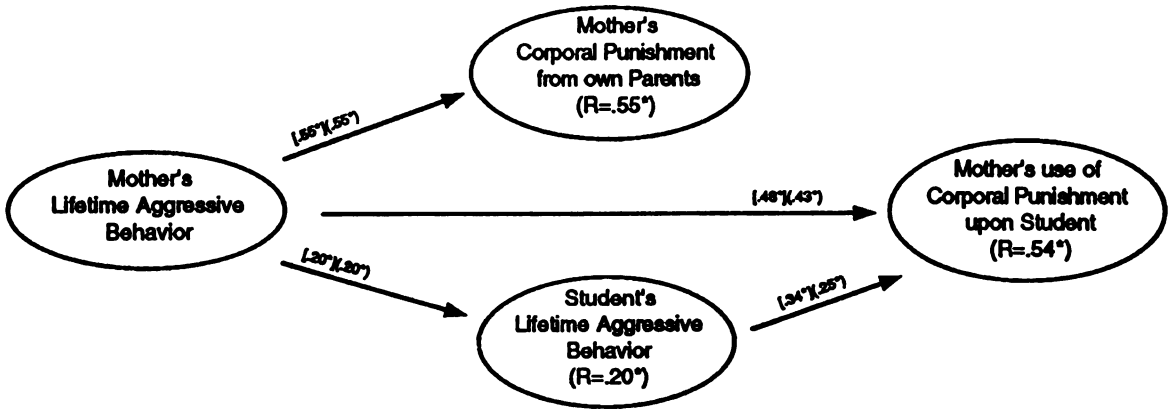
[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 13: The path models for <u>fathers</u> with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (student's + parent's perspectives on Variable 3)

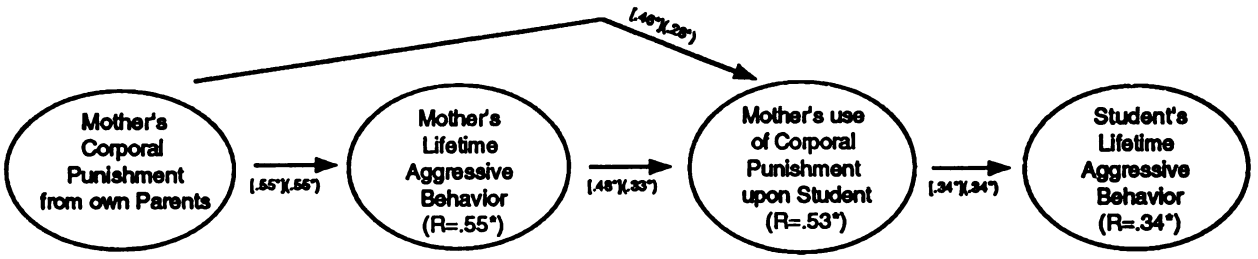
Next, the results of the path analysis are presented for mothers. The findings indicated that Model A was not consistent with the data. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 9.53, $p < .009$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .20 for the missing link between mother's corporal punishment from her own parents and mother's use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = .30, $p > .860$. The largest error term was .04 for the missing link between mother's lifetime aggressive behavior and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 14.

The Bentler and Bonett (1980) goodness of fit index indicated that for mothers, Model B represented an improvement over Model A as follows: NFI = .97; NNFI = 1.23).

MODEL A



MODEL B



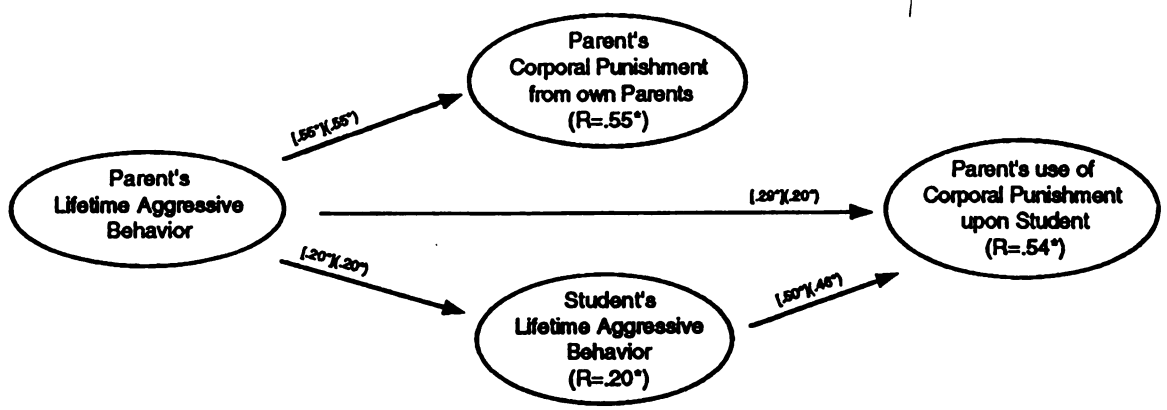
[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 14: The path models for <u>mothers</u> with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (student's + parent's perspectives on Variable 3)

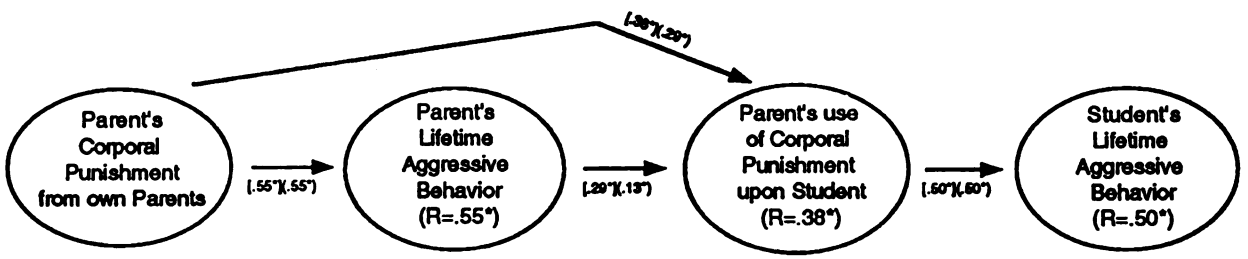
Finally, the results of the path analysis are presented for parents in general (i.e., fathers and mothers combined). The findings indicated that Model A was not consistent with the data. The chi square test for overall goodness of fit indicated a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 9.76, $p < .008$). The largest error term (actual - reproduced correlations) was .20 for the missing link between parents' corporal punishment from their own parents and parents' use of corporal punishment upon the student. For Model B, the chi square test for overall goodness of fit did not indicate a significant difference between the model and the data (chi square (2) = 1.92, $p > .382$. The largest error term was -.07 for the missing link between parents' corporal punishment from their own parents and student's lifetime aggressive behavior. The correlations and path coefficients for these path analyses are presented in figure 15.

The Bentler and Bonett (1980) goodness of fit index indicated that for parents in general, Model B represented an improvement over Model A as follows: NFI = .80; NNFI = 1.01).

MODEL A



MODEL B



[ ] = correlation
( ) = path coefficent
* = p<.05

Figure 15: The path models for <u>parents</u> (mothers and fathers) with correlations and path coefficients between constructs (student's + parent's perspectives on Variable 3)

The Importance of Perspective

The results presented above suggest that goodness of fit of the relevant models depends somewhat on whose perspective is used to define parents' use of corporal punishment. Several interesting correlational comparisons may shed some light on the role of observer perception (see table 19).

Notice that the correlation between variables 2 and 3 is .45, while the correlation between variables 2 and 4 is .19. This suggests that the relationship between parents' self ratings of aggressiveness and their ratings of their use of corporal punishment is greater that the relationship between parents' self ratings of aggressiveness and the students' endorsements of their parents' use of corporal punishment. Furthermore, notice that the correlation between variables 5 and 3 is .17, while the correlation beteen variables 5 and 4 is .50. This suggests that the relationship between students' self ratings of aggressiveness and their ratings of their parents' use of corporal punishment is greater than the relationship between students' self ratings of aggressiveness and parents' endorsements of their own use of corporal punishment.

One conclusion that may be drawn from these findings is that there are important individual differences in perception of aggressiveness events. Here, persons who are more aggressive tend to perceive aggressivenss around them

and tend to remember aggressiveness more, both their own as well as others' acts of aggressiveness. Less aggressive people tend to perceive and recall less aggressiveness around them.

Table 19

Correlations Utilizing all Perceptions

Measure	Parents (n=1536) 1	2	3	4	5
1. Parent's Corporal Punishment from own Parents	1.00				
2. Parent's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.55	1.00			
3. Parent's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.49	.45	1.00		
4. Parent's use of Corporal Punishment upon Student	.27	.19	.42	1.00	
5. Student's Lifetime Aggressive Behavior	.11	.20	.17	.50	1.00

N.B. For all correlations in this table, $p < .05$.
Variables 1 & 2: Father and Mother as data sources.
Variable 3: Father & Mother as data sources.
Variable 4: Student as data source.
Variable 5: Student as data source.

Discussion

The result of this portion of the project indicated the following. When using classic goodness of fit indices, such as the chi square test, and the Bentler and Bonett (1980) indices, Model B represented somewhat greater consistency with the data than did Model A.

One important caveat that should be pointed out in interpreting the current results has to do with the issue of perspective. The extent to which one may conclude one path model to be superior to the other is related to the perspective of the individual making the judgment. Persons who are more aggressive tend to perceive aggressivenss around them and tend to remember aggressiveness more, both their own as well as others' acts of aggressiveness. Less aggressive people tend to perceive and recall less aggressiveness around them. Thus, there are important individual differences in perception of aggressiveness events.

Future research investigating the issue of family aggressive behavior should use a wider array of perspectives than were used in the current study. For example, some other perspectives that may be included are: (a) each parent's perceptions of the spouse's use of corporal punishment; (b) each parent's perceptions of the child's aggressiveness; (c) child's perceptions of the parents'

aggressiveness; (d) each parent's perceptions of the spouse's aggressiveness.

Clinical Relevance

This study addressed two theoretical positions. One assumed that biologically based provocative child temperament influences aggressive parental response as a means of coping with the child. The second view (social learning) assumed that one learns to use aggressive behavior as a means of resolving conflict from one's parents. As such, aggressive behavior toward one's children was learned from one's own parents.

The theoretical issues raised in this portion of the research may have bearing upon clinical practice. Clinicians holding the temperament view might conduct their practice quite differently from therapists asserting the social learning position. For example, a clinician assuming the temperament view might concern him/herself with teaching parents alternative strategies on how to cope with a difficult child, other than losing control. The assumption would be that this child was born difficult. The intervention focus may be on developing strategies on how to help the parent manage the child. This therapist might use a solution based "problem solving" approach such as that advocated by Haley (1987).

A clinician assuming the social learning view may be concerned with altering the parent's beliefs that aggressive

behavior is a means of conflict resolution that is in his/her best interest. The assumption would be that the parent's children will pick up the parent's problematic coping methods, and that the parents needs to learn new ways to manage his/her intense affect, and model those to the children. The intervention focus might be a cognitive-behavioral anger management treatment group for the parent.

Limitations and Strengths of this Project

Limitations

The current research is limited in certain ways that affect the conclusions that may be drawn. First, the data included in this report, and upon which conclusions were drawn, were collected by means of questionnaires. Many of these questionnaires were self report. It may be argued that subjects in this study were conveying information that was of a relatively personal nature. As such, they might have been more comfortable and perhaps honest in an interview setting. Furthermore, some have argued that questionnaires are not an adequate measure of "abusive histories" (e.g., Wyatt & Peters, 1986). It is important to note that other researchers disagree with these positions. Berger, Knutson, Mehm, and Perkins (1988) demonstrated that if parental punitiveness is broken down is terms of specific behaviors, subjects are able to provide self-reports that are reliable and valid measures of prior experience of severe corporal punishment. Similar results were found in the area of "sexual abuse" (Elliot & Briere, 1992).

A second possible limitation of this research is related to the low response rate for sample two. This low response rate may indicate that only a specific select group of P.A. parents wished to participate, a specially motivated group. This may imply that the results are only generalizable to a specific population of persons, rather

than to the clinical parent population at large. It should be noted that while the response rate was low, there was also a large range and standard deviation across groups in terms of response rates. This may suggest that parents were drawn from groups that varied widely in terms of motivation for participation. As such, sample two may, in fact, represent parents from a number of populations varying widely on motivation for participation.

A third limitation of this project is that it did not utilize a wide range of racial and ethnic groups. For example, Black parents comprised only 3.6% and 6.4% of the subjects in samples 1 and 2 respectively. Only a handful of parents were Native American. Subjects represent proportionally more Caucasians than other parents. Consequently, results should be limited primarily to Caucasians. In order to increase the racial diversity of the findings, one route to be taken in future research may be the following. The current study may be replicated on parents of inner city high school students.

A fourth limitation is that the current study was cross-sectional in design. Consequently, it is somewhat limited in the extent to which it can address questions of causality. The technique of path analysis was used in order to partially circumvent that limitation. With cross-sectional data on individual difference variables, it is more appropriate to make causal interpretations with path

analysis than with traditional techniques, such as analysis of variance or multiple regression. Furthermore, with cross-generational data (as in the current study), frequently there is a natural ordering to many of the variables.

Nevertheless, use of cross-sectional data means that the researcher cannot easily escape the "chicken-egg" dilemma of causal inference. As an alternative, use of longitudinal data in the context of a path analysis, would allow for the greater naturalness of individual difference (nonexperimental) variables along with the greater ability to draw causal inferences from the data. It is suggested that the current study be replicated using a longitudinal design.

Strengths of this Research

Several aspects of the current project suggest that the findings have good internal and external validity. The first of these is the fact that two different samples were used. The two samples were made up of very different groups of parents. Sample one consisted of a nonclinical group of parents of college students. These parents were average in terms of typical level of education (some high school) and occupation (skilled manual employee).

The second sample consisted of parents from Parents Anonymous groups. This group also demonstrated average characteristics in terms of typical levels of education

(some high school) and occupation (clerical or sales worker). However, this group of parents differed quite considerably from the others in that they preselected themselves as people who recognized that they were having great difficulties coping with the stressors of parenting. The fact that two very different samples were used increases the generalizability of the current findings.

One important aspect of the current research was the large size of sample one. The sample of 1536 parents meant that the standard error of correlation coefficients was approximately .025. Low standard errors such as this one suggest that correlations can be compared to one another in terms of magnitude of effect size, not only in terms of level of statistical significance.

Another strength of the current findings rests in the design. For sample one, data were collected from multiple sources. This allowed for the variable of corporal punishment toward the student to be defined from more than one perspective. The vast majority of research studies in this field define this variable from only one perspective. Several studies have pointed out the problems with using such an approach. Robins (1966) conducted a 30-year follow-up study in which she reported that of 71 subjects who, according to childhood interviews and/or reports, had been the recipients of very physically punitive paternal discipline, only 22 reported the experience in a follow-up

interview conducted 30 years later. Investigating corporal punishment, Femina, Yeager, and Lewis (1990) found that among 69 adults who had been incarcerated as adolescents, 26 gave histories discrepant with the histories and records from 9 years prior. Memory, impression management, or a wish to forget about the experience, are all factors that may play an important function in biasing the report of prior corporal punishment. As such, having more than one perspective can reduce those problems.

Finally, the current study investigates the issue of corporal punishment not just among mothers, but among fathers as well (for both samples). Several recent theorists (e.g., Phares, 1992) have argued that fathers are dramatically underrepresented in clinical child and adolescent research even though a substantial proportion of children under 18 have contact with biological fathers. Phares and Compas (1992) reviewed clinical child and adolescent research in 8 clinical journals from 1984 to 1991. The authors found that 48% of the studies exclusively involved mothers, whereas only 1% of the studies exclusively involved fathers. As such, the current study allows for a comparison of findings for fathers with those for mothers, in a way that many previous studies do not.

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