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Christine Marie Skubisz

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**THE INFLUENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT RELATED MEMORABLE MESSAGES
FROM PARENTS ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTION**

By

Christine Marie Skubisz

A THESIS

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
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ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT RELATED MEMORABLE MESSAGES FROM PARENTS ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTION

By

Christine Marie Skubisz

An investigation of achievement related memorable messages was conducted using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a framework. The TPB is concerned with the ways in which attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control about a particular behavior may influence intentions to behave and actual overt behavior. The purpose of this research was to determine if memorable messages from parents serve as persuasive messages that influence attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control to achieve. A sample of 249 participants were asked to recall an achievement related memorable message from their parents that was received during adolescence. Additionally, participants were asked about their attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intentions for achievement. Correlational analyses revealed that the valence of memorable messages affects attitudes significantly, but not subjective norms or perceived behavioral control. Attitude is related significantly to all other TPB variables. The findings also include categories of memorable message types and primary sources of memorable messages.

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The Influence of Achievement Related Memorable Messages from Parents on Behavioral Intention

Adolescence is a critical period in development, near the end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood, and the establishment of a personal identity is the psychological connection between these two life stages. At this stage of development, adolescents tend to have a heightened awareness of their self-image and their focus is shifted to questions of self-identity and potential talents (Rosenberg, 1965). A child must receive meaningful recognition of his or her accomplishments in order to acquire a strong and healthy identity (Erickson, 1950). The choices made during this formative period cause some options to close and others to become attainable (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 2001).

Many choices are made in the later years of adolescence that shape the course of an individual's life. Educational choices such as valuing education, finishing high school, or attending college can create opportunities or limit choices later in life. An educational or career choice leads to more than a degree or a job. These choices move individuals toward different life trajectories (Bandura et al., 2001). This leads to the question of why some individuals feel that they can achieve success in their endeavors, while others feel they cannot.

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), behavioral intention is predicted by the attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control about the behavior in question (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). During adolescence, parents have the potential to have a profound influence on the attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control regarding the self-efficacy and perceived achievement

motivation of their children. Individuals who perceive they are more effective, more confident, and more able will accomplish more than individuals who have less positive self-beliefs (Marsh, Trautwein, Ludtke, Koller, & Baumert, 2005). Messages sent to children during adolescence by parents are predicted to influence attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These variables are predicted to be associated with behavioral intention to engage in achievement related behaviors including, but not limited to, valuing education, finishing high school, and going to college. Therefore, this investigation will focus on the affects of parental memorable messages to adolescents concerning intentions to achieve.

To provide background for this investigation, a literature review will be conducted to explore how adolescents process this type of persuasive message, and more specifically how parental messages serve as memorable messages influencing self-efficacy and perceived achievement motivation. The TPB will be reviewed and utilized as a framework for this research. Hypotheses that consider the relationships between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, derived from the TPB, will be offered. The perceived valence of memorable messages is the independent variable of interest here. The dependent variables include attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intention towards achievement. It is predicted that the perceived valence of parental memorable messages affect attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These variables should be related to behavioral intention to achieve. A research design will be implemented to test these hypotheses. Finally, the results and a discussion of this investigation will be given.

Review of the Literature

Theory of Planned Behavior

The TPB is one social influence theory that considers the links between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intention. This theory has been employed to predict behavioral intention in a variety of contexts including: attending class (Ajzen & Madden, 1986), participating in elections (Watters, 1989), searching for a job (Van Ryn & Vinokur, 1990), and the decision of African American students to complete high school (Davis, Saunders, Williams, & Ajzen, 2002). It is concerned with the ways in which attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control about a particular subject, like achievement, may influence intentions and behaviors that are relevant to that subject (Ajzen 1985, 1991). The theory makes it possible to account for volitional behaviors of various kinds by reference to a small number of concepts within a single theoretical framework.

The goal of the TPB is to explain and predict behavior. It serves as a mechanism to link attitudes and overt behaviors. The theory rests upon three assumptions: humans are rational and systematically use information that is available to them, this information is used in a reasonable way to form a behavioral decision, and behavior is the result of a rational decision or intention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The theory also asserts that individuals generally behave in the way that they intend to behave. According to the TPB, an individual's overt behavior is influenced directly by behavioral intention, thus making intentions the principal guide to behavior. Behavioral intention is influenced, or weighted by, the attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

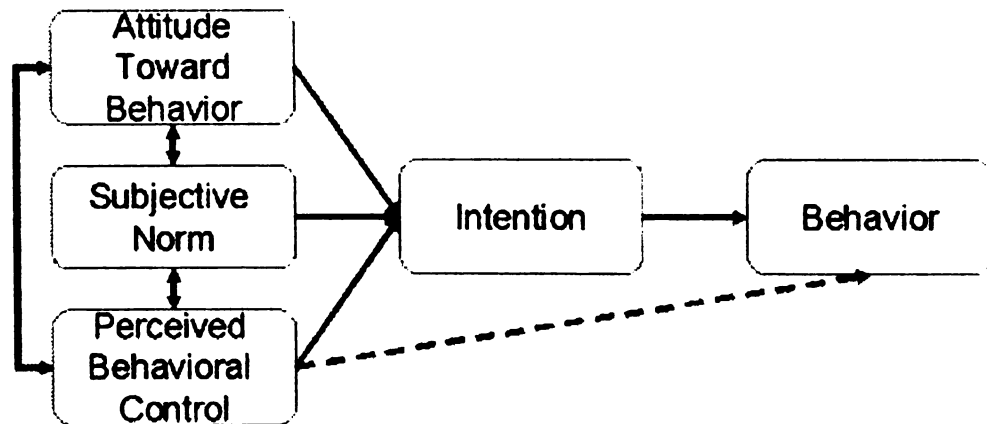


Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behavior Model (Ajzen, 1991)

The attitude toward the behavior is the evaluation of the consequences of performing a given behavior, meaning that an individual must evaluate the implications of a particular act. Attitudes are predispositions that are assumed to constitute past experiences, and therefore are learned by the individual (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). These attitudes are a function of outcome evaluations and beliefs. Outcome evaluations are the consequences, positive or negative, of the behavior. Beliefs are the probability that the behavior will actually result in the consequences. An individual's attitude about being successful or being a high achiever may include having academic success, getting into a good college, obtaining a good job, or excelling in athletics.

The second factor, subjective norms, consists of perceptions of social pressures from close others placed on the individual to perform or not perform the particular behavior. These perceptions are a function of normative beliefs and motivation to comply. Normative beliefs are expectations about whether important reference groups or individuals endorse performing the particular behavior or what the individual thinks others think he or she should do. Motivation to comply is the degree to which the

individual cares about the opinions of significant others. Subjective norms consider the influence of important others, like parents, in an individual's social environment.

The final predictor of behavioral intention is perceived behavioral control. This refers to an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior in question. Perceived behavioral control considers how an adolescent feels about his or her ability to be successful in his or her endeavors. If an individual feels that he or she is unable to produce the outcome that he or she desires, there is little incentive to continue. Therefore, perceived behavioral control is a critical factor in career choice and development (Bandura et al., 2001).

The TPB will serve as a guide to this investigation on parental memorable messages. Given that parents have the potential to influence the attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control of their adolescent children, memorable messages from them should be influential in shaping self-efficacy and perceived levels of achievement. Memorable messages often serve as guides to behavior (Smith & Ellis, 2001). These messages are a medium through which attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control can be influenced. Memorable messages, parent-child relationships, self-efficacy, perceived achievement motivation, and sex differences in the achievement literature will now be discussed further.

Memorable Messages

Knapp, Stohl, and Reardon (1981) originally defined memorable messages as “verbal messages which may be remembered for extremely long periods of time and which people perceived as a major influence on the course of their lives” (p. 27). Individuals receive hundreds of verbal messages in a single day and most of these messages are simply processed and then forgotten. Yet, some messages are seen as meaningful units of communication that affect behavior and guide sense-making processes (Holladay, 2002). These retained messages are referred to as memorable, and are most often received from a person who is older and of higher status. Thus, messages from parents fit this definition well. This research predicts that memorable messages have the ability to serve as persuasive messages from parents to their children.

Knapp et al. (1981) established that the age of the memorable message receiver was often young. Eighty percent of the participants were under 21 years old when they heard the reported memorable message. In contrast, 85 percent of the senders were over 21 years old. Most messages (62%) were exchanged in a private setting like at home or in the car. Ninety percent of the message recipients believed that the memorable message received had a long-term and positive impact on their lives. Knapp et al. (1981) found that messages perceived as memorable are most often brief and prescribe rules of conduct for solving problems. These messages tend to be able to transcend a specific context and are applicable to a variety of situations.

Smith and Ellis (2001) conducted an investigation of memorable messages as guides to behavior, focusing on messages that were recalled by an individual in the context of self-assessing personal behavior. Almost all of the participants (99%) were

able to report messages that they recalled when self-assessing behavior. The memorable message types reported most often were about kindness, loyalty, and patience.

Memorable messages are often received within the context of an important relationship, such as a child's relationship with his or her parents. Smith and Ellis (2001) found that participants reported receiving memorable messages most often from both parents, then mothers, followed by a number of additional sources. In most situations a parent is the principal adult figure in an adolescent's life, allowing many opportunities for memorable messages to be exchanged.

An individual's current self-image will include those messages that he or she recalls as important in forming that image (Knapp et al., 1981). Thus, a relationship between successful individuals and encouragement in the form of memorable messages that have "stuck with them" is predicted. Both positive and negative messages can significantly impact an individual's attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral intention to achieve, depending on the source and the context. Memorable messages have been shown to have a profound impact, and individuals who are sent positive messages are expected to have greater perceived efficacy and success than individuals who received negative messages. Positive memorable messages are conceptualized as messages that have an encouraging motive or tone. Negative memorable messages have a pessimistic, discouraging motive or tone.

Memorable messages have been studied within the contexts of final conversations about religious faith (Keeley, 2004), aging (Holladay, 2002), gendered socialization (Dallimore, 2003), and newcomer socialization in organizations (Stohl, 1986). This investigation considers memorable messages in another important context, parent-child

relationships. Adolescence is a time when the parent-child relationship is changing. This unique interpersonal relationship will now be explained further.

Parent-Child Relationships

Verbal interactions between parents and adolescents include expressions of feelings, asking and answering questions, discussion of ideas, arguments, and negotiations (Saphir & Chaffee, 2002). In the academic literature, adolescence is associated with important life changes. Parents serve as attachment figures and information sources that provide resources that other adults or peers cannot (Williams, 2003). Most scholars agree that the adolescent-parent relationship is generally fulfilling, continuous over time, and dissatisfaction in this type of relationship is generally short-lived. According to Williams (2003), the best model for good adjustment is one in which the adolescent feels autonomy but at the same time is embedded within a system of attachments. Relational partners, such as parents, have an important task in sending memorable messages that will be recalled when an individual is deciding how to behave or when self-assessing prior behavior (Smith, Ellis, & Yoo, 2001).

A study conducted by Biddle, Bank, and Marlin (1980) found that parental norms are more likely to influence an adolescent than peer norms. This is explained by the fact that parents have a longer time to influence their children. In contrast, peers may be shunned if they attempt to impose standards on their adolescent friends (Biddle et al., 1980). The authors also determined that parents have more influence on school achievement than peers. Kniveton (2004) found that parents are shown to have a greater influence than teachers and that the same-sex parent is most influential followed by the opposite-sex parent.

Parental aspirations are positively linked to children's academic, social, and self-regulatory self-efficacy (Bandura et al., 2001). This is important because the content of a parental message is likely to be a reflection of the parent's own aspirations for his or her child. The importance of self-efficacy on behavioral intention will now be discussed further.

Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. Self-efficacy is the confidence, or lack thereof, in an individual's ability to learn something or do something new. The most prominent and pervading mechanism of agency involves an individual's belief about his or her capabilities to exercise control over life events (Bandura, 1992). Self-beliefs of efficacy have an affect on thought patterns and can enhance or undermine performance. Human accomplishments prosper on the belief in an individual's own ability and in the worth of what he or she is doing (Thomas, 2005). All factors that serve as guides and motivators of behavior are fixed in the belief that an individual has the power to produce effects by his or her own actions (Bandura et al., 2001).

Parents, who let their children know that they have confidence in them, build their children's self-esteem and personal efficacy (Williams, 2003). An adult's high or low self-efficacy level is likely to be shaped largely by his or her parents. In a study by Huang (1999), family communication patterns were found to have important consequences on individuals' social lives, choice of occupation, and health. This perception of ability is more important in some situations than the actual ability of the

individual. Bandura et al. (2001) calls this a persuasory process, through which parental academic aspirations can raise children's perceived self-efficacy for academic pursuits. Consequently, "children's perceived efficacy rather than their actual academic achievement is the key determinant of their perceived occupational self-efficacy and preferred choice of work life" (p. 187).

Perceived Achievement Motivation

While self-efficacy is the belief an individual has about his or her capability, perceived achievement motivation involves the drive to carry out one's endeavors. Perceived achievement motivation is conceptualized as an individual's assessment of his or her ability to achieve the success he or she desires in educational and vocational endeavors. This also encompasses how an individual feels about his or her current academic and social achievements, and how he or she feels about the prospect of future vocational and social success. A sense of achievement is a key aspect in a young person's preparation for the future. Both psychological and motivational factors influence an individual's achievement, with intellectual ability contributing as only a small factor. To achieve academic and personal success, adolescents need to be confident in their abilities and persistent in their efforts (LeCroy & Daley, 2001).

Sex Differences in Achievement

The achievement literature brings attention to the sex differences in achievement related behaviors. The majority of the research on sex differences in academic achievement has traditionally been focused on girls. Beginning in the mid 1990's a distinct shift toward examining boy's educational and achievement related behaviors has occurred (Weaver-Hightower, 2003). A summary of the literature on adolescent girls will first be given, followed by the more recent research on adolescent boys. The term "gender" is often used interchangeably with biological sex in this literature.

Women make up an increasingly larger share of the American workforce, but few are selecting careers in scientific fields, technical fields, or a variety of other vocations that have traditionally been held by men (Bandura et al., 2001). Recent figures on national undergraduate enrollment in engineering (2002) consisted of only 18.5% female students versus 81.5% male students (National Science Foundation, 2002). The number of women with a graduate degree in this field is even smaller. In contrast, the self-efficacy of male college students is equally high for traditionally male dominated professions and female dominated professions (Bandura et al., 2001). It is troubling that many girls may not be pursuing or achieving the success they are capable of and desire for themselves. Further, for many girls career aspirations are not based on capability, but on confidence. Low confidence is often the cause of girls' low educational and career aspirations, primarily in the fields of math and science (Eccles, 1994). Women are more likely than men to base their occupational preferences on perceived efficacy than on the potential benefits the choice may provide (Bandura et al., 2001). This gives memorable messages to daughters the potential to be highly influential.

The field of research on adolescent boys and academic achievement is a new one. Weaver-Hightower (2003) calls this shift in focus the “boy turn,” meaning that there is a new and immediate concern for adolescent boys. Hunsader (2002) states that instead of the frightening statistics about school age girls, researchers are now discovering that boys are falling behind. According to Hunsader (2002), boys are given 70% of the D’s and F’s on school report cards, boys are three to five times more likely to be labeled learning disabled, and boys report a less positive schooling experience in terms of enjoyment, usefulness of the curriculum, and teacher responsiveness. Given this focus in the literature on sex differences in academic achievement, the following research questions are posed:

- RQ1: Do sex differences exist in the perceived valence of memorable messages received from parents?
- RQ2: Do men and women report different levels of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control toward achievement?

Hypotheses

It is predicted that parental memorable messages affect attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Accordingly, positive or negative messages should be associated with the likelihood of behavioral intentions for the future. These predictions are offered in the following hypotheses:

H1: Perceived valence of parental memorable messages will be positively related to attitude to achieve.

H2: Perceived valence of parental memorable messages will be positively related to subjective norms of achievement.

H3: Perceived valence of parental memorable messages will be positively related to perceived behavioral control over achievement.

The TPB predicts that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control lead to behavioral intention. According to the theory, behavioral intentions lead to overt behavior. This is predicted in the following hypotheses:

H4: Attitude to achieve will be positively related to behavioral intention to achieve.

H5: Subjective norms of achievement will be positively related to behavioral intention to achieve.

H6: Perceived behavioral control over achievement will be positively related to behavioral intention to achieve.

Method

Independent variable

The independent variable of interest in this investigation was the perceived valence of memorable messages adolescents received from their parents. Memorable messages were operationalized as reported messages from parents that stand out in the participant's mind relating to the topics of academic achievement, advancement, motivation, or self-efficacy. The participants were asked whether they perceived their message to be more positive or more negative.

Dependent variables

The dependent variables of interest, derived from the TPB, included attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and perceived achievement motivation. Perceived achievement motivation is the reported objective of the individual to engage in achievement related behaviors such as working hard in school, finishing high school, going to college, or reaching his or her goals. This variable served as the behavioral intention concept in the TPB model.

Instrumentation

This study utilized a web-based survey questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of seven-point bipolar adjective scales, open-ended questions, and fixed answer questions that were analyzed quantitatively. The survey was divided into three sections. The first section contained questions about achievement related memorable messages. Other researchers successfully used questionnaires to collect memorable message data (Knapp et al., 1981; Smith & Ellis, 2001). In addition to the actual reported memorable message, several other features have been found to be

important in determining if a message is memorable and significant. Participants were asked a combination of open and closed ended questions about the message sender and the circumstances surrounding the message.

The second section of the survey contained items designed to assess the major constructs within the TPB. Measures of parental influence on attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control were taken. Participants were asked about their intentions to engage in certain achievement behaviors. Additional questions measured attitudes about achieving success, self-efficacy, and feelings about how successful participants have been in the past or feel they can be in the future. Direct and indirect measures of the constructs within the TPB model were taken (see the Appendix for the questionnaire). The TPB research manual *Constructing questionnaires based on the theory of planned behavior* (Francis, Eccles, Johnson, Walker, Grimshaw, Foy, Kaner, Smith, & Bonetti, 2004) and *Constructing a TpB Questionnaire: Conceptual and Methodological Considerations* (Ajzen, 2002) were used when developing the questionnaire for this study. Finally, in the last section, demographic information was asked of all participants.

Procedure

Participants were given an internet web address and completed one survey online. First, participants were asked to report an achievement related memorable message, if one came to mind, that they had received from a parent or guardian during childhood or adolescence (ages 10 to 18). This age range was chosen because adolescence is the period of development that bridges childhood and adulthood. It is a period of physical, emotional, social, and mental growth. This is an important time for young people to form

their own identities, separate from their families, and prepare for their future as members of society. Participants who recalled an achievement related memorable message were then asked about the source of the message, what they were doing when the message was first received, a situation when the message was recalled, and whether they believed the message to be more positive (encouraging) or more negative (discouraging). If a participant did not recall a memorable message, he or she did not complete the TPB questions and was directed to a set of demographics questions.

Participants who reported a memorable message were then asked a series of questions based on variables derived from the TPB. Measures of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control were taken about the behavioral intention for academic achievement. Finally, these participants then completed the same set of demographics questions as the participants who did not recall a memorable message.

Participants

Participants were recruited from communication courses at a large midwestern university and some participated in this study as part of a course requirement. All participants were asked to send the web address of the survey to peers who were not attending a four-year college or university. There were 249 respondents who completed the survey in this study. One hundred and fifty seven participants (63.1%) were female and 92 (36.9%) were male. Their ages ranged from 18 to 45 years old. The age of 236 (95%) participants ranged from 18 to 22 years old. The mean age was 20.03. Two hundred and twelve (85.1%) participants were Caucasian, 16 (6.4%) were African American, 10 (4.0%) were Asian American, 5 (2.0%) were Hispanic, 1 (0.4%) was Native American, and 5 (2.0%) participants indicated another ethnic or racial group. All

participants were high school graduates and 272 (97.2%) were enrolled in college. Of this, 235 (97.1%) were enrolled in a four-year college or university and 6 (2.5%) were enrolled in a two-year institution. One participant attended a 2-year community college and then transferred to a 4-year institution. Seven participants (2.8%) were not enrolled in any type of college institution. Table 1 presents additional demographic information.

Message Characteristics

One hundred and ninety seven (79.1%) participants reported an achievement related memorable message and 52 (20.9%) did not report a memorable message. Previous research suggests that memorable message senders tend to be of higher status and older than the message receiver (Holladay & Coombs, 1991; Knapp et al., 1981). This research confirms those findings (see Table 2). Sixty-seven participants (34.2%) reported both their mother and father as the sender, 48 (24.5%) reported their mother only, and 39 (19.9%) reported their father only. Parents were most often reported as the message sender suggesting that messages from parents have the ability to serve as memorable messages to their children. Most participants were in late childhood or early adolescence when the message was received. The mean age when the message was received was 12.83 (ages ranged from 3 to 23). Eighty-six (43%) participants were age 12 or younger when the message was received and almost all of the participants ($n = 189$, 96%) were age 18 or younger when the message was received.

Previous research also found that memorable messages were more likely to be exchanged in private settings rather than public settings (Knapp et al., 1981). This research confirms those findings as well. One hundred and thirty four (53.8%) participants were at home when they first heard the memorable message they reported.

Twenty-six (10.4%) were at school and 16 (6.4%) were in the car. Table 3 presents all locations where the reported memorable messages were first received. Participants were asked whether other people were present when the message was first heard. Ninety-seven participants (49.2%) reported that they were alone with the message sender when the message was first received. Sixty-seven (34%) participants reported that family was present when the message was first received. Most participants ($n = 172$, 87%) heard their reported memorable message more than once. Eighty-one participants (41.1%) reported hearing their memorable message 2 to 10 times. This data is presented in Table 4.

Participants were asked with whom they lived during late childhood and adolescence, ages 10 to 18. Two hundred and thirty nine (96.8%) of the participants reported living with their mother during this time. When asked about their mother's level of education, 143 (57.8%) reported that their mother graduated from college. Fifty-eight (23.3%) mothers went beyond college or attended graduate school. Two hundred and eleven (85.1%) participants reported living with their father during this time. When asked about their father's level of education 158 (63.9%) reported that their father graduated from college. Seventy-two (28.9 %) fathers went beyond college or attended graduate school. Two hundred and five (82.3%) participants reported living with both parents during adolescence. Ten (4.1%) participants reported living with another caregiver during late childhood and adolescence.

Message Content and Circumstances Surrounding the Message

Two independent coders coded the variables of memorable message type, situation when message was received, and circumstances when message was recalled to allow for inter-coder reliability to be assessed. After assessing reliability, both coders recoded the instances in which there had been disagreement. One coder then coded the remaining variables. The types of achievement related memorable messages were coded into 20 different categories. Inter-coder reliability was .82. All message types and frequencies can be seen in Table 5. Thirty-two (16.2%) participants reported a message telling them that they could “do anything or be anything” they wanted. Twenty-six participants (13.2%) reported a message that told them to “do your best and work or study hard.”

Participants were asked what they were doing when they first heard the reported memorable message. These activities were coded into 24 categories by two coders that achieved an inter-coder reliability of .82 (see Table 6). Twenty-nine (14.7%) participants reported hearing the message during general conversation with family. Seventeen participants (8.6%) reported hearing the message while at an athletic practice or competition. Seventeen participants (8.6%) reported hearing the message while talking or thinking about the future.

Participants were then asked to report a time when they recalled their memorable message. They were asked to report the situation in which the message was remembered. These situations were coded into 28 categories (see Table 7). Inter-coder reliability was .80. Fifteen participants (7.6%) reported recalling the message when doing poorly in school. Fifteen participants (7.6%) recalled the message when selecting a college major

or changing a major, and 13 (6.6%) participants recalled their reported message at an athletic practice or competition. Many of the reported message types can be applied to both academic achievement and athletic achievement. Two key features of memorable messages are that they serve as guides to behavior and can be applied to a variety of situations (Knapp et al., 1981; Smith & Ellis, 2001). Memorable messages can potentially be heard in one context and recalled in another.

Message Valence and the Theory of Planned Behavior Variables

Table 8 presents descriptive statistics among the major variables of interest. Participants were asked if they believed the message they received was more positive (encouraging) or more negative (discouraging). Participants indicated how positive or how negative they believed their message to be on a seven point Likert-type scale. One hundred and fifty one (76.6%) participants believed their message to be very positive. The mean score was 6.48 ($SD = 1.28$) with a potential range of 1 to 7. Perceived valence of the reported memorable messages is presented in Table 9.

Attitude toward the behavior was measured indirectly with five questions assessing behavioral beliefs and five questions assessing outcome evaluations. The attitude score was calculated by multiplying each behavioral belief score by its corresponding outcome evaluation score. The total attitude score is the total of each pair divided by five [$\text{attitude} = (B1 \times OE1) + (B2 \times OE2) + (B3 \times OE3) + (B4 \times OE4) + (B5 \times OE5) / 5$]. The mean score was 42.35 ($SD = 6.22$) with a potential range of 1 to 49. The alpha reliability was .82.

The subjective norms variable was assessed with four questions measuring normative beliefs and four corresponding questions measuring motivation to comply. The

subjective norms score was calculated by multiplying each normative belief score by its corresponding motivation to comply score [subjective norms= (NB1 x M1) + (NB2 x M2) + (NB3 x M3) + (NB4 x M4) + (NB5 x M5) /5]. The mean score was 42.34 ($SD = 5.07$) with a potential range of 1 to 49. The alpha reliability was .78.

Perceived behavioral control was assessed with 12 items. A combination of direct and indirect measurement was used to assess perceived behavioral control. These questions evaluated the participants' self-efficacy to perform the behavior, controllability, control beliefs, and perceived power to influence behavior. Direct measurement was utilized due to the fact that self-efficacy emerged as an important construct in the achievement literature. Therefore, it was important to measure this construct directly. The formula for indirect measurement that was used for the previous two variables would not allow for this. Also, keeping the survey at a length that was manageable for the participants was also a consideration. The mean of all 12 scores was calculated to give an overall perceived behavioral control score. The mean score was 5.53 ($SD = .75$) with a potential range of 1 to 7. The alpha reliability was .77.

Behavioral intention to achieve was assessed with three items. Several methods of measuring behavioral intention can be utilized. The behavioral intention in this study is achievement, which is a very broad concept. Therefore, generalized intention to achieve was measured. One item was removed to increase reliability to .74 from .56. The mean of the two remaining intention items was 6.56 ($SD = .49$) with a potential range of 1 to 7.

Results

Perceived valence of parental memorable messages was predicted to affect attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Accordingly, positive or negative messages should be associated with the likelihood of behavioral intentions for the future. According to TPB, behavioral intentions lead to overt behavior. Therefore, relationships were expected to exist between parental memorable messages, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intention to achieve. The correlations for all of these variables are presented in Table 10.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that valence of parental memorable messages would be positively related to attitude to achieve. This research finds that the perceived valence of memorable messages from parents is positively related to attitude to achieve, supporting this hypothesis. The correlation for the effect of perceived valence of achievement related messages on attitude was $r(193) = .23, p < .01$. Hypothesis 2 predicted that the perceived valence of parental memorable messages would be positively related to subjective norms of achievement. The correlation for the effect of achievement related memorable messages and subjective norms for achievement was $r(194) = .11, p > .05$. Thus, the data do not reveal a significant relationship between the valence of the reported message and subjective norms of achievement. Hypothesis 3 predicted that the perceived valence of parental memorable messages would be positively related to perceived behavioral control over achievement. The correlation for the effect of parental memorable messages on perceived behavioral control was $r(194) = .045, p > .05$. Therefore, this relationship was not found to be statistically significant.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that attitude toward achievement would be positively related to behavioral intention to achieve. This was found to be the case as attitude was correlated significantly with behavioral intention to achieve ($r(192) = .28, p < .01$). Hypothesis 5 predicted that subjective norms of achievement would be positively related to behavioral intention to achieve. This was not found as the relationship between subjective norms and perceived behavioral control was not statistically significant ($r(193) = .11, p > .05$). Hypothesis 6 predicted that perceived behavioral control over achievement would be positively related to behavioral intention to achieve. There was a significant relationship between perceived behavioral control and intention to achieve ($r(193) = .58, p < .01$).

In addition to the predicted relationships, several other relationships were found between the dependent TPB variables of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. A relationship between attitude and subjective norms was present ($r(191) = .345, p < .01$). The correlation for attitude and perceived behavioral control was significant as well ($r(191) = .22, p < .01$). There was also a significant relationship between subjective norms and perceived behavioral control ($r(192) = .21, p < .01$).

Two research questions were presented in the current study regarding sex differences in achievement. Research question 1 explored sex differences in the perceived valence of memorable messages received from parents. This study did not find major sex differences in terms of memorable messages received or behavioral intentions to achieve. Men and women were equally likely to believe a parental message is positive or negative. Research question 2 asked if men and women report different levels of attitude, subjective norms, or perceived behavioral control toward achievement. Women

have slightly higher attitudes ($M = 43.29$, $SD = 4.88$) towards achievement than men ($M = 40.3$, $SD = 8.11$). There was a significant effect for sex, $t(80) = -2.67$, $p < .01$, with women receiving higher attitude scores than men. Non-significant sex differences were seen in the subjective norms ($t(99) = -1.46$), perceived behavioral control ($t(99) = -1.52$), and behavioral intention variables($t(86) = -1.73$).

Discussion

The TPB is a valuable theory in terms of memorable message research. It provided a theoretical framework to examine how memorable messages have the potential to act as persuasive messages to affect behavioral intention. This study verified and advanced memorable message research by considering these messages to be persuasive messages for the first time. This research indicates that there is a persuasive influence available to parents in the form of memorable messages. In terms of the TPB, valence of memorable messages affects attitude only, yet attitude is related significantly to all of the other TPB variables (subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intention). A very strong relationship was found between perceived behavioral control and behavioral intention to achieve. This supports previous findings that argue that perception of ability is a more important factor in some situations than the actual ability of the individual (Bandura et al, 2001).

This study also serves as an extension of prior research on memorable messages. Previous research definitions suggest that parental messages are likely to be remembered as memorable messages (Knapp et al., 1981; Smith & Ellis, 2001), and this research does show that messages from parents can be remembered as memorable messages. According to this research, adolescents are listening to their parents and recalling messages from them in a variety of contexts. Achievement related memorable messages were often recalled during times of stress or decision-making when guidance was needed (see Table 6).

This research also has practical implications for parents. Parents may feel that it is difficult to make time to talk to their children about important issues. Public service

commercials emphasize how important it is for parents to talk to their children, implying that having a meaningful conversation is difficult or takes planning. In this study, the majority of the participants remember hearing their memorable message during typical, everyday activities. Twenty-eight participants (14%) report first hearing the memorable message they reported while eating dinner or doing homework. This is encouraging to parents who feel that they do not have enough quality time with their children. Eating dinner together as a family has often been considered an important activity. This research shows that dinner time or homework time can serve as important opportunities for parents to talk to their children. Finally, this research addresses the sex differences that are discussed in the achievement literature. In this study, women do not appear to acknowledge or be affected by subjective norms that promote lower levels of achievement, if in fact these subjective norms exist, nor do women report lower levels of self-efficacy toward achievement related activities.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several potential limitations of this investigation that could be addressed in future research endeavors. First, the majority the participants in this study were college students. Therefore, this was a sample of students that have already proven to be high achievers and value education enough to continue on past high school. Future research should include a larger sample of participants that are not attending colleges or universities. In addition, almost all of the participants believed their reported memorable message to be very positive. Perhaps participants are more likely to remember positive messages than negative messages or individuals were just more likely to report positive messages for various reasons. This is something that future research should investigate.

A third limitation of this study is in the measurement of behavioral intention to achieve. This variable was measured with two items after one item was removed to increase reliability. Future research should include more items to assess this variable more accurately.

Finally, the results of this study provide a method for considering parental messages as persuasive messages. A natural follow up study could be conducted with a sample of adolescent participants. Variables such as message valence may be different with a younger sample. It is important to determine if adolescents believe memorable messages are as positive as older participants believe them to be. As individuals grow older, are messages from their parents perceived to be more positive? This is a future direction for this line of research. In addition, future research could explore social and economic status and its affect on the types of memorable messages received. It is important to determine whether adolescents from different social and economic backgrounds are receiving different types of messages from their parents. Achievement related messages that adolescents are hearing from parents at home would be of interest to teachers and guidance counselors who are helping students prepare for the future.

Table 1 Demographic Information, Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
Sex		
Male	92	36.9
Female	157	63.1
Participant's Education Level		
graduated from high school	249	100
2-year institution	6	2.4
4-year institution	235	94.4
2-year then 4-year institution	1	0.4
no college	7	2.8
Mother's Education Level		
8 th grade or less	2	0.8
some high school	4	1.6
graduated from high school	35	14.2
some college/technical school	63	25.5
graduate from college	85	34.4
beyond college	58	23.5
don't know	0	0
TOTALS	247	100.0
Father's education level		
8 th grade or less	1	0.4
some high school	0	0
graduated from high school	33	13.4
some college/technical school	53	21.5
graduate from college	86	34.8
beyond college	72	29.1
don't know	2	0.8
TOTALS	247	100.0

Table 2 Primary Sources of Memorable Messages, Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

Primary Sources of Memorable Messages	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
Both Mother and Father	67	34.2
Mother	48	24.5
Father	39	19.9
Teacher or Professor	14	7.1
Coach	8	4.1
Grandmother/Grandfather	5	2.6
Television/Message was written	3	1.5
Aunt	3	1.5
Friend	3	1.5
Co-worker/Work supervisor	2	1.0
Judge in competition	1	0.5
Religious leader	1	0.5
Stepmother	1	0.5
Did not specify	1	0.5
TOTALS	196	100.0

Table 3 Locations where Memorable Messages were Received, Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

Location	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
At home	134	53.8
At school	26	10.4
In the car	16	6.4
Miscellaneous	9	3.6
At an athletic practice/competition	6	2.4
At a restaurant	3	1.2
At work	2	0.8
Did not answer the question	1	0.4
TOTALS	197	100.0

Table 4 Number of Times Memorable Messages have been heard,
Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

Number of times	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
2 to 10 times	81	41.1
11 to 20 times	37	18.8
51 or more times	29	14.7
21 to 50 times	25	12.7
1 time	22	11.2
Did not specify	3	0.20
TOTALS	197	100.0

Table 5 Types of Achievement Related Memorable Messages, Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

Memorable Message	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
You can do anything/ You can be anything	32	16.2
Do your best and work/study hard	26	13.2
Encouragement	14	7.1
Advice for how to live life	14	7.1
Independence/Individuality	12	6.1
I'm proud of you	11	5.6
Athletic achievement	10	5.1
Praise or a compliment	10	5.1
Mention or suggest a specific job/career path	10	5.1
Education-College/Higher education	9	4.6
Be happy	8	4.1
Education-General	7	3.6
Dream big/don't settle	7	3.6
Warning messages	6	3.0
Negative/critical messages	6	3.0
Never give up/overcome an obstacle	6	3.0
Rewarding good grades	3	1.5
Have an opportunity I did not	2	1.0
Money themed	2	1.0
Religious/Faith themed	2	1.0
TOTALS	197	100.0

Table 6 Situations when the Memorable Messages were First Heard, Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

Situation	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
General conversation with family	29	14.7
Athletic practice/competition	17	8.6
Talking or thinking about the future	17	8.6
Doing homework/studying or learning	15	7.6
Eating Dinner	13	6.6
In class or at school	10	5.1
Preparing or talking about college	9	4.6
Talking about school	8	4.1
Watching television	8	4.1
Talking about grades/ looking at grade reports	7	3.6
Don't remember	7	3.6
At home/doing chores around the house	6	3.0
Crying/upset/stressed	6	3.0
Did not answer the question at all	6	3.0
At a school activity/event	5	2.5
Talking about jobs/work	5	2.5
Traveling in the car	5	2.5
Complaining/trying to avoid school	4	2.0
Playing/ leisure activity	4	2.0
Talking to a teacher	3	1.5
Working/at work	3	1.5
At church/church activity	3	1.5
At a non-school activity/event	3	1.5
Shopping	2	1.0
Did not give an appropriate response	2	1.0
TOTALS	197	100.0

Table 7 Situations when Memorable Messages were Recalled, Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

Situation	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
When doing poorly in school	15	7.6
Selecting a college major/changing a major	15	7.6
Athletic practice or competition	13	6.6
Making a decision	11	5.6
Applying or preparing for college/ graduate school (prior to being accepted)	10	5.1
When stressed	9	4.6
After a success	9	4.6
Going through a difficult time/ faced with a challenge	9	4.6
At school	8	4.1
Doing a homework assignment/studying	8	4.1
Alone/thinking	8	4.1
When uncertain or worried about the future	7	3.6
With friends or peers	7	3.6
Thinking about the future	6	3.0
Life changing event/at a transition point	6	3.0
Watching TV/at home	6	3.0
Being told others were proud of them/ receiving praise	5	2.5
When feeling like a failure/ having self-doubt	5	2.5
Dealing with or trying to understand others	5	2.5
Did not answer the question at all	5	2.5
Helping others	4	2.0
Did not give an appropriate response	4	2.0
When frustrated or upset	4	2.0
When struggling (not academically)	4	2.0
Before or during a test or exam	4	2.0
At an audition or interview	4	2.0
Having a disagreement with parents	3	1.5
After a disappointment	3	1.5
TOTALS	197	100.0

Table 8 Descriptive Statistics: Message Valence, Attitude, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Behavioral Intention

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha	Range
Message Valence	6.48	1.28	----	1-7
Attitude	42.35	6.22	.82	1-49
Subjective Norms	42.34	5.07	.78	1-49
Perceived Behavioral Control	5.53	.75	.77	1-7
Behavioral Intention	6.56	.49	.74	1-7

Table 9 Valence of Memorable Messages, Frequencies, and Percentage of Total

Valence	Frequencies	Percentage of Total
Very positive	151	76.6
Somewhat positive	27	13.7
Slightly positive	5	2.5
Neutral	5	2.5
Slightly negative	1	0.5
Somewhat negative	2	1.0
Very negative	6	3.0
TOTALS	197	100.0

Table 10 Correlations among Valence of Memorable Messages, Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Message Valence	-	.23*	.11	.045	.062
2. Attitude		-	.345*	.22*	.28*
3. Subjective Norms			-	.21*	.11
4. Perceived Behavioral Control				-	.58*
5. Behavioral Intention					-

*The correlations are significant at $p < .01$.

Appendix

Memorable Messages about Achievement Survey

The goal of this study is to see what factors influence achievement motivation. You must be 18 years or older to participate in this study. You will complete one survey online that should take about 30 minutes in total. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may skip any question that you do not want to answer or that makes you feel uncomfortable. You may stop participation at anytime without penalty. No identifying information will be collected from you. Your answers will be kept confidential and your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. This software uses 128-bit encryption. Any data that is uploaded to the server, submitted to the server, or downloaded from the server is encrypted. The data from the server is downloaded on to one specific computer, which is protected by a login and password. When downloaded, the data itself does not contain a unique id for respondents.

If you are a Communication student at Michigan State University and completing this survey in exchange for course credit points you will receive ½ hour credit for your participation.

If you have any questions about this study, contact the investigator, Dr. Sandi Smith at 353-3715 or by email at smiths@msu.edu. If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant or are at any time dissatisfied with any aspect of this study, you may contact - anonymously if you wish - Peter Vasilenko, PhD, Chair of the Social Science, Behavioral, and Education Institutional Review Board (SIRB) by phone: (517) 355-2180, email: irb@msu.edu, or regular mail: 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Clicking the next page box below indicates your voluntary agreement to participate in this study.

1. This is a study about memorable messages and achievement motivation. People frequently receive memorable messages that influence them for the rest of their lives. When we are adolescents and teenagers our parents often tell us things about our ability and the future. We are interested in learning about a message related to achievement that you remember receiving from a parent or main caretaker when you were an adolescent (ages 10-18).

This can be something **POSITIVE** or something **NEGATIVE** that you were told about **SUCCESS, EDUCATION, JOBS, or YOUR ABILITY TO REACH YOUR GOALS**. The critical point is that you feel this message has significantly influenced your life in some way such as how you behave, what you think about, your attitudes, or other aspects of your life. This message could be about your strengths, your talents, or what you should become as adult. Or this could be about your weaknesses, jobs you should not pick, or goals you will not be able to reach. There is no right or wrong answer.

Do you recall an achievement related memorable message? YES NO

2. Please type the actual achievement related message you received (use exact words if possible).

3. About how old were you when you first heard this message? _____

4. Who told you this message?

1. mother

2. father

3. both mother and father

4. Other (please specify) _____

5. Where were you when you first heard this message?

1. at home
2. at school
3. in the car
4. at a friend or family members home
5. other (please specify) _____

6. What were you doing when you first heard this message?

7. Were any other people there with you when you first heard this message?

8. About how many times do you think you have heard this message? _____

9. Think of a time when you have remembered this message. What was the situation when you recalled this message?

DIRECTIONS: For the next set of questions, mark the response that best describes your opinion. Circle one response for each question.

10. Do you believe the message you wrote down is more positive (encouraging) or more negative (discouraging)?

1. very positive
2. somewhat positive
3. slightly positive
4. neither positive nor negative
5. slightly negative
6. somewhat negative
7. very negative

11. This message has influenced my job or career choice.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

12. This message has influenced my decision to go or not go to college.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

13. This message influenced how I behaved in school.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

14. Doing well in school will help me get a good job.

1. very likely
2. somewhat likely
3. slightly likely
4. neither likely nor unlikely
5. slightly unlikely
6. somewhat unlikely
7. very unlikely

15. Doing well in school helped or will help me get into a good college.

1. very likely
2. somewhat likely
3. slightly likely
4. neither likely nor unlikely
5. slightly unlikely
6. somewhat unlikely
7. very unlikely

16. If I do well in school, I will feel that I am doing something positive for myself.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

17. Adults who have good jobs probably were good students when they were kids.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

18. Getting good grades will help me reach my goals.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

19. Doing well in school is

1. very good
2. somewhat good
3. slightly good
4. neither good nor bad
5. slightly bad
6. somewhat bad
7. very bad

20. Going to college is

1. very good
2. somewhat good
3. slightly good
4. neither good nor bad
5. slightly bad
6. somewhat bad
7. very bad

21. Doing something positive for myself is

1. very good
2. somewhat good
3. slightly good
4. neither good nor bad
5. slightly bad
6. somewhat bad
7. very bad

22. Getting a good job is

1. very good
2. somewhat good
3. slightly good
4. neither good nor bad
5. slightly bad
6. somewhat bad
7. very bad

23. Getting good grades is

1. very good
2. somewhat good
3. slightly good
4. neither good nor bad
5. slightly bad
6. somewhat bad
7. very bad

24. My parents think I should do well in school.

1. very true
2. somewhat true
3. slightly true
4. neither true nor false
5. slightly false
6. somewhat false
7. very false

25. My parents would be proud of me if I earn a college degree.

1. very true
2. somewhat true
3. slightly true
4. neither true nor false
5. slightly false
6. somewhat false
7. very false

26. When I was growing up, my parents didn't care if I did well in school.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

27. My parents felt it was important that I graduate from high school.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

28. My parents want me to make good choices.

1. very true
2. somewhat true
3. slightly true
4. neither true nor false
5. slightly false
6. somewhat false
7. very false

29. How much do you care about what your parents think?

1. I care very much
2. I care somewhat
3. I care slightly
4. I neither care nor don't care
5. I don't care slightly
6. I don't care somewhat
7. I don't care at all

30. How important is it for you to make your parents proud?

1. very important
2. somewhat important
3. slightly important
4. neither important nor unimportant
5. slightly unimportant
6. somewhat unimportant
7. very unimportant

31. What my parents think matters to me.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

32. It is important to do what my parents want.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

33. I care if my parents agree with the choices I make.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

34. I am confident that I can be anything I want to be in the future.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

35. Reaching my goals is

1. very easy
2. somewhat easy
3. slightly easy
4. neither easy nor difficult
5. slightly difficult
6. somewhat difficult
7. very difficult

36. It was or still is difficult for me to get good grades in school.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

37. I am certain that I can be successful.

1. very true
2. somewhat true
3. slightly true
4. neither true nor false
5. slightly false
6. somewhat false
7. very false

38. Having any job or career I want is beyond my control.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

39. I usually did not get good grades in school because it was too hard.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

40. Whether I am successful or not is completely up to me.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

41. If I wanted to, I could have any job I desired.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

42. Nothing is stopping me from having any job or career I want.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

43. I have control over my own success.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

44. Lots of things are preventing me from reaching my goals.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

45. How likely are you to give up when it gets hard for you to do well in school or at work?

1. very likely
2. somewhat likely
3. slightly likely
4. neither likely nor unlikely
5. slightly unlikely
6. somewhat unlikely
7. very unlikely

46. What would allow you to achieve your future goals? Select all that apply.

1. doing well in school
2. getting good grades
3. going to a good college
4. my parents
5. having friends that support me
6. other (please specify) _____

47. What might keep you from achieving your future goals? Select all that apply.

1. I can't decide what I want to be.
2. my parents
3. my friends
4. I am not smart enough.
5. money
6. I don't have good grades.
7. other (please specify) _____

48. I want to graduate from college.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

49. I will be whatever I want to be in the future

1. very likely
2. somewhat likely
3. slightly likely
4. neither likely nor unlikely
5. slightly unlikely
6. somewhat unlikely
7. very unlikely

50. I expect to reach the goals I have for myself.

1. agree strongly
2. agree somewhat
3. agree slightly
4. neither agree nor disagree
5. disagree slightly
6. disagree somewhat
7. disagree strongly

DIRECTIONS: This is the final set of questions. Please answer the following questions about yourself.

51. What is your gender? Male Female

52. What is your age: _____

53. What is your ethnicity or race?

1. African-American
2. Caucasian
3. Asian-American
4. Hispanic
5. Native-American
6. Other (please specify) _____

54. What job or career do you aspire to have in the future? _____

55. Did you graduate from high school? YES NO

If NO, what did you do after leaving high school? _____

56. Are you enrolled in college? YES NO

If YES, What type of institution do you attend?

1. 4 year college or university
2. 2 year community college
3. Other (please specify) _____

If NO, Do you plan on attending a college or a university?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I'm not sure

What type of job do you have now? _____

What are your future job plans? _____

57. Did you live with your mother for the majority of your childhood until age 18?

1. Yes
2. No

58. What is the highest level of education your mother has completed?

1. eighth grade or less
2. some high school
3. graduated from high school
4. some college or technical school
5. graduated from college
6. beyond college/graduate school
7. I don't know.

59. Did you live with your father for the majority of your childhood until age 18?

1. Yes
2. No

60. What is the highest level of education your father has completed?

1. eighth grade or less
2. some high school
3. graduated from high school
4. some college or technical school
5. graduated from college
6. beyond college/graduate school
7. I don't know.

61. Did you live with someone who was not a parent for the majority of your childhood until age 18?

1. Yes, Who was this person? _____
2. No

62. What is the highest level of education this caregiver has completed?

1. eighth grade or less
2. some high school
3. graduated from high school
4. some college or university
5. graduated from college
6. beyond college/graduate school
7. I don't know

Thank you very much for taking the time and effort to complete this survey. If you are a Communication student at Michigan State University and taking this survey for course credit, please print this page. Write your name and the COM course you are enrolled in on the page you printed and turn this into Sandi Smith's mailbox, CAS 470.

We would like to get responses from people who are doing many different things at this point in their lives, so please email this web address to your friends or peers who are 18-24 years old and who are not attending a four year college or university and ask them to take the survey.

<http://research.adv.msu.edu/ss/wsb.dll/christine/survey.htm>

Do not forget to click the submit survey box below.

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