THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIFE STRESS, EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN EARLY ADOLESCENTS FROM LOW-INCOME URBAN AREAS.

MOGAMAT OMAR ADAMS

A mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree M. Psych. in the Department of Psychology, University of the Western Cape.

Supervisor: Mr. Rashid Ahmed

2002

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIFE STRESS, EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN EARLY ADOLESCENTS FROM LOW-INCOME URBAN AREAS.

MOGAMAT OMAR ADAMS

KEY WORDS

ADOLESCENCE

STRESS

LIFE-EVENTS

ADJUSTMENT

FAMILY

PARENTS

GRANDPARENTS

SIBLINGS

RELATIONSHIPS

SOCIAL PROVISIONS

DECLARATION

The author hereby declares that the following mini-thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in this text, is his own work.

M.O. Adams

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people for their valuable contributions to the completion of this mini-thesis:

- My supervisor, Rashid Ahmed
- Anton and Farah, for their encouragement, guidance and support through the tough times in my life.
- My parents for having had the patience to support me all these years.
- To Lynn, for your support.

  To the youngsters without whom this mini-thesis would not have been possible.

  To the Psychology Department at UWC for affording me the chance to become a psychologist.

CONTENTS

FIGURES AND TABLES **Page**

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between life stress, emotional adjustment and family relationships in early adolescents from low-income urban areas. A non-experimental, survey research design was adopted for this study. The sample consisted of 119 early adolescents, aged between 12 and 14 years, from 3 low-income neighbourhoods on the Cape Flats. Data was collected by means of four instruments: a demographic questionnaire, the Adolescent Perceived Events Scale, the How I Feel Scale and the Network of Relationships Inventory. The aim was to determine the impact of stressful life events on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents and the interactive effects of perceived family relationships on the stressful life events/emotional adjustment relationship.

The following hypotheses were tested: 1) there is a positive correlation between adolescents' stressful life events and their levels of emotional maladjustment (depression, anxiety and anger/aggression), 2) early adolescent females will perceive events experienced as significantly more stressful than early adolescent males and 3) supportive adolescent/family relationships will have a buffer effect on emotional adjustment in the presence of stressful life events.

Correlation analysis revealed a small but significant positive correlation between life stress and emotional maladjustment. An increase in the experience of negative stressful life events led to an increase in symptoms of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression. These findings highlight the emotional vulnerability of early adolescents from low-income areas when exposed to negative stressful events. Despite the positive correlation, causation could not be inferred. Factors that may have impacted on the positive correlation are discussed. Females also perceived life events as significantly more stressful than males. Interestingly, females' levels of maladjustment

not significantly higher than that of males and this finding is discussed. Contrary to the stated hypothesis moderated multiple regression analysis revealed a reverse buffer effect for father support and relative support. These findings suggest that fathers and relatives

more sources of stress than support for the early adolescents in this sample. The impact of fathers and relatives on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents from low-income areas are discussed Furthermore recommendations are made regarding future research in the area of life stress and early adolescence

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Adolescence in general and early adolescence in particular has been investigated from two broad perspectives: the developmental and the life span perspective. The developmental perspective views development in terms of age-specific changes that occur physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially and has been criticised for having limitations in investigating adolescent perceptions of themselves and their surroundings (Frydenberg, 1997)

The life span perspective (the one adopted in this study), however, views development as a life long process where age, is considered a marker variable and not a developmental variable (Lerner and Spanier, 1980) In other words, adolescence is not viewed as a distinct and isolated period of life but a crucial part of the continuous life cycle (Frydenberg, 1997). From this perspective, early adolescence can thus be considered as an outcome of childhood and a forerunner to adulthood In this way, the life span perspective allows for investigations into the dynamic relationships between the early adolescent and the community from which he or she emanates.

Frydenberg (1997) posits that the life span perspective has three components, namely that, 1) development is shaped by the context in which it occurs; 2) early adolescents and the context they find themselves in, reciprocally influence each other and 3) constant interaction between early adolescents and various social contexts are transactional as contextual changes over time may influence individual development and vice versa.

Swearingen and Cohen (1985) further point out three sets of influences mediated through the individual, which interact with each other to produce development. The first, *normative age-graded influences*, are those that are biologically and environmentally determined and are closely related to chronological age, for example, puberty. This will be elaborated on in greater detail in the following chapter. The second set of influences, *normative history-graded influences* are associated with historical context. The third set of influences, *non-normative life events* are events that are unrelated to either age or historical context. These are a major focus of this study and include major events such as the death of a parent and the birth of a sibling as well as more routine daily events such as attending school and doing chores. How these major or daily events are appraised or perceived and whether they are seen to be positive or negative, may contribute to the adolescent phase of the life span being construed as relatively stressful. When confronted with normative age-graded events as

well as stressful non-normative life events, the early adolescent in particular may be at risk, emotionally and psychologically. Stress, as a result of life events, is an important factor in the development of depression in adolescents and it appears that this population seems more vulnerable to depression than others (Swimmer, 1996)

The degree to which early adolescents cope with non-normative life events is largely determined by the way the events are appraised. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) theorised that the individual's perception or appraisal of a particular event determines what resources, internal or external, the individual will mobilise, the impact of that event and ultimately how that event is coped with.

Early adolescents from low-income urban areas are faced with adverse social circumstances and stressful life events. Tolan and Gorden-Smith (cited in Stern, Smith & Jang, 1999) found that children and families from the poorest urban communities experience significantly higher levels of adversity, increased negative consequences and simultaneous stressors than do families living elsewhere. The impact of major life events on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents is well documented. Minor life events or daily hassles, however, can also be very stressful and have proven to be a more powerful predictor of emotional adjustment in early

adolescents (Wagner & Compas, 1990). If these stressful life events are not dealt with effectively, it may lead to the internalising of problems resulting in depression and anxiety (Ge, Lorenz, Conger, Elder, Simons, 1994; Grant & Compas, 1995) and externalising problems such as aggression, which may lead to delinquent behaviour (Windle, 1992)

The family forms an integral part of early adolescents' environment, and their perceptions of family relationships have a marked influence on their emotional adjustment (Ohanessian & Lerner, 1996) Relationships among family members living in low-income areas may sometimes be strained due to the stresses associated with poverty. South African families, particularly those from previously disadvantaged populations, continue to live with the socioeconomic effects of apartheid, often leading to relationships marked by poor levels of support.

In relationships where early adolescents perceive themselves to receive high levels of emotional support and guidance from family members, they may be better equipped to cope effectively with stressful life events than early adolescents who perceive their family members as less supportive. Thus positive family relationships where early adolescents receive the necessary social provisions to help them cope with stressful life events may buffer or

protect them against the effects of these stressful events (Wagner & Cohen, 1996).

Extensive international research, particularly North American, has investigated the relationships between early adolescents' life stress, emotional adjustment and family relations. There is however, a paucity of local literature regarding this topic. The focus of this study will be on the impact of life stress on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents from low-income urban areas and the role of family relationships within this context.

1.2 Summary of chapters

In chapter two adolescence in general and *early adolescence* in particular is discussed, emphasising the developmental tasks associated with this period and how they may impact on early adolescents, emotionally and psychologically. Prevalence rates of psychopathology amongst South African youth are also discussed.

Chapter three expounds upon the conceptual development of life stress from Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional theory of stress and coping. Life stress measurement in early adolescence is also discussed,

methodologically and operationally. Life stress experienced by South African adolescents is also reviewed.

Chapter four discusses the role of family relationships in the lives of early adolescents. Positive relationships from immediate and extended family members are considered with regards to the social provisions they provide to stressed early adolescents. The buffering role of these relationships is examined

Chapter five focuses on the methodology employed in this study. A description of the motivation, aims, design, hypotheses, participants, instruments, data analysis and ethics appraisal of the study is provided in this chapter.

In chapter six the results of the current study are presented, detailing the findings of the correlation and multiple regression analyses.

Chapter seven provides a discussion of the results obtained in the study. Limitations of the current study are highlighted as well as recommendations with regards to the results obtained

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF EARLY ADOLESCENCE

In the following chapter a brief overview of early adolescence will be provided, with an emphasis on emotional adjustment in the context of some of the developmental tasks associated with this phase of the life span

2.1 Developmental tasks of early adolescence

Early adolescence is a phase of the life span characterised by profound physical, psychological, emotional and social developmental changes and tasks (Irvin, 1996) Most individuals safely negotiate these biopsychosocial changes and tasks and though no longer viewed as a period necessarily marked by "storm and stress" (Conger & Conger, 1997), adolescence may be experienced by many as particularly stressful.

The most profound physiological change associated with early adolescence is that of puberty It is, however, important to distinguish between puberty and adolescence. Puberty, which refers to the process of physical changes characterised by the development of the primary (e.g menarche) and secondary (e.g. enlarged breasts and facial hair) sex characteristics may, in itself be experienced as particularly stressful and may impact on emotional

development. Williams and Currie (2000), for example, found that 11-year old and 13-year old girls who experienced early and later pubertal timing respectively, had lower ratings of body image (body size and perceived appearance) and reported lower levels of self-esteem than their peers.

Adolescence is largely a *psychological* process of change and refers to the cognitive, emotional, psychological and social changes experienced by the individual. Early adolescence may be experienced by some youth as especially difficult as it is often hypothesised to be a time when many individuals experience a convergence or accumulation of life changes or life events compared to, for example, younger children (Larson & Ham, 1993). Thus it is not surprising that this phase corresponds with an increase in negative affect (Larson & Ham, 1993).

Self-esteem, a crucial component in identity development during early adolescence, is often at it's lowest during this period (Harter, cited in Irvin, 1996). Low self-esteem makes early adolescents vulnerable to internalising their feelings when confronted with stressful life events and may lead to depression and anxiety (Rutter, 1985).

Regarding gender differences, girls seem more prone to experience drops in perceived levels of self-worth and in self-competencies during early

adolescence, in comparison with boys (Kenny, Moilanen, Lomax, & Brabeck, 1993). This may increase girls' vulnerability to emotional problems such as depression. Brage and Meredith's (1994) study lends support for this assertion as they found that gender was significantly related to adolescent depression through self-esteem: boys reported higher levels of self-esteem than girls did. Baron & Perron (1986) suggest that perhaps girls manifest depressive symptomatology and low self-esteem more frequently than boys because of the stressors inherent in the female sex role as well as the developmental tasks associated with adolescence (Brage & Meredith, 1994).

Cognitively, early adolescence is marked by the ability to think more abstractly and to view situations from multiple perspectives. According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, early adolescents move from the stage of concrete thought operations which is the ability to think logically about real experiences to the stage of formal thought operations where the individual develops the ability to consider "what-ifs", reflect and reason abstractly (Irvin, 1996) Different levels of concrete and abstract thought processes play a crucial role in the way early adolescents appraise stressful events and the subsequent coping strategies employed to deal with these stressful events.

The advent of formal operational thinking impacts on the emotional development of early adolescents, and they become more introspective in an attempt to learn more about themselves. This aids in one of the most important developmental tasks of adolescence, namely, identity development. The adolescent's major concern is to establish a strong, worthwhile identity, and issues of status, independence, and competence are important. Erikson (1963) considered identity development to be the most important developmental task of adolescence. A failure to develop an adequate sense of identity in adolescence may lead to what Erickson called confusion", which may lead to difficulties in mastering further developmental tasks in early, middle and late adulthood.

Socially, changes occur in the way early adolescents relate to others. The group becomes increasingly important in their lives and may impact on their emotional development. Research reviewed by Way and Chen (2000) revealed that in general, adolescents who experienced more satisfactory peer relationships and who had more close friendships had higher self-esteem and less depressive symptoms than other adolescents. Roberts et al. (2000) found that positive peer profiles reflective of high support and involvement and low hassles were associated with higher reported levels of self-esteem in early adolescents.

Early adolescents' interactions with adults also undergo changes, with their need for autonomy leading to "major realignments in relationships with adults, both at home and at school" (Irvin, 1996, p. 4). These "realignments" may cause conflict between early adolescents and significant adults, impacting on their emotional development. At home, for instance, parents' attempts to overcontrol the psychosocial development of their adolescent children, promoted, rather than inhibited undesirable adjustment problems (Conger & Conger, 1997).

2.2 South African adolescents

The aforementioned overview of early adolescence provides empirical evidence that this crucial developmental phase and some of it's accompanying changes and tasks can be particularly stressful for the individual and may affect self-esteem, self-image and emotional adjustment. It becomes obvious that early adolescents are vulnerable to experiencing a plethora of emotional problems associated with the advent of this phase of the life span.

Most research focussing on emotional problems in early adolescence has been North American and European in origin. Findings from these studies indicate that early adolescents from middle class communities in socioeconomically stable countries experience emotional problems related

to this phase. Needless to say, early adolescents from low-income areas in socioeconomically unstable countries, such as South Africa, are equally, if not more vulnerable to the stresses associated with early adolescence Spanenberg 1999) for example found that the intensity of stress experienced by a sample of black adolescents was higher than that reported for most other samples.

Mentioned earlier was the role of identity development within a social context as a crucial developmental task of adolescence (Erikson. Given that Erikson was referring to a relatively "normal" social context, in South Africa apartheid-capitalism made it nearly impossible for black adolescents to successfully negotiate the tasks associated with developmental phase. Stevens and Lockhat 1997) argue that the healthy development of self-concepts among black adolescents was hampered by them being encouraged to achieve individual success and social mobility but simultaneously being refused access to the material resources needed for this.

Black youth, however, were at the forefront in the struggle against apartheid and in some way this helped them not only to gain a sense of social identity (Stevens and Lockhat, 1997) but also a personal identity (Freeman, 1993). Many of the black youth developed a "struggle identity" as

were united in the fight against the National Party regime in an attempt to procure social change.

In post-apartheid South Africa, children between 10 and 14 years constitute the second largest grouping after children aged 5 to 9 years (StatsSA, 2000). Youth aged between 12 and 14 were born in the late 1980's, when the socioeconomic impact of apartheid was profound. Black babies born in Cape Town in the 1980's, were often characterised by low birth weight due to maternal smoking, alcoholism and poor nutrition (Zille, 1986) and years later this may have impacted on their biopsychosocial development. Stevens and Lockhat (1997) refer to these early adolescents as the "Coca-Cola kids", a generation which has embraced the individualism, competitiveness and worldview of America.

1990's, these adolescents' formative years, was a decade marked by great political but limited socioeconomic changes. The Group Areas Act of 1950 had forced these adolescents' grandparents and parents to move to "townships", where they still live in relative poverty. In the Western Cape, where 90% of inhabitants live in urban areas, 62% of them earn less than R1500 per month (StatsSa, 2000) Thus the majority of blacks in the Western Cape come from low-income households. Many households earn

far less than R1500 and early adolescents living in these households are often faced with the stressors associated with poverty.

Furthermore, research provides evidence of an association between urbanisation and mental health (Gillis, Welman, Koch & Joyi, 1991) In black adolescents in the Cape Peninsula, Flisher and Chalton (2001) found that urbanisation was associated with an increase in the prevalence of some risk behaviours. These included use in the previous month of alcohol, cannabis and cannabis mixed with Mandrax; perpetration of an act of violence; being a victim of violence and suicidality.

Dawes et al. (cited in Pillay, Naidoo & Lockhat, 1999) posit that in South Africa, it has been estimated that at least 15% of children and adolescents have mental health problems. In a 5-year study of mental health problems among South African children and adolescents, Pillay et al. (1999) found that, for urban children, 7% suffered from mood disorders, 28% exhibited disruptive behaviour disorders and 4% experienced some form of anxiety disorder. The sample in the Pillay et al. study was, however, children and adolescents referred to mental health clinics and do not reflect mental health problems among non-referred children and adolescents. Thus prevalence rates of mental health problems among children and adolescents in the general population may be much higher.

This is a cause for concern because **"by the standards of those modern societies within which most psychological knowledge has been generated, the majority of South African children can be considered to be grossly disadvantaged and as being at risk for less optimal psychological development"** (Dawes & Donald, 1994, p1).

2.3 Summary

This chapter highlights the emotional vulnerability of early adolescents as they are faced with the developmental tasks associated with this phase of the life span. Empirical data proves that what is commonly referred to as normative events (e.g. puberty) can be experienced by some individuals as particularly stressful, affecting levels of self-esteem and subsequent emotional adjustment. South African studies underscore the susceptibility of local adolescents from previously disadvantaged populations to emotional and psychological maladjustment. These adolescents may still be at a "disadvantage" as they battle to cope with the socioeconomic ramifications of apartheid.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW ON LIFE STRESS

In this chapter, a conceptualisation of life stress will be provided by reviewing the response-, stimulus- and transactional theories of stress. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional perspective will be elucidated in greater detail to highlight the impact of life events on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents

3.1 Conceptualisation of life stress

he concept of stress is difficult to define and debate has been keen regarding it's conceptualisation and operationalisation Stress refers to physiological and emotional conditions, generally and specifically in humans and animals (Robinson, 999) Once stress is experienced **"as a human and animal phenomenon, it results in intense and distressing experience and appears to be of tremendous influence in behaviour"** (Lazarus, 1966, p.2)

Thus early adolescents who are faced with normative and non-normative stressful life events may find their experiences "intense and distressing", if they do not have the adequate coping strategies to deal with stressful

events it may impact negatively on their emotional adjustment and could therefore be of "tremendous influence in [their] behaviour".

Stress has been the focus of empirical research since the late 1920's with Canon (1929) investigating the effects of stress on human physiology. By observing bodily changes related to pain, hunger and the major emotions, Canon posited that bodily changes that accompany violent emotional states prepare the human organism for flight, fight, or injury. According to Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1974), Canon was the first to prove that stressful life events can be physiologically harmful to humans.

Over the past seventy years, the concept of stress has undergone considerable changes in conceptualisation. The move from a simplistic biological construct to a more complex biopsychosocial construct is illustrated by the following three contemporary approaches to stress; namely the response-based perspective, the stimulus-based view and the transactional approach.

3.1.1 The "response" view of stress

Hans Selye (1936), a prominent researcher investigated the effects of stress on animals by observing rats' responses when continuously exposed to noxious stimuli. He found that humans who suffered from a variety of

illnesses, showed many of the same reactions as the rats (Selye

From his observations, he devised the concept of a "general adaptation syndrome" which he said occurs when a living organism experiences stress. This syndrome has three distinct stages. First, there is the "alarm stage", where the organism detects the presence of stress and attempts to eliminate it. Failing this, the second stage or "resistance stage" occurs, where the organism's body attempts to adjust to the stress. When the organism cannot adjust to the persistent stress, the third stage or "exhaustion stage" occurs, where the organism's coping efforts fail, leading to the point of exhaustion.

Selye postulated that stress is how an organism, whether human or animal, *feels* and *reacts* to heavy demands. The "general adaptation syndrome" described above may include physiological, affective, cognitive behavioural components and is usually perceived by the individual as noxious (Robinson, 1999). Selye's work laid the foundation for the "response" model of understanding stress and from this perspective, stress is defined as **"the demands placed upon the organism to *respond* adaptively to a stimulus appraised as noxious"** (Zegans, 1984, p. 140).

3.1.2 The "stimulus" view of stress

Selye's "response" model was an alternative to the "stimulus" model of stress, which viewed stress as events impinging on an individual and also includes conditions arising internally, for example, more innate drives such as hunger and sex (Robinson & Cook, 1993). Blom (cited in Robinson & Cook, 1993) defined stress as **"a clearly definable external life event or chronic life situation (stressor) that causes a psychological disequilibrium in an individual sufficient to result in a behavioural reaction"** (p. 219). It was the "stimulus-response" model of stress that provided the rationale behind the "life-events" approach where major events are scaled on various measures or life-events checklists, the development of which will be discussed below.

Holmes and Rahe (1967) were of the first researchers who attempted to quantify and operationalise psychological stress using the stimulus-response model. They developed the Schedule of Recent Events (SRE), a 43-item scale in which respondents indicated which positive and negative events or life changes they might have experienced in the recent past. Holmes and Rahe (1967) postulated that "change" per se is inherently stressful, and life events experienced, irrespective of their desirability, cause stress. In light of this, they defined life events as **"any set of circumstances, the advent of which requires of signals change in the**

basic life pattern of an individual" (Holmes & Rahe, 1967, p. 3). Similarly Plunkett, Radmacher and Moll-Pharana (2000) defined a life event as any event occurring to an individual or family that has the potential to produce stress. Life events may be categorised as major, such as the death of a parent, and minor or daily, for example, taking caring of younger siblings. The distinction between major and minor/daily stressors will be detailed at a later stage in this chapter.

"stimulus-response" model to conceptualising stress was groundbreaking and it's appeal lay in the way it's simplification of the measurement of stress and the construction of the life-events scale. Each stimulus or stressor could be assigned a set value of life change units in terms of the amount of adjustment a situation would demand

In Holmes and Rahe's 1967) SRE, for instance, the death of a spouse was given a value of 100 (which they assumed to be of the most stress-inducing life-events) while getting married was assigned a value of 50. The underlying assumption of the "stimulus-response" model is that humans are basically socialised into a system where values and beliefs are shared

thus individuals generally experience events in the same way. It assumes that the death of a parent, for instance, has the same meaning for one individual as it does for another. This raised some conceptual issues as

a particular individual's unique appraisal or perception of a life event experienced was not considered A major critique of the "stimulus-response" model was that it assumed the stressor was always external to the individual (except for more innate drives such as hunger), always identifiable and always caused disequilibrium (Robinson & Cook, 1993)

Even though the "stimulus-response" model allows for individual differences in the reaction to stressors and focuses on the nature of the stressor, it does not take the individual's perception of that stressor into consideration Robinson and Cook (1993) for instance argue that every individual early adolescent's perception of the stressfulness of an experienced event is unique, and by assigning such an event a score, one may lose sight of the distinctiveness of human experience In this regard Sarason, Johnson and Siegel (1978) argue that **"events may indeed vary in terms of their desirability depending on the circumstances and perceptions of the individual"** (p. 933). Thus some individuals exposed to high levels of stress may report few symptoms, whilst others exposed to low levels of stress may report many symptoms. This phenomenon may be explained by the transactional view to stress and coping discussed below

3.1.3 The "transactional" view of stress

In recent years, Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional view to stress and coping has received widespread support. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) believe that an individual's perception or appraisal of the experienced event, whether discrete or chronic, is critical in determining how the event impacts on him and ultimately how he will cope with that event. Their conceptualisation of stress and coping is based on the person-environment interaction theory of human action and reaction (Sieffge-Krenke, 1995). Essentially, person-environment interaction theory views an individual w

produces human action and reaction or human behaviour.

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) cognitive-phenomenological model of stress and coping is transactional in nature, complex and dynamic interactions or transactions occur between an individual and the environment where an individual reacts to demands in the environment. If an individual perceives that he does not have the necessary resources to deal with the demands, then stress is experienced. In this way stress and coping is defined as **"the constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person"** (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141).

The strength of the transactional model is that it views stress as a ***process*** that occurs internally and externally, consciously and unconsciously. Phenomenologically, the effects of stress vary from person to person, adolescent to adolescent. An event, such as living with only one parent, may be perceived as minor and positive by one early adolescent but major and extremely negative by another.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) reject a linear view of stress which views an event as simply producing stress which in turn leads to an emotional/somatic/behavioural problem. They argue that: **"the transactional model that underlies our cognitive theory of stress views the person and the environment in a mutually reciprocal, bi-directional relationship... Further, in traditional models variables retain their separate identities. In a transactional model separate person and environment join together to form new meanings via appraisal; threat, for example, does not refer to separate person and environment factors, but to the integration of both in a given transaction. The transactional model is concerned with process and change..."**(pp. 325-326). Their model of stress is circular and embedded and is illustrated in figure 1

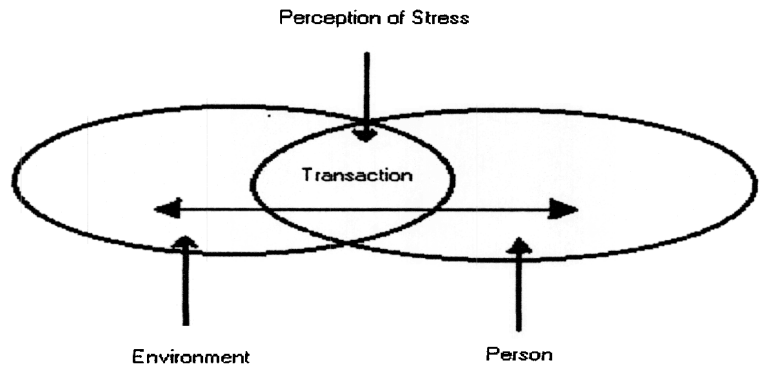


Figure 1. A transactional model of stress

Source: Robinson, M. (1999). Stress and it's perception in childhood. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly, 12* (3), 217-231.

The cognitive activities of "primary appraisal" and "secondary appraisal", plays a crucial role in the way the individual copes with stressful life events and can be viewed as a **"continuously changing set of judgements about the flow of events for the person's well-being"** (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, p. 302).

Primary appraisal is used by the individual to determine how the event will impact on his well-being and consists of three types, namely, harm-loss, threat and challenge. Harm-loss refers to the damage already experienced by the individual, threat to any anticipated harm or loss and challenge to the potential for mastery or gain over the life event.

The above-mentioned types of appraisal determine the individual's perception of how an event will impact on him and leads to secondary appraisal. In secondary appraisal, the individual assesses which resources may be mobilised to help him cope with the particular life event. Secondary appraisal is crucial because it entails making evaluative judgements of what action can be taken to improve the dysfunctional person-environment interaction.

The relationship between primary and secondary appraisal is bi-directional. If the individual knows that he can overcome a particular danger then that danger may be perceived as less threatening. Similarly, if the individual knows that he is in danger, then it automatically initiates a search for information about or evaluation of what can and can't be done about that particular danger (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). If through secondary appraisal the individual knows that he will have adequate resources (personal or interpersonal) to cope with the event, then that event automatically becomes less of a threat.

Reappraisal refers to the cognitive and intrapsychic processes that also form an important part of the coping process. This is the feedback system that includes information from the individual's own reactions and from the environment. Reappraisals are cognitive coping strategies aimed at actively

managing the demands and distress associated with a particular life event (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). Thus the dynamic and circular interaction between primary appraisal, secondary appraisal and reappraisal determines the extent to which the individual copes with major or minor life events and the impact of these life events on his emotional adjustment.

3.2 Life stress and early adolescence

3.2.1 Life stress measurement in early adolescence

Coddington 1972) was one of the first researchers to investigate the impact of life events on children's health. Using Holmes and Rahe's (1967) method of quantifying events, Coddington administered his scale to more than 3000 children and adolescents. He found that a positive relationship existed between children and adolescents' life events, frequency of accidents and the presence of physical ailments such as abdominal pains and respiratory illnesses (Balk, 1995)

Despite Coddington's groundbreaking research on the relationship between life events and health in children and adolescents, his approach revealed some conceptual issues. Firstly, the method of assigning values to a life event based on the opinion of adults failed to consider the child or adolescent's perception of that life event. This approach assumed that adults could judge the stressfulness of events better than the children and

adolescents who experienced them. Research by Anthony and Koupernik (cited in Brown & Cowen, 1988) contradicted this, when they revealed that stress experienced by children and stress as adults inferred it to occur in them, differed.

Secondly, Coddington's approach failed to distinguish between negative and positive life events (Swearingen and Cohen, 1985) Coddington assumed that that any event, whether positive or negative, required readjustment by the child or adolescent and was therefore stressful. The extant adult and adolescent stress literature however revealed that negative and not positive life events accounted for the significant relationship between life stress and mental health problems.

Attempts at addressing the conceptual issues raised by Coddington's (1972) work led to the development of life events scales which required children or adolescents to report the occurrence, desirability and degree of impact of experienced events. Scales such as the Junior High Experiences Survey (Swearingen and Cohen, 1985) and the Adolescent Life Change Events Scale (Yeathworth, York, Hussey, Ingle Goodwin, 1980) considered the crucial role of "appraisal" in determining how experienced life event impacts on the respondent and thereby greatly improved the measurement of life stress in children and adolescents.

In developing the Adolescent Perceived Events Scale (APES), Compas, Davis, Forsythe and Wagner (1987) argued that a major methodological problem of some life events scales were the generation of items on these scales by adult researchers and mental health professionals. They posited that the views of adults who generated the items might not accurately reflect the experiences of children and adolescents, as adults' views may be clouded by factors such as theoretical bias and age differences. Compas et al. (1987) emphasised the importance of developing a scale, such as the APES, in which the items were solely adolescent-generated. Thus adult-generated life events scales and adolescent-generated life events scales may reveal different results.

Swearingen and Cohen 1985), in finding a positive, yet weak correlation between negative life events and psychological distress in early adolescents, recognised that a limitation of their study was the use of an adult-generated life events scale. Data derived from studies using adolescent-generated life events scales yielded stronger positive correlations between the occurrence of stressful life events and depressive symptomotology (Ge et al. 1994 Larson & Ham, 1993; Siegal & Brown, 1988) and anxiety (Cauce, Hannan & Sargeant, 1992; Grant & Compas, 1995).

3.2.2 Defining life events in the context of adolescence

The three theories of stress discussed above highlight the differences in how events may be experienced as stressful by an individual. Stimulus and response views to stress emphasise the "objective" characteristics of events, where impact is inherent and is relatively unaffected by differences between the individuals who experience them. Examples of event characteristics that have been assessed objectively have been in the domain (e.g. school, family) in which the events occur or whether the event is a major life event or a daily hassle (Compas, Davis & Forsythe, 1985).

The transactional view to stress, however, emphasises the "subjective" characteristics of events and hence the importance of perceptions or cognitive appraisals. Subjective characteristics of events include assessment of whether an event is positive or negative and the impact of the event.

Certain properties of events or *event parameters* such as frequency, predictability, uncertainty and control (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) impact on the perceived stressfulness of the event. Seiffge-Krenke (1995) identified certain event parameters that may be of particular relevance to adolescents. Event controllability can be significant and may affect the way a situation is appraised and the coping skills used to deal with it. Event predictability

may be also be crucial as it allows for the occurrence of anticipatory coping (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). Imminence refers to the time left before an event occurs and may be particularly important as an optimal amount of time may allow the individual to enlist support from significant others.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) proposed the view that daily negative life events or hassles and not only major events impact on emotional adjustment. Lazarus (in Chamberlain and Zika, 1990) conceptualised hassles as **"experiences and conditions of daily living that have been appraised as salient and harmful or threatening to the endorser's well-being"** (pg. 469). Compas et al. (1987) define major events, as events perceived to have high impact but occur infrequently whereas minor events are events perceived to occur frequently with variable impact.

3.2.3 The impact of life events on early adolescents

Coddington (1972) found that early adolescents needed more adjustment for experienced life events compared to the middle- and late childhood and middle adolescent age groups. This implied that the early adolescent group perceived their experienced life events as more stressful than the other age groups and thus they appeared to be more vulnerable.

Larson and Ham's research (1993) confirmed this as they found that early adolescents experienced more negative life events than preadolescents did. Furthermore, they found that these negative life events assumed a stronger relationship with negative affect in the early adolescent group than in the preadolescent group

Multiple factors account for early adolescents experiencing more stressful life events than other age groups. The age-graded normative events (e.g. puberty) associated with early adolescence may be a source of stress (Williams & Currie, 2000). Early adolescents' need for independence may also expose them to more environmental experiences than younger children and thus more experiences that may be appraised as stressful. Coddington (1972) argued that early adolescents still have close ties to the family and may be exposed to many events, especially those originating within the family, over which they have little or no control.

An important point made by Larson and Ham 1993) is that early adolescents' reporting more stressful life events than younger children may be due to them becoming sensitised to tensions in their relationships with significant others, especially family members. This "realignment" in relationships between early adolescents and significant others (Irvin, 1996)

may further increase the occurrence of conflict as early adolescents begin to question parental control in many spheres of their lives.

Related to this, Wagner and Compas (1990) raised the issue of the influence of different subtypes of events in the lives of early adolescents. In their study, early adolescents found network-related events (events happening in their immediate environment) to be the greatest in mean number of events experienced, followed by family-, academic-, peer- and intimacy-related events. Family-related events showed the highest correlation with psychological symptoms followed by intimacy-, network-, peer- and academic-related events. It thus appears that early adolescents' relationships whether in the context of their families, networks or intimate relations can be experienced as very stressful and may impact on emotional and psychological adjustment.

In recent years, the role of minor events or daily hassles in the stress/symptom relationship has gained increasing prominence. Chamberlain and Zika (1990) found minor events to be substantially stronger than major life events in predicting psychological well-being. Stress research on early adolescents also found similar findings (Compas, Howell, Phares & Williams, 1989; Wagner & Compas, 1990; Wagner, Compas & Howell, 1988). Wagner et al. (1988) found that daily stressful

events acted as a mediating variable between major life events and psychological symptoms. In other words, major events led to an increase in daily stress which, in turn, led to an increase in psychological symptoms.

Wagner et al. (1988), in fact, argued for an integrative model of viewing psychosocial stress, emphasising the role of daily negative life events in predicting emotional adjustment. Printz, Shermis and Webb's (1999) study supports this view as they found a higher correlation between daily events and adjustment than major events and adjustment in a sample of adolescents. Similar to Wagner et al. (1988), they suggest that major events were causally related to daily events, which in turn, impacted on adolescent emotional adjustment.

3.2.4 Life stress and gender differences in early adolescence

In the previous chapter reference was made to gender differences with regard to levels of self-esteem and subsequent vulnerability to depression. Girls were found to display lower levels of self-worth and self-esteem, which were related to higher levels of depression compared to boys.

Girls and boys also appear to differ with regards to their experiences of stressful life events, whether these events are appraised as "major" or "daily", "positive" or "negative", "controllable" or "uncontrollable". Compas

et al 1985) investigated the characteristics of life events during adolescence using open-ended questionnaires. They found that the nature of the events reported by the sample varied as a function of gender. In general, girls reported experiencing more negative major events, negative daily events, less positive events and anticipated more negative events than boys did. Compas et al. 1989) administered the Adolescent Perceived Events Scale (the measure used in this study) to a sample of early adolescents and found similar results: girls experienced significantly more negative major events and daily hassles than boys.

Not only do girls appear to experience more negative events than boys; they also appear to appraise these negative events as more stressful than boys. Swearingen and Cohen (1985) found that girls experienced more uncontrollable negative events as well as higher impact scores than boys did.

It appears this phenomenon is not only confined to adolescence. Brown and Cohen 1988) for example found that in their sample of 9- to 13-year-old children, girls reported significantly more cognitive upset due to stressful events than boys.

Multiple factors may contribute towards girls being more vulnerable to the demands of stressful situations than boys. These include the possibility of girls having a more external locus of control than boys (Doherty & Baldwin, 1985) and the stressors inherent in the female gender role (Baron & Perron, 1986).

Wagner and Compas (1990) posit that girls might be more sensitive than boys to certain *subtypes* of events. The literature reviewed by them suggests that adolescent female self-esteem and identity is linked to skill and success in interpersonal relationships whereas self-esteem and identity in boys is linked with tangible achievement. Thus **"adolescent girls may have more of a personal investment in interpersonal events than boys, and so may be more at risk for experiencing negative interpersonal events, for perceiving interpersonal events as highly stressful, and for experiencing symptoms in relation to this stress."** (Wagner & Compas, 1990, p. 384). They found that females in the early-, middle- and late adolescent groups reported experiencing more overall negative events than males. Additionally, female early adolescents reported their stressful events as more stressful than those reported by male early adolescents.

Wagner and Compas (1990), however found that even though early adolescent females perceived their negative events as greater in number

and perceived stressfulness than early adolescent males, stressful events were not more highly related to psychological symptoms for females than males. Wagner and Compas 1990) posit that the coping skills of early adolescent females may be more effective than they themselves expect and may even be more effective than those of early adolescent males.

3.2.5 Early adolescents from low-income areas

A multitude of variables may impact on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents living in low-income communities and these include violence, crime, economic distress, inadequate housing and receiving low quality schooling (Stern et al., 1999). Inner city early adolescents' exposure to community violence for example has been significantly related to depression/suicidal ideation (Mazza & Reynolds, 1999) as well externalising behaviour, such as aggression and antisocial behaviour (Schwab-Stone et al., 1999)

In particular, early adolescents living in conditions marked by chronic poverty are faced with a myriad stressful experiences which range major life events such as divorce to daily hassles which are a part of their everyday lives (Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz & Simons, 1994; Guerra, Huesmann, Tolan, Van Acker & Eton, 1995)

Daily hassles or minor stressful events may play a salient role in the lives of early adolescents from low-income urban areas. Daily stressful events or hassles may be one of the strongest socioenvironmental predictors of emotional adaptation in early adolescents from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds (Dubois, Felner, Meares & Krier, 1994). Dubois et al. (1994) suggest that under circumstances of socioeconomic disadvantage, early adolescents are vulnerable to the pervasive impact of daily stresses. Similarly, Felner et al. (1995) reported that early adolescents from relatively disadvantaged homes reported greater exposure to stressful life events. Stern et al. (1999) found life stressors to have a direct effect on urban early adolescents' mental health, specifically externalising problems.

More recently, Grant et al. (2000) investigated the protective factors affecting low-income urban African American youth exposed to stress. They found that stressful life experiences were correlated positively with both internalising and externalising symptoms.

Stressful experiences of early adolescents living in low-income areas often occurs within the context of the interpersonal relationships they have and the negative impact these relationships may have on their emotional adjustment. Living in conditions of poverty or socioeconomic disadvantage may, for example, indirectly impact on parent-adolescent relationships,

which may in turn, affect emotional adjustment. In a study of low-income Mexican American adolescents' perceived stress and coping, Kobus and Reyes (2000) found that participants, particularly females most frequently identified family-related events as the most recent difficult life event stressor.

Drawing from ecological systems perspectives, Stern et al. (1999) investigated the effects of social and economic disadvantage on parent distress, family processes and adolescent metal health. They found that family adversity constructs such as poverty, life stressors and parental isolation led to increased levels of parental distress. Parental distress affected family processes such as parental discipline and supportive parenting which in turn, affected both internalising (depression and self-esteem) and externalising (aggression) outcomes in early adolescents.

The study by Stern et al. (1999) highlights how the stressful experiences of youth and their families from low-income areas negatively impacts on emotional adjustment. The impact of family relationships on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents from low-income areas will be elaborated on in the following chapter of this study.

3.3 South African adolescents and life stress

South Africa has the reputation for being one of the most violent countries in the world, with Cape Town in particular experiencing high levels of crime, gangsterism, highjackings and murders. South African adolescents may therefore be regularly exposed to stressful life events, leading to the prevalence of psychological and emotional problems. In this regard, local research has focussed predominantly on the emotional impact of violence, both political and non-political, on children and adolescents. Literature reviewed by Dawes 1994) in the 1990's concentrated mostly on the impact of political violence on children and adolescents. In post-apartheid South Africa, high levels of non-political violence have erupted and has thus taken it's toll on the emotional development and adjustment of children and adolescents.

More recently, the impact of traumatic life events, violent and non-violent, has been the focus of research Early adolescents' exposure to violent events at a community level, especially low-income urban areas, has been positively correlated with the development of aggression and oppositional/defiant behaviour patterns (van der Merwe, 1999)

A study conducted by the Medical Research Council's Stress and Anxiety Disorders Unit revealed that 75% of 15 year-olds on the Cape Flats replied "yes" when asked whether they had been exposed to a traumatic incident or life event such as being beaten, witnessing a robbery or mugging, seeing an assault or the death of a family member or having been in a serious accident or natural disaster (Caelers, 2000)

In a study of general stress amongst high school students, Ackermann (1991 found that a significant percentage experienced a wide variety of events and situations that may lead to high levels of anxiety, tension and general unhappiness. Kruger (1995) further postulates that stress in adolescents occurs at a micro-level, meso-level and macro-level. Micro-level stressors include identity, self-image and physical attraction and may impact on the adolescent's self-esteem. Meso-level stressors include the family, peer group and school and relate to relationships and academic pressures. Macro-level stressors involve the impact of culture and the outside world on the adolescent

Exposure to traumatic events as well as daily stressful events may have serious implications for emotional adjustment in early adolescence. This is highlighted by Printz et al.'s (1999) assertion that **"stressful life events during childhood [and adolescence] greatly increases an individual's**

vulnerability to behavioural and psychological maladjustment, in addition to physical illness" (p.3). Almost 20% of the sample (average age 13) in the MRC study was diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, with more than 30% resorting to alcohol consumption as a coping mechanism. Chronic negative life events can further undermine coping (Liem & Liem, cited in Mayhew & Lempers, 1998) leading to lowered self-esteem. Research linking low self-esteem to emotional problems, especially depression in adolescents, is substantial (Brage & Meredith, 1994; Katraggada & Tidwell, 1998; Mayhew & Lempers, 1998; Roberts et al., 2000)

3.4 Summary

In this chapter a conceptualisation of life stress was provided, with the emphasis on Lazarus and Folkman's 1984) transactional model of stress and coping. The conceptual and operational development of life stress research in children and adolescence was also discussed. When faced with major or minor stressful life events, early adolescents, especially from low-income areas are susceptible to adjustment problems. Within Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress and coping, it is possible to understand how the appraisal process influences the way stressful life events are experienced and it's subsequent impact on emotional

adjustment. Life stress research among South African adolescents was also discussed.

CHAPTER 4

LITERATURE REVIEW ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

In the previous chapters, an attempt was made to provide an overview of adolescence with reference to the emotional vulnerabilities experienced by individuals going through this phase of the life span. When exposed to stressful life events, early adolescents are even more vulnerable to emotional problems such as depression, anxiety and aggression. Family relationships, however, can be a source of protection against the negative effects of life stress experienced by early adolescents. The following chapter will examine the impact of such family relationships. This will be discussed with particular reference to early adolescents living in low-income areas.

The impact of family relationships on early adolescents

Emotional disorders in children and adolescents are inextricably linked to their social context, of which families form a crucial part. Research has revealed numerous family factors which contribute to emotional problems in adolescents and these include family structure (Salem, Zimmerman & Notaro, 1998), family size and birth order (Katragadda & Tidwell, 1998), parental depression (Davies & Dumenci, 1999), parental substance abuse (Su & Hoffman, 1998) and family relational problems (Marsh & Johnston,

1996) All of these occur within the context of relationships between the early adolescent and his family members.

The emotional vulnerability of early adolescents is further accentuated when they are exposed to dysfunctional family relationships, and may lead to depression and anxiety (Nilzon & Palmerus, 1997). In a study of parent-adolescent relationships in Transkei, Mayekiso and Flatela 1993) found early adolescents experienced their parents as authoritarian and inconsistent in their child-rearing practices. These relationships were characterised by conflict and very limited parent-early adolescent interaction When adolescents are exposed to stress as a result of poor family relationships and they have poor coping mechanisms, they may be more predisposed to exhibiting depressive symptoms leading to an increased risk of suicide (Swimmer, 1996) Dysfunctional family relationships, where for example, parents and siblings attempt to overcontrol or overmanage the psychosocial development of co-resident adolescents, has lead to an increase in internalising and externalising problems (Conger & Conger, 1997) Lack of parental control, however has also been linked to externalising of problems, for example, aggression in adolescents (Barber, 1992)

Stressful circumstances, which families from low-income areas experience, may further impact on relationships between family members. The impact of family relationships on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents from low-income areas was briefly discussed in the previous chapter will now be elaborated on by referring to the model proposed by McLoyd (1990). Based on the person-process-context perspective, McLoyd's model describes the impact of economic hardship on family processes as they relate to the personal characteristics of individual family members.

This model assumes that a) poverty and economic loss impairs the ability of parents to provide consistent, supportive and involved parenting; b) psychological distress caused by negative major and daily stressful events, and poor or non-existent marital bonds are mediators of the link between economic hardship and parenting behaviour; c) early adolescents are indirectly affected by economic loss and poverty through the impact of parenting behaviour and d) under conditions of economic hardship, the father/adolescent relationship depends on the quality of the father/mother relationship.

An extensive literature review by McLoyd (1990) provides compelling empirical support for the proposed model. She found that compared to parents who were economically more advantaged, parents who

struggling financially were more depressed, irritable and explosive and more likely to experience marital problems. The psychological distress experienced by parents from poverty-stricken areas had a negative impact on their parenting behaviour and led to higher use of physical punishment and less frequent use of reasoning and negotiation in their interactions with their children, compared to parents from more affluent areas. Parenting behaviour, in turn, had a negative impact on the emotional adjustment of poor black children.

Studies investigating the links between economic hardship, parenting and adolescent emotional adjustment support the mediational model proposed by McLoyd. Studies among rural (Lempers & Clark-Lempers, 1997; Mayhew & Lempers, 1998) as well as urban (Stern et al., 1999) early adolescents reveal that economic hardship has a negative impact on parent self-esteem and also leads to an increase in parental distress. This negatively affects parenting practices, which in turn leads to an increase in early adolescents' experiencing externalising and internalising problems. More specifically parental discipline impacts more on the externalising of problems whereas adolescent perceptions of unsupportive parenting mediated the effects of distress and disrupted discipline on the internalising of problems (Stern et al., 1999)

Thus adolescents' perceptions of their relationships with their parents have a profound effect on their emotional adjustment. Citing Cooley's concept of the "looking glass self", Mayhew and Lempers (1998) posit that adolescents' perceptions of what significant others, like parents, think of them, has a direct impact on their self-esteem. Self-esteem and self-worth is shaped from early childhood within the context of relationships between the individual and family members. Perceptions of support and acceptance from significant others such as family members substantially impact on a child's developing self-concept. When children enter adolescence, family relationships may still have a profound impact on their levels of self-esteem and self-worth. When early adolescents, for instance, perceive their mothers to be unaccepting, it negatively affects their levels of self-worth, which in turn leads to feelings of depression (Garber & Robinson, 1997)

In low-income areas, where economic hardship is one of the many chronic stressors faced by early adolescents, levels of self-esteem may be negatively affected, as mediated through the parent/adolescent relationship. Levels of self-esteem and self-worth are crucial individual characteristics which may influence the individual's ability to cope with stressful life events (Compas, 1987). Positive adolescent adjustment (where levels of self-esteem and self-worth are most likely high) has been linked to the frequent use of outside-support coping strategies such as seeking support or guidance from others

(Kurdeck & Sinclaire, 1988) This is supported by Rudolph (1997) reveals that adolescents who perceive their mothers as someone they can turn to in times of adversity, experience significantly lower levels of depression, anxiety and risk-taking behaviour than adolescents who do not enjoy such perceived maternal support.

Mothers' awareness of their adolescent children's stressors as well as levels of communication between them is negatively correlated with adolescent self-reports of anxious/depressed and aggressive behaviour (Hartos & Power, 2000), indicating the importance of supportive parental behaviour in predicting emotional adjustment

4.2 The protective function of family relationships

In general, the literature reveals that emotional and psychological adjustment in early adolescents is significantly related to the quality of their relationships with their family members. Adolescent/family relationships marked by high levels of support, connectedness and intimacy has been related to higher levels of self-esteem (Ohannessian & Lerner, 1996), decreased likelihood of engaging in sexual intercourse and suicidal ideation (O'Connor, 1998), reduced probability of depression delinquency (Remez, 1997), better school adjustment during the transition to early adolescence (Dubois & Eitel, 1994) and generally higher levels of

life satisfaction (Young & Miller, 1995). In particular, positive relationships between poor urban early adolescents and their parents is directly associated with psychological adjustment and well-being (De Haan & MacDermid, 1998).

Previously mentioned in this study was the role of effective coping strategies such as seeking support from significant others when exposed to stressful events. Rutter (cited in Robinson & Cook, 1993) proposed "bonds and relationships" as one of the nine variables prevalent when some children able to show resilience to stress; the others being interactive effects between stresses, genetic effects, individual differences, influences outside the home (e.g. school), self-esteem, scope for opportunities, structure and control and coping skills.

Similarly, Compas (1987) distinguishes between three broad factors when children and adolescents demonstrate resilience when confronted with stressful events. These are a) individual disposition, e.g. temperament; b) family circumstances and c) support systems. Family circumstances such as the presence of a supportive family climate marked by warmth, closeness cohesiveness and support systems where an individual or group provides the early adolescent with positive models for identification are

crucial factors in protecting early adolescents from the negative effects of stressful events.

More specifically, early adolescents' relationships with their family members may be conceptualised according to the functions they provide. Weiss' (1974) theory of social provisions proposed that, in their relationships with others, individuals seek certain types of social support or social provisions. These include attachment, reliable alliance, enhancement of worth, social integration, guidance and opportunity for nurturance. Attachment refers to affection, security and intimate disclosure. Reliable alliance refers to a long-lasting dependable bond, though not necessarily an emotional one. Enhancement of worth is where one receives affirmation of one's competence or value. Social integration refers to the level of companionship and the sharing of experience that one has with another. Guidance refers to the tangible aid and advice that one receives from others. The opportunity for nurturance occurs when one is in the position to provide some form of affection or caring for another, such as an older sibling taking care of a younger one. These social provisions, Weiss theorised, are provided by different individuals in different contexts.

Involvement in supportive family relationships may provide the early adolescent with a source of acceptance and intimacy, helpful information

guidance and instrumental support in the form of services and resource assistance (Frydenberg, 1997). When exposed to stressful life events early adolescents can thus turn to parents and extended family members to provide them with the necessary resources to cope with these events. Also, when early adolescents perceive that parents accept them, it increases their levels of self-esteem and self-competence (Ohannessian & Lerner, 1996) and this may be lead to effective coping strategies when faced with stressful events

Frydenberg (1997) further posits that family members may model successful coping with stressful events. Citing social learning theory, she proposes that children and adolescents may learn adaptive coping techniques through direct experience and/or vicarious learning. Parents who use adaptive coping techniques such as the willingness to approach others for help and support serve as models for their children who may feel to use similar coping strategies when faced with stressful events.

Vicarious learning takes place when early adolescents observe family members receive rewards or reinforcements for displaying support-seeking behaviour when stressed. Without necessarily having to experience the stressful event himself, the early adolescent may adopt and internalise these adaptive coping strategies used by family members in anticipation of

receiving similar reinforcements, for example, self-approval (Frydenberg, 1997).

4.3 Early adolescents and non-parental family relationships

The profound impact of parents on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents is obvious. Parents, however, form part of a larger network of family members in their lives. Furman and Buhrmester 1985a) found that parents as well as grandparents and siblings were turned to most for affection, enhancement of worth, instrumental aid and a sense of reliable aid. Blythe et al. (cited in Scales & Gibbons, 1996) found that more than 75% of a sample of 2403 early adolescents from middle class areas mentioned at least one extended family member when asked about a significant person whom they spent a lot of time with, made important decisions about their lives and sought advice from. Interaction time with these extended family members was very low with up to 70% of them only having contact once a month, telephonically or personally.

In low-income areas, however, early adolescents are prone to having more frequent contact with extended family members due to extended families living together. Thus extended family members may be significant sources of support for early adolescents from low-income areas, providing them with the social provisions discussed above. This is supportive of Benson,

Mangen and Wiliams (in Scales & Gibbons, 1996) who found that African American youth were more likely to turn to extended family members than nonrelated adults for support. In three-generation black South African households, where nuclear and extended family relationships are marked by cohesiveness and support, co-resident adolescents are more likely to achieve higher grades at school than those from less supportive families (Moller, 1995).

significance of extended family members' relationships to early adolescents may be related to the functional role of these relationships. Siblings, for instance, are important sources of support for early adolescents. Furman and Buhrmester (1985a) interviewed a sample of 11 to 13-year olds regarding the quality of their relationships with their siblings.

found the most commonly mentioned positive qualities were companionship, admiration of sibling and affection. They also found that older siblings provided more instrumental aid than younger siblings did (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985b)

Munsch and Blythe (cited in Scales & Gibbons, 1996) addressed the functions of different supportive relationships of 7th and 8th graders and found that non-parental adults provided similar types of support as those provided by parents such as instrumental support, emotional regulation,

esteem enhancement and emotional support. In low-income families, especially, extended family members may be the most important non-parental adults for early adolescents (Scales & Gibbons, 1996)

4.4 The buffering role of positive family relationships

Cohen and Wills (1985), in writing about the buffering-effects model, postulated that certain social resources, for example, esteem support, informational support, social companionship and instrumental support (similar types of support proposed by Weiss), may operate as stress buffers at two points. Firstly, when faced with esteem-reducing stressful life events, the above-mentioned social resources may either intervene between the events and potential emotional stress by preventing or attenuating a stress appraisal response. Secondly, these social resources, if adequate, may intervene between the experience of stress and the onset of emotional distress by helping the individual reappraise the stressful event and thus reduce or eliminate the stress reaction that may lead to emotional distress.

To further elaborate, Thoits (1986) posits that stressed individuals are confronted by two sources of perceived stress: the situation itself and the emotional reactions to the situation The individual may respond to both of these sources, on a cognitive- or a behavioural level. This leads to a two-by-

two matrix of stress-buffering responses: situations, as well as the emotional reactions to them, can be altered behaviourally or cognitively.

Thus the individual may choose a behavioural response to the situation by either changing the situation by adopting certain strategies or in future avoid any such situation. Alternatively the individual can adopt a cognitive strategy, and reinterpret the situation as not being as stressful as it appears. Here the importance of appraisal in the transaction between the individual and the situation is highlighted once again.

In light of the above, buffer effects exist only if a) the interaction between family support and negative stressful events significantly increases the amount of variance accounted for in the measure of emotional adjustment, and b) the form of the relationship is such that the slope of the regression of emotional adjustment on stress is higher for early adolescents with high family support than it is for early adolescents with lower family support (Cauce et al., 1992)

Empirical research, however, has been somewhat inconsistent in determining the stress-buffering role of family support in the lives of adolescents. Windle (1992) and Printz et al. (1999), for example, found little support for the stress-buffering effects of family social support in their

studies. The sample groups in both studies consisted, however, of middle- and not early adolescents. Early adolescents, more so than middle adolescents, may have closer ties to the family and may seek the social provisions provided by significant family members.

Middle adolescents who are attempting to individuate and gain autonomy from the family may seek increased social support from other sources such as peers and teachers. Additionally, the samples in both studies were predominantly white (97% for Windle and 61% for Printz et al. and thus their findings are not representative of the United States of America. Windle's study only looked at major life events as predictors of emotional adjustment and did not consider the impact of daily stresses. important role of daily stress in predicting emotional adjustment had been discussed in the previous chapter.

Studies supporting the buffer-effect of family support, however, appear to outnumber those that do not. Wagner and Cohen (1996) found that early adolescents who perceived both their parents as warm (and thus more supportive) had a lower association of depression with stressful events than those who perceived only one parent as warm. Walker and Green (cited in Printz et. al., 1999) found that family support among adolescents experienced negative life events was negatively associated with self-reported

psychiatric symptoms. Dubow, Edwards and Ippolito (1997) showed that family support moderated the effects of stressors on maladjustment in inner-city children and adolescents. Research by Grant et al. (2000) revealed that African American early adolescents' positive relationships with father figures buffered the effects of stress on externalising symptoms.

Wenz-Gross and Siperstein (1997) found that emotional support from family played a key role in buffering early adolescents from the negative effects of peer-related stress. Cauce et al. (1992) examined the relationship between negative events, locus of control, social support and psychological adjustment in a sample of 6th and 8th Grade students and found that **"family support was positively correlated with general, peer and physical competence and it also served to buffer the effects of negative events upon school performance"** (p. 795)

Research by Seidman et al. 1999) further supports the buffering effect of family support. They examined the risk and protective functions of perceived family and peer microsystems in the lives of early adolescents living in urban poverty. Two of the 6 family transaction profiles found namely, Functional-Involving (characterised by high involvement, above average levels of support and below average levels of hassles) and Functional-Uninvolving (characterised by above average levels of perceived

support and below average levels of hassles and involvement) were highly protective, manifesting the lowest association with depression and antisocial behaviour.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, the author attempted to expound upon the profound impact of family relationships on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents. It is obvious that parents as well as extended family members may play a crucial role in protecting early adolescents from the negative effects of stressful life events. This, however, may only happen if the social provisions provided by these relationships are adequate. Despite the stresses associated with living in low-income areas, empirical research proves that positive family relationships and adequate family support experienced by early adolescents help to buffer them from stressful life events.

CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGY

5.1 Motivation for the study

Local studies reveal high rates of emotional maladjustment among adolescents. There is, however, a paucity of research investigating the role of stressful life events in the development of emotional maladjustment in a particular subgroup of adolescents, namely early adolescents from low-income urban communities. Research has predominantly focussed on the negative impact of family relationships on the emotional adjustment of adolescents with little reference to the impact of positive family relationships. Additionally, the studies that have examined the role of life events in the lives of adolescents have focussed only on traumatic events and not daily negative events, as well.

Given the plethora of international literature, particularly North American, investigating the relationship between life stress, emotional adjustment and family support in early adolescents, it is expected that this study will contribute to the growing body of local literature regarding the variables discussed above. Data gained from the study may help to identify the extent to which early adolescents from low-income urban communities in Cape

Town, use family relationships to help cope with stressful life events may aid in the implementation of programmes aimed at helping early adolescents cope with stressful life events.

5.2 Aims of the study

Considering the above, the aims of this study are to:

1. Determine the impact of stressful life events on early adolescents' emotional adjustment.
2. Explore gender differences regarding perceived exposure and impact of stressful life events.
3. Explore the interactive effects of perceived family relationships on the stressful life events/emotional adjustment relationship.

5.3 Research design

A non-experimental, survey research design was adopted for this study. design was cross-sectional, in that the relationship between negative stressful events and emotional adjustment was investigated at one point in time, and correlational as this was considered most appropriate for investigating these variables.

This design has inherent weaknesses, such as an inability to manipulate the independent variables, a lack of power to ensure random sampling, and the risk of inaccurate interpretation (Contrada & Krantz, 1987). The present design therefore has limited ability to reveal causal processes (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995). Despite these limitations, the design is adequate to investigate the stated hypotheses, which aims to identify statistically significant relationships amongst variables, as opposed to causal relationships.

5.4 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the present study:

1. There is a positive correlation between adolescents' stressful life events and their levels of emotional maladjustment (depression, anxiety and anger/aggression).
2. Female early adolescents will perceive events experienced as significantly more stressful than male early adolescents.
3. Supportive adolescent/family relationships will have a buffer effect on emotional adjustment in the presence of stressful life events.

5.5 Response rate of parents

The criteria for participation was parental permission; consent forms were distributed to 260 individuals of which 123 (48.76%) were signed and returned, granting permission for participation. The following reasons may account for the poor response rate: 1) some of the learners may not have complied with the researcher's instructions and thus not given the consent forms to their parents due to them forgetting or not wanting to share private information; 2) upon receipt of the consent forms, some parents may not have been comfortable with their children divulging information about their families and 3) parents may have been suspicious of the confidentiality of their children's responses.

Furthermore, parents' low literacy levels may have prevented them from understanding the content of the consent form, leading to them not returning the form. According to the South African Census of 1996 (StatsSA, 2000), between 7 and 10% of the inhabitants of Lavender Hill/Steenberg has no formal schooling. During the administration, four of the instruments were not filled in correctly and were excluded from the statistical analyses.

5.6. Community Profile

The sample for this study was drawn from 3 primary schools in Lavender Hill/Steenberg and Parkwood Estate - situated in the southern suburbs of

Town. These are two low-income townships populated by those classified as "coloured"[1] during the apartheid era. Like most South African townships, these are marked by high levels of poverty, unemployment, violence and low levels of education. The 1996 national census, for example, revealed some striking statistics. In Lavender Hill, approximately 40% of the population earn less than R18 000 per annum, 25% are unemployed and only 4,5% have attained matric or higher (StatsSA, 2000) In Steenberg, approximately 24% of the population earn less than R18 000 per annum, 17% are unemployed and 14% have attained matric or higher.

The sample

A non-probability, opportunity sample of 119 learners was drawn from 3 primary schools in Steenberg and Parkwood Estate - situated in the southern suburbs of Cape Town.

[1] The term "coloured" should be problematised and it's link to apartheid made. The unproblematic use of these terms can help to perpetuate oppression and inequality.

The sample consisted of 58 (48.7%) males and 61 (51.3%) females. Their ages ranged from 12 to 14 years with a mean age of 12.44 years. Of the participants 8 (9.52 %) were in Grade 6 and 111 (90.48 %) in Grade 7. Despite the convenience of an opportunity sample, there are various methodological disadvantages in this method of sampling. These include the weak generalisability of results, the possibility that uncontrolled extraneous variables may explain significant relationships between variables, and the possibility of response bias (Fletcher, 1991).

5.7.1 Family structure of the sample (nuclear)

Figure 2 presents the nuclear family structure of the sample. The majority of the participants lived with both parents, followed by those living with mother and lastly those living with father. Most of the sample had between 1 and 2 siblings, followed by 1 sibling and 3 to 4 siblings, respectively.

Figure 2

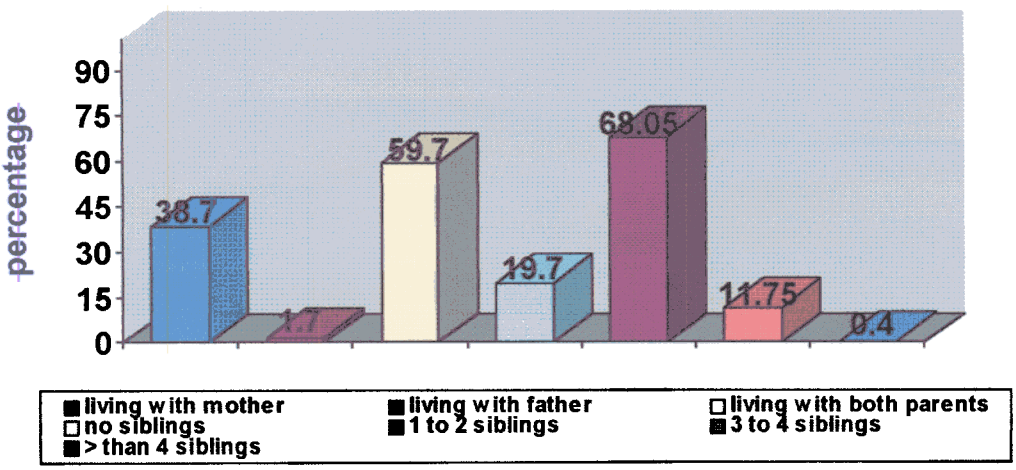
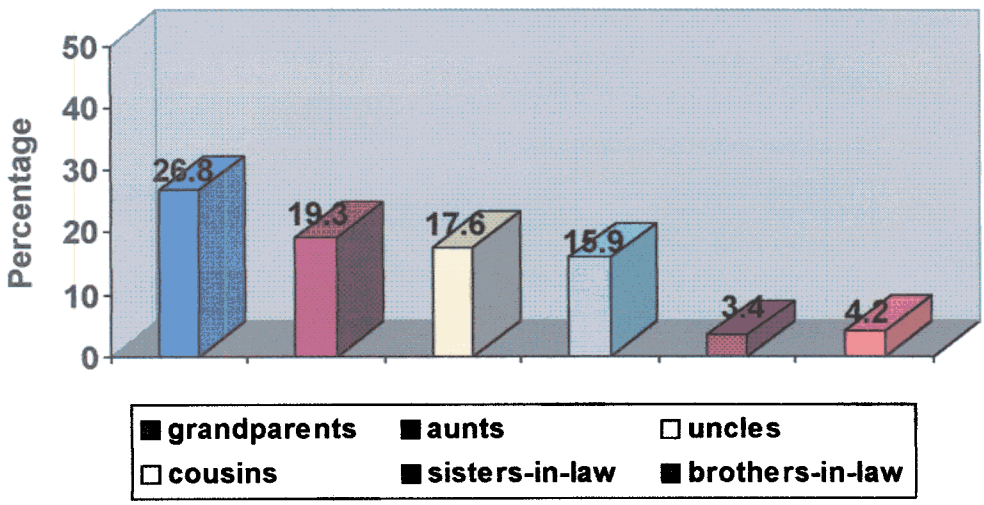


Figure 2 does not necessarily represent siblings living with the participants as some siblings (e.g. those that are married) may live outside of the nuclear family household.

5.7.2 Presence of extended family in the home

Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters- and brothers-in-law comprised the extended family for the sample. Figure 3 depicts the percentage of participants who have extended family members living with them in the same household.

Figure 3



5.8 Instruments

The instruments used in the present study were self-report measures completed by the participants and therefore, responses only reflect the participants' perceptions and not those of their family members.

The participants completed 4 questionnaires: a demographic questionnaire, the Adolescent Perceived Events Scale (APES) (Compas et al.1987), the How I Feel (HIF) (Turner, 981) and the Network of Relationships Inventory (NRI) (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985a).

The demographic questionnaire included questions relating to gender, age, grade, one or both parents co-residing with the participant (if one parent, then mother or father), number of siblings and presence of extended family members in the home.

APES. In discussing the need for developing an adequate measure of life stress in adolescents, Compas et al. (1987) posit that measurement development needs to address three key issues: a) the adequate sampling of relevant events for children and adolescents, b) the validation of cognitive appraisals of stressful events, and c) the investigation of psychometric properties of checklists for children and adolescents – which had not been

adequately dealt with in the construction of previous life events checklists for children and adolescents.

In an attempt to address these issues, Compas et al. (1987) implemented four studies in the development of the APES. Firstly, in order to eliminate researcher bias in the generation of life event items, 658 adolescents generated a pool of items, which they deemed to be significant major and daily life events. A life-events checklist was created for 3 age groups (12-14: 143 items, 15-17: 189 items and 17-20: 204 items). Secondly, cognitive appraisal scales by which the life events could be measured were identified. The early adolescent checklist (the one used in the present study) uses a 9-point desirability scale ranging from –4 (extremely undesirable), 0 (neither desirable or undesirable) to +4 (extremely desirable).

Thirdly, reliability of the APES was determined by administering the age-appropriate checklists to 95 adolescents at 2 points in time, 2 weeks apart. Test-retest reliability coefficients over the two-week period for the early adolescent group were 0.85, 0.86 and 0.78 ($p < .001$) for number of events, weighted negative events and weighted positive events, respectively (Compas et al., 1987). Further confirmation of the test-retest reliability of the early adolescent version of the APES was determined by Compas et al.

(1987), finding an 83% and 81% agreement of subjects' appraisals of occurrence and desirability of events, respectively, over the 2-week period.

Fourthly, validity of the APES was determined by comparing the self-reported life events of 34 older adolescents attending their first year at university with the reports of their roommates - who had close relationships with them. The percent of agreement for event reports by the two sources were 82 % (the sum of events reported by both respondents as occurring plus events reported by both respondents as not occurring, divided by the total number of events). The authors used this method to test the validity of the older adolescent version of the APES but not the younger- or middle adolescent versions, a shortcoming, which they admit.

In summary, the early adolescent version of the APES used in this study is a 143-item measure providing a comprehensive list of major events (e.g. death of a relative) as well as daily stressors (e.g. taking care of younger siblings) in the lives of young adolescents. Respondents indicate those events which have occurred during the prior 3 months and rate these events on 9-point Likert scales for their desirability (-4 = extremely bad, -3 = very bad, -2 = somewhat bad, -1 = slightly bad, 0 = neither good nor bad, +1 = slightly good, +2 = somewhat good, +3 = very good and +4 = extremely good).

Scoring of the APES for this particular study was done by conducting a simple count of the events appraised as negative by the respondents and then calculating the mean stressfulness of these negative events. This method was employed in order to determine the impact of negative stressful events on the emotional adjustment of the sample. This negated the need to calculate the total weighted positive events scores as positive events have not been shown to predict psychological problems (Siegel & Brown, 1988).

The APES has yielded adequate psychometric properties in studying risk factors for emotional-behavioural problems in early adolescents (Compas, Howell, Phares, Williams & Giunta, 1989), adolescents' gender, instrumentality and expressivity as moderators of the relation between stress and psychological symptoms (Wagner & Compas, 1990) and anxious-depressed symptoms among adolescents whose parent had been diagnosed with cancer (Grant & Compas, 1995). To date, the APES has not been administered to a South African sample. It may, however, be useful in a local context, as it provides a comprehensive list of major and daily stressful events experienced by early adolescents, in general

Furthermore, the development of the APES discussed elsewhere in this chapter suggests that this measure addresses many issues neglected by other life event inventories. The authors, however, admit that despite

advances in the development of life event inventories, the APES is constantly being refined (Compas et al., 1987).

HIF. The How Feel was developed by Petersen and Kellam (1977) in order to assess the psychological well-being of African-American adolescents from poor urban communities on the south side of Chicago. Their concept of psychological well-being embodied both psychiatric symptoms as well as positive states, leading to a measure consisting of the following constructs: seven aspects of psychopathology, five aspects of self-esteem, self-evaluation and satisfaction with social adaptational status.

Turner (1981) used a shortened version of the HIF (the version employed in this study) in assessing social support as a contingency in psychological well-being – using only the depression, anxiety and anger/aggression subscales. The shortened HIF is a 19-item scale comprising of questions such as "I feel nervous" and "I cry and I don't know why". Scoring of the HIF is based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "not at all like me" to 5 = "very much like me" with higher scores reflecting a higher level of emotional/psychological distress.

According to Pretorius (1991) the version used by Turner (1981) represents a measure of psychological distress rather than psychological well-being as

Petersen and Kellam's original scale measured positive emotional states as well as psychiatric symptoms.

Psychometric properties of both versions of the HIF appear adequate. The original version (Petersen & Kellam, 1977) revealed Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0.68, 0.69 and 0.69 for the anxiety, depression and anger/aggression subscales, respectively. Even though Pretorius (1991) administered the shortened version of the HIF to 3 samples (students, adults and senior citizens) much older than the sample in this study, it may be useful to present these Cronbach alpha coefficients

The alpha coefficients for the student sample was 0.83, 0.77, 0.86 and 0.88 for anxiety, aggression, depression and a global distress score, respectively. These alpha coefficients are comparable to those obtained by Turner (1981) and all exceed Anastasi's (1982) minimum criterion of 0.75, which is indicative of acceptable reliability. Pretorius (1991) supports the continued use of the HIF in South Africa as a measure of psychological/emotional distress.

NRI. In developing the NRI, Furman and Buhrmester (1985a) utilised Robert Weiss's theory of social provisions (discussed elsewhere in this study). They

included dimensions such as relative power and conflict; aspects which they considered to be as important as social provisions.

The original version of the NRI included 10 three-item scales that loaded on two factors: 1) Support (affection, instrumental aid, reliable alliance, companionship, admiration, intimacy and nurturance of the other) and 2) negative interactions (punishment, conflict and irritation). Cronbach alpha coefficients of all the factors exceeded .90 (Furman and Buhrmester, 1985a). Three other qualities of relationships were also included – a) relative power, b) satisfaction and c) importance of the relationship. Buhrmester included support, criticism and dominance as dimensions which can also be assessed (Furman, 2000).

Due to this study investigating the protective role of family support in the face of stressful life events, the researcher omitted the negative interaction scales and included the companionship, instrumental aid, intimacy, nurturance, affection, admiration and reliable alliance scales. The satisfaction and support scales also are included.

Respondents need to answer questions regarding their relationships with each of the following persons: mother/stepmother, father/stepfather,

grandparent, sibling, relative, same-sex friend, other-sex friend and boy-friend/girlfriend.

For the purpose of this study, respondents were requested to answer questions pertaining to their relationships with their mother/stepmother, father/stepfather, a sibling, a relative and a grandparent to which they are the closest. Respondents replied to questions such as "how much free time do you spend with this person?" and "how often do you depend on this person for help, advice and sympathy?". Ratings were done on a standard five-point Likert-type scale with the following anchor points: 1 = little or none; 2 = somewhat; 3 = very much; 4 = extremely much and 5 = the most.

Scoring of the NRI was done by calculating the mean for the three items on each scale for each relationship. However, due to the nine scales loading on one factor (support), they were collapsed into one dimension resulting in a composite support score for each relationship. Thus 5 scale scores were derived with higher scores indicative of more supportive and involved interactions with family members.

Furman and Buhrmester (1992) used the same scoring method with the original seven support scales and found internal consistency coefficients to be satisfactory (M alpha = .81). Similarly, Wolchik, Sandler and Braver

(cited in Harrison and Stewart, 1995) found satisfactory internal consistency coefficients for the NRI with all r-values >0.60 and M= 0.80 Bennett and Bates (1995) assessed the relationships between attributional style, depressive symptoms and social support in early adolescents in a 6-month prospective study and found Cronbach alphas of .97 at Time 1 and Time 2. Even though local psychometric properties for the NRI are not available, Harrison and Stewart 1995) found adequate internal consistencies for a sample of Zimbabwean adolescents.

5.9 Procedure

After making appointments with the principals and teachers of the participating schools, the researcher explained the study to the learners during class time, answered learner questions and distributed parent-consent forms. The parent-consent forms briefly described the study, the voluntary nature of participation, with an emphasis on the guaranteed anonymity of the learners and their families as well as the confidentiality of the data to be gained. Learners returned signed parent-consent forms to their teachers.

Data gathering was completed in school classrooms during school time at the convenience of the teachers. The instruments were group- administered with each participant being issued one questionnaire at a time, in the

following order: 1) the demographic questionnaire, 2) the APES, 3) the HIF

4) the NRI. The researcher read out the instructions of the questionnaires and addressed any questions. The questionnaires were read aloud to ensure that learners with varying reading levels kept pace with the administration, and learners were given assistance if they had difficulty understanding any of the questions.

5.10 Data analysis

For this study, the SPSS statistical package (Norusis/SPSS Inc., 1990) was utilised for all statistical analyses.

The RELIABILITY sub-program of SPSS was used to analyse the psychometric properties of all the measures employed in this study. This sub-program generated alpha coefficients, indicating the reliability of each measure. Measures with unacceptable reliability were excluded from further statistical analysis.

DESCRIPTIVE sub-program of SPSS was used to obtain descriptive statistics on measures. This sub-program yielded means and standard deviations for all measures used in this study.

The CORRELATION sub-program was utilised to analyse the relationship between all variables.

To determine the impact of family support, either singly or in combination with emotional adjustment, the REGRESSION sub-program of SPSS was used to perform moderated multiple regression analyses. In these analyses, emotional adjustment was used as the criterion variable. In moderated multiple regression analysis stressful negative events and family support by relationship type (e.g. mother, father etc.) were entered into the regression equation in step one, while an interaction term (moderator x predictor) was entered in step two (Cohen & Cohen, 1975).

In step one significant T-values indicated the presence of direct effects (main effects), while a significant interaction term (performed during step 2) indicated moderating (buffer) effects. A main effect implied that the designated variable affected emotional adjustment directly, irrespective of the level of stress experienced by the early adolescent. The buffer effect suggested that the designated variable affected emotional adjustment by moderating the effects of stress on the early adolescent.

5.11 Ethics appraisal

All adolescents participated with informed consent. All participants were informed of the study, it's aims and the nature of the measuring instruments. Parent-consent forms, with a short description of the study and it's aims were issued, signed and returned to the researcher. Participants and parents were guaranteed total anonymity confidentiality. Permission to conduct research was gained from participating schools' principals. Feedback was provided to the school staff at an appropriate time while still maintaining the anonymity of respondents and their families. A brief written report was made available to the schools.

CHAPTER SIX

RESULTS

The following chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses for the study. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - SPSS-PC (Norusis, 1990) was used in all statistical calculations.

6.1 Overview of analyses

To determine the internal reliability of the instruments used in the study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated.

The first hypothesis; whether negative stressful life events are predictive of emotional adjustment in early adolescents, was determined by correlational analyses and moderated multiple regression.

The second hypothesis; whether early adolescent females perceive their experienced life events as significantly more stressful than early adolescent males, was determined by a series of one-way ANOVA's

The third hypothesis; whether positive family relationships, indicated by high levels of support buffer early adolescents from the effects of negative stressful events, was evaluated via moderated multiple regression analysis.

6.2 Psychometric Properties

6.2.1 Internal consistency

According to Oliver (1979) it is standard procedure to report on the reliability of the measuring instruments. The results of the reliability analysis for the How Feel (HIF) and Network of Relationships Inventory (NRI) including the various relationship types are presented in table 1. Due to the Adolescent Perceived Events Scale (APES) having no internal structure (respondents only rate events that apply to them), no estimates for internal consistency could be obtained.

Table 1. Internal Reliability Coefficients for the HIF and NRI

Measure	Alpha
Emotional Adjustment	
HIF	.74
Family Support	
Global NRI	.92
Mother	.92
Father	.94
Sibling	.92
Relative	.92
Grandparent	.92

Anastasi's (1982) criteria for determining the internal consistency of measuring instruments were used in this study. Anastasi suggests that reliability coefficients higher than .75 are indicative of acceptable reliability.

The HIF (Petersen & Kellam, 1977) was used as a measure of emotional adjustment. It is a 19-item instrument scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = not at all like me to 5 = very much like me. The Alpha coefficient for the HIF was .74, falling marginally below Anastasi's criteria for acceptable reliability. The Alpha coefficient obtained for this sample is substantially lower than the .88 obtained by Pretorius (1991) in a sample of university students.

The modified version of the NRI (Furman & Burhmester, 1985a) was used to measure the quality of family support experienced by the sample. It is a 27-item, 9-scale instrument based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = little or none to 5 = the most. The global Alpha coefficient for the NRI was .92 whereas the alpha coefficients for the mother, father, sibling, relative and grandparent scale scores ranged from .92 to .94. These coefficients are well within the limits suggested by Anastasi and are higher than the alpha coefficient of .81 obtained by Furman and Burhmester (1992).

6.3 Descriptive statistics of the Adolescent Perceived Events Scale

In order to determine the frequency / magnitude of stressors, means scores were calculated for each item and arranged in descending order. The frequency, means and standard deviations of the most frequently occurring stressors are illustrated in table 2.

Table 2: Frequency, means and standard deviations of most frequently occurring stressors.

	Stressor	Frequency	Mean	SD
1.	People interrupting when you are trying to get work done.	74	3.00	1.09
2.	Restrictions at home.	62	2.18	.8
3.	Having to share a room.	58	3.26	.97
4.	People not respecting your privacy and property	56	3.00	1.10
5.	Having bad classes or teachers	54	2.91	1.01
5.	Bad weather.	54	2.70	1.19
6.	Fight or problems with a friend.	53	2.58	1.10
7	Not getting enough sleep.	52	2.50	1.2
8.	Something bad happens to friend	48	3.40	.87
9.	Liking someone who doesn't like you.	47	2.94	1.22

6.4 The relationships between individual variables

6.4.1 Inter-correlations

The inter-correlations between variables are illustrated in table 3.

Table 3. Inter-correlations between individual variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. T.S.E	-	.48**	.41**	.12*	.05	.22*	.12	.55	-.09	.31**
2. Major S.E.		-	.58**	.11	-.01	.07	.24**	.19*	-.14	11
3. Daily S.E.			-	.14	.09	.14	.03	.14	.04	12
4. Total Support				-	.73*	.63*	.64**	.58*	54**	14
5. Mother					-	.45**	.33**	.22*	.29**	.03
6. Father						-	.21*	.02	.19*	.02
7. Sibling							-	.40**	.04	.15
8. Relative								-	.09	.20*
9. Grandparent									-	.04
10. H.I.F										-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Note: T.S.E.= Total Stressful of Events; S.E.= Stressful Events; H.I.F.= How I Feel

To determine whether there were any significant relationships between individual variables, a correlational analysis was performed. A significant (positive) correlation was found between total stressfulness of events and emotional adjustment ($r = .31$, $p < .01$) Total stressfulness of events was correlated with major stressful events ($r = .48$, $p < .01$) and daily stressful

events (.41, p< .01). Total stressfulness of events was correlated with total support (r = .12, p< .05).

Major stressful events correlated with daily stressful events (r = .58, p< Major stressful events showed correlations with relative support (r = .19, p< 05) and sibling support (r = .24, p< .01), respectively.

Total support was correlated with mother support (r = .73, p< .05), father support (r = .63, p< .05), sibling support (r = .64, p< .01), relative support (r .58, p< .05) and grandparent support (r = .54, p< .01).

Maternal support showed a correlation with father support (r = .45, p< as well as sibling support (r = .33, p< .01), relative support (p= .22, p< and grandparent support (r = .29, p< .01).

Paternal support showed correlations with grandparent (r = .19, p< .05) and sibling support (r = .21, p< .05). Sibling support was correlated with relative support (r = .40, p< .01) and relative support showed a correlation with emotional adjustment (r = .20, p< .05).

6.4.2 One-way analysis of variance

A series of one-way ANOVA's were performed to test for significant differences between participants. One-way ANOVA's were conducted in terms of events x gender, family support x gender and emotional adjustment x gender. Results revealed a significant difference between males and females with regards to mean stressfulness of events scored. Females scored significantly higher on stressfulness of events experienced than males. No significant gender differences were found with regards family support and emotional adjustment. Table 4 illustrates the ANOVA.

Table 4. ANOVA table

ANOVA	Males		Females		F	Sig
N=119	M	SD	M	SD		
Gender * SE	53.8	33.9	78.5	47.8	9.9	.00*
Gender * EA	51.1	12.7	53.6	10.3	1.2	.26
Gender * FS	3.3	.47	3.2	.54	.01	.91

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
Note: S.E. = Stressful Events; E.A. = Emotional Adjustment; F.S. = Family Support

6.5 Moderated multiple regression analysis

To determine the impact of family support with life stress, moderated regression analysis was performed with emotional adjustment as criterion variable. In moderated multiple regression analysis, the scores of the predictor variables are entered into the regression equation in Step 1 while an interaction term (moderator x predictor) is entered in Step 2.

procedure enables the researcher to test for the direct (main) effects of the predictor variables, as well as the interaction (buffer) effects after the main effects of the predictor variables are partialled out (Kleinbaum, Kupper & Muller, 1988).

the purpose of this study, the total support and five relationship support scale scores were used in the analysis. Significant results of the moderated multiple regression analysis for the individual variables in predicting emotional adjustment, are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 5. Multiple moderated regression with stressfulness of events and father support as predictors, and emotional adjustment as the dependent variable.

Dependent Variable	Independent variables	Step	R^2	ANOVA		
				Df	Beta	T
Emotional Adjustment	Stressfulness of events Father support	1	.10	2	.32 -.50	3.5** -.54
	Stressfulness of events x father support	2	.13	3	.82	1.9*

**α< .01
* α< .05

results of the regression of emotional adjustment on life stress (stressfulness of events), father support and their interaction effects indicates a main effect (t = 3.5, p< .01) of stressfulness of events on emotional

adjustment. In terms of the underlying theoretical constructs this implies a "direct" effect of life stress on emotional adjustment. The interactive terms stressfulness of events X father support (t = 1.9, p< .05) showed a significant effect on emotional adjustment. This interactive effect would imply a "buffer" effect of father support on emotional adjustment.

Table 6: Multiple moderated regression with and stressfulness of events and relative support as predictors, and emotional adjustment as the dependent variable.

Dependent Variable	Independent variables	Step	R^2	ANOVA		
				Df	Beta	T
Emotional Adjustment	Stressfulness of events Relative support	1	.13	2	.30 .18	3.46** 2.09*
	Stressfulness of events x relative support	2	.17	3	-1.08	-2.4*

**α< .01
* α< .05

The results of the regression of emotional adjustment on life stress (stressfulness of events), relative support and their interaction effects indicates a main effect of stressfulness of events (t = 3.46, p< .01) and relative support (t = 2.09, p< .05) on emotional adjustment. This points to a "direct" effect of life stress on emotional adjustment as well as a "direct" effect of relative support on emotional adjustment. The interactive terms

stressfulness of events X relative support ($t = -2.4$, $p < .05$) showed a significant effect on emotional adjustment. The theoretical constructs discussed in this study imply a "buffer" effect of relative support on emotional adjustment.

To explore these interactive processes more closely and to portray them graphically, the researcher calculated regression lines for stress and emotional adjustment for low (1 SD below the mean) and high support (1 SD above the mean) scores. Kleinbaum, Kupper and Muller (1988) suggest calculation of a high and low score for each of the two independent variables (life stress & family support), and that scores on the Y-axis (emotional adjustment) are plotted, for each of the four combinations of scores (high stress/high support, high stress/low support, low stress/low support and low stress/high support).

High and low scores were calculated by utilizing the median score for each of these independent variables, where scores above the median were included as high scores and those below the median were included as low scores. Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the results of these calculations.

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate how support from fathers and relatives interact significantly with emotional support. Plots obtained for these interaction

effects, however, displayed the opposite of what was expected for this study. Higher levels of father support and relative support appear to be associated with increased levels of emotional maladjustment, suggestive of a "reverse" buffer effect.

Figure 4 - Support from Fathers

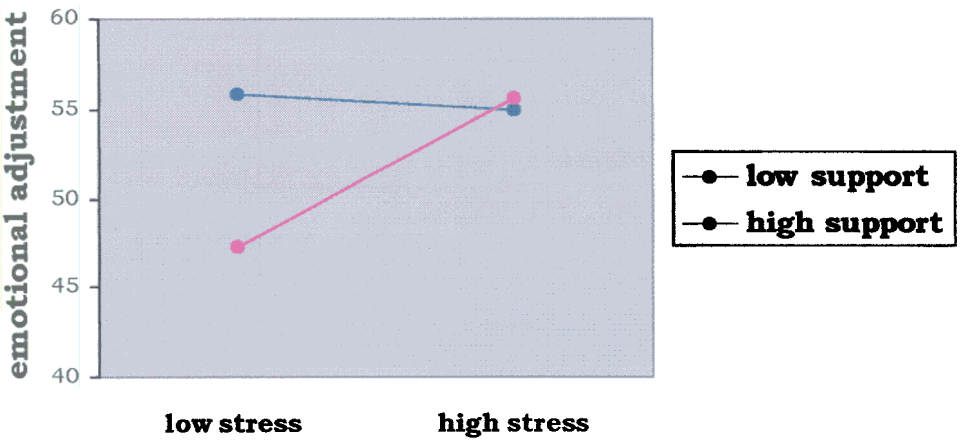
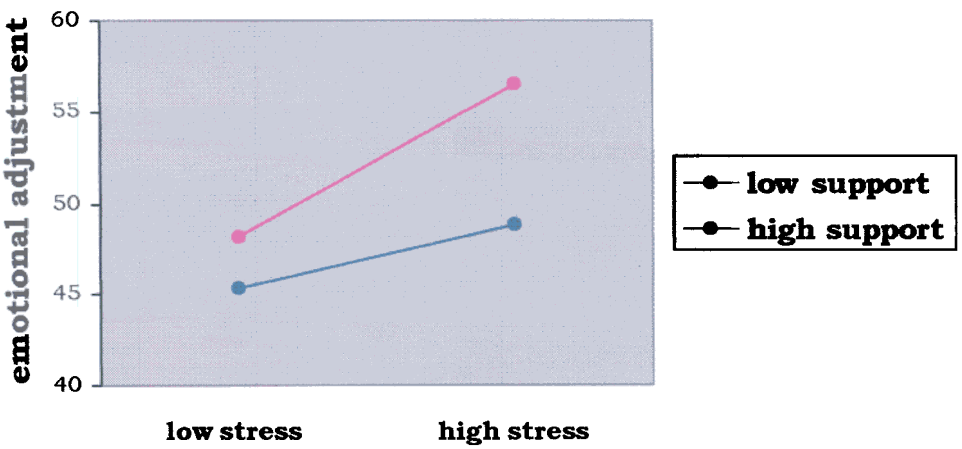


Figure 5 - Support from Relatives



Summary

Reliability analysis revealed adequate internal reliability of the How I Feel (HIF) and Network of Relationships Inventory (NRI). No estimates for internal consistency could be obtained for the Adolescent Perceived Events Scale (APES) due to the lack of it's internal structure (respondents only rate events that apply to them)

Regarding the first stated hypothesis of the current study, the correlational analysis revealed a significant correlation between the negative stressful events and emotional adjustment scores. A positive correlation was found between stressful events and emotional adjustment.

A series of one-way ANOVA's revealed significant gender differences with regards to perceived stressfulness of events experienced. Early adolescent females perceived the life events that they had experienced as significantly more stressful than early adolescent males.

moderated multiple regression analysis of emotional adjustment on stressful events, and family support by relationship type revealed direct effects of stressful events on emotional adjustment as well as direct effects of relative support on emotional adjustment. Two interactive effects were found, namely, father support and relative support interacted significantly

with stressful events to impact on emotional adjustment. Further investigation of these interactive effects, points to 'reverse buffering' effects, where high levels of father support and relative support are associated with increased emotional maladjustment. In the case of father support, low levels of support is associated with an increase in emotional adjustment.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a discussion of the results of the study. It comments on the internal consistency of the instruments used, the means standard deviations of the subtypes of stressors as well as the types of relationship support. Gender differences with regards to stressful events experienced are also noted. Furthermore the results of the correlational and moderated regression analyses are discussed in light of the hypotheses tested.

7.1 Discussion of results

This study sought to investigate the relationships between life stress, emotional adjustment and family relationships in early adolescents from low-income urban areas. Of particular interest was the impact of stressful events on the emotional adjustment of a sample of early adolescents, significant gender differences regarding perceived stressfulness of events and the protective role of family relationships.

7.1.1 Internal reliabilities

The Cronbach alpha coefficient of .74 for the How I Feel is fractionally lower than Anastasi's (1982) criteria of .75 indicating acceptable reliability

alpha for this sample is lower than those found by Pretorius (1991) when he administered the HIF to three Western Cape samples, namely university students (alpha = .88), a general sample (alpha = .92) and an elderly sample (.90) A review of the literature reveals that the HIF has not been used locally as a measure of emotional adjustment in early adolescents and further research needs to be conducted to determine if it is an appropriate measure of emotional adjustment for this age group. Pretorius 1991), however, supports the HIF as a measure of emotional adjustment in South Africa amongst the student, general and elderly populations.

The Cronbach alphas obtained for the global NRI as well as the 5 different relationship scale scores ranged from .92 to .94 and are suggestive of acceptable reliability. These results are encouraging as the literature reveals that the NRI has not been administered to any other South African sample; the other sample, proximally being a sample of Zimbabwean adolescents (Harrison & Stewart, 1995).

7.1.2 The impact of stressful life events on emotional adjustment

Regarding the first hypothesis of this study, the current findings highlight the impact of stressful life events on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents. The experience of stressful life events accounted for 9.61% of

the explained variance in emotional adjustment. A small but significant (positive) correlation between stressful life events and emotional adjustment was revealed. The correlation coefficient obtained (r = .31) is lower than the r = .44 (Time 1) and r = .54 (Time 2) obtained by Compas et al. (1989) in a longitudinal study. It is also lower than the r = .49 obtained by Grant et al. (2000). The findings suggest that the experience of stressful life events by the early adolescents in this sample was associated with an increase in symptoms of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression. Results of moderated regression further revealed a direct effect of stressful life events on symptoms, confirming the predictive power of stressful events on the emotional adjustment of the early adolescents in this sample and are in keeping with previous research (Wagner & Cohen, 1996)

These findings underscore the significant role of stressful events on emotional adjustment of early adolescents. Discussed elsewhere in this study, was the emotional vulnerability of early adolescents due to the numerous biopsychosocial changes they experience during this particular phase of the life span. Normative events such as puberty may generate stress for early adolescents due to the inherent changes brought about by their occurrence. Early adolescence has also been associated with an increase in negative non-normative events (Larson & Ham, 1993) and in conjunction with normative events may further impact on emotional

adjustment. In this study, the early adolescents' experience of network-, family- and intimacy-related events, in particular, may have impacted negatively on their emotional adjustment, leading to higher levels of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression.

The findings further confirm the role of stressful life events in the lives of early adolescents from low-income areas and the resultant negative impact on their emotional adjustment. Major and daily stressful events experienced by early adolescents in this sample may be related to the socioeconomic conditions in which they live. The extant literature has revealed numerous factors that may link adolescents facing economic hardship to increased levels of stress and subsequent emotional maladjustment. These include low self-esteem (Ho & Lempers, 1995), stressed parents and disrupted family processes (Stern et al., .999) and dysfunctional family and peer profiles marked by low levels of support, low involvement and high levels of daily stressful events (Seidman et al., 1999)

Despite the extant literature showing the significant role of daily stressful events on emotional adjustment (Wagner, Compas & Howell, 1988; Chamberlain & Zika, 1990), this study failed to show a significant correlation between daily stressful events and emotional adjustment. Independently, neither major stressful events nor daily stressful events

were significantly correlated with emotional adjustment. The substantial relationship between major stressful events and daily stressful events suggests that combined, in the form of a composite score, major and daily stressful events impacted significantly on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents in this sample.

The above findings lend support for Wagner et al.'s (1988) integrative model of viewing psychosocial stress. They found that the effects of major stressful events were mediated by daily stressful events. In other words, major stressful events led to an increase in daily stress (daily stressful events) which then led to an increase in psychological symptoms. Their analysis showed that a causal path between major stressful events and symptoms did not exist independent of daily stressful events (Wagner et al., 1988) Wagner and his colleagues argue that a full understanding of the relationship between major stressful events and psychological symptoms can only be achieved if one considers the mediating role of daily stressful events. Simultaneously, the important role of major stressful events also needs to be considered to gain a better understanding of the daily stressful events-psychological symptoms relationship (Wagner et al., 1988)

Despite the positive association between stressful life events and emotional adjustment, the findings of this study do not suggest that the experience of

stressful life events cause symptoms of depression, anxiety anger/aggression. Due to the cross-sectional design of the present study, causality cannot be inferred. Lakay and Heller (1985) argue that the event-symptom relation is more complex and may be attributed to other factors. Respondents who experience symptoms of depression, anxiety and/or anger/aggression may expose themselves to situations that may be perceived as stressful. When confronted with these stressful events, adolescents who display disruptive or aggressive behaviours may also be less likely to approach their parents or any other significant adult for support (Muncsh & Kinchen, 1995), further affecting how they cope with these events. Emotionally maladjusted individuals may also be hypersensitive to situations and be prone to appraising these situations as more negatively stressful

Another factor that may cast doubt on the validity of research based on life events questionnaires, is that of response bias (Lakay & Heller, 1985) Emotionally maladjusted respondents may, at the time of filling in the life events questionnaire, report certain events as negative, events which they may have appraised as neutral or even positive a few months ago. These respondents may even be prone to having a better memory for negative events and thus only report these events that may have been forgotten on some other occasion. Considering the above factors, longitudinal

prospective studies may be more effective in determining directions of causality or whether there is reciprocal causality between the experience of stressful life events and emotional adjustment (Larson & Ham, 1993)

A surprising finding of this study was the positive correlation between relative support and emotional adjustment. This correlation suggests that support from relatives had a significant impact on the emotional adjustment of this sample and was associated with increased symptoms of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression. Relative support accounted for a small but still significant 4% of the variance in emotional adjustment. The moderated regression further revealed a direct effect of relative support on emotional adjustment suggesting that those early adolescents who reported more support or contact with their relatives experienced more symptoms of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression.

Contrary to the argument laid forth in this study; it may be that relatives are more sources of stress than support for the early adolescents in this sample. Early adolescents from low-income areas, specifically, who live with relatives may find their domestic environment particularly more stressful due to overcrowding and lack of privacy etc.

of the 10 most frequently occurring stressors experienced by this sample may be related to overcrowding in the early adolescents' home environment and lends support for the above premise These stressors are: people interrupting when you are trying to get work done; having to share a room; people not respecting your privacy and property and not getting enough sleep. Thus the presence of extended family members in the same household may encroach on early adolescents' need for privacy and a sense of having their own "space", resulting in feelings of frustration and anger.

7.1.3 Gender differences regarding the perceived stressfulness of life events

Significant gender differences were found in this study with regards to perceived stressfulness of events. Females perceived life events that they experienced as significantly more stressful than males. This is in keeping with other studies where early adolescent females reported not only more stressful events than early adolescent males, but also perceived these events to be more stressful (Compas et al., 1989; de Anda & Bradley, 1997; Plunkett et al., 2000). Similarly, in a sample of South African high school pupils, Ackermann (1991) found that females reported higher levels emotional discomfort due to stress than did males.

Evidence to support Wagner & Compas' (1990) assertion that early adolescent females are more sensitive to certain subtypes of stressors may be found in this study. One may speculate that network-related stressors, which were perceived by this sample to occur the most frequently and to be the most stressful, may have contributed to girls' perception of their events as more stressful than boys. Early adolescent girls reported more negative network-related stressors than early adolescent boys (Wagner & Compas, 1990) Girls reporting their life events as more stressful may also reflect their willingness to self-report feelings and manifestations of stressful life events (de Ande & Bradley, 1997).

An interesting finding was that despite the significant gender difference in perceived stressfulness of events, there was no significant gender difference in levels of emotional adjustment. Even though females in this sample perceived their events as significantly more stressful than males, their levels of emotional adjustment was not significantly different to that of the males. It may be that early adolescent females cope more effectively with their stressful events compared to early adolescent males (Wagner & Compas, 1990). Gender differences in coping strategies of stressed early adolescents within a local context needs further investigation.

7.1.4 The interactive effects of family support and life stress on emotional adjustment

To determine the third hypothesis of this study, which was the impact of family support, either singly or in combination with life stress on emotional adjustment, moderated multiple regression analysis was conducted. In addition to the main effects for both stressful life events and relative support on emotional adjustment discussed earlier, analyses also revealed significant interactive or buffer effects for both father support and relative support, on emotional adjustment.

Further investigation of these interactive effects however, revealed "reverse" buffer effects. Highly stressed early adolescents, who received high levels of support from their fathers and relatives, experienced an increase in symptoms of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression. Those early adolescents who received low father support and low relative support when faced with high levels of stress experienced a decrease in symptoms. These findings contradict those of Grant et al. (2000) who found that a strong positive relationship with a father-figure attenuated the relation between stress and symptoms. The results of this study also contradict the argument by Scales and Gibbons 1996) that extended family members may have a positive influence on the emotional development and adjustment of early adolescents.

The reverse buffer effect of father support on the emotional adjustment of highly stressed early adolescents in this sample may be understood if one considers McLoyd's (1990) model discussed elsewhere in this study. Recall McLoyd's fourth proposition that under conditions of economic hardship, the father/adolescent relationship depends on the quality of the father/mother relationship.

The demographics of this study indicate that 38.7 % of the sample lives only with their mother. If one assumes that these single-mother households are as a result of divorce and are marked by conflictual mother /father relationships, it may lead to stressful father/adolescent relationships. Even in two-parent households (59.7% of the sample) conflict between parents, especially those from low-income areas, has been associated with increased emotional/psychological distress in children and adolescents (McLoyd, 1990).

Thus stressful father/adolescent relationships may have negatively affected this sample's emotional adjustment when they were faced with high degrees of stress. In this way the early adolescents' relationships with their fathers may have been a source of stress rather than a source of support, leading to the reverse buffer effect. Additionally, the low response rate (45,76%) of parents/care-givers giving permission for their children to participate in the

study may also be reflective of the lack of involvement and support received by early adolescents from their parents/caregivers.

Also, when faced with a greater number of negative life events, adolescents have been found to have more chronic relationship stressors with their fathers as well as other family members (Timko, Moos & Michelson, 1993) In view of McLoyd's 1990) findings that resident poor black fathers are less affectionate with their children than non-resident fathers, local research may reveal some interesting findings regarding the differential impact of resident and non-resident fathers on the emotional adjustment of low-income early adolescents.

An explanation for the reverse buffer effect of relative support may be similar to the one posited for the positive correlation between relative support and emotional adjustment. In this sample 87.2% of early adolescents reported living with extended family members. In addition to being more sources of stress than support for this sample, there may be other explanations for the reverse buffer effect found. It may be that when early adolescents were faced with high levels of stress; instead of being supportive, their relatives may have convinced them that situations were as bad or even worse than what they initially thought. This is also known as "negative" buffering (Kaufmann and Beehr, 1989) Thus the content of

communication of supportive relatives may in itself be detrimental to the emotional adjustment of highly stressed early adolescents.

Additionally, the social support resources of family members living in low-income areas may be depleted due to the chronic strain associated with living in poor socioeconomic conditions (Grant et al., 2000). Thus the early adolescents in this sample may have been dissatisfied with the levels of support received from their fathers and relatives leading to an increase in symptoms of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression.

The overall lack of buffer effects of family support on emotional adjustment in highly stressed early adolescents warrants some mention. It may be that the support received from other family members (e.g. mothers, grandparents and siblings), individuals who may be similarly affected by the stresses of living in low-income areas, was not adequate enough to protect them from the stressful events they experienced

The early adolescents in this sample may have sought support from non-familial others when they were faced with high levels of stress. When faced with high levels of family stress for example, early adolescents may have sought support from their friends and peers as well as teachers. Wenz-Gross and Siperstein 1997) acknowledge the importance of the impact of

differing types of stress and differing sources of support on adjustment in early adolescence. Dubios, Felner, Brand, Adan, & Evans 1992) found that school-based supportive ties buffered early adolescents from the negative effects of stresses associated with the home and other non-school contexts. They found that youth who reported high levels of support from school staff were the least vulnerable to increased levels of psychological distress, especially those receiving low levels of family support. Locally, Ackermann 1991) concluded that teachers could play a major role in helping pupils cope with stressful events. The role of peers and other non-familial adults such as teachers in the lives of stressed early adolescents needs further investigation

7.2 Conclusions regarding the stated hypotheses

As hypothesised, a positive correlation was found between stressful life events and emotional adjustment. The perceived stressfulness of the life events was associated with an increase in symptoms of depression anxiety and anger/aggression

In terms of the second hypothesis of this study, significant gender differences were found regarding the perceived stressfulness of life events experienced. Early adolescent females reported their life events

experienced as significantly more stressful than the early adolescent males of the sample.

Regarding the third hypothesis, buffer effects for supportive family relationships on emotional adjustment were found. Contrary to stated hypothesis, however, "reverse" buffer effects of father support and relative support on emotional adjustment were found. High levels of support from fathers and relatives were associated with increased levels of depression, anxiety and anger/aggression in highly stressed adolescents.

7.3 Strengths of the present study

- The scales used in this study are considered reliable - the high alpha coefficients obtained in this study testifies to the reliability of these measures.

- The perceived stressfulness of different subtypes of events was measured in this study providing valuable insights into the types of stressors affecting early adolescents from low-income urban areas.

In addition to investigating the overall impact of family support, study also considered the differential impact of individual family members in buffering early adolescents from high levels of stress.

7.4 Limitations of the present study

An important limitation of the present study was perhaps the exclusive use of self-report measures; making it particularly difficult to determine the validity of the early adolescents' reports of experienced events, their emotional adjustment and the quality of their relationships with family members. Furthermore, when single measures are used in assessing stress and symptoms, the association between these two variables may be biased because of shared method variance (Windle, 1992). Even though the use of multiple measures may address this problem, the modest correspondence among different measures on child emotional problems suggests that there is no single true indicator of child maladjustment (Compas et al., 1989) The challenge for researchers is to define a useful set of clinically important predictors for each of the various perspectives on child and adolescent emotional problems (Compas et al., 1989).

The Adolescent Perceived Events Scale, as a self-report measure, relies on participants to provide a subjective appraisal of stressful events. Whilst there are sound theoretical arguments for the subjective appraisal of events (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), it does have it's own limitations. The issue of response-bias is discussed elsewhere in this chapter. More objective behaviour-based indices of emotional adjustment may prove more useful.

The generalisability of the results may also be limited due to certain factors. In addition to the small sample size (only 19 early adolescents correctly completed the questionnaires in the study); it was not a probability sample. The small sample size may also have influenced the correlations obtained. With a larger sample it is likely that stronger correlations between variables may have emerged.

low response rate by parents may have further introduced the possibility of a biased sample. Parents who responded positively to the consent letter may in themselves be more supportive of their children whereas parents who responded negatively may be less supportive.

research design was also cross-sectional and correlational, which places limitations on causal inferences. This particular research design may reveal data showing an association (or lack thereof) between variables but does not necessarily address any etiological processes. The use of longitudinal and prospective studies may be able to determine directions of causality or whether a reciprocal causal relationship between the experience of stressful life events and emotional adjustment exists. Despite the simple design of the present study, Pretorius (1994) posits that studies

of this type may play an important role in the identification of variables that may moderate stress, before more sophisticated designs are employed.

Furthermore, the present study provides valuable insights into the types of stressors impacting on early adolescents from low-income urban areas and the role of family relationships in this context. Of particular interest was the impact of fathers and relatives on the emotional adjustment of early adolescents from low-income urban areas. These findings underscore the pivotal role fathers and relatives play in the lives of early adolescents and highlight the need for more research in this field.

7.5 Recommendations

In the light of the limitations of the study, the following recommendations are made with regards to future research:

- To address the issue of response-bias, information may be elicited from multiple informants such as parents and teachers, using various techniques such as parent, teacher and peer ratings and behavioural observation procedures.

- The use of larger samples may impact on the correlations obtained in future studies, especially that of the multiple regression analyses.

- Causality in the stress-symptom relation may be addressed if more sophisticated research designs such as longitudinal and/or prospective designs are used.

References

Ackermann, C.J. (1991). Stres by sekondereskoolleerlinge. *South African journal of education,* ***12***(4), 355-358.

Anastasi, A. (1982*). Psychological testing.* New York: Macmillan.

Balk, D.E. (1995). *Adolescent Development: Early through late adolescence.* Boston: Brookes/Cole Publishing Company.

Barber, B. (1992). Family, personality and adolescent problem behaviours. *Journal of Marriage and the Family,* ***54***(1), 69-80.

Baron, P., & Perron, L. (1986). Sex differences in the Beck Depression Inventory of adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence,* ***15***, 165-171.

Brage, D. & Meredith, W. (1994). A causal model of adolescent depression. *Journal of Psychology Interdisciplinary and Applied,* ***128*** (4), 455-469.

Bennet, D.S. & Bates, J.E. (1995). Prospective models of depressive symptoms in early adolescence: Attributional style, stress and support. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* ***15*** (3), 299-316.

Bless, C. & Higson-Smith, C. (1995). *Fundamentals of social research methods: An African perspective.* Kenwyn: Juta & Co.

Brown L. P. & Cowen E.L. (1988) Children's judgement of event upsettingness and personal experiencing of stressful events. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* ***16*** (1), 123-134.

Caelers, D (2000, September 18). Trauma takes toll on kids. *Cape Argus*, cover page.

Canon, W.B 1929). *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear and Rage.* York: D. Appleton and Company.

Cauce, A.M., Hannan, K. & Sargeant, M. (1992). Life stress, social support, and the locus of control during early adolescence: Interactive effects. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* ***20*** (6), 787-797.

Chamberlain, K. & Zika, S. (1990). The minor events approach to stress: Support for the use of daily hassles. *British Journal of Psychology,* ***81*** (4), 469-482.

Coddington, R.D. (1972). The significance of life events as etiologic factors in the diseases of children: 1. A survey of professionals. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research,* ***16***, 7-18

Cohen, J. & Cohen, P. (1975). *Applied multiple regression/correlation: Analysis for the behavioural sciences.* New York: Erlbaum.

Cohen, S., & Wills, T.A. (1985). Stress, social support and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin,* ***98***, 310-357

Compas, B.E. (1987). Coping with stressful life events during childhood and adolescence. *Psychological Bulletin,* ***101*** (3), 393-403.

Compas, B.E., Davis, G.E., Forsythe, C.J & Wagner, B.M (1987) Assessment of daily and major stressful events during adolescence:

Adolescent Perceived Events Scale. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* ***55*** (4), 534-541.

Compas, B.E., Howell, D.C., Phares, V., Williams, R.A. & Giunta, C.T. (1989). Risk factors for emotional-behavioral problems in young adolescents: A prospective analysis of adolescent and parental stress and symptoms. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* ***57***, 732-740.

Compas, B.E., Howell, D.C., Phares, V., Williams, R.A. & Ledoux, N (1989). Parent and child stress symptoms. *Developmental Psychology,* ***25*** (4), 550-559.

Compas, B.E., Davis, G.E. & Forsythe, C.J. (1985). Characteristics of life events during adolescence. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* ***13*** (6), 677-691.

Conger, K.J. & Conger, R.D. (1997). Parents, siblings, psychological control, and adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Adolescent Research,* ***12*** (1), 113-139.

Conger, R. D., Ge, X., Elder, G. H., Jr., Lorenz, F. O., & Simons, R. L. (1994). Economic stress, coercive family process, and developmental problems of adolescents. *Child Development,* ***65***, 541-561.

Contrada, R.J & Krantz, D.S. (1987). Measurement bias in health psychology research designs. In S.V. Kasl & C.L. Cooper (Eds.), *Stress and health: Issues in research methodology.* John Wiley and Sons: Chichester.

Davies, P.T. & Dumenci, L. (1999). The interplay between maternal depressive symptoms and marital distress in the prediction of adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Marriage and the Family,* ***61*** 1), 238-255.

Dawes, A (1994). The emotional impact of violence. In A. Dawes and D. Donald (Eds.), *Childhood and adversity: Psychological perspectives from South African research.* Cape Town: David Philip.

Dawes, A. & Donald, D (Eds.) (1994). *Childhood and adversity: Psychological perspectives from South African research.* Cape Town: David Philip.

de Anda, D. & Bradley, M. (1997). A study of stress, stressors, and coping strategies among middle school adolescents. *Social Work in Education,* ***19*** (2), 87-99.

De Haan, L.G. & MacDermid, S. (1998). The relationship of individual factors to the psychological well-being of junior high school students living in urban poverty. *Adolescence,* ***33*** (129), 73-90.

Doherty, W.J. & Baldwin, C. (1985). Shifts and stability in locus of control during the 1970's: Divergence of the sexes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* ***48,*** 1048-1053.

Dohrenwend, B.S., & Dohrenwend, B.P. (1974). *Stressful life events: Their nature and effects.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

DuBois, D.L. & Eitel, S.K. 1994). Effects of family environment and parent-child relationships on school adjustment during the transition to early adolescence. *Journal of Marriage and the Family,* ***56*** (2), 405-415.

DuBois, D.L., Felner, R.D., Brand, S., Adan, A.M. & Evans, E.G (1992). A prospective study of life stress, social support and adaptation in adolescence. *Child Development*, ***63***, 542-557.

DuBois, D.L., Felner, R.D., Meares, H. and Krier, M. (1994). Prospective investigation of the effects of socioeconomic disadvantage, life stress, social support on early adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology,* ***103*** (3), 511-522.

Dubow, E. F., Edwards, S., & Ippolito, M. F. 1997) Life stressors, neighborhood, disadvantage, and resources: A focus on inner-city children's adjustment. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, ***26***, 130-144.

Erikson, E.H. 1963). *Childhood and Society.* Horton: New York.

Felner , R.D., Brand, S., Dubois, D.L., Adan, A.M., Mulhall, P.F. & Evans, E.G 1995) Socioeconomic disadvantage, proximal environmental experiences, and socioemotional and academic adjustment in adolescence: Investigation of a mediated effects model. *Child Development*, ***66***, 774-792.

Flisher, A.J & Chalton, D.O (2001) Urbanisation and adolescent behaviours. *South African Medical Journal*, ***91*** (3), 243-249.

Freeman, M 1993) Seeking identity township youth and social development. *South African Journal of Psychology*, ***23*** (4), 157-166.

Frydenberg, E. (1997). *Adolescent Coping: Theoretical and research perspectives*. Routledge: New York.

Furman, W. (2000). Personal communication by email.

Furman, W. & Burhmester, D. (1985a). Children's perceptions of the personal relationships in their social networks. *Developmental Psychology*, ***21*** (6), 1016-1024.

Furman, W. & Burhmester, D. (1985b). Children's perceptions of their sibling relationships. *Child Development*, ***56***, 448-461.

Furman, W. & Burhmester, D. (1992). Age and sex differences of networks of personal relationships. *Child Development*, ***63***, 103-115.

Garber, J. & Robinson, N.S. (1997). The relation between parenting and adolescent depression: Self-worth as a mediator. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, ***12*** (1), 12-34.

Ge, X., Lorenz, F.O., Conger, R.D., Elder, G.H., Jr., Simons, R.L. (1994). Trajectories of stressful life events and depressive symptoms during adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, ***30*** (4), 467-483.

Gillis, L.S., Welman, M., Koch, A & Joyi, M. (1991). Psychological distress and depression in elderly black urbanising persons. *South African Medical Journal*, ***79***, 490-495.

Grant, K.E. & Compas, B.E. (1995). Stress and anxious-depressed symptoms among adolescents: Searching for mechanisms of risk. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* ***63*** (6), 1015-1021.

Grant, K.E., O'Koone, J.H., Davis, T.H., Roache, N.A., Poindexter L.A., Armstrong, M.L., Minden, J.A. & McIntosh, J.M. (2000). Protective factors affecting low-income urban African American youth exposed to stress. *Journal of Early* Adolescence, ***20*** (4), 388-418.

Guerra, N. G., Huesmann, L. R., Tolan, P. H., Van Acker, R., & Eton, L. D. (1995). Stressful events and individual beliefs as correlates of economic disadvantage and aggression among urban children. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* ***63***, 518-528.

Harrison, A.O. & Stewart, R.B. (1995). Perceptions of social networks among adolescents from Zimbabwe and the United States. *Journal of Black Psychology,* ***21*** (4), 382-408.

Hartos, J.L. & Power, T.G. (2000). Mothers' awareness of their early adolescents' stressors. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* ***15*** (5), 546-564.

Ho, C.S. & Lempers, J.D. (1995). Effects of economic hardship on adolescent self-esteem: A family mediation model. *Adolescence,* ***30*** (17), 117-132.

Holmes, T.H., & Rahe, R.H. (1967). The social readjustment rating scale. *Journal of psychosomatic research,* ***11***, 213-218.

Irvin, J.L. 1996) Developmental tasks of early adolescence: How adult awareness can reduce at-risk behaviour. *Clearing House,* ***69*** (4), 222-226

Katraggadda, C.P & Tidwell, R. (1998). Rural Hispanic adolescents at risk for depression. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology,* ***28*** (20), 1916-1930.

Kaufmann, G.M. & Beehr, T.A. (1989). Occupational stressors, individual strains, and social supports among police officers. *Human Relations,* ***42*** (2), 185-197.

Kenny, M. E., Moilanen, D., Lomax, R., & Brabeck, M. M. (1993). Contributions of parental attachments to depressogenic cognitions and depressive symptoms among early adolescents. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* ***13***, 408-430.

Kleinbaum, D.G., Kupper, L.L. & Muller, K.E. (1988). *Applied regression analysis and other multivariable methods.* Boston: PWS-Kent Publishing Co.

Kobus, K. & Reyes, O. (2000). A descriptive study of Mexican American adolescents' perceived stress and coping. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences,* ***22*** (2), 163-179.

Kruger, N. (1995). Identification and prevention of stress in adolescents. *South African Journal of Education,* ***15*** (4), 196-202.

Kurdek, L. A., & Sinclair, R. J. (1988). Adjustment of young adolescents in two-parent nuclear, stepfather, and mother-custody families. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* ***56***, 91 -96.

Lakay, B. & Heller, K. 1985). Response biases and the relation between negative life events and psychological symptoms. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* ***6***, 1662-1668.

Larson, R. & Ham, M. (1993) Stress and "Storm and Stress" in early adolescence: The relationship of negative events with dysphoric affect *Developmental Psychology,* ***29*** (1), 130-140.

Lazarus, R.S. 1966). *Psychological stress and the coping process.* New York:McGraw-Hill.

Lazarus, R.S., & Folkman, S. 1984). *Stress, Appraisal and Coping.* New York: Springer.

Lempers, J.D. & Clark-Lempers, D.S. (1997) Economic hardship Family relationships, and adolescent distress: An evaluation of a stress-diathesis mediation model in mother-daughter and mother-son dyads. *Adolescence,* ***32*** (126), 339-357.

Lerner, R.M. & Spanier, G.B. (1980). *Adolescent Development: A Life Span Perspective.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Marsh, E.J. & Johnston, Charlotte 1996). Family relational problems: Their place in the study of psychopathology. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders,* ***4*** (4), 240-254.

Mayekiso, T.V. & Flatela, Z.P.S.S (1993). Assessment of the quality of parent-adolescent relationships. *Southern African Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry,* ***5*** (2), 92-95.

Mayhew, K.P. & Lempers, J.D. (1998). The relation among financial strain, parent, parent self-esteem, and adolescent self-esteem. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* ***18*** (2), 145-173.

Mazza, J.J. & Reynolds, W.M. (1999). Exposure to violence in young inner city adolescents: Relationships with suicidal Ideation, depression and PTSD symptomatology. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology,* ***27*** (3), 203-213.

McLoyd, V.C. (1990). The impact of economic hardship on black families and children: Psychological distress, parenting, and Socioemotional development. *Child Development,* ***61***, 311-346.

Moller, V. (1995). Home environment and educational achievement among high-school pupils living in three-generation urban black households. *South African Journal of Sociology,* ***26*** (3), 87-97.

Munsch, J. & Kinchen, K.M. (1995). Adolescent sociometric status and social support. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* ***15*** (2), 181-203.

Nilzen, K.R. & Palmerus, K. (1997). The influence of familial factors on anxiety and depression in childhood and adolescence. *Adolescence,* ***32*** 128, 935-944.

Norusis, M.H. (1990). *SPSS / PC+ Advanced statistics 4.0.* [computer programme]. Chicago: SPSS Inc.

O'Connor, M.L. (1998). Adolescents with close family relationships have reduced chances of engaging in risky behaviours. *Family Planning Perspectives,* ***30*** (2), 97-99.

Ohannessian, C.M & Lerner, R.M. (1996). Direct and indirect relations between perceived parental acceptance, perceptions of the self, and emotional adjustment during early adolescence, *Family and Consumer Research Journal,* ***25*** (2), 159-184.

Oliver, L.W. (1979). Outcome and measurement in career counselling research. *Journal of Counselling Psychology,* ***26***, 217-226.

Petersen, A.C. & Kellam, S.G. (1977). Measurement of the psychological well-being of adolescents: The psychometric properties and assessment procedures of the How I Feel. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence,* ***6*** (3), 229-247.

Pillay A.L., Naidoo, P. & Lockhat M.R. (1999). Psychopathology in urban and rural/peri-urban children seeking mental health care. *South African Journal of Psychology,* ***29*** (4), 178-184.

Plunkett, S.W., Radmacher, K.A. & Moll-Phanara, D (2000). Adolescent life events, stress and coping: A comparison of communities and genders, *Professional School Counseling,* ***3*** (5), 356-367.

Pretorius, T.B. (1994). Network orientation and social support as moderators of the stress-depression relationship: A South African study. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality,* ***9*** (1), 1-12.

Pretorius, T.B. (1991). Normative and Psychometric Data on Research Questionnaries used at UWC. *Psychology Resource Centre Publication*, University of the Western Cape.

Printz, B.L, Shermis, M.D. & Webb, P.M. (1999). Stress-buffering factors related to adolescent coping: A path analysis. *Adolescence,* ***34*** (16), 715-735.

Remez, L. (1997). In intact poor families, parents affect teenagers' well-being unequally. *Family Planning Perspectives,* ***29*** (2), 94-96.

Roberts, A. Seidman, E., Pedersen, S., Chesir-Teran, D., Daniel, A., Allen, L., Aber, J.L., Duran, V. & Hsueh, J. (2000). Perceived family and peer transactions and self-esteem among urban early adolescents. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* ***20*** (1), 68-93.

Robinson, M. (1999). Stress and it's perception in childhood. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly,* ***12*** (3), 217-231.

Robinson, M. & Cook, P. (1993). Stress in adolescence. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly,* ***6*** (3), 217-229.

Rudolph, B. (1997). Gender differences in adolescent depression: A consequence of exposure to adverse life circumstances and the loss of parent support. *Dissertation Abstracts International-Section A-Humanities and Social Sciences,* ***57*** (11-A), 4932.

Rutter, M. (1985). Family and school influences on behavioral development. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry,* ***23*** (6), 349-368.

Salem D.A., Zimmerman, M.A. & Notaro, P.C. (1998). Effects of family structure, family process and father involvement among African-American adolescents. *Family Relations*, ***47*** (4), 331-342.

Sarason, I.G., Johnson, J.H., & Siegel, J.M. (1978). Assessing the impact of life changes: Development of the Life Experiences Survey. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* ***46*** (5), 932-946.

Scales, P.C. & Gibbons, J.L. (1996). Extended family members and unrelated adults in the lives of young adolescents: A research agenda. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* ***16*** (4), 365-390.

Schwab-Stone, M., Chen, C., Greenberger, E., Silver, D., Lichtman, J & Voyce, C. (1999). No safe haven II: The effects of violence exposure on urban youth. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry,* ***38*** (4), 359-367.

Seidman, E., Chesir-Teran, D, Friedman, J.L., Yoshikawa, H. Allen, L., Roberts, A. & Aber, J.L. (1999). The risk and protective functions of perceived family and peer microsystems among urban adolescents in poverty. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* ***27*** (2), 211-235.

Seigffge-Krenke, I (1995). *Stress, Coping, and Relationships in Adolescence.* New Jersey: LEA.

Selye, H. (1936). A syndrome produced by diverse nocuous agents. *Nature,* ***138***, 32.

Siegal, J.M. & Brown, J.D. (1988). A prospective study of stressful circumstances, illness symptoms and depressed mood among adolescents. *Developmental Psychology,* ***24*** (5), 715-721.

Spannenberg, J.J. (1999). Stress and coping among Black adolescents in the Western Cape: an explorative study. *Unpublished Master's dissertation,* University of Stellenbosch.

StatsSA (2000). Census 1996. Central Statistics Service. Available Internet http://www.statssa.co.za.

Stern, S.B., Smith, C.A., Jang, S.J. (1999). Urban families and adolescent mental health. *Social Work Research,* ***23*** (1), 15-28.

Stevens, G. & Lockhat, R. (1997). "Coca-Cola kids" – reflections on black adolescents' identity development in post apartheid South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology,* ***27*** (4), 250-255.

Su, S.S. & Hoffman, J.P. (1998). The effect of home environment on adolescent substance use and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Drug Use,* ***27*** (4), 851-879.

Swearingen, E.M. & Cohen, L.H. (1985). Life events and psychological distress: A prospective study of young adolescents. *Developmental Psychology,* ***21*** (6), 1045-1054.

Swimmer, S. (1996). Adolescent suicide and depression. *Unisa psychologia,* ***23*** (2), 12-16.

Terr, L.C. (1979) Children of Chowchilla: A study of psychic trauma. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child,* ***34***, 547-632.

Thoits, P.A. (1986). Social support as coping assistance. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* ***54*** (4), 416-423.

Timko, C., Moos, R.H. & Michelson, D.J. (1993). The context of adolescents' chronic life stressors. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* ***21*** (4), 397-421

Turner, R.J. (1981). Social support as a contingency in psychological well-being. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior,* ***22***, 357-367.

van der Merwe, A. 1999). The relationship between exposure to community violence and the development of prosocial and antisocial tendencies. *Unpublished document,* University of Cape Town.

Wagner, B.M., Compas, B.E. & Howell, D.C. (1988). Daily and major life events: A test of an integrative model of psychosocial stress. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* ***16*** (2), 189-205.

Wagner, B.M & Compas, B.E. (1990). Gender, instrumentality, and expressivity: Moderators of the relation between stress and psychological symptoms during adolescence. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* ***18*** (3), 383-404.

Wagner, B.M. & Cohen, P. (1996). Parent/adolescent relationships: moderators of the effects of stressful life events. *Journal of Adolescent Research,* ***11*** (3), 347-375.

Way, N. & Chen, L. (2000). Close and general friendships among African American, Latino, and Asian American adolescents from low-income families. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, ***15*** (2). 274-302

Wenz-Gross, M. & Siperstein, G.N. (1997). Stress, social support, and adjustment of adolescents in middle school. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, ***17*** (2), 129-152.

Weiss, R.S. (1974). The provisions of social relations. In Z. Rubin (Ed.), *Doing unto others*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Windle, M. (1992). A longitudinal study of stress buffering for adolescent problem behaviors. *Developmental Psychology*, ***28*** (3), 522-530.

Williams, J.M. & Currie, C (2000). Self-esteem and physical development in early adolescence: Pubertal timing and body image. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, ***20***, 2, 129-150.

Young, M.H. & Miller, B.C. (1995). The effect of parental supportive behaviors on life satisfaction of adolescent offspring. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, ***57*** (3), 813-823

Yeaworth, R. C., York, J., Hussey, M. A., Ingle, M. E., & Goodwin, T. (1980). The development of an adolescent life change event scale. *Adolescence*, ***15*** (57), 91-97.

Zegans, L. (1982). Stress and the development of somatic disorders. In L.Goldberg & S. Breznitz (Eds.). *Handbook of Stress: Theoretical and Clinical Aspects*. New York: Free Press.

Zille, H. (1986). Beginning life in apartheid society: Childbirth in South Africa. In S. Burman & P. Reynolds (Eds.), *Growing Up in a Divided Society: The context of childhood in South Africa* (pp. 139-157). Johannesburg: Raven Press.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

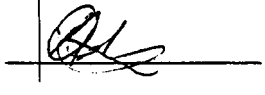
My name is Omar Adams and I am a psychology student at the University of the Western Cape. I am currently doing research on the life experiences of young teenagers and how it affects them emotionally. I am trying to find out what bad or good things they gave experienced, such as being a victim of a violent crime or having their mother give birth to a baby brother or sister. What I am also looking at is how their family relationships with their mother, father, brother, sister, or grandparent protects them against the bad experiences they may have experienced.

Your son/daughter is one of about 120 young people that have been chosen to take part in my research. I am writing this letter to ask you, the parent/guardian, permission for your son/daughter to take part in this research project. Your son/daughter will be asked to fill in four lists which will asked him/her about his/her experiences, feelings and family relationships. Please let me assure that your son/daughter will not be asked to write his/her name, surname or even the name of the school that he/she is attending. All the information will be treated in the strictest of confidentiality.

Please place your initials (no name) on the space, seal the letter in the envelope provided and give it to you son/daughter to return it to me as soon as possible.

Thank you

Omar Adams



I, hereby give permission for my son/daughter to take part in the research conducted by Omar Adams. I understand that all the information gathered by Omar Adams will be strictly confidential and the identity of my son/daughter or my family will not be revealed.

Initial _____

Date _____

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE.
YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.
MARK THE CORRECT BOX WITH AN "X"

GENDER

	BOY	GIRL

AGE

	11	12	13	14	15

GRADE

	6	7	8

WHO OF YOUR PARENTS LIVE WITH YOU?

MOTHER	FATHER	BOTH PARENTS

HOW MANY BROTHERS DO YOU HAVE?

HOW MANY SISTERS DO YOU HAVE?

WHO OF YOUR GRANDPARENTS ARE ALIVE?

GRANDMOTHER	GRANDFATHER	BOTH GRANDPARENTS

DO YOUR GRANDPARENT/S LIVE WITH YOU?

YES	NO

DO YOU HAVE OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS LIVING WITH YOU?

YES	NO

IF YOU DO, THEN HOW MANY?

AUNTS	
UNCLES	
COUSINS	
SISTER IN LAW	
BROTHER IN LAW	
OTHER	

APPENDIX III

Life Events

Jr. High

Instructions: On the following pages are a list of events which may or may not have happened to you. Please read each item carefully. If the event has happened to you in the past three months please place an "x" in the box marked EVENT HAS HAPPENED in front of the event. For each event that has happened please fill in your rating of the desirability of the event (how good or bad it was when it happened).

Desirability Rating: Good (desirable) events are ones which are pleasant or make us happy while bad (undesirable) events are ones that upset us or make us feel scared, sad, or angry. Using the following numbers write down in the blank space marked GOOD-BAD RATING the number which best describes how desirable the event was when it happened to you.

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4...	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2...	+3	+4

EVENT HAS HAPPENED

Good-Bad Rating

- ☐ 1. Hobbies or activities (watching TV, reading, playing an instrument, etc.).....
- ☐ 2. Doing things/spending time with family members.
- ☐ 3. Spending time/talking with boyfriend/girlfriend.
- ☐ 4. People not respecting your privacy or property
- ☐ 5. Going to bed/sleeping
- ☐ 6. Dating or doing things with people of the opposite sex.
- ☐ 7. Friend having emotional problems.
- ☐ 8. Trying to quit smoking
- ☐ 9. Free time in school.
- ☐ 10. Family members, relatives, step-parents move in or out of house.....
- ☐ 1. Helping other people.
- ☐ 12. Fight with or problems with a friend.
- ☐ 13. Taking care of daily appearance and hygiene.
- ☐ 14. Restrictions at home (having to be in at a certain time, etc.)
- ☐ 15. Death of a family member.
- ☐ 16. Family member becoming pregnant or having a child.
- ☐ 17. Attending school.
- ☐ 18. Hospitalization of a family member or relative.

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4

EVENT HAS HAPPENED

- ☐ 19. Recovering from an accident or illness.....
- ☐ 20. Change in personal appearance..... _____
- ☐ 21. Falling in love or beginning relationship with boyfriend/girlfriend _____
- ☐ 22. Work hassles (rude customers, unpleasant jobs, etc.)..... _____
- ☐ 23. Liking someone who doesn't like you..... _____
- ☐ 24. Doing poorly on an exam or paper..... _____
- ☐ 25. Talking or sharing feelings with friends..... _____
- ☐ 26. Change in personal health or fitness..... _____
- ☐ 27. Arrest of a family member..... _____
- ☐ 28. Getting in trouble or being suspended from school..... _____
- ☐ 29. Hassles, arguments of fights with other students or peers..... _____
- ☐ 30. Financial troubles or money worries..... _____
- ☐ 31. Getting bad grades or progress reports..... _____
- ☐ 32. Having bad classes or teachers..... _____
- ☐ 33. Change in moral or religious beliefs..... _____
- ☐ 34. Not getting enough sleep..... _____
- ☐ 35. Dieting or keeping track of weight..... _____
- ☐ 36. Having a good talk with a teacher or other adult..... _____
- ☐ 37. School interfering with other activities..... _____

_____

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4	-3	-2.....	..-1	0	...+1.....+2.....+3.....			.+4

EVENT HAS HAPPENED — Good-Bad Rating

- ☐ 38. Being assaulted.
- ☐ 39. Buying new clothes.
- ☐ 40. Eating.
- ☐ 41. End of school year.
- ☐ 42. Getting mail.
- ☐ 43. Going to church.
- ☐ 44. Good weather.....
- ☐ 55. Having a job..
- ☐ 56. Listening to music
- ☐ 57. Meeting new people
- ☐ 58. Menstruation.
- ☐ 59. Putting things off.
- ☐ 60. Smoking cigarettes
- ☐ 61. Writing letter..
- ☐ 62. Being involved in a car accident.
- ☐ 63. Getting or losing a pet.
- ☐ 64. Change in eating habits.
- ☐ 65. Major success or failure in sports..
- ☐ 66. Major success or failure in extracurricular activities (music, arts, etc.).
- ☐ 67. Friend getting married or engaged.

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4.	-3..	-2.	-1	0.	+1	+2.	+3.	+4

EVENT HAS HAPPENED	GOOD-BAD RATING
❑ 68. Having few or no friends.	
❑ 69. Having to share a room.	
❑ 70. Arguments or fights between parents..	
❑ 71. Getting good grades or progress reports.	
❑ 72. Having good classes or teachers.	
❑ 73. Getting ready for school..	
❑ 74. Drinking or drug use.	
❑ 75. Understanding classes/homework....	
❑ 76. Change in relationship with boyfriend/girlfriend.	
❑ 77. Change in relationship with family member(s).	
❑ 78. Change in relationship with friend(s).	
❑ 79. Problems with transportation.	
❑ 80. Vacation, trip or summer break...	
❑ 81. Doctor's or Dentist's appointments.	
❑ 82. Pressures or expectations by parents.....	
❑ 83. Visiting a parent that doesn't live with you.	
❑ 84. Having plans fall through (not going on a trip, etc.)	
❑ 85. Visiting with relatives.	
❑ 86. Change in church attendance....	
❑ 87. Making love or sexual intercourse.	
❑ 88. Friends getting drunk or using drugs.	

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4

EVENT HAS HAPPENED	GOOD-BAD RATING
☐ 89. Having braces removed.	
☐ 90. Death of a relative.	
☐ 91. Obligations at home.	
☐ 92. Spending time alone	
☐ 93. Getting complimented.	
☐ 94. Friend becoming pregnant or having a child.	
☐ 95. Family member or relative having emotional problems	
☐ 96. Friend or family member recovering from illness or injury	
☐ 97. Arguments or problems with boyfriend/girlfriend.	
☐ 98. Something bad happens to a friend	
☐ 99. Change in privileges or responsibilities at home.	
☐ 100. Change in health of a family member or relative.	
☐ 101. Change in health of a friend.	
☐ 102. Change in number or friends (make new friends or lose friends)	
☐ 103. Parents discovering something you didn't want them to know.	
☐ 104. People interrupting when you are trying to get work done	
☐ 105. Becoming (or making) pregnant or having a child....	
☐ 106. Brother or sister getting engaged or married.	
☐ 107. Brother or sister getting separated or divorced	
☐ 108. Abortion or girlfriend has an abortion.	
☐ 109. Not spending enough time with family members or friends.	

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4.....	.-3...	.-2	...-1.	0	.+	.+2.	.+3	..+4

EVENT	HAS HAPPENED	GOOD-BAD RATING
☐ 110.	School or career change of family member (drops out of school, gets job, etc).	
☐ 1	Advancing a year in school	
☐ 112.	Living with only one parent	
☐ 13.	Talking on the phone	
☐ 14.	Losing job (quitting, getting fired, laid off, etc.)	
☐ 15.	Homework or studying	
☐ 116.	Taking care of younger brothers or sisters	
☐ 117.	Personal achievement at work (getting a raise, promotion, etc.)	
☐ 118.	Change in birth control use	
☐ 19.	Problems or arguments with parents, siblings or family members	
☐ 120.	Problems or arguments with teachers or principal	
☐ 121.	Spending time at home	
☐ 122.	Having or making money	
☐ 123.	Change in alcohol or drug use	
☐ 124.	Making honor roll or other school achievement	
☐ 125.	Doing household chores	
☐ 126.	Becoming more independent	
☐ 127.	Something good happens to a friend	
☐ 128.	Participation in sports or recreation	
☐ 129.	Breaking up with or being rejected by a boyfriend/girlfriend	

Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Somewhat Bad	Slightly Bad	Neither Good Nor Bad	Slightly Good	Somewhat Good	Very Good	Extremely Good
-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4

EVENT HAS HAPPENED

- ☐ 130. Bad Weather.
- ☐ 131. Death of a friend.
- ☐ 132. Family move.
- ☐ 133. Feeling too young.
- ☐ 134. Getting robbed.
- ☐ 135. Holidays
- ☐ 136. Taking medication
- ☐ 137. Taking showers.
- ☐ 138. Wearing braces.
- ☐ 139. Being unemployed.
- ☐ 140. Changing schools.
- ☐ 141. Exercising.
- ☐ 142. Getting a job
- ☐ 143. Losing virginity.

GOOD-BAD RATING

HOW I FEEL

The following 19 items focus on how **you** generally feel. Respond to each of these 19 items by using the following scale:

1= not at all like me 2= not like me
3= somewhat like me 4= much like me
5= very much like me

	feel nervous	1	2	3	4	5
2.	feel under pressure	1	2	3	4	5
3.	My hands sometimes shake	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I feel tense	1	2	3	4	5
5.	New situation make me feel tense	1	2	3	4	5
6.	feel tight inside	1	2	3	4	
7.	get startled easily	1	2		4	5
8.	When I get angry I stay angry	1	2	3	4	5
9.	yell at people	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I feel like I am boiling inside	1	2	3	4	5
11	lose my temper	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I feel angry	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I get into fights and arguments	1	2	3	4	5
14.	feel sad	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I cry and I don't know why	1	2	3	4	5
16.	feel hopeless	1	2	3	4	5
17.	feel ashamed of myself	1	2	3	4	5
18.	don't feel worth much	1	2	3	4	5
19.	People would be better off without me	1	2	3	4	5

NETWORK OF RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985)

Everyone has a number of people who are important in his or her life. These questions ask about your relationships with each of the following people: your mother, your father, a sibling, a relative and a grand-parent.

The first questions ask you to identify your mother figure, your father figure, a sibling, a relative and a grandparent

1. Circle the **mother figure** you will be describing. (If you have both, choose the one you think of as your primary mother figure.)

   A. Biological/Adopted Mother

   B. Step-Mother (or Father's Significant Other)

   C. Other _____

2. Circle the **father figure** you will be describing. (If you have both, choose the one you think of as your primary father figure.)

   A. Biological/Adopted Father

   B. Step-Father (or Mother's Significant Other)

   C. Other _____

3. If one of your **brothers or sisters** is participating in this study also, please choose him or her. If you do not have a sibling taking part in this study, please describe your relationship with the sibling you consider to be most important/closest to you. (If several are equally important/close, just select one.) **If you do not have a sibling, leave these questions blank.**

   How old is s/he? _____ years old.

4. Now we would like you to choose a **relative** who is/was most important to you. Is this person an a) **aunt,** b) **uncle** or c) **brother-in-law** or d) **sister-in-law**? (Please circle one.)

Now we would like you to answer the following questions about the people you have selected above. Sometimes the answers for different people may be the same but sometimes they may be different.

5. How much free time do you spend with this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

6. How much does this person teach you how to do things that you don't know?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

7. How much do you talk about everything with this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

8. How much do you help this person with things she/he can't do by her/himself?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

9. How much does this person like or love you?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

10. How much does this person treat you like you're admired and respected?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

1. How sure are you that this relationship will last no matter what?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

12. How much do you play around and have fun with this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

13. How much does this person help you figure out or fix things?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

14. How much do you share your secrets and private feelings with this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or Nohe	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

15 How much do you protect and look out for this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

16. How much does this person really care about you?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

17. How much does this person treat you like you're good at many things?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

18. How sure are you that your relationship will last in spite of fights?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

19. How often do you go places and do enjoyable things with this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

20. How often does this person help you when you need to get something done?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

21. How much do you talk to this person about things that you don't want others to know'

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

22. How much do you take care of this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

23. How much does this person have a strong feeling of affection (loving or liking) toward you?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

24. How much does this person like or approve of the things you do?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

25. How sure are you that your relationship will continue in the years to come?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

26. How often do you turn to this person for support with personal problems?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

27. How often do you depend on this person for help, advice and sympathy?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

28. When you are feeling down or upset, how often do you depend on this person to clear things up?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

29. How satisfied are you with your relationship with this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

30. How good is your relationship with this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father

3 How happy are with the way things are between you and this person?

	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	Little or None	Some-what	Very Much	Extre-mely Much	The Most	
Mother	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Boy/Girl Friend
Father	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Same-Sex Friend
Sibling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Other-Sex Friend
Relative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Grandmother/father