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THE EFFECTS OF IMMEDIACY TO PARENTHOOD ON
THE PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE OF
PARENT EDUCATION TOPICS

by

Nancy Mauro Gerard

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
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Department of Educational Leadership

Western Michigan University
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THE EFFECTS OF IMMEDIACY TO PARENTHOOD ON
THE PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE OF
PARENT EDUCATION TOPICS

Nancy Mauro Gerard, Ed.D.

Western Michigan University, 1984

The purpose of this study was to determine how immediacy to parenthood affects one's perception of what should be learned in a parent education class. Differences were sought among groups of individuals at four levels of immediacy to parenthood on the perceived importance of 11 parenting topics. These topics were Pregnancy and Childbirth, Infancy, Early Childhood, Late Childhood, Adolescence, Health and Safety, Social Issues Related to Parenthood, Family Relations and Communication, Guiding the Behavior of Children, Parenting Patterns, and Career-Related Concerns. In order to determine if there were differences, the data, collected through the use of a parent education questionnaire, were analyzed with a series of one-way analysis of variances. Following the one-way ANOVAs, post hoc analysis was conducted using the Bonferroni method.

Overall significant differences with the ANOVAs were found among the four groups beyond the .10 level of significance on all the parent education topics except Early Childhood. Eight of the 11 hypotheses were significant at the .001 level. Post hoc analysis revealed where the specific differences existed among the groups on each of the variables except Early Childhood with the parent group being most different.

Definite trends were found in how the four groups rated the importance of the topics. One trend was a pattern of decreasing importance of several of the topics as the students approached parenthood, e.g., Pregnancy and Childbirth, Infancy, Health and Safety, and Career-Related Concerns. The other trend followed a modulating pattern of importance ratings among the groups, e.g., Late Childhood, Adolescence, Family Relations and Communication, and Guiding the Behavior of Children. This trend presented low points for the secondary and expectant parent groups and high peaks for the college and parent groups.

The implications of the findings of this study are related to curriculum development at each of the four levels of parent education represented in this study. Recommendations were made for curriculum planning at the four levels of parent education.

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Nancy Mauro Gerard

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

Programs aimed at preparing young people for parenthood and enhancing parenting skills for those who are already parents have been in existence in one form or another for many years. However, in the last 15 years these types of curricula have enjoyed an increased popularity in both schools and community agencies. This popularity could be related to some of the drastic changes seen in society in the past 3 decades. These changes include widespread availability and use of contraceptives, legalized abortion, increased numbers of women in the work force, rising divorce rates, and the single parent phenomenon. With these changes and their impact on families came a heightened awareness of the need to provide help for parents and prospective parents. Although there are numerous local, state, and federal programs intended to assure an acceptable life for American families, it was thought that more needed to be done to insure a better life for future generations.

In 1972, the Offices of Education and of Child Development combined resources and efforts to promote Education for Parenthood programs. These programs were implemented in junior high schools, high schools, colleges, and various social service agencies and hospitals. The intent of this effort was to prepare young people

for rearing their own families and to encourage them to pursue careers in working with children.

Federal legislation was passed in 1976 requiring a course offering in parenthood education on the senior high level in order for the schools to receive vocational reimbursement funds for their consumer/home economics programs (Public Law 94-482). It was felt that this action greatly encouraged education for parenthood at the secondary level and increased the chance that a greater number of young people would receive this type of training.

Besides the two federal actions described above, increased activity was seen in the 1970s at the community level to provide education for adults concerning the parent role.

Parent education programs in the late 60s and early 70s were based upon the argument that if ignorance about children and their needs could be obliterated perhaps some of the current problems in families and society could be lessened. In addition, it was hoped that the quality of life for generations of children to come could be improved.

Most Recent Concerns

There is some reason for concern about the future of parent education in the public schools and other educational institutions at the present time. With scarce resources, educational administrators are looking for ways to cut expenditures and often the easiest place to begin cutting is in programs deemed unnecessary. With the pendulum of the "Back to Basics" movement in full swing, it is

relatively easy to determine what is "necessary."

Fuel for the "Back to Basics" movement was provided recently by the President's National Commission on Excellence in Education. A report of this commission appeared in Time (McGrath, 1983). The commission pointed a finger at American schools for their negligence in allowing too many "extras" at the secondary level. Emphasis was placed on strengthening the "New Basics" of the curriculum such as math, science, English, social studies, and computer science. And suggestions were made that the nonacademic subjects should be cut back.

With these recent concerns for stressing the more academic aspects of the curriculum and a state of financial exigency in education, the future of parent education seems quite uncertain.

A Second Look at Parent Education

Current societal and family conditions favor the need for parent education. Educators, medical personnel, and social scientists concur that there is a tremendous need for more information to be given to current and prospective parents (Bavolek, 1978; Bronfenbrenner, 1978; D. J. Cohen, 1973; Coward & Kerckhoff, 1978; Gaines, 1981; Kruger, 1972; Lauderdale, 1980; Wolverton, 1973; Ziegler, 1980). The differences of opinion appear to be in regard to when parenting information should be taught and what topics should be included.

When Should Parenting Information Be Taught?

Currently, most parent education programs are offered to four groups of people: secondary students, college students, expectant parents, and parents. We see in these four levels a continuum of courses for individuals at varying levels of nearness or immediacy to parenthood.

Some writers (D. J. Cohen, 1973; Maloney, 1978) argue that adolescence is not an appropriate time to provide parenting information due to the developmental activities occurring during this stage of development. They cite developmental psychology studies indicating that the adolescent is rapidly developing physically, involved heavily in the peer culture, and struggling with identity formation to the extent that he or she is not ready, developmentally, to accept knowledge about parenthood.

Other writers (Coward & Kerckhoff, 1978; Magid, Gross, & Shuman, 1979; Vogel, 1978; B. L. White, 1980) argue that adolescence is the best time to provide parenting information. They base this argument on several factors: the need to help teens learn to understand their relationship with their own parents, a trend of increased teen sexual activity, a high number of teenage mothers keeping their babies, and the fact that often high school is the last opportunity to deliver this type of information on a large scale.

What Should Be Taught?

Various writers and curriculum developers debate the issue of what is relevant and essential subject matter for parent education programs. Because parent education is very different from the hard sciences or mathematics where an agreed upon body of knowledge is delivered at various academic levels, there is little consensus as to what content matter should be included. In addition, it is not known that all students at the various educational levels are developmentally receptive to the same parenting information.

Some authors have outlined what they feel is necessary information to be included in parent education. M. D. Thomas (1977) stated that such a program should teach problem solving, introduce young people to community resources, and discuss the responsibilities of marriage and family life. In addition, he stated that nutrition, family finance, the effects of heredity and environment on children, learning patterns of children, and the stresses of parenting should be included as topics.

Coward and Kerckhoff (1978) emphasized that parent education should go beyond the developmental stages of a child's growth. While allowing that an understanding of child development is important, they take the position that more important are skills that help parents cope with behavior problems, appreciating the commitments and responsibilities involved with parenting, and understanding the effects children can have on a marriage relationship.

Obtaining Answers to the Content Questions in Parenting

In light of current educational trends which place a stronger emphasis on the "Basics," it appears important that parent education curriculum planners study which subject matter areas and concepts are appropriate and most needed by their students. While experts agree on some areas of parenting curricula, there may be a need to obtain input from students concerning what they feel are important concepts to be learned relative to the parent role. One possible way of obtaining this input would be to develop a list of parenting concepts from various literature sources, textbooks, and curricula and submit the list to individuals from the various levels at which parenting information is most often taught. Perhaps there is clear consensus among the various groups at differing stages of life and at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood concerning topics which should be included as content matter in parent education classes. Obtaining this type of information from students would be a great benefit to curriculum planners and would help make parenting curricula more efficient and relevant.

The Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine how immediacy to parenthood affects one's perception of what should be learned in a parent education class. Participants in the study will include four groups of people representing various levels of immediacy to

parenthood. These levels will be represented by secondary students, college students, expectant parents, and parents.

CHAPTER II

A FOCUS ON CURRICULUM AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

In dealing with the problem of determining how immediacy to parenthood affects one's perception of what should be learned in parent education, it was necessary to study literature in three specific areas. Curriculum development, human development, and parent education literature was studied as it applied to this research. Chapter II reports and discusses the literature related to curriculum and human development and Chapter III reports and discusses the parent education literature.

The material in this chapter has been divided into two major sections: (1) curriculum development at the secondary, higher, and adult education levels and (2) human development as it is described by several theorists and applied to curriculum development and the teaching of parenting information.

Curriculum Development

Introduction

Modern society (because of its complexity) looks to schools and, more basically, their curricula as necessary for enabling the next generation to gain needed knowledge, insight, and power to build a better society (Tanner & Tanner, 1975).

A curriculum provides order and structure to learning. It assumes that youngsters will not automatically glean the necessary knowledge from their encounters with life experiences and therefore need a more structured setting for learning.

Tanner and Tanner (1975) stated that because knowledge is constantly changing and new problems are always presenting themselves to society, knowledge cannot be considered an "end product of inquiry but a by-product and resource for solving problems and producing intelligent action" (p. 4). Likewise, if the school is to fulfill its function of helping the future generations build a better life for themselves, the curriculum cannot be seen as a rigid, fixed set of subject matters.

Phenix (1958/1968) described the curriculum as having three components: what is studied (the content or subject matter), how the study and teaching of the subject matter are done, and when the various subjects are presented. M. Johnson (1967/1968) described curriculum as a "structured series of intended learning outcomes" (p. 44).

In discussing the curriculum development process, Taba (1962) outlined an orderly sequence for action:

- Step 1: Diagnosis of needs
- Step 2: Formulation of objectives
- Step 3: Selection of content
- Step 4: Organization of content
- Step 5: Selection of learning experiences
- Step 6: Organization of learning experiences
- Step 7: Determination of what to evaluate and of the ways and means of doing it. (p. 12)

Tyler (1950) stated that four fundamental questions must be answered in the development of curricula:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (pp. 1-2)

The similarity between Taba's (1962) steps and Tyler's (1950) questions should be noted. These two, along with Phenix (1958/1968), stressed the inclusion of considering and/or selecting content as a fundamental part of the curriculum development process. This is a necessary step in curriculum development without which intended learning will not occur. This is the phase of the curriculum development process upon which this study is focused.

Curriculum development implies planning or preparation for the curriculum process. It is a before-the-fact process of working through the details of what will be taught, how it will be taught, and when it will be taught.

MacDonald (1968) described curriculum development as plans for instruction. He stated that this process involves goals, people, and values in connection with the elements of curriculum.

It is clear that educational curricula are necessary for a society that proposes to prepare its young for meaningful life in a complex environment. And preparation for life means not only preparing for a career or profession, but also acquiring life skills;

those skills that will equip individuals for a happy and satisfying family life. Exactly what is taught in those curricula is subject to variance. However, the process of choosing what will be taught and how it will be taught must occur. Various author's viewpoints as to what that process entails have been included in this section. Subsequent sections of the discussion of curriculum development focus on current practices and recommended practices in curriculum development at three levels of education. In addition, a definition or description of curriculum as it pertains to each educational level will be given.

Secondary Education

Curriculum, at the secondary level, is described by Tanner (1971) as "planned learning activities sponsored by the school" (p. 406). This could include the planning of individual lesson plans, a specific course, a sequence or set of courses offered in a department or discipline area, or the overall educational offerings of the school, as a whole.

Curriculum development at the secondary level is tied into elementary curriculum planning. The secondary curriculum builds upon the elementary curriculum and, consequently, most curriculum experts refer to the K-12 curriculum as a related whole. This mode of thinking is, most likely, based on an historical perspective where education beyond the eighth grade was commonly thought of as a higher form of more advanced type of elementary education (Tanner & Tanner, 1975). This close relationship, curricularly, is also very

much nurtured by the organization of the administration of public schools today. There are distinctions, however, and these are most commonly in a more definite division of faculty, courses, and learning by discipline area.

Current practices. In reporting about who is involved or responsible for curriculum development at the secondary level, writers differ somewhat. Tanner (1971) described individuals in the separate disciplines making decisions about curricula in their specific area. He also discussed the use of "canned" curricula developed by university academicians with federal or foundation money for use at the secondary level. Use of these materials has advantages and disadvantages. It is rare that any one curriculum will meet the needs of every program, but often instructors can use parts of these curricula as they meet their specific needs.

Caswell (1968) described curriculum development as being the responsibility of many subject area committees who are often under the guidance of a university subject area specialist. Hashway and Hesse (1980) reported that most of the decision making about what competencies and skills should be taught at the high school level has been done by school authorities and the local school board with minimal or no student input.

In a recent study of parent advisory councils, Burris (1980) found that parent council members felt that they had some influence in the area of curriculum decision making. Parents' rating of the amount of influence their advisory council had on decision making,

however, was lower than ratings made by school administrators of the advisory council. Although parent advisory councils are a good idea for achieving community input on curricular matters, it is a practice too few school districts employ. It would appear that the use of parent advisory boards could be especially helpful in developing curricula for value-laden courses such as parenting, family life, and sex education. Unfortunately, it seems that this practice is not always followed. Marburger (1975) listed two of five assorted afflictions in education as failure to involve students in the decision-making process and lack of citizen participation. He said that "the great majority of education decisions about money, curriculum and so on have been made with neither public debate nor public participation" (p. 26).

Recommended practices. Many curriculum experts have written about the "shoulds" of curriculum development. The suggestions and ideas are as diverse and numerous as the various authors who have written about them.

Ferguson (1981) suggested that a curriculum developer should be permanently placed in the school who would involve the entire faculty in writing curricula based on the philosophy, purposes, and needs of the school. Teachers working directly with the curriculum specialist could establish requirements and policies for curricular materials. Caswell (1968) seemed to concur with Ferguson on this point.

Schneider (1981) believed that large scale curriculum development programs sponsored by the federal government are becoming a thing of the past. He suggested that this is to be welcomed as it would be advantageous to have more local input. This is congruent with Marburger's (1975) views. He also suggested that since much of the current curriculum development is being done by research and development institutions, it would be helpful to coordinate local teachers and administrators to work with the large institutions for the purpose of developing curricula.

J. L. Brown (1981) stressed the importance of receiving input and support from concerned parties. Paul (1982) concurred with this approach. She suggested surveying the community as to what specific learning goals should be taught in the schools and then using this input in the curriculum planning process. Hashway and Hesse (1980) also promoted input from non-school-personnel sources. They suggested and described a way of obtaining information from high school students as to what specific competencies should be taught on the secondary level. Beyer (1981) also supported involving students in the curricular planning process stating that this involvement helps them learn about the ingredients of good teaching and helps them become more self-directed learners. In applying this idea, perhaps educators could present students with the opportunity to rate various concepts relating to a specific course and then consider these opinions in developing the curriculum.

Discussion of the curriculum development process has also focused on the "how-to" or process. Weischadle (1979) stressed that

the public is becoming more concerned with efficiency and cost effectiveness. He made the comparison between budget planning and curriculum planning and suggested that perhaps the concept of zero-based budgeting can be applied to the curriculum process. Rather than maintaining the curriculum as is from year to year, he suggested that questions be asked regarding the curriculum and whether or not it is relevant currently. Curriculum, in this way, becomes more future-oriented rather than being oriented toward present or past problems only.

Thuraiaratnam (1980-1981) suggested that in working to provide materials and planning learning activities that are congruent with students' developmental process and the school's philosophy and objectives, it would be helpful to work in coordination with guidance personnel. His rationale for this suggestion is that the guidance worker can help the curriculum planner consider the emotional, social, and physical growth of students rather than focusing only on the intellectual development of students.

In discussing resources of the sources used in curriculum development, Hanna (1962/1968) outlined the following:

- (a) the demands of the society in which the learners live,
- (b) the needs, interests, maturity, goals, and ability of a particular child or group of children at a particular time in his or her development; and (c) the democratic heritage and values which society cherishes and wants perpetuated. (p. 68).

Wilhelms (1962/1968) considered adulthood, childhood, and organized knowledge as guides in curriculum development: adulthood, in considering how people "should" be as adults and then teaching

students those traits and characteristics; childhood as a guide, in messages from the growing learner or tuning in to the developmental process; and organized knowledge as a guide, being guidance and direction from the specific disciplines.

In a more specific sense, other authors offer suggestions as to what resources could be helpful in curriculum development. Telzrow (1981) discussed brain growth and the implications this process should have when educators plan for curriculum and instruction. Diem (1980) proposed a computer assisted educational management system that would store data on student progress and allow for ongoing curriculum development and formative evaluation.

Summary. Current practice in curriculum development on the secondary level is often centered around specific disciplines and practiced by secondary teachers, university academicians, and curriculum development specialists. Too rarely are board members, parents, and students invited to have input about curricular matters. Recommended practice includes suggestions for more involvement by students and community people, and planning learning that is congruent with students' developmental needs.

Higher Education

Scott (1981) defined curriculum as a statement by a college or university about what is considered relevant, useful, or appropriate for the lives of young people at a certain point in time. More specifically, Levine (1978), of the Carnegie Council on Policy

Studies in Higher Education, outlined the basic elements of the undergraduate curriculum as general education, the major or concentration, basic and advanced skills and knowledge that an institution requires students to possess, tests and grades, occupational-type education, advising, credits and degrees, methods of instruction, and the structure of academic time (college calendars and the number of years of study required to earn a degree). These elements, along with the extracurricular activities and the hidden curriculum (informal learning), constitute a college education. How these elements are organized or how they occur will vary depending on the type of institution. This discussion of curriculum development in higher education focuses on current practices and recommended practices. Within each of these sections, material is organized according to what is said about who is involved in the curriculum development process, how the process occurs, and the resources or sources used in developing the curriculum.

Current practices. In describing the current scene in higher education, Rinehart (1979) ascribed blame for serious problems, conflicts, and debates in higher education to failure, by university planners, to develop, communicate, and agree on clear curriculum goals. He noted that when "pie-in-the-sky statements, ambiguous phrases, and overly generalized goals" (p. 55) are made, this allows for different interpretations and disregard of implications.

Mayhew (1970) outlined common faults of college curricula which result from poor planning and which cause the curriculum to be

ineffective and out of balance. One specific problem he cited was the proliferation problem--courses multiplying as a result of faculty interest, public relations demands, or student pressure rather than as a result of planning processes.

In discussing who is generally involved in the curriculum development process in higher education, G. R. Johnson (1980) commented that academic affairs officers are seen as the person in the university with the responsibility of overseeing this process. Starnes and Wellman (1979) described involvement in shaping the curriculum in community/junior colleges by one or more state boards or agencies. In a study by O'Hara (1977) it was found that the governing board of the institution was a prime agent in curriculum development. Another study by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges (1978) reported that faculty were the moving force behind curricular change. Jones (1982) noted that decisions about what should be taught and how the information is chosen, organized, and transmitted are typically made by certain educators, not by the consumers. He argued that this practice sets the educators up as "high priests of culture" (p. 166) and is a form of social control.

Although the views of various authors seem quite divergent as to who really is involved in the curriculum development process, it would probably be accurate to say that all are correct to some extent.

Few discussions of higher education curriculum focus on current practices in the process or "how-to" of curriculum development. However, it is noted that most institutions of higher education

usually have a prescribed process by which curricular change is accomplished. This process would be employed for curricular decision making other than those left to the instructor about specific course details. This process usually begins with a departmental curriculum committee, moves to a college curriculum committee, then possibly on to some sort of undergraduate studies council, from there to a faculty senate board, and finally, to the vice president for academic affairs.

Resources or sources of the higher education curriculum are described by Starnes and Wellman (1979). They stated that local and state manpower studies, surveys of business and industry, input from advisory committees, and information from conferences and publications are expected to be used by institutions in preparing new curriculum proposals. Levine and Weingart (1973) portrayed a typical picture of most American colleges and universities as basing much of their curriculum and educational policy decisions on what is being done at other institutions.

Recommended practices. Many authors discuss the ideal in higher education curriculum development. Bender (1979) described who should be involved in one successful approach to curriculum change. He suggested a task force that could include representatives from the faculty, administration, the student body, alumni, and sometimes community leaders in order to gain as many perspectives as possible. Rinehart (1979), in discussing curriculum goal information, suggested human sources of information as advisory

committees, college committees, field consultants, individual faculty members, instructional consultants, societal groups (government agencies for education, etc.), and students or alumni. Ford (1980) stated that the curriculum development process can be an important aspect of promoting excellence in teaching in higher education if teachers would be included more in curriculum decision making.

The process of curriculum development in higher education has been a topic about which many curriculum experts have written. Dressel (1963) has discussed steps which should be followed in the curriculum development process warning, however, that they should not be perceived as discrete, isolated actions but rather phases that are somewhat interrelated and recurrent. He outlined the steps as (a) defining objectives, (b) selecting experiences, (c) organizing experiences, and (d) evaluating the process and products. These steps are similar to Taba's (1962) except that she more specifically differentiated between content, objectives, and learning experiences.

McBrayer (1980-1981) noted that most curricular change is made by "disjointed incrementalism" without following a systematic procedure. Bender (1979) agreed and, because of this, suggested that a comprehensive action plan is needed. This action plan should include an assessment of internal and external climate, purposes for change or development of the curriculum, a statement of goals and objectives, and steps for how the curriculum plan will be carried out. Smith and Clarke (1980) outlined a process for curriculum development that would include student input. They stated that:

From a developmental perspective, an appropriate educational program would begin with analysis of needs among the student population and slowly develop a set of experiences that would promote intellectual, social, personal, physical, and moral development along lines of growth established by nature within the individual. (p. 332)

This seems to acknowledge the need for attention not only to the individual's developmental needs, but also to what is going to stimulate growth in personal and social areas of study such as in the study of personal and family life.

G. R. Johnson (1980) surveyed academic affairs officers and from the findings, which reported on curriculum practices within state supported colleges and universities, formulated a list of areas that need improvement:

1. A conceptual or theoretical framework is necessary to guide curriculum efforts.
2. Courses should be experimentally tested (pilot test/field test) prior to full implementation.
3. A "needs assessment" should be conducted as a major early step in any curriculum effort.
4. A variety of relevant learning experiences should be provided to the students.
5. A greater effort must be made to develop more individualized learning.
6. Instructors should learn a variety of teaching techniques--the lecture is not appropriate for all objectives established for courses of study.
7. Faculty need assistance in how to close the gap between valuing individual differences and actually doing something with those differences.
8. Diagnostic testing should take place early in a course so corrective measures can be employed with those students lacking the basic information to succeed in the course.

9. Time, consultants, in-service programs, and financial resources should be provided to the faculty if curriculum efforts are going to be successful. (p. 9)

In discussing resources or sources for curriculum development, Conrad and Pratt (1983) stated that societal and institutional goals will guide curriculum content. This will, in turn, define the scope of the curriculum general purposes and specific program aims. In discussing specific course planning, Heirick (1980) suggested that the characteristics of the people who will be taught should be considered. Mayhew and Ford (1971) suggested that the developmental needs of college students should be considered as resources and guides when planning the curriculum.

In a general sense, Dressel (1963) outlined three sources of educational objectives which should be considered in curriculum planning. These are the needs of society, the needs of the individual, and the authoritative statements of experts, professionals, and professional organizations.

Summary. It appears that curriculum development at the higher education level is an activity that can vary greatly depending upon which aspect of the curriculum is being developed. Activities can focus on specific courses (which would be instructor-initiated), departmental offerings or majors (which would be overseen by the specific department in cooperation with the college and university as a whole), or university-wide planning.

The implications this review of literature has for this study

are that student input as a source for curriculum development is necessary and realistic.

Adult Education

Adult education is diverse and varied in both its clientele and its methods. Because of the unique needs and characteristics of adult learners, traditional pedagogy, as used in youth education, has been replaced, for the most part, by what adult educators refer to as andragogy--the art and science of educating adults (Knowles, 1980). These unique differences between youth and adult learners are a result of the greater amount of experience with which adult learners enter the classroom and the more specific and immediate plans adults have for applying their newly acquired knowledge (Jensen, Liveright, & Hallenbeck, 1964).

Curriculum development is a part of adult education but is more often referred to as program development. Verner (1964) stated that technically, the term "program" can be used for other levels of the adult education process in addition to the processes related strictly to what would be called "the curriculum" in traditional education. He further differentiated the two terms by stating that the preadult curriculum is designed to provide learning experiences for both immediate development and future responsibilities, whereas a program is more concerned with meeting an immediate need for specific learning. A. M. Thomas (1964) suggested that adult educators commonly use the term "program" rather than "curriculum" because "program" allows for more flexibility than the traditional meanings

of "curriculum."

Boyle (1981) described program development in adult education as:

an effort to affect the economic, social, environmental, and cultural health of a community. It is a deliberate series of acts and decisions through which representatives of the people are involved with professional staff to plan an educational program that will contribute to improving the community and its people. (p. 183)

Because of the practical orientation of program development in adult education, parent education is a realistic, viable option for the adult curriculum.

Current practices. The current practice of adult education could be described as amorphous and burgeoning. In describing the curriculum or program of adult education, Jensen et al. (1964) reported that it has no plan. They stated that:

It is largely an a la carte menu comprised of miscellaneous items. It is not organized in a way that provides continuity and integration of learning. It is need-meeting but not goal-fulfilling. Finally, it is not connected with youth education by any concept of continuing development throughout the life span. (p. vii)

T. White (1962) presented a rather dismal picture of the adult education process. He suggested that there is no integrated, complete, continuous curriculum for adults. Efforts are piecemeal and sometimes overlapping with its attention being concentrated on certain specific needs, rather than a continuous learning process. Knowles (1980) concurred with the idea that adult education practices a specific problem-centered approach to program development. However, he saw this approach as congruent with and best suited to

meeting the needs of adults.

Recommended practices. In describing who should be involved in the program development process, Boyle (1981) stated that the potential clientele probably should have a major role in decision making. This is especially true, he stated, in programs whose purpose it is to help families where decisions about content matter involve feelings, beliefs, and values. Rosenblum and Darkenwald (1983) stated that "a cardinal principle of adult education is that adults should participate in planning their own learning activities" (p. 147). Bedient and Rosenberg (1981) concurred with this principle. They said that adults want to be involved and should be involved.

Although adult educators do not always agree as to how the process of program development should occur, there are some similarities in their approaches. Boyle (1981) described 15 concepts that should be considered important in the program development process. These are: (1) establishing a philosophical basis for programming, (2) situational analysis of problems and needs or concerns of people and the community, (3) involvement of potential clientele, (4) recognition of levels of intellectual and social development of potential clientele, (5) consideration of sources to investigate and analyze in determining program objectives, (6) recognition of institutional and individual constraints, (7) criteria for establishing program priorities, (8) degree of rigidity or flexibility of planned programs, (9) legitimation and support with formal and informal power situations, (10) selecting and organizing learning experiences,

(11) identifying instructional design with appropriate methods, techniques, and devices, (12) utilizing effective promotional priorities, (13) obtaining resources necessary to support the program, (14) determining the effectiveness, results, and/or impact, and (15) communicating the value of the program to appropriate decision makers. It should be noted that there is great similarity between Boyle's (1981) Step 10, selecting and organizing learning experiences, and Taba's (1962) Steps 5 and 6. Also, one should note, in particular, Steps 2 and 3 which emphasize obtaining information about what potential clients are interested in and concerned about learning. These steps are of particular importance to this study.

Bergevin, Morris, and Smith (1963) suggested a six step approach to planning adult learning. These steps consist of (1) identifying a common interest or need of those who will participate, (2) develop topics, (3) set goals for the learning activity, (4) select appropriate resources, (5) select appropriate educational techniques and subtechniques, and (6) outline each session and the various responsibilities to be carried out. This sequence differs from Taba (1962) in the order in which goals are set and topics are developed. Taba listed formulation of objectives (which would be analogous to goal setting) as the second step before deciding on content, whereas Bergevin et al. (1963) selected content (develop topics) before setting goals.

Resources or sources used in planning the adult education program rely heavily on input from potential clients. Bergevin et al. (1963) suggested ways of discovering the needs and interests of

potential students. In a more global sense, Boyle (1981) outlined three sources to be used in developing adult education programs as the learners themselves, contemporary life or society, and subject specialist or discipline.

Summary. Current practice in curriculum development on the adult level could be described as disjointed and piecemeal. Jensen et al. (1964), Knowles (1980), and T. White (1962) elaborated on these conditions. However, with the emphasis on student participation in program development, there are many opportunities for incorporating students' perceptions of important concepts to be learned into adult education courses.

Conclusion

The curriculum development section of the review of literature focused on current practices and recommended practices at the secondary, higher, and adult education levels. Discussion centered on what the literature revealed about who does curricular activities, how they are done, and what resources are used in doing them.

Initially, literature was cited that underscored the importance of content selection as a major step in the curriculum development process. Also literature was cited that discussed the importance of obtaining student input in developing curricula, of considering the developmental readiness or stage of the students for whom the curriculum is being developed, and of considering the needs of society. The implications of the literature for this study are that:

(a) Since content selection is a necessary aspect of the curriculum development process, the study of content selection for parenting curricula is warranted; (b) there is strong rationale for the inclusion of student opinions when planning for content selection in curriculum development; and (c) detecting developmental differences among various age groups would be helpful when planning curricula.

Human Development

Introduction

In planning for learning, educators would do well to consider the developmental processes of their students. As has been noted in the previous section of this chapter, curriculum developers too rarely base curricular decisions on what is appropriate, developmentally, for students.

In the classroom, problems can evolve if teachers, lacking a knowledge of the developmental process, expect behavior that is developmentally impossible. Perkins (1969) noted that the effectiveness of a teacher in working with students depends, to a great degree, upon the teacher's knowledge of the general characteristics of growth and development at the students' developmental stages.

Human development theorists describe the human experience in a variety of ways. Some focus on cognitive development, some describe psychosocial stages, others discuss moral development, a few describe the development process in terms of developmental tasks, but all view humans as constantly changing, growing, and learning beings.

For the purposes of this study, human development will be viewed through the eyes of Erikson (1963), Havighurst (1950), Kohlberg (1981), Perry (1970), and Piaget (cited in McGuire & Rowland, 1971). These theorists were chosen because they not only represent a diverse range of human development approaches, but also because they represent a wide spectrum of life stages. For example, Piaget (cited in McGuire & Rowland, 1971) only deals with cognitive development in the earlier stages of life, whereas Erikson (1963) studies psychosocial development throughout the whole life, and Perry (1970) only deals with the development of intellect and ethics in the college-age person. All but one of the schemes represent true linear development and there are varying numbers of stages among the schemes.

This section of the review of literature will consist of a discussion of several basic developmental schemes. An overview of two of the schemes (Erikson, 1963; Havighurst, 1950) will be presented and then the aspects of the schemes which are most relevant to this study will be elaborated upon. The other schemes (Kohlberg, 1981; Perry, 1970; Piaget, cited in McGuire & Rowland, 1971), not being so age related, make it difficult to focus on only one or two particular stages which would be relevant to this study. Therefore, the whole developmental scheme will be described intact. Mention will be made with each scheme as to its linearity or nonlinearity, number of stages, age application, and the aspect of development upon which it focuses. The relationship of these schemes to the educational process and the relationship between an individual's stage of development and learning about parenthood will also be discussed.

Erikson's Eight Stages of Man

Erikson viewed human psychosocial development as a series of eight stages through which an individual will pass (Erikson, 1963; Elkind, 1970/1978). These stages begin with infancy and end with old age and are as follows: (1) Basic Trust vs. Basic Mistrust, (2) Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt, (3) Initiative vs. Guilt, (4) Industry vs. Inferiority, (5) Identity vs. Role Confusion, (6) Intimacy vs. Isolation, (7) Generativity vs. Self-Absorption, and (8) Ego Integrity vs. Despair. Development progresses one direction or another at each of the stages dependent upon needs being met by others (when one is young) and choices made (when one is older). The stages also build upon each other suggesting linearity. The stages most applicable to this study (based upon the approximate ages of the individuals who will participate in this study) are Identity vs. Role Confusion and Intimacy vs. Isolation. These two stages are discussed more specifically below.

Identity vs. Role Confusion. The fifth stage of the developmental process is the stage of adolescence, roughly the ages of 12-18. Erikson believed that the psychosocial elements that present themselves during this period have to do with a sense of ego identity at the positive end of the spectrum and a sense of role confusion at the negative end of the spectrum. The adolescent has the task of taking all that he or she knows about himself or herself and integrating these elements into a sense of self that connects with his or her past but that will also take him or her into the future.

Intimacy vs. Isolation. Early adulthood, the period that is characterized by courtship and early family life is the period that Erikson labeled as Stage Six of the life cycle. This stage extends from late adolescence until early middle age. This period is characterized by the interpersonal dimension of intimacy at one extreme and isolation at the other. Intimacy, in Erikson's definition, means the ability to share with and care for another human being without the fear of losing one's own identity. If a sense of intimacy is not established with friends or with a marriage partner, one can experience a sense of isolation.

Douvan and Adelson (1966/1970) noted that, in the psychosocial development of adolescents, teens are both pushed and pulled toward the future. Future orientation for boys and girls is quite different. Boys tend to focus on the vocational future while girls focus more on the interpersonal aspects of their future life--on marriage and the role of wife and mother. It would seem important that educators consider this fact in planning the secondary curriculum. However, one should be careful to note possible changes in young women's thinking that may have evolved (as a result of the women's movement) since this information was originally given in 1966. But since there may be a gender difference, gender could contaminate any study concerning information about families.

Erickson (1980) stated that education should be development along the hierarchical stages of growth. But she added that women are not stimulated for growth as much as men (in our schools). She argued for a school curriculum that facilitates females' psychosocial

and intellectual development following a deliberate psychological education model.

Havighurst's Developmental Tasks

Havighurst (1958) described the human developmental process in terms of developmental tasks. He defined a developmental task as:

a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks.
(p. 2)

Havighurst's tasks are related to development in a vast array of areas. There are tasks related to physical development, socialization, learning, relationships to others, and relationships to society. His stages span from infancy and early childhood to later maturity and are linear in nature. For the purposes of this discussion, only tasks that related specifically to this study will be mentioned.

In the stage called "Adolescence," Havighurst listed as one of the tasks preparing for marriage and family life. Then in "Early Adulthood," he listed starting a family as one of the developmental tasks. Both of these tasks have an important relationship to this study and should be noted by curriculum planners in the area of parenting education.

Havighurst underscored the importance of educators being tuned in to the development of their learners in order to facilitate the good timing of learning. He described the "teachable moment" (p. 5)

as a time "when the body is ripe, and society requires, and the self is ready to achieve a certain task" (p. 5). He stated that teaching and attempted learning can be efforts largely wasted when ill-timed, but when planned to occur at the time when conditions are most favorable can produce gratifying results.

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

On the basis of responses by 10-16 year olds to moral dilemmas, Kohlberg (1981) proposed six stages of moral development. He believed that these stages are fixed and universal and that people move through the stages in a sequential manner, but that very few people reach Stage 6. The age application of his stages are from childhood to adulthood. He believed that moral development can be enhanced by exposing young people to moral discussions based on concepts that are one stage above their present level. A description of his stages follows.

Stage 1: The Punishment and Obedience Orientation. The physical consequences of an action determine its rightness or wrongness. Avoidance of punishment and unquestioning deference for power are valued for themselves.

Stage 2: The Instrumental Relativist Orientation. Right action is based on what satisfies one's needs and occasionally the needs of others. Fairness and reciprocity are present in terms of "I'll do something for you if you'll do something for me."

Stage 3: The Interpersonal Concordance or Good Boy-Nice Girl Orientation. Good behavior consists of that which pleases others

and is approved by them. One earns approval by being "nice" and the judgment of intentions ("he means well") becomes important for the first time.

Stage 4: Society Maintaining Orientation. To maintain the social order, rules must be established and maintained. There is an orientation toward rules, authority, and doing one's duty.

Stage 5: The Social Contract Orientation. Right action consists of taking into account the individual's needs and by living by standards which are agreed upon by the whole society. It is understood that there is relativism as to what is "right" for individuals but emphasis is still on a legal point of view concerning what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon.

Stage 6: The Universal Ethical Principle Orientation. Right is determined by a decision of conscience based upon personally chosen ethical principles which appeal to logic, universality, and consistency. The principles are universal principles of justice, of the equality of human rights, and of the dignity of human beings.

Kohlberg (1981) stated that for many years moral development was thought to be largely the result of family upbringing and family conditions. But he went on to emphasize that moral development can also be facilitated by moral dilemma discussions in the classroom. He stated that this type of learning can be a usable and effective part of the curriculum at any grade level.

Ladenburg (1980) noted that Kohlberg's work and research on moral development (and especially that moral development can be

stimulated) makes possible the realization of education as a facilitator of human development.

Perry's Intellectual and Ethical Development

In describing patterns of development in thought and values of college students, Perry (1970) outlined a nine-point position scheme. His scheme is linear in nature and is applied to older adolescents and adults only. The development can be thought of in two major parts centering on Position 5 (described below). "The outlook of Position 5 is that in which a person perceives man's knowledge as relative, contingent and contextual" (p. 57). The development prior to Position 5 can be described as moving from dualistic absolutism to more generalized relativism. The sequence of development subsequent to Position 5 could be described as a process of orientation to a world of relativism through the activity of personal commitment.

In addition to the nine positions of development, Perry also included three positions of deflection (or delay or regression) from the developmental process. The nine positions of intellectual and ethical development will be described below.

Position 1: The student sees the world in polar terms of good vs. bad. Right answers are absolute and rightness is obtained by hard work and obedience.

Position 2: The student perceives diversity in opinion around him, but believes this is a result of confusion about "authority" or a set of exercises set by Authority to help persons find The Answer by themselves.

Position 3: The student accepts diversity and uncertainty as legitimate "but still temporary in areas where Authority 'hasn't found the answer yet.' He supposes Authority grades him in these areas" (p. 9), but is still confused as to what the standards are.

Position 4: (a) The student perceives diversity of opinion to be extensive and raises this into a realm of its own where anyone has a right to his own opinion. This becomes more important than the Authority's right-wrong standard. Or (b) the student discovers "relativistic reasoning as a special case of 'what they want' within Authority's realm" (p. 9).

Position 5: The student perceives all knowledge as relative and contextual and uses dualistic right-wrong functions only in special cases, within context.

Position 6: The student sees the necessity of orienting himself in a relativistic world through some form of personal commitment.

Position 7: The student makes a commitment in some area.

Position 8: The student experiences the implications of having made this commitment and explores the meaning of this in terms of responsibility.

Position 9: The student "experiences the affirmation of identity among multiple responsibilities and realizes Commitment as an ongoing, unfolding activity through which he expresses his life style" (p. 10).

In addition to the positions, Perry (1970) discussed conditions of delay, deflection, and regression. These are described below.

Temporizing: The student delays in one of the positions for a year, discovering the implications of that position and hesitating to take the step to the next position.

Escape: The student "exploits the opportunity for detachment offered by the structures of Positions 4 and 5 to deny responsibility through passive or opportunistic alienation" (p. 10).

Retreat: The student stubbornly stays in the dualistic, absolutistic structures of Positions 2 and 3.

Perry (1970) explained that at each step of development the student sees himself or herself, his or her instructor, and truth in different terms. He pointed out the importance of the academic community making efforts to instruct, recognize, and confirm the students in forms that are relevant to the students' stages of development.

Cross (1981) noted that Perry's research revealed that most college freshmen enter college at Levels 3, 4, and 5 and graduate at 6, 7, and 8. He found that it is rare to find a student operating at Position 9. Cross hypothesized that one could find adult learners operating at Position 9. Thus, we see the importance of curriculum planners being aware of where students are in the intellectual development process and planning learning accordingly.

Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

For Piaget (cited in McGuire & Rowland, 1971), dividing development into stages is meaningful only if patterns of behavior segregate and differentiate between the stages. The scheme does not

suggest true linear development and time of chronological age is not used as a necessary criteria for measuring development. Time is used only as an approximation of development.

In his scheme, stages are hierarchically related and early stages are integrated into later ones. And for each stage, there is a period of preparation and achievement. His stages of intellectual development are outlined by McGuire and Rowland (1971) below.

The sensorimotor stage is usually considered preverbal and a time of achieving practical knowledge that will serve as necessary substructure for subsequent development of intelligent behavior. Within this stage of development, Piaget has also outlined six sub-stages of development.

The preoperational stage sees the beginnings of language and symbolic thought. A key concept for understanding this stage is in the idea of representation which includes the concepts of signifiers and significates. A significate stands for an absent perceptual event and a signifier is a word or symbol used to refer to the significate. Characteristics of preoperational thought are egocentrism, centered thought (focused or fixed on a single dimension of an object of reasoning), decentration (the thinker sees many dimensions of the thought object and can relate them), static and immobile (focusing on transitory conditions in change), there is an absence of equilibrium between assimilation and accommodation, and irreversibility (the person cannot pursue a series of reasonings and then return to an unchanged starting point).

The stage of concrete operations sees the child moving out of a two-dimensional, flat world and entering a world of three-dimensions. This stage is similar to the sensorimotor stage except that in this stage the child operates with representational thought instead of direct contact with the object. Lugo and Hershey (1974) stated that during this stage, the child switches from "depending on perception as to how things look to reasoning as the primary basis for conceptualizing the world" (p. 438). The child also moves from egocentrism to other-centeredness and there is a growth in the child's ability to understand conservation.

The stage of formal operations finds the child not only dealing with "what is," but also with "what might be." The child can verbalize hypotheses. Three major characteristics of this stage are "(1) a base in a hypothetico-deductive model, (2) the use of propositional reasoning, and finally (3) the use of combinatorial analysis" (McGuire & Rowland, 1971, p. 150).

Kitchen (1969/1975) noted that the educational implications for Piaget's work are almost endless. For curriculum planners, Piaget provides a framework of cognitive development that would guide planning. Packard (1975) also described applications of Piaget's research to curriculum planning. He stated that in order to determine if a child is ready to learn a particular concept, one must analyze the logical structure of the concept as well as the logical structure of the child.

It has been noted by Craig (1983) that cognitive theories have been widely applied to education. They have been utilized to

effectively match instruction with stages of development. The theories can provide information as to when a child is ready for a specific subject and which approaches to the subject are most appropriate.

Germain (1981) noted that Piaget's theory can be used to set objectives for courses. Specifically, this is done by developing objectives at three different levels to be congruent with the levels of the learners. He also suggested that the theory can be helpful when planning instructional strategies.

Summary of the Human Development Models

Of the five models presented here, three focus on an aspect of cognitive development, one focuses on psychosocial development, and the fifth on developmental tasks. Because of the divergence present with these models (diversity in focus and life stages), it is difficult to compare and contrast the five models. Therefore, the models are presented in table form in order to facilitate the comparison of the models (see Table 1).

Thus it is noted that, in terms of number of stages, linear development, and age applications, Erikson's (1963), Havighurst's (1950), and Kohlberg's (1981) theories are most alike. In terms of the aspects of development upon which they focus, they are quite diverse. Perry's (1970) and Piaget's (cited in McGuire & Rowland, 1971) theories stand out as most unique in their narrow age application. But all of the theories provide information and implications

for the curriculum developer to consider and utilize when planning curricula at all levels of education

Table 1
Summary of Characteristics of Human Development Models

| Model | No. of stages | True linear development | Typical age application | Aspect of development |
|------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Erikson | 8 | yes | infant-old age | psychosocial |
| Havighurst | 6 | yes | infant-old age | developmental tasks |
| Kohlberg | 6 | yes | child-adult | moral development |
| Perry | 9 | yes | adult | cognitive development of ethical and intellectual thought |
| Paiget | 4 | no | child | cognitive development |

Parent Education and the Development Process

While a more comprehensive discussion of parent education will occur in the next chapter, a short discussion of the relationship of human development process to parent education will be presented here.

In discussing curriculum planning for parent education it is important to consider the developmental readiness of the learners for receiving this type of information. Parent education is frequently offered to high school age students, college students,

expectant parents, and parents. Because of this, the discussion of this section of the chapter focuses on what is stated in the literature about the developmental readiness of these groups to receive parenting information. As only one of the developmental schemes in this study specifically mentions any curricula remotely related to parent education (Havighurst, 1950), the researcher will attempt to make inferences from the other schemes to parent education.

In describing developmental tasks for the adolescent, Havighurst (1950) listed the task of preparing for marriage and family. The nature of this task, he noted, is in developing positive attitudes toward family life and having children. Although the family will serve as the primary educator to the adolescent in this area, the high school and college can also play a role in facilitating this developmental task.

Havighurst also noted that "early adulthood is the fullest of teachable moments and the emptiest of efforts to teach" (p. 72). This season of the life cycle is an especially ripe one for teaching about parenthood due to the fact that most young adults are getting married and starting families.

Although Piaget's (cited in McGuire & Rowland, 1971) scheme focuses mostly on the child, one could reason that an individual would need to have developed, cognitively, to the stage of formal operations in order to be prepared for learning about parenthood. This would be especially helpful in the situation of preparing for parenthood before parenthood is a reality. One would need to be able to think about possibilities and hypotheses and be able to

think ahead. Kohlberg (1981) also focused on development in childhood. It is possible, though, that an adult could reach maturity without having developed morally. This would be unfortunate, however, when the moral reasoning should be developed to the point of being able to formulate thoughts in regard to how one would guide a child's moral development (as a parent).

Some theorists would argue that some stages of life are not appropriate for teaching about parenthood. Erikson (1963) described adolescence as a time of working on one's identity. DeLissovoy (1978) argued that because of this need to work on ego identity, adolescence is not the time to be presenting education for the parenthood role.

Moore and Robin (1981) took issue with DeLissovoy (1978), however, noting that educators have presented other types of information that are not in line with the developmental tasks of the learner. For example, Civics or American Government might be taught in the ninth grade but many of the students will not be able to use the information until several years later.

D. J. Cohen (1973) expressed mixed opinions about teaching parent education to adolescents. He acknowledged the fact that few young people are interested in this topic area and that other developmental issues overshadow the desire for marriage/parenthood information. He did state, however, that educating for parenthood can, in a more general sense, meet some of the adolescent's developmental needs. He explained how, through working with and learning about children, parenting programs can help adolescents experience

personal growth.

In discussing college student attitudes toward parenthood, Knaub, Eversoll, and Voss (1981) found that while nearly all of the students surveyed wanted to have children, most expressed a desire to delay childbearing. This more current trend in thinking could adjust educators' thinking on what is the best "teachable moment" for parent education. The rationale for presenting this type of information at the secondary level is, for the most part, based on the reasoning that high school may be the last chance for many students to be exposed to information that could help them in their family relationships. It may not be the best time, developmentally, but perhaps it is better than risking the chance of individuals opting to not have any education for parenthood at all later in life. Perhaps the best plan is one that incorporates parent education into every season of the life cycle. Earhart (1980) presented such a plan beginning with childhood and moving right through old age.

Summary

Although there is some debate as to when in the developmental process parenting information should be given, it appears that adolescence and young adulthood are the stages best suited to this type of study. Ideally, parent education could be a lifelong process, but realistically, this is not feasible.

Conclusion

There appears to be much potential for a relationship between the human development theorist and the curriculum planner that could benefit the educational system. Not only can curriculum planners utilize developmental information in planning appropriate learning experiences, but it has been suggested (Perkins, 1969) that the curriculum could be a potential instrument in facilitating the learning of and achievement of developmental tasks.

Rationale was also presented that supports the use of student input in curriculum planning, particularly in the selection of content. This practice can be used at all of the upper levels of education, but is particularly important at the adult education level where students strongly desire input into planning their education.

The implications in the literature cited in this chapter for this particular study are that (a) content selection is an important phase of the curriculum planning process and should be carefully considered, (b) student input should be received, and (c) students may differ at various ages and stages of life in what they feel are important concepts to learn in various courses.

The next chapter serves as a review of the literature related specifically to parent education: an historical viewpoint, a rationale for parent education, access to parent information, and necessary course content for parent education.

CHAPTER III

FOCUS ON PARENT EDUCATION

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature as it pertains to parent education. The material will be organized into five sections as follows: (1) various terms used for educating about parenthood and the various definitions of those terms as presented in the literature, (2) an historical perspective of parent education, (3) the need for parent education, (4) access to parent education, and (5) necessary course content for parenting.

It is the intent of the investigator that information from these various sections would provide a setting for better understanding parent education. The last section presents important information that provided a basis for instrument construction.

Education for the Parenting Role Defined

Typically, one of four titles is given to the process by which individuals are taught about parenthood. This process could be called education for parenthood, parent education, parenthood education, and/or parenting education.

The term education for parenthood was the expression used by federal agencies in the early 1970s for the program and curriculum activities they funded and promoted. Although most references to

this title refer to preparenthood education programs, some include programs for parents. The Kansas State Department of Education (1978) described education for parenthood as focusing on two separate areas. The first is on training young people in schools before they are parents. The second focus is on the education of parents early in the process of having a baby and caring for the young child.

Parenthood education is also a term that is often connected with preparent education experiences. Parenting education is used to describe the whole spectrum of educational experiences, but is problematic to some because of the newness of the word "parenting."

Parent education is the title that is most often used when describing education for the parenting role. Its usage is often marked by confusion. Some writers view parent education as a process which helps people become better parents. Others see parent education as a process by which parents are trained to be teachers of their own children. Parent education is also interpreted to be preparation of future parents for the role of parent.

F. G. Kerckhoff (1977) defined parent education as "purposive training for the parental role and for learning appropriate responses to young children as they grow and develop" (p. 3). McAfee & Nedler (1976) asserted that "parent education includes any type of educational program, involvement or intervention designed to increase parental competence and self esteem in the parenting role" (p. 2). These two definitions are quite broad, one conveying education for parents or nonparents and the other referring more to parents. Coward and Kerckhoff (1978) bent F. G. Kerckhoff's (1977) earlier

definition of parent education to more specifically focusing on preparenthood training. They stated that "Parent education refers to purposeful training in preparation for the responsibilities of parenthood" (p. 24).

Perhaps one might better understand the various terms as they relate to the four groups of individuals involved in this study if presented in a more graphic form. Table 2 shows each of the titles discussed in this section with which age groups they are typically used with.

Table 2
Titles and Applicable Age Groups

| Title | Secondary | College | Expectant parent | Parent |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------------|--------|
| Education for parenthood | X | X | | |
| Parenthood education | X | X | | |
| Parenting education | X | X | X | X |
| Parent education | X | X | X | X |

Although the literature reveals confusing usage of terms relating to the teaching of parent information, parent education is a term that is used most frequently and seems to be accepted across all levels of education. So for the purposes of this study, parent education will be used to refer to the process by which individuals receive information about parenting at all levels of the educational system.

Historical Perspective

Although many educators assume that parent education is a recent curriculum event, this area of educational concern has been with us in an organized manner since the early 1800s (Brim, 1959).

The growth of parent education can be traced along with the growth and changes in the disciplines of psychology and child development. Frank (1962) noted that child study groups were fostered by the Federation for Child Study and were based on the assumption that the care and keeping of children should be founded on new scientific knowledge. This effort was closely linked with the works of Hall (cited in Schlossman, 1976) and could be described as an attempt to improve children's physical health and bring educational practices in line with children's "natural" needs.

Schlossman (1976) described the involvement of the PTA in parent education in the early 1900s. He noted that this group's definition of parent education was closely related to current themes of the time as seen in psychology, medicine, education, penology, religion, racism, women's roles, and household arts. PTA groups in many parts of the country worked to secure passage of laws which required mothers receiving welfare (mother's pensions) to attend parenting classes.

The 1920s were considered the heyday of parent education (Frank, 1962; Schlossman, 1976). During this time, child development research came into being, the National Council of Parent Education was initiated which made major contributions of instructional

materials and sponsored the first university course in parent education, the American Home Economics Association began to include parent education as part of its nationwide educational and lobby interests, and the American Association of University Women also adopted the cause of parent education. The 1920s also saw the beginnings of preparent education courses in colleges, high schools, and even grade schools. The thought was that young people needed to learn the basics of child care as early as possible and while they were still a captive audience.

Little is written concerning parent education between the late 1920s and the late 1960s. Parent education, as a national trend, took a backseat to other education concerns. Home economics departments were still offering courses in child care and family relations, but parent education as a strong movement seemed to die down. The early 1970's saw a reappearance of a move for parenthood education.

Kruger (1972), of the U.S. Office of Education, wrote about a national movement in the early 1970s that sought to strengthen family life by encouraging schools to educate students for parenthood. He noted that relatively few schools offered training that specifically dealt with parenthood. He described a national program sponsored by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare which was called Education for Parenthood. The purpose of this program was to initiate a well organized and expertly planned course of instruction that would become an integral part of secondary school instruction in many schools across the nation. One of the key components of this program was a model curriculum, Exploring Childhood, which was

funded by grants from the Office of Child Development and the National Institute of Mental Health. The main objectives of this national movement were to help strengthen the family in America by assuring that every youngster had training in child development and parenthood and to introduce young people to potential careers in child care.

This major endeavor--Education for Parenthood, 1972-1973--seems to be the wave upon which subsequent efforts in the area of parent education have been riding.

Need for Parent Education

Numerous authors have written concerning the great need for parent education programs. Their concerns center around many of the changes that have been witnessed in society in the last 2 decades and which, as they believe, could be helped by educating people for more competent parenting. These concerns are discussed below.

Changes in the Family

The American family has changed a great deal in the last 2 decades. And many of these changes have had a great impact on the way people parent and how they learn about parenting. These changes have been presented by many as strong rationales for parent education programs (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Coward & Kerckhoff, 1978; Lauderdale, 1980; Wolverton, 1973; Ziegler, 1980).

Decreased family size has deprived many young people of the opportunity to learn first hand about child care. It is not

uncommon for many children to grow up not having younger siblings for which to care. Many see this as an important reason for parent education for young people.

Because of our society's mobility, the extended family is becoming a family form of the past. Practically speaking, this means that mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and others are not available to give parenting advice. Because of this lack of a ready source of advice, parents often feel unsure of their performance as a parent.

Increases in divorce, single parent families, and variant family forms also give rise to the need for support in the way of parent education.

Teen Sexual Activity and Pregnancies

In 1978, 1.1 million teens gave birth. Of these, 554,000 chose to keep their babies (Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1981). It is estimated that 80% of the teen male population and 70% of the teen female population has had or will have sexual intercourse by the age of 18. For these reasons, many writers advocate parenting courses at the secondary level (Anastasiow, Everett, O'Shaughnessy, Eggleston, & Eklund, 1978; Boss & Hooper, 1980; Buchholz & Addington, 1979; Cook, 1977; Gaines, 1981, Kruger, 1973; Radloff, 1978; Ziegler, 1980).

Child Abuse and Poor Parenting Practices

Although child abuse and neglect are very complex social problems to which there are no easy answers, a connection has been made

between poor parenting practices, incorrect information about children's developmental capabilities, and child abuse. Several authors (Bavolek, 1978; Buchholz & Addington, 1979; Cook, 1977; Earhart, 1980; Ziegler, 1980) advocate parent education based on the child abuse and neglect problems we face in this country.

As poor parenting practices (which can facilitate child abuse) are often passed from one generation to the next, it is thought (Kansas State Department of Education, 1978) that parent education could curb this troubling cycle. In linking poor parenting behaviors to delinquency and crime in young people, Wilson (1983) also cast a strong vote for parent education.

Benefit Family/Child Life

B. L. White (1980) advocated parent education in order to reduce stress and deepen pleasure in the family. He and others (Anastasiow et al., 1978; Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Kansas State Department of Education, 1978) also discussed the importance of parent education in helping children reach their full potential and increase their intelligence. Preparent education, by informing students of genetic problems and other prenatal influences, can also enhance the health of future children (Gaines, 1981; Walters, McKenry, & Walters, 1979). Another benefit to the family as a result of parent education can be added recognition and status being given to parenthood (Buchholz & Addington, 1979).

Facilitate Development of Adolescents

D. J. Cohen (1973) suggested that a program in parent education on the secondary level could help young people, developmentally. By providing young people with experiences in working with children, perhaps they can move out of their self-oriented world and experience personal growth.

Summary

The needs for parent education are many and diverse. Although some of the issues presented here are complex social problems which will not be solved by simply implementing parent education programs, it is the sentiment of the various authors discussed here that parent education is at least a viable partial answer to some major social problems in society today.

Access to Parent Information

In a general sense, parent education begins in childhood as parents provide examples to their children of parent behavior. For many, this is the only education they will have to prepare them for parenthood. For those who receive a more formal type of parent education, the process could occur through many different delivery systems. This section of Chapter III focuses on where and how parenting information can be obtained.

Preparent Education Programs

Those programs intended to educate young people for their future role as parents are offered, for the most part, through secondary schools and universities. F. G. Kerckhoff, Ulmschneider, and Adams (1976) reported on what 44 universities were offering in the area of parenting. F. G. Kerckhoff et al. (1976) reported on what 44 secondary schools were offering in parent education.

Besides the parent education programs found in secondary and higher education, several other types of organizations offer parent education programs. In 1973 the federal government awarded grants to seven community and youth-oriented organizations to help them design parent education programs for teenagers outside of the school setting (Radeloff, 1978).

Coward and Kerckhoff (1978) suggested that in addition to the public schools, parent education is being presented in religious youth groups, family service agencies, 4-H clubs, and county extension programs. Walters et al. (1979) reported on parent education efforts by the National Foundation for the March of Dimes and Future Homemakers of America.

Some people argue against education for parenthood in the public schools because they see this as an unnecessary and illegitimate function of the schools (Coward & Kerckhoff, 1978). Others argue that the schools should be responsible for this task because it is not happening in an active way in the home, church, or other private organization (Kruger, 1972). This seems to contradict what

Coward and Kerckhoff (1978) and Walters et al. (1979) reported. B. L. White (1980) and Zellman (1982) advocated parent education programs on the secondary level because young people come into contact with the schools more than any other social institution. Hughes (1980) advocated family and parent education at all levels of the public school curriculum. He suggested that at each stage of development there is readiness for learning some aspect of family life. Others, however, argue that any program aimed at teaching parenting concepts to people who are not parents is only going to play a minor role in preparing them for parenthood (DeLissovoy, 1978) and that parenting information is best delivered to parents because they are most developmentally prepared to receive the information.

Parent Education for Expectant Parents and Parents

A variety of programs are available to expectant parents; however, most of these programs focus on the birth process. Preparation for childbirth classes (such as Lamaze) are often offered by hospitals for expectant parents.

Courses for parents are abundant and typically offered by hospitals, adult education programs, local PTAs, Cooperative Extension Services, churches, social service agencies, community colleges, vocational technical institutes, and the mass media (Cruse, 1976; Earhart, 1980; N. L. Johnson, 1978; Stevens, 1978; Turner, 1980; B. L. White, 1980). The curricula used in these types of agencies can differ widely, being developed by the agency or a "packaged" program as described by Abidin (1980).

Two very frequently used packaged programs are Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976) and Parent Effectiveness Training (PET) (T. Gordon, 1975). As Abidin (1980) stated, "the purpose of the STEP program is to teach parents effective democratic ways of relating to their children" (p. 540). This behavior is based upon developing an understanding of the purposes of children's behavior and misbehavior, effective listening and communication skills, encouragement of responsible behavior, and constructive planning through the use of family meetings and discussions. PET emphasizes an approach to parenting in which parents and children negotiate as equal partners. Emphasis is given to specific communication skills, specifically active listening, that help prevent parent/child conflicts.

Summary

Parenting information can be accessed through a variety of sources and in a variety of forms. Parent education programs (at the preparent level) are delivered by secondary schools, universities, community agencies, and youth-oriented clubs and organizations. These programs are, for the most part, aimed toward the non-parent young person and purpositive of preparing their clients for the role of parent.

Parenting programs also exist for the expectant parent and parent. These programs can be developed by the sponsoring organization or packaged curricula can be used. Typically, these programs either propose to prepare parents-to-be for the birth experience and

infant care or to give parents tools with which to deal with their children in constructive ways. These programs are offered by a variety of delivery systems including churches, hospitals, adult education agencies, social service agencies, community colleges, vocational technical institutes, and the mass media.

Necessary Parent Education Content

Many educators have written concerning what specific content should be included in parent education courses. Most of what is written is directed toward the secondary parenting curriculum. However, in comparing what is directed toward other educational levels and that concerned with the secondary level, one finds much overlap.

The following discussion will center on (a) methods by which writers have determined certain content to be necessary and (b) specific recommended topics and who recommends them.

Determining Parent Education Content

As has been noted earlier, a foundational step of the curriculum development process is the selection of content. Although many have suggested specific content that should be included in parenting courses, one is not always sure of the rationale for inclusion of the content.

One suggestion for determining course content is through needs assessment. Love (1980) stated that programs must be dependent upon the interests, needs, and desires of clients. Crase (1976) suggested

asking parents about their needs as parents to determine program content. She cited a study of rural Ohio parents that indicated parents were most interested in information about children's sexual growth and self-control, helping siblings get along and handling fights, and developing the child's imagination. In the final analysis, she stated that content is dependent upon the purposes and directions of the parent education program.

In another study Crase, Carlson, and Kontos (1981) surveyed expectant parents and parents about their education needs and sources. The data were obtained through an instrument constructed by the researchers which contained some open ended questions and some 5-point Likert rating scales. The results showed that parents and expectant parents most often obtain their parent education from books and various individuals (doctors, friends, mothers, etc.). Specific areas of information need (i.e., topics of concern) were also reported. The topics deemed important varied depending upon the ages of the respondent's children.

Harris (1977) obtained college students' opinions about topics related to preparation for parental responsibilities. In this study she constructed an instrument using the 11 units of "Ourselves and Others: A Cooperative Occupational Home Economics Program" and had the students rank order the unit titles in terms of perceived importance. She found the students most interested in the broader, less specific topic areas, such as learning how to deal with one's relationship to the family and society. They were least interested in specific child development and vocational information.

Beebe (1978) described an expectant parent program that was conceived by a variety of mental health and medical professionals. Content selection, as a part of the program development process, was guided by physicians, nurses, guidance counselors, nutritionists, and psychologists. This illustrates the review by experts as another method of developing course content.

Another method by which parenting course content could be determined is by considering the health objectives established for the nation as determined by the Surgeon General of the United States. Iverson and Kolbe (1983) outlined these objectives and described what schools can do to help meet them. Several of these objectives could be used to guide the development of parenting course content.

Crase (1976) concluded that content must be dependent upon the purposes of the parenting program. And these purposes must be based upon what society deems necessary for parents to know in order to produce happy, healthy children.

Recommended Topics

Recommended topics for parent education are myriad and those who recommend the topics even greater. The problem with most discussions of topics for parent education is that authors list suggested topics but don't often specify exactly what they mean. Texts used in parent education often incorporate many of the recommended topics. And because of this, descriptions of the various topics presented here will be taken from parent education texts. The reader should note that, as such, these descriptions do not

necessarily reflect the exact intentions of the authors who recommended them. They do, however, reflect how authors interpret the topics in parent education texts.

After studying the literature related to curriculum development in parent education, only those topics that were recommended by more than one author were reported in this study. Each topic will be described below, and following this narrative, a table will appear that will summarize the narrative.

Child development. More references were made to this topic than any other. But while these writers (e.g., Anastasiow et al., 1978; Bell, 1975, 1976; and Earhart, 1980) say that this topic is important, they do not elaborate on what should be included in this topic. A text by Brooks (1981) includes the study of child development by focusing on the child's physical, intellectual, social and emotional, language, and moral development. Brisbane (1971) also included these areas of development, but focused in more detail on specific landmarks of development at various stages of the child's life. Lunde and Lunde (1980) looked at the stages of a child's development in terms of biological development and tasks and psychological development and tasks.

Experience working with children. Many writers (e.g., Bjorklund & Briggs, 1977; McAfee & Nedler, 1976; and Wolverton, 1973) describing parent education content at the secondary and college level encouraged the inclusion of actual hands-on experience in working with children. Vogel (1978) stressed that no matter what

type of program is utilized at the high school level, supervised experience with children is recommended as the optimum teaching method. Although parent education texts are often designed to be used in relationship with experiences working with children, none used in this study specified exactly what these experiences should include.

Reproductive information. Many authors (e.g., Bell, 1976; Kruger, 1972; and Whiteneck, 1980) also recommended the inclusion of human sexuality content in parent education courses. But while they stress the importance of this topic, they do not elaborate on exactly what should be included in this topic. In a text for secondary students, Draper and Draper (1983) included information on hereditary considerations, conception, and prenatal development. Lunde and Lunde (1980) discussed fertility, sex determination, abortion, and fetal development.

Parental roles and responsibilities. Inclusion of a realistic discussion of what it means to be a parent in terms of roles and responsibilities was recommended by Bell (1976), Stranix and Fleishman (1979), Walker (1978), and others. Although they did not specifically state how this information should be included, Bigner (1979) did in his college text. He included within this topic discussions of determinants of parenting behavior, cultural influences, and characteristics of the mothering and fathering roles. Brooks (1981) discussed expectations for parents, both from themselves and from society. Although Lunde and Lunde (1980) did not describe it

as such, they touched on the topic of parental roles in their discussion of historical and cross cultural views of parenthood and childrearing. Draper and Draper (1983) provided a realistic picture of parental responsibilities in their discussion of what it is like to be a parent, what parents need to know, and who makes a good parent.

Resources to aid the parenting process. Although this is an important topic to present at all levels of the parent education system, this topic is most helpful to expectant parents and parents. The literature (Beebe, 1978; F. G. Kerckhoff, 1977; Vogel, 1978, and others) discussed this topic but did not elaborate. Brooks (1981) focused on resources to help parents with medical and developmental problems of their children. She included topics on how to assess problems and where to go for help. Bigner (1979) discussed support systems for one-parent families and adolescent parents. This includes lists of organizations that work specifically with these populations. Draper and Draper (1983) included information about support for families under stress: changes in the family, illness and accidents, death, and troubled families.

Health and safety of children. While Cook (1977), Kruger (1972), Stranix and Fleishman (1979), and Whiteneck (1980) recommended this topic for inclusion in parent education courses, it is only specifically described by the textbooks. Brisbane (1971) included an entire chapter to the discussion of health and safety. Topics discussed are emergencies, first aid, prevention of illness,

caring for the sick child, nutrition, childhood diseases, and safety. Draper and Draper (1979) devoted four chapters to the discussion of health and safety. Included in these chapters are topics such as childhood diseases, immunizations, maintaining health records, caring for the sick child, first aid, hospitalization, dental health, providing a safe environment, poisonous substances, handling emergency situations, eating patterns of children, nutritional needs, and planning healthful meals for children. Lunde and Lunde (1980) included a general discussion of diet, sleep, illnesses, and accidents in their college level text.

Decision to be or not to be a parent. It is thought (by Bell, 1975; Earhart, 1980; Knaub et al., 1981; and Walker, 1978) that individuals who are not yet parents need realistic information about what it means to be a parent in order to make an objective decision about parenthood. Brooks (1981) discussed the importance of having planned families. She also referred to books that specifically deal with the process of deciding whether or not to have children. Factors that will influence the decision are also included. Bigner (1979) discussed how and why American couples really have a choice about whether or not they wish to be parents. Motivations for becoming parents are also included.

Family planning. Although this is a controversial topic when considered for inclusion at the secondary level, it is still considered important for parent education (Beebe, 1978; Bell, 1975, 1976; R. K. Kerckhoff, Habig, & The Family Coordinator Family Life

Education Panel, 1976; Kruger, 1972). However, only one of the secondary texts or curricula reviewed for this research contained any of this information. The Child Care Curriculum Handbook (n.d.) includes a section on examining the process of preventing pregnancy. In discussing psychological issues of adolescence, Lunde and Lunde (1980) talked about sexual activity and teenage use of contraceptives.

Prenatal care of the mother. While the literature (Beebe, 1978; Bell, 1976; Kruger, 1972; Vogel, 1978) included this as an important topic for parent education, the authors did not discuss specifically what was meant by this topic. Specific discussions in the texts centered on signs of pregnancy, doctor's care, diet, activities during pregnancy, rest, and complications during pregnancy (Brisbane, 1971); diet, exercise, rest, work, choosing an obstetrician, and hazards during pregnancy (Brooks, 1981); childbirth classes, weight control and diet, toxic substances, and miscarriages (Draper & Draper, 1983).

The handicapped child. Although several journal articles (Anastasiow et al., 1978; Bell, 1976; and others) discussed the inclusion of this topic on the parent education curriculum, not many of the texts reviewed for this study included this topic. However, one text (Draper & Draper, 1983) included an entire chapter on this topic. Specific issues addressed are challenges of parenting the handicapped child, types of handicaps, a general discussion of what can be expected of children with various disorders, prevention and detection of handicaps, and daily living habits.

Infant care. Recommendation for the inclusion of this topic is made by Bell (1976), Kruger (1972), and Vogel (1978); but these authors fail to specifically state what should be covered in this topic. The secondary texts seem to focus more on this topic than the college or adult texts. Brisbane (1971) included discussion of feeding the infant (breast vs. bottle), sleep needs, schedules, and routines. The Child Care Curriculum Handbook (n.d.) includes techniques of daily care, physical aspects of the infant, and intellectual, emotional, and social characteristics of the infant. Draper and Draper (1983) covered within this topic what it is like to have an infant in the home, caring for the baby's health, sleep and rest needs, nutritional needs, and daily care techniques.

Prenatal development. Although this topic is recommended for inclusion (Bell, 1976; Earhart, 1980; Kruger, 1972), specifics are left to be described by the textbooks. Lunde and Lunde (1980) covered prenatal development from conception to delivery emphasizing major developmental landmarks during this period. Brooks (1981) divided prenatal development into trimesters and discussed not only fetal development but parental issues during these stages of development. Draper and Draper (1983) also included a brief discussion of prenatal development, but did not include many specific details of development during this time.

Cross cultural childrearing customs. Although this topic is not highly discussed in the literature for inclusion in parent education, some texts do approach the subject. Lunde and Lunde (1980)

contrasted childrearing practices in Europe and the United States from an historical perspective and also included a discussion of childrearing practices in the Soviet Union. Maccoby (1980) also included a discussion of childrearing customs and views of children from an historical and cross cultural perspective. Literature from early American times and philosophical writings are presented to show current thought toward children and childrearing.

Day care for children. The elaboration of what this topic should include, although not described by Kruger (1972) and Stanix and Fleishman (1979), is included in some of the textbooks. Brooks's (1981) discussion of this topic includes information on effects of mothers working outside of the home, handling (maternal) guilt, interviewing guidelines for selecting day care, rules and information to give the caregiver, types of day care facilities, and maintaining ties to the children when both parents work. Bigner (1979) included types of child care, who uses which types, why they choose certain types, costs, what parents want from day care, and what parents can expect from day care centers. Draper and Draper (1979) devoted much discussion to day care: working in a day care setting, planning children's programs, types of child care, what services are provided in child care, what to look for in a good center, how to establish a day care center, and managing a day care center.

Decision making. Although this topic was recommended in the literature for inclusion in parent education programs (Boss & Hooper, 1980; Whiteneck, 1980), none of these references or textbooks used

in this study included any discussion of decision-making processes. The only discussion of decision making was in relation to allowing and teaching children to make decisions. It must be assumed that in order to teach children this skill, parents should be able to model decision-making behaviors themselves.

Family circumstances and their effect on childrearing. While this topic was recommended for inclusion by Bell (1976) and Bronfenbrenner (1978), specific recommendations as to what should be included in this topic were not spelled out. However, many of the texts include discussions of this nature within the context of family stress and the parent/child relationship or alternative family forms. Brooks (1981) included information on single parent families, stepparenting, and the working mother. Draper and Draper (1983) discussed the family in crisis, supporting the child in stressful situations, family changes, moving, and how crises effect the child.

Family communication. This topic is cited by the literature as being included in parent education (Bell, 1975; R. K. Kerckhoff et al., 1976). However, the specific concepts to be included within this topic are only outlined by the texts. Mead (1976) included discussion of communication within his study and application of theoretical models of parent/child interaction. Brooks (1981) outlined various strategies (as suggested by various authors) which maximize communication: communicating feelings, effective forms of praise and criticism, active listening, I-messages, and establishing an atmosphere of psychological safety. Draper and Draper (1983)

included a discussion of the importance of encouragement, handling conflict, and showing the child respect when talking to them.

Financial aspects of childrearing. Besides an indirect reference to this topic when discussing what preparations should be made for the new baby (Draper & Draper, 1983; Brisbane, 1971), no discussions were included in the texts used in this study. And although this topic is recommended by the literature (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Stranix & Fleishman, 1979), no one seems to specifically describe what should be included within this topic. One might assume, however, that this topic could include discussions of the cost of raising a child--educating, clothing, feeding, health care, etc.

Nurturance. While Cook (1977) and Walker (1978) recommended this topic for inclusion in parent education, it is not clear exactly what this topic encompasses. In his college text, Bigner (1979) defined nurturance and reported research on the importance of maternal nurturance and paternal nurturance. In her discussion of nurturance of infants and young children, Maccoby (1980) discussed cross cultural perspectives and male/female differences in nurturing.

Techniques for stimulating the child's intellectual development. Although this topic is recommended in the literature for inclusion (Bell, 1975; Cook, 1977), few of the texts reviewed for this study focused much on this topic. Draper and Draper (1983) spoke in general terms when discussing stimulating intellectual development. They discussed ways in which children learn, factors that influence

learning, brain functions, stages of intellectual development, and helping children become involved in activities that will promote intellectual development. Brisbane (1971) discussed intellectual development and suggested ways that parents can help their children learn.

Table 3 summarizes the recommended parenting topics and outlines who recommended each of the topics. The topics are organized in the table as they have just been described: in descending order from the topic with the most recommendations to the lesser recommended topics.

Table 3
Recommended Parenting Topics

| Content | Authors |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Child development | Anastasiow et al. (1978); Beebe (1978); Bell (1975, 1976); Bjorklund & Briggs (1977); Clayton & Dow (1973); Coward & Kerckhoff (1978); Delissovoy (1980); Earhart (1980); R. K. Kerckhoff et al. (1976); Kruger (1972); Wolverson (1973) |
| Experiences in working with children | Bjorklund & Briggs (1977); Beebe (1978); Cook (1977); Coward & Kerckhoff (1978); R. J. Kerckhoff et al. (1976); McAfee & Nedler (1976); Moore & Robin (1981); Vogel (1978); Wolverson (1973); Ziegler (1980) |
| Reproductive information | Bell (1976); Boss & Hooper (1980); Cook (1977); R. J. Kerckhoff et al. (1976); Kruger (1972); Vogel (1978); Walker (1978); Whiteneck (1980) |
| Parental roles and responsibilities | Anastasiow et al. (1978); Bell (1976); Buchholz & Addington (1979); F. G. Kerckhoff et al., (1976); Kruger (1972); |

Table 3--Continued

| Content | Authors |
|---|---|
| Parental roles and responsibilities (Cont.) | Stranix & Fleishman (1979); Walker (1978) |
| Available resources to aid the parenting process | Beebe (1978); Bell, (1976); Clayton & Dow (1973); F. G. Kerckhoff (1977); Kruger (1972); Vogel (1978) |
| Health/safety of children | Cook (1977); Kruger (1972); Stranix & Fleishman (1979); Whiteneck (1980) |
| Decision to be or not to be a parent | Bell (1975); Earhart (1980); Knaub et al. (1981); Walker (1978) |
| Family planning | Beebe (1978); Bell (1975, 1976); R. K. Kerckhoff et al. (1976); Kruger (1972) |
| Prenatal care of the mother | Beebe (1978); Bell (1976); Kruger (1972); Vogel (1978) |
| The handicapped child | Anastasiow et al. (1978); Bell (1976); R. K. Kerckhoff et al. (1976); Kruger (1972) |
| Infant care | Bell (1976); Kruger (1972); Vogel (1978) |
| Prenatal development | Bell (1976); Earhart (1980); Kruger (1972) |
| What to expect of children at various stages of development | Bell (1975); Cook (1977); Walker (1978) |
| Cross cultural child-rearing customs | Finken & McMahon (1979); Stranix & Fleishman (1979) |
| Day care for children | Kruger (1972); Stranix & Fleishman (1979) |
| Decision making | Boss & Hooper (1980); Whiteneck (1980) |
| Family circumstances and their effect on childrearing | Bell (1976); Bronfenbrenner (1978) |

Table 3--Continued

| Content | Authors |
|---|---|
| Family communication | Bell (1975); R. J. Kerckhoff et al. (1976) |
| Financial aspects of childrearing | Bronfenbrenner (1978); Stranix & Fleishman (1979) |
| Nurturance | Cook (1977); Walker (1978) |
| Techniques for stimulating the child's intellectual development | Bell (1975, 1976); Cook (1977) |

It seems clear that there are definite recommended topics considered necessary for inclusion in parenting courses. The question remains as to how much of what is recommended is based upon research or whether much of what is recommended is a result of one person echoing the sentiments of another.

Summary

Many authors have written concerning the content for parenting education. There is strong consensus on many topics and less consensus on others. Rationale for selecting content was stated as being based upon the needs of the clients, recommendations by experts, and following the health objectives for the nation as outlined by the Surgeon General of the United States.

Conclusion

Although parent education has been with us in one form or another since the turn of the century, terminology to describe these programs is still confusing. This confusion, however, has not hindered the progress of this form of education nor has it blinded educators to the great need (as evidenced by social factors) for the dissemination of parenting information.

The body of knowledge from which content for parenting curricula can be obtained is vast and, as such, provides problems for narrowing the scope of study in parent education. Although many writers make suggestions for a myriad of topics to be included in parenting courses, it is not always clear as to how those judgments were made. Thus, it appears that one would do well, in selecting content for parent education courses, to approach the task with a high level of concern for selecting content that is based upon research.

The next chapter of this study focuses on the methodology that was utilized in determining the effects immediacy to parenthood has upon one's perceptions of what should be included in a parent education class.

CHAPTER IV

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine how immediacy to parenthood affects one's perception of what should be learned in a parent education class. The discussion in this chapter will center on the methods used in obtaining this information. Included in this chapter are the following components: (a) identification and description of the independent variable, (b) participants, (c) identification and description of the dependent variables, (d) instrumentation, (e) data collection and general procedures, (f) hypotheses, and (g) data analysis procedures.

Identification and Description of the Independent Variable

In this study, the independent variable was immediacy of parenthood. This variable was investigated at four levels: (1) secondary students, (2) college students, (3) expectant first-time parents, and (4) parents. These four groups were chosen because it was believed that these groups of people represent varying degrees of the independent variable. The secondary student group represents those persons who are relatively far from being parents, and the college group represents those who are closer to being parents but are still quite involved with other developmental tasks. The

expectant parent group includes those for whom parenthood is imminent, and the parent group represents those for whom parenthood is a present reality. Thus, we see the continuous nature of the independent variable. There is a gradual increase in the probability of parenthood from the secondary students to those who are parents providing a full spectrum for investigation. One might visualize probability of parenthood as spanning from zero to one: zero representing no probability of parenthood (for the prepubescent individual) and one representing parenthood (for the individual who is a parent). Thus, this study focused on a span of probabilities for parenthood from somewhere just above zero to one.

Criteria and qualifications by which persons in each group were chosen are discussed below. Possible contaminants in this study were parental status and gender. Parents were to be represented in only one level of the independent variable. Persons at the first three levels of the independent variable who were parents were not included in this study because these levels were to be represented by nonparents only. It was felt that although they met other qualifications required for their group, their parent status would make them different from their peers in regard to the dependent variables. This difference would thus produce systematic effects within those levels of the independent variable which would no doubt increase the within group variance in a nonrandom fashion. Consequently, persons at the first three levels of the independent variable who were parents were excluded. Age is another factor that was accounted for in this study. Most likely, there would not be age overlap between the

secondary school and college groups. There could, however, be age overlap between the expectant parent and parent groups and the other two levels of the independent variable. Conceivably, there could be college and perhaps even secondary school aged people who are expectant first-time parents and/or parents. However, age would probably produce no systematic differences in the dependent variable scores within a group so no control was placed on age. Gender is another variable that must be considered in a study such as this. Because it was felt that gender could influence a person's response (adolescent boys and girls have been shown to differ in their future orientation vis a vis parenthood, Douvan & Adelson, 1966/1970) and because very few males enroll in parenting classes, it was decided that only females would be included in this study. That is, in three of the groups, females select themselves while in the other (expectant parents) males are involved. So if gender is systematically related to the dependent variable, one group would be contaminated. Therefore, males were excluded to provide a control on the within group variance.

Thus, two restrictions were placed upon participants: They must fit the criteria for parental status and gender. Not having these restrictions would result in data which would be difficult to interpret. But using the restrictions narrows the scope of generalizations which might be made.

Secondary School Students

Secondary school students, for the purposes of this study, were females between grades 10 and 12 who were enrolled in parenting or child care classes in public high schools. This group represented the level of the independent variable that had the least immediacy of parenthood or lowest probability of becoming a parent.

College Students

The college student level of the independent variable included female nonparents who were enrolled in parenting classes at the college level. This group was the next furthest from parenthood and represented the young adult stage of the life cycle.

Expectant First-Time Parents

This level of the independent variable was represented by those for whom parenthood was imminent. For the purposes of this study, this group included pregnant females who were expecting their first child and were enrolled in prepared childbirth classes at a hospital. Thus, the probability of parenthood for this group was quite high.

Parents

This level of the independent variable was represented by those for whom parenthood was a present reality. Parents, in this study, included those females with at least one child who were enrolled in

a parent education class. These individuals' probability of parenthood was one.

Participants

In this study, participants were designated based upon their fulfillment of the requirements of the independent variable. These persons represented the four groups of individuals discussed in the previous section.

Because Bronson Methodist Hospital provides the only neonatal intensive care services in the Southwestern Michigan area, it attracts expectant parents and parents to its services. As a result, it was decided that the service area of Bronson Hospital would limit the scope of this study to those individuals in this area of the state. Specifically, this included secondary and college students from Kalamazoo and expectant parents and parents from the Bronson Methodist Hospital service area. An exception to this criteria was made in the case of the parent group. This exception will be discussed in the parent section which follows.

Further criteria by which individuals were included in the study are as follows: They must have been enrolled in a parenting or parent-related class chosen for the study, female, and a non-parent (except for those persons in the parent group).

Secondary Students

Secondary students enrolled in "Exploring Childhood" and "Child Care Block" at Kalamazoo Central High School during the winter

semester, 1984, constituted the high school age group. Access to this group was obtained by first contacting the classroom teacher to obtain her cooperation and permission to use the students as participants. Then the permission of the administrators was obtained following the proper procedures for research for the school system.

The enrollments of these classes were 22 and 17, respectively. This brought the total size of this group of participants to 39. However, the attendance of the students on the day of data collection and cases of individual's not meeting the criteria of this level of the independent variable brought the number of individuals in this group to 32. These classes were considered an average size for this school. The Kalamazoo Public Schools are fully integrated under federal court order, and as such, Kalamazoo Central High School has approximately the same race distribution as the city of Kalamazoo (81% white) and represents a population of which the mean income is \$18,427 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980b).

College Students

The participants included in the college age group were those students who were enrolled in "Effective Parenting" at Western Michigan University during the winter semester, 1984. Entry into this group was gained by receiving approval for the study from the Human Subjects Review Board and obtaining the permission of the instructor. This course is offered through the Department of Consumer Resources and Technology and is considered a high enrollment course (50-60 people). After considering the criteria outlined

above for participants, there should have been 52 people in this group. However, attendance on the day of data collection brought the total number of individuals in this group to 35.

Western Michigan University is a university with an enrollment of approximately 18,542. The mean composite ACT scores for incoming freshmen for the fall of 1983 was 19.8 (Morris, 1983).

Expectant First-Time Parents

For the purposes of this study, the group of expectant first-time parents included those persons who were expecting their first child, were in their last trimester of pregnancy, and were enrolled in Prepared Childbirth classes at Bronson Methodist Hospital during the spring months, 1984.

The expectant parent education program at Bronson Hospital offers classes through the entire span of pregnancy. One would potentially be able to enroll in classes in the first trimester of pregnancy and continue in an education process throughout the entire pregnancy. However, the sequence of courses can vary, and as the entire program is elective, an expectant parent could take all or none of the courses and still use Bronson's obstetrical services. Despite the probabilities of expectant parents not following a sequential order in taking classes, it was determined that data would be collected at the later end of pregnancy (during Preparation for Childbirth classes) in order to assure that participants were at approximately the same point in their parent education process. By collecting data at this point, individuals had had an opportunity

for further study, individually or in a class, about parenthood.

Access to the classes was obtained by first contacting the director of the program of which those classes were a part. The director then discussed the idea of data being collected in the classes with the class instructors. Final approval was gained through the director of education and hospital administrators. The number of participants (who fulfilled the requirements of the independent variable) in the four classes from Bronson Hospital was 29.

Parents

The individuals included in this group were those individuals who were enrolled in the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) classes at Borgess Medical Center, through the Calhoun Intermediate School District, and the Warren Consolidated Schools Community Education program during the months of March and April, 1984. STEP is a nine-session, packaged parent education program which contains student workbooks, teaching guides, tapes, and visual aids. This course focuses on parent-child relationships and guiding behavior with a special emphasis on family communication patterns and democratic ways of relating. Because all of these programs follow the STEP materials closely and the methods used with this curricula are quite structured, these programs were deemed similar enough to use together.

The exception to the Kalamazoo area data collection limits criterion was justified as follows: (a) It was difficult to find enough participants at the same point in the STEP classes within a

reasonable time for data collection in the Kalamazoo area alone, and (b) the highly structured format of the STEP course offered reasonable assurance of "sameness" among various classes at differing locations.

Data were collected during either the eighth or ninth session to assure that individuals were at approximately the same level of exposure to the STEP program. Access to these groups was obtained by contacting the directors of the programs who, in turn, contacted the instructors of the classes for their permission and cooperation.

One class from Borgess Medical Center was used which had an enrollment of six, four classes from the Calhoun Intermediate School District which, together, had an enrollment of approximately 35, and two classes from the Warren Community Education program which had a total enrollment of 14. After accounting for attendance on the days of data collection, this brought the total number of participants in the parent group to 33.

Total Number of Participants

In summary, the expected number of participants from the high school group was 39, the expected number of participants from the college group was 52, in the expectant parent group there were approximately 38 participants expected, and in the parent group there were approximately 55. This brought the total number of expected participants to approximately 185. Table 4 shows actual numbers of participants after accounting for attendance and unusable data.

Table 4
Number of Participants

| Independent variable group | No. in each group |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Secondary students | 32 |
| College students | 35 |
| Expectant parents | 29 |
| Parents | 33 |
| Total | 129 |

Thus we see that when accounting for attendance fluctuations and unusable data, there were approximately 30-35 in each group.

Because of the nature of the statistical analysis procedures selected for this research (one-way analysis of variance), the nearly equal group sizes as achieved in this research were desirable. If the group sizes are considerably different, then there are problems with power of the test, particularly if there is nonnormality (Glass, Peckham, & Sanders, 1972).

Identification and Description of the Dependent Variables

In discussing the curriculum development process, Taba (1962) outlined a sequence for action. The third step of her process includes the selection of curriculum content. There cannot be a curriculum without content and, as such, we see the importance of this step of the curriculum development process. Many authors writing

about curriculum development encourage the use of input from students as a guide when developing curricula and making content decisions (Bedient & Rosenberg, 1981; Bender, 1970; Beyer, 1981; Boyle, 1981; J. L. Brown, 1981; Paul, 1982; Rinehart, 1979; Rosenblum & Darkenwald, 1983; Smith & Clarke, 1980).

Since the selection of content is of primary importance in the curriculum development process and there is an expressed need to include students in the process of selecting content, the dependent variables in this study are students' perceptions of the importance of various parenting topics. These topics are: (a) pregnancy and childbirth (PC), (b) infancy (IN), (c) early childhood (EC), (d) late childhood (LC), (e) adolescence (AD), (f) health and safety (HS), (g) social issues related to parenting (SI), (h) family relations and communication (FRC), (i) guiding the behavior of children (GBC), (j) parenting patterns (PP), and (k) career-related concerns (CRC). These specific topics, or dependent variables, were chosen after a thorough review of parenting curricular materials and related literature. Concepts were gleaned from these materials and were grouped according to similarities and organized in a logical manner by topic.

In order to obtain data related to the dependent variables, an instrument was developed that contained items reflecting the dependent variables. Specific topic headings represent the dependent variables as listed above and items within each topic consist of parenting concepts as found in the literature and curricula.

In summary, the following process was followed in the development of the dependent variables:

Step 1: Parenting literature and curricular materials were studied.

Step 2: Topics (which were the potential dependent variables) and concepts (specific content that could be included in the major topics) were developed from the study of the literature and recommended curricular materials. That is, material specifically used in parenting classes with adolescents and young adults were reviewed.

Step 3: Items for the instrument were held to five criteria which narrowed the variables to 11 and the number of items to 60. These were organized into the instrument.

Step 4: The instrument was field tested.

Step 5: Following the field test, a final form of the instrument was developed for actual data collection.

Each of these steps will be described in detail below.

Instrumentation

An examination of the literature did not yield an instrument that would meet the objectives of this study; therefore, an instrument was developed following the processes described above. This instrument development process involved a thorough search of the literature, parenting texts, and parenting curricula to determine those curriculum concepts that were deemed necessary in parenting curricula by experts in the field. The organization of those concepts by general topics was also studied. This method of developing the instrument was thought to be appropriate given that the data were being collected from individuals in classes that used these

texts and the potential use of the data was in further curriculum development. The discussion below focuses in greater detail on each of the five steps mentioned above.

Development of the Instrument

The instrument (and dependent variables) was developed following a series of five steps which spanned the initial review of parent education literature through several intermediate steps to the development of a final instrument for actual data collection.

Step 1. Parenting literature was reviewed to find curricular content for parent education. The search of the literature resulted in a vast variety of suggested parenting content. These are outlined in Table 3 along with the authors who recommended them. Table 5 shows the number of content areas gleaned from the literature and the corresponding number of references to the topics.

Table 5
Content Areas Found in Parenting Literature

| Content area | No. of references |
|--|-------------------|
| Child growth and development | 11 |
| Experiences in working with children | 10 |
| Reproductive information | 8 |
| Parental roles and responsibilities | 7 |
| Available resources to aid the parenting process | 6 |

Table 5--Continued

| Content area | No. of references |
|---|-------------------|
| Health and safety of children | 4 |
| Decision to be or not be a parent | 4 |
| Family planning | 4 |
| Prenatal care of the mother | 4 |
| The handicapped child | 4 |
| Infant care | 3 |
| Prenatal development | 3 |
| What to expect of children at various stages of development | 3 |
| Cross cultural childrearing customs | 2 |
| Day care for children | 2 |
| Decision making | 2 |
| Family circumstances and their effect on childrearing | 2 |
| Family communications | 2 |
| Financial aspects of childrearing | 2 |
| Nurturance | 2 |
| Techniques for stimulating the child's intellectual development | 2 |

Note. Total number of areas = 21.

Step 2. In obtaining the curricular materials needed for instrument development, specific procedures were followed: (a) experts in the field with information about local and state programs were contacted, (b) information about materials in use and exemplary programs was obtained, (c) suggested materials were obtained by the researcher, and (d) the curricular materials were reviewed for use in the instrument.

To represent secondary level parenting curricula, five sources were utilized. The recommendations for the use of these five texts and/or curricula came from experts at various levels of the educational system. Two educators at the secondary level, two college professors, and the Supervisor for Consumer Home Economics at the State Department of Education were consulted as to their knowledge of exemplary programs at the high school level and textbook usage in parenting. Five texts and curricular materials were recommended as being representative of parenting courses on the secondary level in Michigan. These included Caring for Children by Draper and Draper (1975), The Caring Parent by Draper and Draper (1983), The Developing Child by Brisbane (1971), Teens Parenting by Lindsay (1981), and Child Care Curriculum Handbook by Dillenbeck and Associates (n.d.). These sources were obtained and content analysis was conducted to discover concepts being covered in parenting/child care classes at this level.

To represent parenting curricula on the college level, texts used by parenting instructors in five of the state higher education institutions in Michigan were obtained for analysis. These texts included Parent-Child Relations by Bigner (1979), The Process of

Parenting by Brooks (1981), The Next Generation: A Book on Parenting by Lunde and Lunde (1980), Social Development: Psychological Growth and the Parent-Child Relationship by Maccoby (1980), and Six Approaches to Child Rearing by Mead (1976).

To represent parenting at the adult education level, two curricula were analyzed. Four experts from hospital, social service agencies, and adult education were consulted and their recommendations about parenting curricula being widely used in this part of Michigan were followed. The two curricula analyzed for content were Systematic Training for Effective Parenting by Dinkmeyer and McKay (1976), a workbook format for teacher/small group use, and Manual for Trainers of "Family Communications--Building Self-Esteem: Your Own and Others" (Wend, 1981), a curriculum for teacher use with small groups.

After analyzing the content of the 12 curricular sources, lists were made of all of the concepts included in the materials. These concepts were then organized in a logical manner using four of the texts as a guide. There were 13 major topic headings that emerged with a total of 250 concepts in the list.

Table 6 shows a comparison of the content areas found in the parenting literature (e.g., Chapter III), topics gleaned from textbooks, and number of concepts (which were the potential items on the instrument) from each curricular source.

Table 6 is organized such that content areas are grouped next to similar topics. And in cases where a content area might be found in more than one topic area (i.e., child development), the content is repeated in all appropriate topic areas.

Table 6

Comparison of Content, Topics, and Concepts

| Content | Topics | Concepts |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Family planning Prenatal care of the mother Prenatal development Reproductive information Family circumstances and their effect on childrearing Financial aspects of parenting | Pregnancy and Childbirth | 28 |
| Child development What to expect of children at various stages of development | Infancy | 41 |
| Child development What to expect of children at various stages of development | Early Childhood | 32 |
| Child development What to expect of children at various stages of development | Late Childhood | 24 |
| Child development What to expect of children at various stages of development | Adolescence | 29 |
| Health and safety of children The handicapped child | Health and Safety | 20 |
| Available resources to aid in the parenting process | Social Issues | 8 |
| Family communications | Family Relations and Communications | 20 |
| Cross cultural childrearing customs | Historical and Cultural Perspectives | 8 |
| | Guiding the Behavior of Children | 15 |
| | Children and Institutions | 6 |

Table 6--Continued

| Content | Topics | Concepts |
|---|----------------------------|----------|
| Decision making Decision to be or not be a parent Nurturance Parent roles and responsibilities | Parenting Patterns | 13 |
| Experiences working with children Day care for children | Career-Related Concerns | 6 |
| Total: 21 (different content areas) | 13 | 250 |

Step 3. Items for the instrument were held to five criteria. First, only concepts recommended by two or more sources were included. Then the remaining concepts were given to three individuals (an adult nonparent, a parent, and an expert in the field) for the purpose of merging concepts into items for the instrument. Then length was considered, both in terms of the time factor (how long it would take to complete the instrument) and in terms of number of items in each topic (reliability considerations). Finally, the investigator's judgment was imposed upon the concepts. Following the application of these criteria to the original list of concepts and topics, the list was established which provided the basis for the instrument.

Each of the items under the major topic headings reflect and measure the specific topic. Taken together, these specific items provide a comprehensive overview of the topics. Because the students rate each of the concepts on a Likert scale for importance, these ratings will reflect the overall importance of the major topic

headings.

As one may quickly note (see Table 7), the number of items in each variable is fairly consistent excepting in the case of Career-Related Concerns. Because this topic is mandated for inclusion in parenting courses (in order to obtain vocational funding on the secondary level), it was deemed necessary for inclusion in this study. However, there were not as many specific concepts to be included in this topic after submitting them to the five criteria mentioned above.

Table 7
Draft Instrument Length for Each Variable

| Topics (variables) | No. of items |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth | 6 |
| Infancy | 7 |
| Early Childhood | 6 |
| Late Childhood | 6 |
| Adolescence | 5 |
| Health and Safety | 5 |
| Social Issues | 6 |
| Family Relations and Communication | 6 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children | 5 |
| Parenting Patterns | 5 |
| Career-Related Concerns | 3 |
| Totals: 11 | 60 |

The positive side to the fairly equal number of items in each variable is that one is able to compare reliability across variables. The negative aspect of this instrument is that not all topics (variables) are equally complex. And by restricting the number of items (or concepts) in each variable, we are potentially weakening validity by not really measuring the whole of the topic.

Step 4. A field test instrument was drafted utilizing the topics and concepts outlined in Table 7. Each page of the field test instrument was devoted to one topic (variable). This topic was noted first, then the concepts (items) were listed below. The instrument contained two rating scales: one for measuring the individual's perception of the clarity of the item and the other for measuring the individual's perception of the importance of the concept. These perceptions were measured by a 5-point Likert scale and a sample item is shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Field Test Instrument Item Format

| Clarity scale | | | | | Concept | Importance scale | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|--|------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 1. <u>How pregnancy occurs</u> | | | | | |
| | | | | | (conception, reproductive information) | | | | | |

The rationale for the use of a Likert scale (or summated rating scale) is that it is very easy to develop, makes good intuitive

sense, and often results in a greater degree of reliability and validity (Phillips, 1976). It is also believed to be an easily understood measuring scale (Shaw & Wright, 1967). Selltiz, Wrightsman, and Cook (1976) noted that this type of scale allows a range of responses that give more precise information about the individual's opinion on the issue referred to by the item. In spite of these advantages, there are some problems with this type of scale. Some (Selltiz et al., 1976; Shaw & Wright, 1967) conclude that this type of scale should not be treated as more than an ordinal scale. However, despite the disadvantages, the Likert type questionnaire often provides the necessary basis for measuring a particular characteristic or attitude (Selltiz, et al., 1976). It was also noted that other studies for determining curricular content for parent education and computer education also used a Likert-type scale (Hansen, Klassen, Anderson, & Johnson, 1981; Strom & Johnson, 1978).

The 5 points of the scale were anchored in a further descriptor and appeared as follows: 1 = Trivial, should not be included; 2 = Unimportant, include only if there is enough time; 3 = Moderately Important, spend some time on this concept; 4 = Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept; and 5 = Critical, must be covered as a unique concept.

Space was provided on the instrument (by each item) for respondents to state what the problems were with each item, if they found any (see Appendix A). Directions indicating the way in which participants should fill out the questionnaire appeared at the beginning of the instrument along with the key explaining the possible

responses on the Likert scale. For the field test, only one topic (variable) appeared on each page thus making certain that the participants understood that they were responding to the items by topic.

At the end of the instrument there were four items which appeared for the purpose of collecting demographic information. The four items gathered data about gender, age, parental status, and delivery system (what type of organization or institution was offering the parent education course).

Field test design: After the instrument was developed, it was field tested in Ypsilanti, Michigan. This sight was chosen based on its similarities to the Kalamazoo, Michigan, area where final data collection would occur. Census data (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980a, 1980b) from the two cities were analyzed along with Michigan Educational Assessment Program scores for the secondary level (Rapley & Hallock, 1984) and comparisons were also made of Eastern Michigan University and Western Michigan University. Table 9 shows a comparison of Kalamazoo and Ypsilanti on several variables.

One may notice that there are definite similarities between the two cities on certain demographic variables and dissimilarities on other variables. The two cities are quite similar in gender distribution, percentage of high school graduates, MEAP scores, and University ACT scores. The dissimilarities are in the areas of race distribution and percentage of the population below the poverty level. Ypsilanti has a lower percentage of whites and a greater number of the population below the poverty level than Kalamazoo.

Table 9
Demographic Data for Kalamazoo and Ypsilanti

| Demographic variables | Kalamazoo | Ypsilanti |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Gender distribution | 50% female | 55% female |
| Race | 81.4% white | 67.7% white |
| High school graduates | 73.4% | 71.7% |
| Mean income | \$18,427 | \$16,987 |
| Percentage below poverty level | 13.7% | 17.5% |
| MEAP scores--math | 51.9% | 48.6% |
| --reading | 71.6% | 67.3% |
| University enrollment | 18,542 | 20,342 |
| University ACT scores (composite scores) | 19.8 | 19.2 |

Ypsilanti High School provided the secondary education group (with 14 individuals), Eastern Michigan University provided a college group (12 individuals), and Beyer Hospital provided the expectant parent and parent groups (20 individuals, 6 of whom were parents). The total field test sample was 46.

Entry was gained into the high school by first contacting the parenting teacher to see if she would be interested in having the study done in her class. Then the senior high principal was contacted to obtain his permission. Entry was obtained at the college level by obtaining the permission of the instructor of the parenting class. Access to the hospital group was obtained by contacting the instructor of the class for her permission.

The instrument was administered at the class sights by the investigator after a brief explanation of the study (see Appendix A). Upon the completion of data collection for the field test, questionnaires were coded and reliability and validity were established.

There are a number of criteria to which one could subject items for either inclusion or exclusion in a final instrument. In analyzing the reliability and validity data from the field test, the researcher established three ways in which an item would be excluded from the final instrument. These were:

1. Clarity scale: Items were dropped if mean scores on the item were less than 2.0. Items were reworded if the mean score on an item was between 2.1 and 3.5. Each group was analyzed separately because it appeared that the high school group was rating clarity lower. In this way, wording could be changed to meet the needs of the lowest level (educationally).

2. Validity indicator (correlation between the item and the total score of the variable): Items were dropped if there was a negative item-total correlation.

3. Reliability: Items were dropped if the reliability measure of a variable was increased substantially (.06 points or more) when an item was dropped.

No variable was to be measured by less than five items (except Career-Related Concerns (CRC), which had three items to begin with). So if, by submitting items to the criteria listed above, a variable ended up with less than five items, items (which affect the reliability measure the least) must be included to bring the item number to

five or more.

Field test results: The field test was conducted during January 1984 in Ypsilanti, Michigan, to determine the reliability and validity of the instrument.

As previously stated, the instrument had two rating scales. Instrument reliability was established (by each dependent variable) through the use of the Cronbach alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1970) using the importance ratings of concepts. All the variables had alpha coefficients of over .7 except for Infancy (.486) and Career-Related Concerns (.419). Table 10 depicts the alpha coefficients for the 11 dependent variables as a result of the field test.

Infancy (IN) had one negative item-total correlation and two other items with very low item-total correlations such that if they were dropped the alpha would have increased more than .06 points. As had been established prior to the field test, these three items should have been dropped from the instrument. However, by dropping all three, the dependent variable would have been left with less than five items, so the two items with the lowest item-total correlations were dropped and the other item was retained. The items that were dropped were Infant Care and The Infant's Home and Family. By dropping these two items, the alpha coefficient on this variable was substantially increased.

Career-Related Concerns (CRC) also had a low alpha coefficient (.419). This low alpha, however, is related to two factors: (1) the few number of items for this variable and (2) the lack of relationship between the first two items of this variable and the last

item. The last item is related to careers in child care (which was rated low); but since this is a required concept on the secondary level, it was necessary to keep it.

Table 10
Reliability of Dependent Variable Measures

| Dependent variables | Alpha coefficients |
|--|--------------------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | .76 |
| Infancy (IN) | .49 |
| Early Childhood (EC) | .85 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | .86 |
| Adolescence (AD) | .89 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | .76 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | .72 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | .88 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | .77 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | .82 |
| Career-Related Concerns (CRC) | .42 |

The clarity scale measured individuals' perceptions of the clarity of the items. It had been decided previously that if any of the groups had a mean score of less than 2.0 on an item, the item would be dropped. And if any of the mean scores were between 2.1 and 3.5, the items would be reworded. As it turned out, none of the items needed to be dropped or reworded. All the mean scores on all

the items were above 3.5.

The result of the field test was a valid and reliable measure of the dependent variables with 58 items (measuring the 11 dependent variables) and four items (which obtained demographic information) bringing the total number of items to 62. (See Appendix B for a copy of the final instrument.)

Step 5. Following reliability and validity studies of the field test data and content analysis of written comments, a final instrument was constructed.

An example item from the final instrument is shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Final Instrument Item Format

| Concept | Importance scale | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|----|---|---|
| | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1. How Pregnancy Occurs (conception, reproductive information) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

There were two changes made from the field test instrument to the final instrument. One change was that more than one variable appeared on each page and the other was the inclusion of an additional item on the questionnaires that were distributed to the expectant parents. The extra item asked for the participant's approximate delivery date. This item was necessary in order to make sure the participants met the criteria for the independent variable; i.e., in their last trimester of pregnancy.

Data Collection and General Procedures

Final data collection took place as follows: Intact groups at the secondary, college, and adult education levels completed the parenting questionnaire at their class sites. This included classes at Kalamazoo Central High School, Western Michigan University, Bronson Methodist Hospital, Borgess Medical Center, various sites associated with Calhoun County Intermediate School District, and two sites associated with Warren Consolidated Schools Community Education program.

Consent of class members to participate in this study was obtained at two levels. First, consent of the institution was obtained to enter the classes to present the study and questionnaire. Second, consent of the class members was obtained at the class site by telling them that they could choose not to participate.

Data were collected from the secondary group in late March. There were 32 people in this group. Data collection from the college group took place on March 21, and there were 35 people in this group. Data were collected from the expectant parent group at Bronson Hospital in April and May, and there were 29 people in this group. Data collection from the parent group took place on different days (depending upon when the individual classes met). This occurred with one group on February 24 and with the other groups during the last 10 days of March. There were 33 people in this group.

The questionnaires were administered by the investigator after enlisting the cooperation of the class members. Following the completion of the questionnaires by class members, the questionnaires were collected. Questionnaires filled out by class members who did not fit the criteria for the independent variable were not used in data analysis. Exclusion of these class members would have caused a disruption to the class as some members would have been sitting with nothing to do while others were filling out the questionnaire. These questionnaires were analyzed separately and appear in Appendix C, since the data obtained from these individuals were not directly related to the problem being addressed in this study. After coding each questionnaire, data analysis was carried out.

Hypotheses

Differences among levels of the independent variable on the dependent variable ratings of importance are determined by testing the null hypothesis. So for this reason, hypotheses will be stated in null terms.

Null Hypotheses

For testing the dependent variables, hypotheses are stated in null terms. Following are the null hypotheses that relate to the dependent variables.

Immediacy to parenthood will cause no differences in perceived importance of:

1. Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC)

2. Infancy (IN)
3. Early Childhood (EC)
4. Late Childhood (LC)
5. Adolescence (AD)
6. Health and Safety (HS)
7. Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI)
8. Family Relations and Communication (FRC)
9. Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC)
10. Parenting Patterns (PP)
11. Career-Related Concerns (CRC)

Data Analysis Procedures

A one-way analysis of variance will be used to test for differences between group means of the importance ratings of each of the parenting topics. If there are significant differences found, post hoc analysis will be carried out using the Bonferroni method in order to determine where the differences occur.

The level of significance for testing the hypotheses was set at .1. This alpha level was deemed appropriate given that there were not great risks perceived in the event of making a Type I error (rejecting a true null hypothesis). The risks are less, however, with an alpha level at this point, that a Type II error could be made, thus failing to reject a false null hypothesis (J. Cohen, 1977).

Post Hoc Analysis

Contrasts were planned between the following groups: (a) secondary vs. all other groups combined, (b) college students vs. all other groups combined, (c) expectant parents vs. all other groups combined, (d) parents vs. all other groups combined, (e) secondary students vs. parents, (f) college students vs. expectant parents, and (g) expectant parents vs. parents. The rationale for contrasts a-d is that there is interest in finding out if one group differs from all of the other groups for the purpose of planning curricula at each of the levels. The fifth contrast compares the lowest end of the independent variable (i.e., farthest from parenthood) with the highest end of the spectrum (actual parenthood) which could yield possible differences as individuals have differing amounts of immediacy to parenthood. This comparison is important because curriculum planning at the secondary level may need to plan for laying a foundation of learning upon which parent education at the parent level may need to build. The sixth contrast compares two groups of people who are fairly close in age but are experiencing very different developmental stages of their life. This comparison was selected because, through their developmental differences, perhaps differing patterns of importance ratings of the topics would be seen. The groups are also quite different in their parent education experience. The college group is exposed to quite a structured experience, whereas the expectant parents are in a more unstructured educational process. The last contrast compares the two groups at the

higher end of the immediacy to parenthood spectrum. It is believed that although these groups share some similarity in their immediacy to parenthood, they are experiencing very different developmental issues and because of this, differences might be detected. It could also be helpful to determine differences in order to restructure expectant parent education based upon what parents say they need to know (but which would be information that expectant parents might not think they needed to know).

Given the types of contrasts planned, it was deemed necessary to use the Bonferroni method in post hoc analysis given the number of groups vs. the number of contrasts being done (Neter & Wasserman, 1974).

Bonferroni is a post hoc analysis technique that can be used for equal or unequal group sizes. It is also appropriate when one is performing pairwise comparisons and/or complex contrasts. It is applicable when the "family of interest is the particular set of estimated contrasts specified by the user" (Neter & Wasserman, 1974, p. 480).

This method is preferred to the Sheffé method because it is less conservative. It is recommended for use when the number of contrasts to be estimated is about the same or slightly larger than the number of groups. The number of contrasts would have to be considerably larger than the number of groups before the Sheffé method would be better. The method essentially computes a statistic by dividing the variable means by the error term, $\frac{\bar{y}_i}{s_e}$, (Miller, 1966). This value is then compared to a critical value in the t

distribution with 125 degrees of freedom. In this study, a critical value for alpha of .10 will be used throughout the analyses.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to outline the methods which were to be used to answer the research problem posed in Chapter I. The independent variable was defined as immediacy to parenthood and levels of this variable were discussed by describing the characteristics of the participants at each of the four levels: secondary, college, expectant parents, and parents.

The dependent variables were then discussed by describing the procedures by which the variables were selected. The 11 dependent variables were outlined as students' perceived importance of (1) Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC), (2) Infancy (IN), (3) Early Childhood (EC), (4) Late Childhood (LC), (5) Adolescence (AD), (6) Health and Safety (HS), (7) Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI), (8) Family Relations and Communication (FRC), (9) Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC), (10) Parenting Patterns (PP), and (11) Career-Related Concerns (CRC).

The steps which were followed in the development of the instrument were described. This discussion included a review of item development, the field test, and a description of the final instrument.

Near the close of the chapter, data collection procedures were reviewed. Following this discussion, the hypotheses were outlined and data analysis procedures were described.

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of this research study. In order to achieve this objective, information on (a) group characteristics, (b) the instrument, (c) findings of the hypotheses, (d) group differences, (e) special paired comparisons, and (f) a summarization of findings will be presented.

In order to test the 11 null hypotheses, the mean scores for the dependent variables importance of parenting concepts (as listed in the 11 hypotheses in Chapter IV) were determined for each of the four levels of the independent variable immediacy to parenthood (secondary students, college students, expectant first-time parents, and parents). A one-way analysis of variance was then used to test for differences between levels of the independent variable on each of the dependent variables. This was followed by post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni method.

Group Characteristics

The information presented in this characterization of the groups will include: (a) a description of the data collection process for each group (levels of the independent variable) and (b) a description of the participants.

Data were collected from secondary students, college students, expectant first-time parents, and parents who were enrolled in parent education classes through the use of a Parent Education Questionnaire. These questionnaires were distributed by the researcher at the class sites after a brief description of the study and an explanation of what participants were supposed to do. Individuals were given the option of not participating, but of the 183 people present in the 15 classes from which data were collected only six people chose not to participate. This resulted in a participation rate of 96.7%.

Secondary Students

Data collection characteristics. Data were collected from two classes at Kalamazoo Central High School on March 27, 1984. Of the two high school parent education classes, there were 39 enrolled in the classes (22 in Exploring Childhood and 17 in Child Care), 35 present on the day of data collection (20 in Exploring Childhood and 15 in Child Care), 34 chose to participate (19 in Exploring Childhood and 15 in Child Care), and two individuals did not fulfill the criteria of this level of the independent variable (one was pregnant and one was a parent). This brought the total number of usable questionnaires from the secondary group to 32.

Participant characteristics. The participants in the two classes from Kalamazoo Central High School were enrolled in either Exploring Childhood or Child Care Block. They were all female, and

all but two were nonparents or not pregnant. The secondary students were all in either the 13-15 year old range, the 16-18 year old range, or the 19-23 year old range. There was one participant who did not respond to this item on the instrument so her age is unknown.

The secondary student characteristics are shown in Table 12.

Table 12
Secondary Student Characteristics

| Group | Enrollees | Members present | Participants | Usable questionnaires |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Secondary | 99 | 35 | 34 | 32 |
| Demographic variable | Response options | Frequency | Percent (%) | |
| Age ^a | 13-15 | 3 | 9.38 | |
| | 16-18 | 27 | 84.37 | |
| | 19-23 | 1 | 3.12 | |

^aThis is the only demographic variable reported since there is no variance in the responses to the gender, parental status, and delivery system variables.

College Students

Data collection characteristics. Data were collected from the college group on March 28, 1984. The students were enrolled in one class entitled "Effective Parenting" which was offered by the Department of Consumer Resources and Technology. There were 56 people enrolled in the class, 38 students present on the day of data

collection, and 37 participants. Of the 37 questionnaires collected that day, only 35 were usable given the criteria of the independent variable for this group (female, nonparents).

Participant characteristics. All of the participants from this group were female, one was a parent, and one was an expectant parent. The data from these two individuals who did not fulfill the requirements of the independent variable for this group were not used. Most of the members of this group (33) were in the 19-23 year old age range. One member was in the 24-29 year old range and one was in the 30-35 year old range.

The college student characteristics are shown in Table 13.

Table 13

College Student Characteristics

| Group | Enrollees | Members present | Participants | Usable questionnaires |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| College | 56 | 38 | 37 | 35 |
| Demographic variable | Response options | Frequency | Percent (%) | |
| Age ^a | 19-23 | 33 | 94.28 | |
| | 24-29 | 1 | 2.86 | |
| | 30-35 | 1 | 2.86 | |

^aThis is the only demographic variable reported since there is no variance on gender, parental status, and delivery systems.

Expectant Parents

Data collection characteristics. Data were collected from six expectant parent education classes at Bronson Methodist Hospital on April 16, 18, and 19 and May 4. On these days there were 22, 30, 35, and 12 people, respectively, attending these classes. Total enrollment was 99, but attendance on the days of data collection yielded 76 attendees. Of these, 72 chose to participate, and 43 questionnaires were unusable because the individuals did not fit the criteria of the independent variable for this group (female, pregnant for the first time, and in their last trimester of pregnancy). This brought the total number of usable questionnaires from this group to 29.

Participant characteristics. Participants from this group were female, in their last trimester of their first pregnancy, ranged in age from 19 to 35, and enrolled in Preparation for Childbirth classes. Although questionnaires were completed by both males and females in the classes, only questionnaires from the females were used. Of these women 8 were in the 19-23 year old age range, 14 were in the 24-29 year old range, and 7 were in the 30-35 year old range.

The expectant parent characteristics are shown in Table 14.

Parents

Data collection characteristics. Data were collected from the last or next to the last session of five Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) classes. On February 24 data were

Table 14

Expectant Parent Characteristics

| Group | Enrollees | Members present | Participants | Usable questionnaires |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Expectant parents | 99 | 76 | 72 | 29 |
| Demographic variable | Response options | Frequency | Percent (%) | |
| Age ^a | 19-23 | 8 | 27.59 | |
| | 24-29 | 14 | 48.27 | |
| | 30-35 | 5 | 17.24 | |

^aThis is the only demographic variable reported since there is no variance on gender, parental status, and delivery system.

collected from four individuals (six were enrolled and there was one questionnaire that was unusable) at a STEP class offered by Borgess Medical Center. On March 13, 15, and 21, data were collected from STEP classes offered by Calhoun Intermediate School District. Of these classes, there were 10 enrolled in the first, 12 enrolled in the second, and 12 enrolled in the third. Actual numbers of participants (and numbers of those present) from these classes were five, nine, and six, respectively. These classes met at a school and two churches in the Battle Creek area. On March 29 data were collected from two STEP classes in Warren, Michigan. These two classes represented an enrollment of seven in each class, but attendance the day of data collection resulted in four members present in

one class and six in the other. All of these individuals participated and all fulfilled the requirements of the independent variable for this level (female, parent) so all 10 questionnaires were usable.

The number of usable questionnaires from Borgess Medical Center was 3, 20 from Calhoun Intermediate School District, and 10 from Warren Consolidated Schools Community Education program. Thus, the total number of participants in the parent group was 33.

Participant characteristics. Individuals in this group were female, parents of at least one child, and enrolled in a STEP class which was in its next-to-the-last session or its last session. Ages of these individuals were as follows: 1 participant was in the 19-23 year old range, 3 were in the 24-29 year old range, 17 were in the 30-35 year old range, and 12 were in the 36 or older range. Three of the participants received their parent education from a hospital and 30 received their education from an education institution.

The parent characteristics are shown in Table 15.

Summary

In summary, there were 129 usable questionnaires collected from 15 classes representing four levels of parent education. Three of these class sites represented traditional education (secondary and college), seven classes were sponsored by hospitals, and five were sponsored by adult education organizations of some sort. Numbers

Parent Characteristics

| Group | Enrollees | Members present | Participants | Usable questionnaires |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Parents | 74 | 34 | 34 | 33 |
| Demographic variable ^a | Response options | Frequency | Percent (%) | |
| Age | 19-23 | 1 | 3.03 | |
| | 24-29 | 3 | 9.09 | |
| | 30-35 | 17 | 51.51 | |
| | 36 or older | 12 | 36.36 | |
| Delivery system | Hospital | 3 | 9.09 | |
| | Other | 30 | 90.90 | |

^a These are the only demographic variables reported since there is no variance on gender and parent status.

of enrollees, people present, participants, and usable questionnaires appear in Table 16.

Ages of the participants were: 3 (2.33%) in the 13-15 year old range, 28 (21.27%) in the 16-18 year old range, 43 (33.33%) in the 19-23 year old range, 18 (13.95%) in the 24-29 year old range, 25 (19.38%) in the 30-35 year old range, and 12 (9.3%) in the 36 or older range. These data are shown in Table 17.

The participants could either categorize themselves as non-parents, expecting (pregnant with) their first child, or parents.

Table 16
Number of Enrollees, Participants, and
Usable Questionnaires by Group

| Group | Enrollees | Members present | Participants | Usable questionnaires |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Secondary | 39 | 35 | 34 | 32 |
| College | 56 | 38 | 37 | 35 |
| Expectant parents | 99 | 76 | 72 | 29 |
| Parents | 74 | 34 | 34 | 33 |
| Totals | 268 | 183 | 177 | 129 |

Sixty-seven (51.93%) of the participants were nonparents. Twenty-nine (22.49%) were expecting their first child, and 33 (25.58%) were already parents.

Types of organizations or institutions that delivered the parent education classes were as follows: 32 (24.9%) received their parent education from a high school, 35 (27.13%) from a college or university, 32 (24.9%) from a hospital, and 30 (23.25%) from other type of organization or institution.

Table 17 displays the participant characteristics.

Instrument

Participants rated the importance of various parent education concepts for inclusion in parent education courses for someone at their age/stage of life. The concepts were arranged on the

Table 17

Participant Characteristics

| Demographic variable (options) | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| <u>Age:</u> | | |
| 13-15 | 3 | 2.33 |
| 16-18 | 28 | 21.71 |
| 19-23 | 43 | 33.33 |
| 24-29 | 18 | 13.95 |
| 30-35 | 25 | 19.38 |
| 36 or older | 12 | 9.30 |
| <u>Parent status:</u> | | |
| Nonparent | 67 | 51.93 |
| Expecting first child | 29 | 22.49 |
| Parent | 33 | 25.58 |
| <u>Institutions or organizations offering parent education class:</u> | | |
| High school | 32 | 24.90 |
| College or university | 35 | 27.13 |
| Hospital | 32 | 24.90 |
| Other | 30 | 23.25 |

instrument by major topic, i.e., dependent variables. The rating scale was a 5-point scale: 1 = Trivial, should not be included, 2 = Unimportant, include only if there is enough time, 3 = Moderately Important, spend some time on this concept, 4 = Important, spend a

substantial amount of time on this concept, and 5 = Critical, must be covered as a unique concept.

The reliability of the measure of the dependent variables remained quite stable from the field test to the final data collection. Table 18 contains the alpha coefficients for the final form of the instrument.

Table 18
Reliability of Dependent Variable Measures

| Dependent Variable | Alpha coefficients |
|--|--------------------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | .88 |
| Infancy (IN) | .91 |
| Early Childhood (EC) | .84 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | .86 |
| Adolescence (AD) | .90 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | .85 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | .85 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | .90 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | .84 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | .82 |
| Career-Related Concerns (CRC) | .83 |

Means for the dependent variables were computed as the sum of scores for items within that section divided by the total number of items. This procedure, the analysis of variance for each dependent

variable, and post hoc analysis (using the Bonferroni method) were carried out through the use of the ANOVA program of SPSS (Hull & Nie, 1981) and Minitab (Ryan, Joiner, & Ryan, 1981).

Findings of the Hypotheses

To simplify further discussion of the dependent variables and hypotheses, the hypotheses will be referred to by their dependent variable name which in some cases will be abbreviated and in other cases will be written out. For example, Hypothesis 1 (or Pregnancy and Childbirth) will be referred to as PC, Hypothesis 2 (or Infancy) will be IN, Hypothesis 3 (Early Childhood) will be EC, Hypothesis 4 (Late Childhood) will be LC, Hypothesis 5 (Adolescence) will be AD, Hypothesis 6 (Health and Safety) will be HS, Hypothesis 7 (Social Issues Related to Parenthood) will be SI, Hypothesis 8 (Family Relations and Communication) will be FRC, Hypothesis 9 (Guiding the Behavior of Children) will be GBC, Hypothesis 10 (Parenting Patterns) will be PP, and Hypothesis 11 (Career-Related Concerns) will be CRC.

In the post hoc analysis, contrasts were made in the following manner: Contrast 1 was secondary students vs. college, expectant parents, and parents, combined; Contrast 2 was college students vs. secondary students, expectant parents, and parents, combined; Contrast 3 was expectant parents vs. the secondary, college, and parents, combined; Contrast 4 was parents vs. secondary, college, and expectant parents, combined; Contrast 5 was secondary students vs. parents; Contrast 6 was college students vs. expectant parents; and Contrast 7 was expectant parents vs. parents.

To simplify further discussions of the post hoc analysis, abbreviations of the groups will be as follows: S = secondary students, C = college students, Ex = expectant parents, and P = parents. When referring to a contrast between any combination of these groups in the findings section, in order to aid the reader, sometimes these abbreviations will be used and other times the words will be used.

The discussion of each of the hypotheses will center around three types of information. The analysis of variance that was performed will be discussed and then a table will appear that depicts this information. The tables for the ANOVAs will contain columns that contain data for the sum of squares, the degrees of freedom, the mean squares, the F value, and the approximate probability of F . Following the analysis of variance tables, a discussion and table for the post hoc contrasts will appear.

The post hoc procedure used was the Bonferroni method which is a method by which the statistic is computed by dividing the variable means by the error term (Miller, 1966). This value is then compared to a critical value in the t distribution with the appropriate degrees of freedom. A critical value for the alpha of .10 was used throughout the analyses. In the post hoc tables, the columns contain information about the contrasts, the value of the contrast (which is the mean of the group minus the mean of the group or groups with which the first group is being contrasted), the standard error of the contrast, and the t value.

At the end of each hypothesis section a discussion and table will appear describing the central tendencies and dispersions of

each of the dependent variables. These tables will contain the name of the dependent variable, the levels of the independent variables, the size of each group, and the group means and standard deviations.

Findings of Hypothesis 1: Pregnancy and Childbirth

Hypothesis 1 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Pregnancy and Childbirth. There were six items on the instrument that, together, measured this variable. The reliability coefficient for importance of Pregnancy and Childbirth was .88. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

The analysis of data for Hypothesis 1 yielded an F with a probability of $< .001$. Because this probability is less than the established .1 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 19 presents the data for the one-way analysis of variance.

Table 19

ANOVA for Pregnancy and Childbirth

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 29.76 | 3 | 9.92 | 14.08 | $< .001$ |
| Residual | 88.05 | 125 | .70 | | |
| Total | 117.80 | 128 | .92 | | |

Post hoc analysis yielded significant differences on five of the seven contrasts at an overall alpha of .10. Significant differences were found for Secondary vs. College, Expectant Parents, and Parents; College vs. Secondary, Expectant Parents, and Parents; Parents vs. Secondary, College, and Expectant Parents; Secondary vs. Parents; and Expectant Parents vs. Parents. The contrasts, values of the contrasts, standard error of the contrasts, and t values are depicted in Table 20.

Table 20
Post Hoc Analysis for Pregnancy and Childbirth

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | -1.49 | .51 | -2.89* |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | -1.56 | .50 | -3.12* |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | - .08 | .53 | - .15 |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | 3.12 | .51 | 6.13* |
| S vs. P | 1.15 | .21 | 5.53* |
| C vs. Ex | .37 | .21 | 1.75 |
| Ex vs. P | .80 | .21 | 3.74* |

*Shows significance at the .10 overall alpha.

Analysis of central tendencies and dispersion for the participants for Pregnancy and Childbirth was carried out and is displayed in Table 21. The high mean for this variable was 3.98 given by the college students and the low mean was 2.81 which was given by the

parent group. The most homogeneous group was the college students and the most disparate group was the parents. Group sizes, means, and standard deviations are depicted in Table 21.

Table 21
Central Tendency and Dispersion for
Pregnancy and Childbirth

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | \bar{x} | <u>s</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth | Secondary students | 32 | 3.96* | .78 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.98* | .60 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.61 | .64 |
| | Parents | 33 | 2.81* | 1.19 |

*Significantly different from the other groups.

Findings of Hypothesis 2: Infancy

Hypothesis 2 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Infancy. There were five items on the instrument that, together, measured this variable. The reliability coefficient for the importance of Infancy was .91. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no difference among the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

The analysis of data for Infancy resulted in an F with a probability of $< .001$. Since this probability is well below the

established .1 level of significance, it was possible to reject the null hypothesis. Table 22 contains the summary data for the ANOVA.

Table 22
ANOVA for Infancy

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 15.12 | 3 | 5.04 | 6.64 | < .001 |
| Residual | 94.87 | 125 | .76 | | |
| Total | 109.98 | 128 | .86 | | |

Post hoc analysis showed significant differences for three of the seven contrasts performed for this variable. Significant differences were found for C vs. S, Ex, and P; for P vs. S, C, and Ex; and Ex vs. P. The data for the contrasts are presented in Table 23 which contains the value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t values.

Data analysis produced information on central tendencies and dispersion for each group on the importance of Infancy. These data are presented in Table 24. It should be noted that the high mean for this variable was 4.06 (rated by college students) and the low mean was 2.81 (rated by parents), both of which were significantly different from the others. The college students were nearly twice as homogeneous as the parents for this dependent variable.

Table 23
Post Hoc Analysis for Infancy

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | .13 | .53 | .25 |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | -1.65 | .52 | -3.19* |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | - .53 | .55 | - .95 |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | 2.04 | .53 | 3.87* |
| S vs. P | .48 | .22 | 2.21 |
| C vs. Ex | .28 | .22 | 1.29 |
| Ex vs. P | .64 | .22 | 2.90* |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

Table 24
Central Tendency and Dispersion for Infancy

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | <u>\bar{x}</u> | <u>s</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Infancy | Secondary students | 32 | 3.61 | .90 |
| | College students | 35 | 4.06* | .59 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.78 | .77 |
| | Parents | 33 | 2.81* | 1.13 |

*Significantly different from the other groups.

Findings of Hypothesis 3: Early Childhood

Hypothesis 3 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Early Childhood. Six items on the Parent Education Questionnaire measured this variable. The reliability coefficient for the importance of Early Childhood was .84. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

The data analysis for this hypothesis yielded an F with a probability of .198. This probability is greater than the established .1 level of significance and, as such, provided evidence to retain the null hypothesis that there is no difference among the groups in the perceived importance of concepts related to Early Childhood. Because there was no significant difference, the post hoc analysis table is missing for this hypothesis. Table 25 presents the data for the ANOVA of this hypothesis.

Table 25
ANOVA for Early Childhood

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 2.71 | 3 | .90 | 1.58 | .198 |
| Residual | 71.46 | 125 | .57 | | |
| Total | 74.17 | 128 | .58 | | |

Analysis of the data for Hypothesis 3 yielded the data for central tendency and dispersion for this dependent variable which is displayed in Table 26. Means ranged from a low of 3.43 (rated by expectant parents) to 3.83 (rated by college students), but there were no significant differences found for either group. It is interesting to note the similarities in standard deviations for the four groups which indicates homogeneity of the groups.

Table 26
Central Tendency and Dispersion for Early Childhood

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | \bar{x} | <u>s</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Early Childhood | Secondary students | 32 | 3.62 | .77 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.83 | .62 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.43 | .88 |
| | Parents | 33 | 3.72 | .75 |

Findings of Hypothesis 4: Late Childhood

Hypothesis 4 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to the importance of Late Childhood. There were six items on the instrument that, together, measured this variable. The reliability coefficient for importance of Late Childhood was .86. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among the groups in the importance of this topic.

The data analysis for Hypothesis 4 yielded an F with a probability of .001. Because this probability is less than the established .1 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 27 contains the summary data for the ANOVA.

Table 27
ANOVA for Late Childhood

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 9.35 | 3 | 3.12 | 5.82 | .001 |
| Residual | 66.87 | 125 | .53 | | |
| Total | 76.22 | 128 | .59 | | |

Post hoc analysis was performed on seven contrasts for the variable Late Childhood. The following three contrasts were found to have significance: Ex vs. S, C, & P; C vs. Ex; and Ex vs. P.

Table 28 depicts the value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t values.

Analysis of the data for central tendency and dispersion for Late Childhood showed a low mean of 3.04 (rated by expectant parents) and a high mean of 3.76 (rated by college students). However, these groups were not significantly different from the others. Table 29 displays group sizes, means, and standard deviations for the groups for this variable. The group which displayed the least homogeneity was also the group for which there was significant difference from the other groups.

Table 28

Post Hoc Analysis for Late Childhood

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | - .51 | .45 | -1.15 |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | -1.00 | .43 | -2.31 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | 1.88 | .46 | 4.05* |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | - .36 | .44 | - .81 |
| S vs. P | .04 | .18 | .21 |
| C vs. Ex | .72 | .18 | 3.92* |
| Ex vs. P | - .56 | .19 | -3.00* |

*Significant at the .1 overall alpha level.

Table 29

Central Tendency and Dispersion for Late Childhood

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | <u>\bar{x}</u> | <u>s</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Late Childhood | Secondary students | 32 | 3.63 | .80 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.76 | .61 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.04* | .89 |
| | Parents | 33 | 3.60 | .62 |

*Significantly different from the other groups.

Findings of Hypothesis 5: Adolescence

Hypothesis 5 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to the importance of Adolescence. There are six items on the Parent Education Questionnaire that, together, measure this variable. The reliability coefficient for importance of Adolescence is .90. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

Data analysis of this hypothesis yielded an F with a probability of $< .001$. Because this probability is less than the .1 level of significance that had been established, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 30 presents the summary data for this ANOVA.

Table 30
ANOVA for Adolescence

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 17.63 | 3 | 5.88 | 10.67 | $< .001$ |
| Residual | 68.85 | 125 | .55 | | |
| Total | 86.47 | 128 | .68 | | |

Post hoc analysis was performed on seven contrasts for Adolescence and three of the seven contrasts were found to be significant. These were Expectant Parent vs. Secondary, College, and Parents;

College vs. Expectant Parents; and Expectant Parents vs. Parents.

Table 31 contains value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t values.

Table 31
Post Hoc Analysis for Adolescence

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | t value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | - .65 | .45 | -1.43 |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | - .91 | .44 | -2.07 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | 2.64 | .47 | 5.62* |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | -1.07 | .45 | -2.39 |
| S vs. P | - .11 | .18 | - .58 |
| C vs. Ex | .89 | .19 | 4.77* |
| Ex vs. P | - .93 | .19 | -4.92* |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

Data analysis of the central tendencies and dispersions for Adolescence yielded the information which is presented in Table 32. It can be noted that the means range from 3.28 (rated by expectant parents) to 4.21 (rated by parents). However, of these two extreme means, only the expectant parents differed significantly from the others. The parents were twice as homogeneous as the expectant parents for this variable. Group sizes, means, and standard deviations appear in Table 32.

Table 32

Central Tendency and Dispersion for Adolescence

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | \bar{x} | <u>s</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Adolescence | Secondary students | 32 | 4.10 | .69 |
| | College students | 35 | 4.17 | .64 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.28* | 1.05 |
| | Parents | 33 | 4.21 | .52 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

Findings of Hypothesis 6: Health and Safety

Hypothesis 6 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Health and Safety. There are five items on the instrument which measured this variable. The reliability coefficient for the importance of Health and Safety was .85. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

Data analysis for Health and Safety yielded an F with a probability of $< .001$. Because this probability is less than the .1 level of significance that had been established, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 33 depicts the summary data for the ANOVA for this variable.

Post hoc analysis of the data for Health and Safety was performed on seven contrasts and, of these, two were found to be

Table 33
ANOVA for Health and Safety

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 14.91 | 3 | 4.97 | 6.64 | < .001 |
| Residual | 93.54 | 125 | .75 | | |
| Total | 108.44 | 128 | .85 | | |

significant. These were P vs. S, C, and Ex and S vs. P. Table 34 contains information about the value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t values.

Table 34
Post Hoc Analysis for Health and Safety

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | -1.31 | .53 | -2.48 |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | -1.06 | .51 | -2.06 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | .30 | .55 | .54 |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | 2.07 | .52 | 3.95* |
| S vs. P | .85 | .21 | 3.94* |
| C vs. Ex | .34 | .22 | 1.56 |
| Ex vs. P | .44 | .22 | 2.01 |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

Analysis of central tendencies and dispersions for the data from Health and Safety yielded a range of means from a low of 3.30 (rated by parents) to a high of 4.15 (rated by secondary students). There were significant differences found between parents and the others. College students were nearly twice as homogeneous as the parents. A complete display of the descriptive data is presented in Table 35 with group sizes, means, and standard deviations.

Table 35
Central Tendency and Dispersion for Health and Safety

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | \bar{x} | <u>s</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Health and Safety | Secondary students | 32 | 4.15 | .89 |
| | College students | 35 | 4.09 | .62 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.75 | .91 |
| | Parents | 33 | 3.30* | 1.01 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

Findings of Hypothesis 7: Social Issues Related to Parenthood

Hypothesis 7 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Social Issues Related to Parenthood. Five items on the Parent Education Questionnaire, together, measured this variable. The reliability coefficient for the importance of Social Issues Related to Parenthood was .85. The null

hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

Analysis of the data for Hypothesis 7 yielded an F with a probability of $< .001$. Because this probability is less than the established .1 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 36 depicts the summary data for the ANOVA for Social Issues Related to Parenthood.

Table 36
ANOVA for Social Issues Related to Parenthood

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 18.12 | 3 | 6.04 | 7.67 | $< .001$ |
| Residual | 98.45 | 125 | .79 | | |
| Total | 116.57 | 128 | .91 | | |

Post hoc analysis of the data for Social Issues Related to Parenthood was performed on seven contrasts. Of these, four contrasts were found to be significant. These significant contrasts were Secondary vs. College, Expectant Parents, and Parents; Expectant Parents vs. Secondary, College, and Parents; College vs. Expectant Parents; and Expectant Parents vs. Parents. The data for the contrasts are depicted in Table 37 with the value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t values.

Analysis of the data for Social Issues Related to Parenthood yielded data related to central tendency and dispersion which is

Table 37
Post Hoc Analysis for Social Issues
Related to Parenthood

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | -1.94 | .54 | -3.57* |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | - .43 | .53 | - .81 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | 2.38 | .56 | 4.23* |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | - .01 | .54 | - .02 |
| S vs. P | .48 | .22 | 2.19 |
| C vs. Ex | .70 | .22 | 3.14* |
| Ex vs. P | - .60 | .23 | -2.64* |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

depicted in Table 38. There was a low mean of 2.98 (rated by expectant parents) and a high mean of 4.06 (rated by secondary students). Significant differences were found between secondary students and the others and between expectant parents and the others. The low standard deviation was .74 for college students and the high was 1.05 for expectant parents showing that the expectant parents are 50% more heterogeneous than college students with respect to their perception of the importance of this topic.

Findings of Hypothesis 8: Family Relations and Communication

Hypothesis 8 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived

Table 38
Central Tendency and Dispersion for Social Issues
Related to Parenthood

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | <u>\bar{x}</u> | <u>s</u> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood | Secondary students | 32 | 4.06* | .88 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.68 | .74 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 2.98* | 1.05 |
| | Parents | 33 | 3.58 | .88 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

importance of concepts related to Family Relations and Communication. There were six items on the instrument that were pooled to measure this variable. The reliability coefficient for the importance of this variable was .90. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

The analysis of data for Hypothesis 8 yielded an F with a probability of $< .001$. Because this probability is less than the established .1 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 39 presents the summary data for the ANOVA for Family Relations and Communication.

Post hoc analysis was performed on the data for Family Relations and Communication. Of the seven contrasts, five were found to be significant. The significant contrasts were Ex vs. S, C, & P; P vs. S, C, & Ex; S vs. P; C vs. Ex; and Ex vs. P. Table 40

contains value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t values for each contrast.

Table 39
ANOVA for Family Relations and Communication

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 15.64 | 3 | 5.21 | 8.74 | < .001 |
| Residual | 74.56 | 125 | .60 | | |
| Total | 90.20 | 128 | .70 | | |

Table 40
Post Hoc Analysis for Family Relations
and Communication

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | .85 | .47 | 1.79 |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | - .38 | .46 | - .83 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | 1.63 | .49 | 3.34* |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | -2.10 | .47 | -4.48* |
| S vs. P | - .74 | .19 | -3.84* |
| C vs. Ex | .50 | .19 | 2.60* |
| Ex vs. P | - .93 | .20 | -4.75 |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

Data analysis results from Family Relations and Communication showed a range of means from 3.41 (rated by expectant parents) to 4.34 (rated by parents). Both of these extreme means were found to be significantly different from the other groups. Parents had the lowest standard deviation and secondary students had the highest making the secondary students twice as heterogeneous as the parents for this variable. Group sizes, means, and standard deviations appear in Table 41.

Table 41
Central Tendency and Dispersion for Family
Relations and Communication

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | <u>\bar{x}</u> | <u>s</u> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Family Relations and Communication | Secondary students | 32 | 3.61 | 1.00 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.91 | .63 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.41* | .86 |
| | Parents | 33 | 4.34* | .46 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

Findings of Hypothesis 9: Guiding the Behavior of Children

Hypothesis 9 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Guiding the Behavior of Children to be. Five items on the Parent Education Questionnaire, together, measured the importance of Guiding the Behavior of Children.

Reliability for this variable was .84. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences between the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

The analysis of data for Guiding the Behavior of Children yielded an F with a probability of $< .001$. Because this probability is less than the established .1 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 42 presents the summary data for the ANOVA for this variable.

Table 42
ANOVA for Guiding the Behavior of Children

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 10.78 | 3 | 3.59 | 6.04 | $< .001$ |
| Residual | 74.39 | 125 | .59 | | |
| Total | 85.18 | 128 | .66 | | |

Post hoc analysis for Guiding the Behavior of Children was performed on seven contrasts. There were four contrasts that were found to be significant. These were Expectant Parents vs. Secondary, College, and Parents; Parents vs. Secondary, College, and Expectant Parents; College vs. Expectant Parents; and Expectant Parents vs. Parents. Table 43 contains the value of each contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t values.

Analysis of the data for Guiding the Behavior of Children yielded means ranging from 3.25 (rated by expectant parents) to

Table 43
Post Hoc Analysis for Guiding the
Behavior of Children

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | .18 | .47 | .37 |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | - .41 | .46 | - .90 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | 1.76 | .49 | 3.60* |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | -1.52 | .47 | -3.26* |
| S vs. P | - .42 | .19 | -2.22 |
| C vs. Ex | .54 | .19 | 2.80* |
| Ex vs. P | - .82 | .20 | -4.18* |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

4.07 (rated by parents) both of which were found to be significantly different from the others. Standard deviations of the groups showed a low of .48 for the parent group and a high of 1.03 for the expectant parents which means that the parent group was twice as homogeneous as the expectant parents for this variable. Table 44 presents group sizes, means, and standard deviations for this variable.

Findings of Hypothesis 10: Parenting Patterns

Hypothesis 10 is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Parenting Patterns. Five items on the instrument were pooled to measure this variable. Reliability

Table 44

Central Tendency and Dispersion for Guiding
the Behavior of Children

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | <u>\bar{x}</u> | <u>s</u> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Guiding the Behavior of Children | Secondary students | 32 | 3.64 | .89 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.79 | .61 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 3.25* | 1.03 |
| | Parents | 33 | 4.07* | .48 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

for the importance of this variable was .82. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences between the groups in how important they perceived this topic to be.

Data analysis of this hypothesis yielded an F with a probability of .003. Because this probability is less than the .1 level of significance which had been previously established, the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 45 presents the summary data for the ANOVA.

Table 45

ANOVA for Parenting Patterns

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 9.61 | 3 | 3.20 | 5.01 | .003 |
| Residual | 80.02 | 125 | .64 | | |
| Total | 89.64 | 128 | .70 | | |

Analysis of the data for Parenting Patterns was submitted to post hoc analysis and seven contrasts were performed. There were three contrasts that were found to be significant. The significant contrasts were S vs. C, Ex, & P; Ex vs. S, C, & P; and C vs. Ex. Table 46 contains for each contrast value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t value.

Table 46
Post Hoc Analysis for Parenting Patterns

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | -1.24 | .49 | -2.53* |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | - .78 | .47 | -1.64 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | 1.65 | .51 | 3.26* |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | .37 | .49 | .77 |
| S vs. P | .40 | .20 | 2.03 |
| C vs. Ex | .61 | .20 | 3.03* |
| Ex vs. P | - .32 | .20 | -1.56 |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

Analysis of the data for Parenting Patterns yielded means ranging from a low of 2.82 (rated by expectant parents) to 3.54 (rated by secondary students) both of which were found to be significantly different from the others. Standard deviations for the four groups showed a low of .58 for the college students and a high of 1.00 for secondary students, making the college students nearly twice as

homogeneous as the secondary students. Group sizes, means, and standard deviations for the four groups appear in Table 47.

Table 47
Central Tendency and Dispersion for
Parenting Patterns

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | <u>\bar{x}</u> | <u>s</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Parenting Patterns | Secondary students | 32 | 3.54* | 1.00 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.43 | .58 |
| | Expectant parents | 29 | 2.82* | .92 |
| | Parents | 33 | 3.14 | .67 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

Findings of Hypothesis 11: Career-Related Concerns

This hypothesis is concerned with potential differences among groups at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in the perceived importance of concepts related to Career-Related Concerns. There were three items on the questionnaire which measured this variable. Reliability was .83 for the importance of Career-Related Concerns. The null hypothesis stated that there would be no differences among the groups in their perceptions about how important this topic was.

Data analysis for this hypothesis yielded an F with a probability of .01. Because this probability is less than the .1 level of significance that was previously established, it was possible to

reject the null hypothesis. Table 48 contains the summary data for the ANOVA for Career-Related Concerns.

Table 48
ANOVA for Career-Related Concerns

| Source | <u>SS</u> | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F</u> | Prob. of <u>F</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| Main effects | 15.52 | 3 | 5.17 | 3.95 | .010 |
| Residual | 163.59 | 125 | 1.31 | | |
| Total | 179.11 | 128 | 1.40 | | |

Post hoc analysis of the data for Career-Related Concerns was performed on seven contrasts. Of these, two were found to be significant. The significant contrasts were Parents vs. Secondary, College, and Expectant Parents and Secondary vs. Parents. Table 49 shows for each contrast value of the contrast, standard error of the contrast, and t value.

Analysis of the data from Career-Related Concerns yielded means ranging from 3.09 (rated by parents) to 4.01 (rated by secondary students). There was significant difference found between parents and the other groups. Standard deviations for the groups show a low of .71 for college students and a high of 1.56 for secondary students, thus showing that the college students are twice as homogeneous as the secondary students relative to this variable. Group sizes, means, and standard deviations are presented in Table 50.

Table 49

Post Hoc Analysis for Career-Related Concerns

| Contrast | Value of the contrast | S. error of the contrast | <u>t</u> value |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S vs. C, Ex, & P | -1.50 | .70 | -2.15 |
| C vs. S, Ex, & P | -.80 | .68 | -1.17 |
| Ex vs. S, C, & P | .15 | .72 | .21 |
| P vs. S, C, & Ex | 2.15 | .69 | 3.11* |
| S vs. P | .91 | .28 | 3.22* |
| C vs. Ex | .24 | .29 | .82 |
| Ex vs. P | .50 | .29 | 1.72 |

*Significant at the .10 overall alpha level.

Table 50

Central Tendency and Dispersion for Career-Related Concerns

| Dependent variable | Independent variable level | <u>n</u> | <u>\bar{x}</u> | <u>s</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Career-Related Concerns | Secondary students | 32 | 4.01 | 1.56 |
| | College students | 35 | 3.83 | .71 |
| | Expectant Parents | 29 | 3.59 | 1.19 |
| | Parents | 33 | 3.09* | .99 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

In order to take a different perspective on the findings of the 11 hypotheses presented in this study, this section will focus on the findings by group (levels of the independent variable) rather than by hypothesis (dependent variables) as the last section has just done. Following, the reader will find a discussion of how each group differed from the other groups combined. This is an expansion of the post hoc comparison discussion of contrasts S vs. C, Ex, & P; C vs. S, Ex, & P; Ex vs. S, C, & P; and P vs. S, C, & Ex.

Secondary Students

Findings from the secondary students group showed differences between secondary students against the other groups combined on PC and PP. The secondary students were higher in both cases than the combined means of the other groups. Importance ratings for each of the dependent variables by the secondary group are displayed in Table 51 for comparative purposes. Means which were significantly different from the other groups are indicated.

College Students

Findings from the college student group showed significant differences were found between college students and the rest of the groups combined on PC, IN, AD, and SI. The college students were higher on all of these variables than the combined means of the other groups. Means and standard deviations for importance ratings are listed in Table 52 for purposes of comparison. Those dependent

Table 51

Overview of Secondary Students on the Dependent Variables

| Dependent variable | \bar{x} | s |
|--|-----------|------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | 3.96* | .79 |
| Infancy (IN) | 3.61 | .90 |
| Early Childhood (EC) | 3.63 | .78 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | 3.63 | .80 |
| Adolescence (AD) | 4.10 | .69 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | 4.15 | .89 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | 4.06 | .88 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 3.61 | 1.00 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | 3.64 | .89 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | 3.54* | 1.00 |
| Career-Related Concerns (CRC) | 4.01 | 1.56 |

*Significantly different from other three groups.

variables for which there were found significant differences for this group compared to the other groups are indicated.

Expectant Parents

Findings from the expectant parent group showed significant differences between expectant parents and the rest of the groups combined on LC, FRC, GBC, and PP. These differences are due to the lower ratings given by this group on these topics compared to how the others rated them. Means for the importance ratings on each of

Table 52

Overview of College Students on the Dependent Variables

| Dependent variable | \bar{x} | s |
|--|-----------|-----|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | 3.98* | .60 |
| Infancy (IN) | 4.06* | .59 |
| Early Childhood (EC) | 3.83 | .62 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | 3.76 | .61 |
| Adolescence (AD) | 4.17* | .64 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | 4.09 | .62 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | 3.68* | .74 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 3.91 | .68 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | 3.79 | .61 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | 3.43 | .58 |
| Career-Related Concerns (CRC) | 3.83 | .71 |

*Significantly different from other three groups.

the dependent variables appear in Table 53 along with standard deviations. Means for which significant differences were found between expectant parents and the others are indicated.

Parents

Findings for the parent group showed significant differences between parents and the rest of the groups combined on PC, IN, HS, FRC, and CRC. The differences between parents and the others on PC, IN, and CRC are due to the very low ratings given to these topics in

Table 53

Overview of Expectant Parents on the Dependent Variables

| Dependent variable | \bar{x} | <u>s</u> |
|--|-----------|----------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | 3.61 | .64 |
| Infancy (IN) | 3.78 | .77 |
| Early Childhood (EC) | 3.43 | .88 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | 3.04* | .89 |
| Adolescence (AD) | 3.28 | 1.06 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | 3.75 | .91 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | 2.98 | 1.05 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 3.41* | .86 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | 3.25* | 1.03 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | 2.82* | .92 |
| Career-Related Concerns | 3.59 | 1.19 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

comparison to the other groups. The differences seen for FRC are due to the high rating given to this topic by parents in comparison to the other groups. This high rating could be due to the fact that the parents are highly aware of this topic because of the emphasis placed upon this topic in the STEP classes.

Means and standard deviations for the dependent variables are displayed in Table 54 for comparative purposes. Topics for which there were significant differences found between parents and the others are indicated.

Table 54

Overview of Parents on the Dependent Variables

| Dependent variable | \bar{x} | <u>s</u> |
|--|-----------|----------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | 2.81* | 1.19 |
| Infancy (IN) | 3.13* | 1.13 |
| Early Childhood (EC) | 3.72 | .75 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | 3.60 | .77 |
| Adolescence (AD) | 4.21 | .52 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | 3.30* | 1.01 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | 3.58 | .88 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 4.34* | .46 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | 4.07 | .48 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | 3.14 | .67 |
| Career-Related Concerns (CRC) | 3.09* | .99 |

*Significantly different from the other three groups.

Special Paired Comparisons

This section will now discuss differences between the groups by way of special comparisons that were performed in post hoc analysis. These comparisons are between (a) secondary students and parents, (b) college students and expectant parents, and (c) expectant parents and parents. Organization of this discussion will be by comparison and will touch on the specific dependent variables for which significant differences were found and possible reasons for the findings.

Secondary Students vs. Parents

Significant differences were found between these two groups on PC, HS, FRC, and CRC. As can be seen in Table 55, differences between these two groups on PC, HS, and CRC are due to the low ratings of the importance of these topics by the parents and high ratings of importance by the secondary students. For FRC, the situation is just opposite.

Table 55

Secondary Students vs. Parents

| Dependent variable | \bar{x} of secondary | \bar{x} of parents |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | 3.96 | 2.81 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | 4.15 | 3.30 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 3.61 | 4.34 |
| Career-Related Concerns (CRC) | 4.01 | 3.09 |

College Students vs. Expectant Parents

Significant differences were found between these two groups on LC, AD, SI, FRC, GBC, and PP. As can be seen in Table 56, the differences are all due to high ratings of importance by the college students in comparison to the lower ratings by the expectant parents.

Table 56

College Students vs. Expectant Parents

| Dependent variable | \bar{x} of college students | \bar{x} of expectant parents |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Late Childhood (LC) | 3.76 | 3.04 |
| Adolescence (AD) | 4.17 | 3.28 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | 3.68 | 2.98 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 3.91 | 3.41 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | 3.79 | 3.25 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | 3.43 | 2.82 |

Expectant Parents vs. Parents

Significant differences were found between these two groups on PC, IN, LC, AD, SI, FRC, and GBC. The differences between the two groups on PC and IN are due to high ratings of importance by the expectant parents in comparison to the ratings given by the parents. Differences between the groups on the other topics are due to the higher importance ratings given them by the parents in comparison to the expectant parents (see Table 57).

Summary

This chapter presented a discussion of group characteristics which included a description of data collection characteristics and participant characteristics, a discussion of the instrument,

Table 57
Expectant Parents vs. Parents

| Dependent variable | \bar{x} of expectant parents | \bar{x} of parents |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | 3.61 | 2.81 |
| Infancy (IN) | 3.78 | 3.13 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | 3.04 | 3.60 |
| Adolescence (AD) | 3.28 | 4.21 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | 2.98 | 3.58 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 3.41 | 4.34 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | 3.25 | 4.07 |

findings of each hypothesis, a description of group differences, and a discussion of special paired comparisons.

The Group Characteristics section focused on data collection procedures in terms of numbers of enrollees in the classes from which data were collected, members present, participants, and usable questionnaires. This section also dealt with how participants met the criteria of the independent variable which had been established in Chapter IV in addition to demographic information for each group. Information was presented on gender, age, parental status, and delivering institutions or organizations.

The Instrument section of this chapter discussed the content and format of the questionnaire and data analysis procedures utilized.

Findings of the study were organized by hypothesis where discussion and depiction of the data in tables for the ANOVAs, post hoc analysis, and descriptive data were presented. Significant differences were found in both the ANOVAs and post hoc analysis procedures.

Findings of the study were then organized into a discussion of how groups differed from the other groups on the importance of the various dependent variables. Further discussion of the findings focused on special paired comparisons between secondary students and parents, college students and expectant parents, and expectant parents and parents.

The next chapter presents a review of procedures, a discussion of trends in the results, implications of the study, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine how immediacy to parenthood affects one's perception of what should be learned in a parent education class. Differences were sought between groups of individuals at four levels of immediacy to parenthood (secondary students, college students, expectant first-time parents, and parents) on their perceived importance of 11 parenting topics. These topics were pregnancy and childbirth (PC), infancy (IN), early childhood (EC), late childhood (LC), adolescence (AD), health and safety (HS), social issues related to parenthood (SI), family relations and communication (FRC), guiding the behavior of children (GBC), parenting patterns (PP), and career-related concerns (CRC). In order to determine if there were differences, the data, collected through the use of a parent education questionnaire, were analyzed with a series of one-way analysis of variance. Following the one-way ANOVAs, post hoc analysis was conducted using the Bonferroni method.

The purpose of this chapter is to (a) present an overview of the data collection procedures, (b) discuss the trends in perceived importance of the dependent variables, (c) present implications of the study, (d) outline limitations of the study, and (e) make recommendations for future research.

Review of Data Collection Procedures

In reviewing the data collection procedures, the discussion will focus on how the instrument was developed and how data collection was carried out.

Instrument Development

The following process was followed in the development of the instrument for this study. First, parenting literature and curricular materials (textbooks, curriculum guides) were studied. Then, topics and concepts were developed from the study of the literature and curricular materials. Following that step, items for the instrument were developed from the concepts found in the literature and curricular materials. Five criteria were used to narrow the number of concepts from 250 to 58 items. These items were then organized into an instrument. Subsequently, the instrument was field tested, tested for reliability, and then refined for actual data collection.

Data Collection

Data were collected from 177 individuals at 15 class sites which offered parent education to secondary students, college students, expectant first-time parents, and parents. The delivering institutions or organizations were Kalamazoo Central High School, Western Michigan University, Bronson Methodist Hospital, Borgess Medical Center, Calhoun County Intermediate School District, and

Warren Consolidated Schools Community Education.

The participants responded to the Parent Education Questionnaire that was developed in the process described above. Of the 177 questionnaires collected, 129 met the criteria of the independent variable (respondents were female, of the correct parental status for their group, and participating in the later portion of a parent education class) and, therefore, were usable. This number represented 32 participants from the secondary group, 35 from the college group, 29 expectant first-time parents, and 33 parents.

The data from the questionnaires were then entered into the computer and data analysis was performed. One-way analysis of variance was performed on the data. Where significant differences in the means occurred, post hoc analysis was carried out using the Bonferroni method.

Trends in Perceived Importance

After data analysis was performed, it was clear that there were definite trends in how the four groups perceived the importance of the dependent variables. The following information about these trends is discussed as follows: (a) the flow of the trend is presented, (b) the hypotheses or dependent variables that followed the particular trend are discussed, (c) a discussion of the post hoc contrasts that were significant for dependent variables in the trend appears, (d) figures depicting the trend are displayed, and (e) possible explanations for the trend are presented.

Decreasing Importance

This trend presented a downward flow of importance of the dependent variables as the groups increased in their parental status. Means for the dependent variables were high on the secondary and college end of the spectrum and lower on the parent end for the hypotheses that followed this trend.

The dependent variable means that followed the trend of decreasing importance with increasing parental status were PC, IN, HS, and CRC.

In all four of the dependent variables, significant differences were found for the contrast of parents vs. the others. In three of the dependent variables (PC, HS, and CRC), significant differences were found when the contrast between secondary students and parents was performed. For two of the dependent variables (PC and IN), significant differences were found between college students and the others. Significant differences were also found between expectant parents and parents for these dependent variables. For PC, in addition to the significant contrasts already listed, there was also a significant difference found for the contrast of college students vs. the others. Figure 1 depicts the trend of decreasing importance.

This trend of decreasing importance indicates that for the topics of Pregnancy and Childbirth, Infancy, Health and Safety, and Career-Related Concerns, interest wanes as the parent education student becomes closer to parenthood. Parents clearly do not perceive these topics to be as important as do students at the other end of the parental status spectrum.

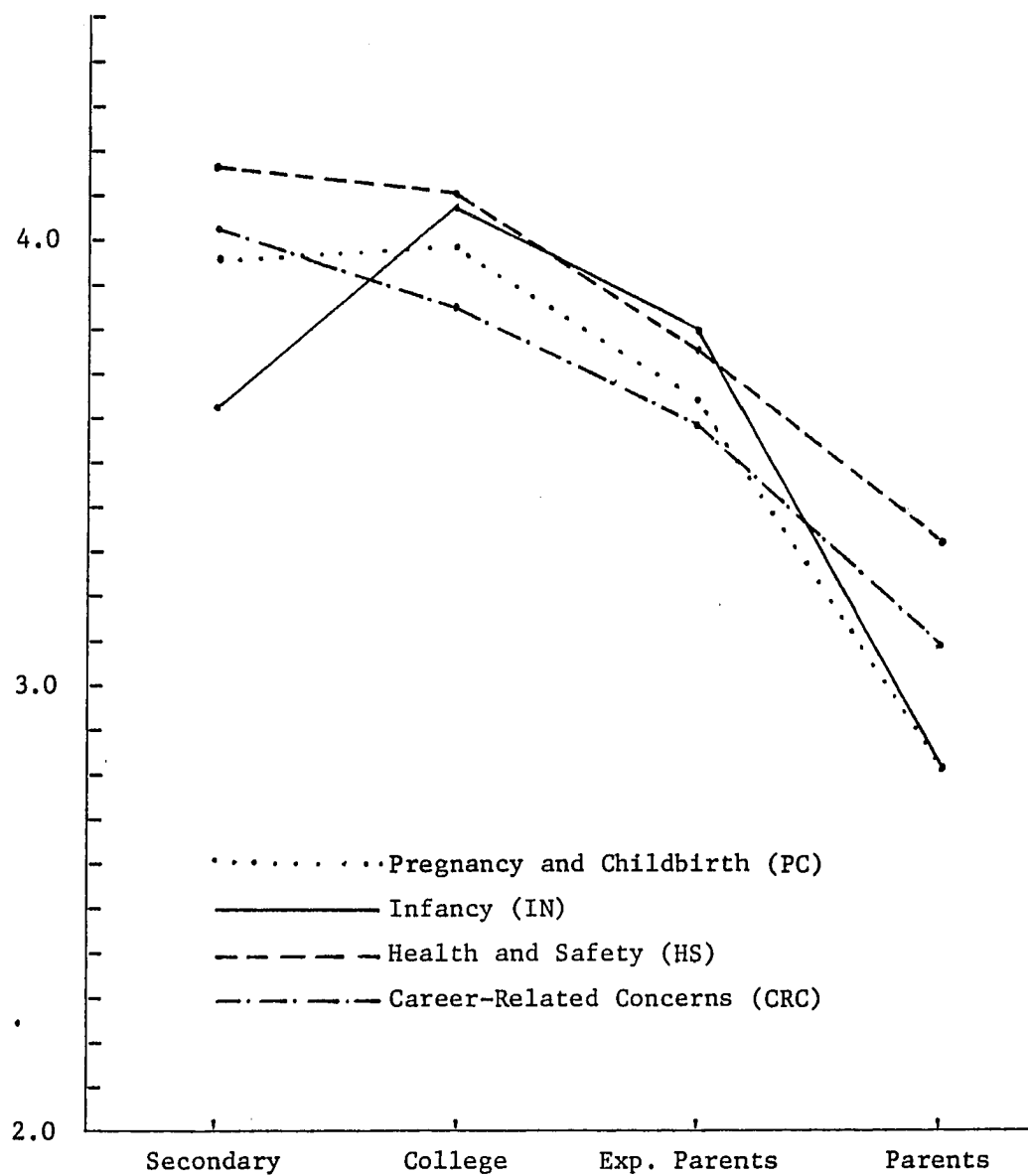


Figure 1
Trend of Decreasing Importance

The differences seen between secondary students and parents are quite easily understood for these topics. It appears that people who are already parents are no longer as interested in information about pregnancy and babies. They are past that point in their life and no longer perceive these topics as relevant or important for themselves. It also could be that secondary students perceive Health and Safety as important because this information is highly stressed in secondary courses and they feel least knowledgeable about this topic. Career-Related Concerns are probably perceived as very important to secondary students because they are in the process of trying to make career decisions for the future and are considering careers in child-related areas.

Differences between college students and the others are such that college students rated the importance of these topics higher than the others. This higher rating of the importance of these topics could be because the majority of the college students from whom data were collected are either majoring or minoring in an area related to family life and consider all the topics to be very important.

Differences between expectant parents and parents are found for the perceived importance of topics related to pregnancy and child-birth and infancy. Looking at the group members' stages of development and the issues with which they are dealing at this point in their lives, it is evident that expectant parents would consider these two topics more important than parents.

Modulating Importance

This trend is characterized by an up and down flow of means for the four groups. The secondary group is lower, followed by an upward direction for the college group, then a dip for the expectant parents is seen, followed by a rise for the parent group. The dependent variable means which followed this trend in up and down flow were LC, AD, FRC, and GBC.

In all four dependent variables, significant differences were found between expectant parents and the others and between college students and expectant parents. In three of the dependent variables, LC, AD, and GBC, significant differences were found between the expectant parent group and the parent group. In two of the dependent variables (FRC and GBC), significant differences were found between the parent group and the others. For FRC, significant differences were also found between the secondary group and the parent group. Figure 2 depicts the trend of Modulating Importance.

Differences between the expectant parents and the others are noticeable due to the fact that expectant parents rated these topics as least important of all the groups. These, apparently, are not topics which expectant parents consider important at this time of their life. However, parents seem to be dealing with these issues in their lives and, therefore, perceive these topics as very important. Also, the STEP classes focus a great deal on family relations and communication and also on how to guide child behavior. The modulation between secondary and college students could be related

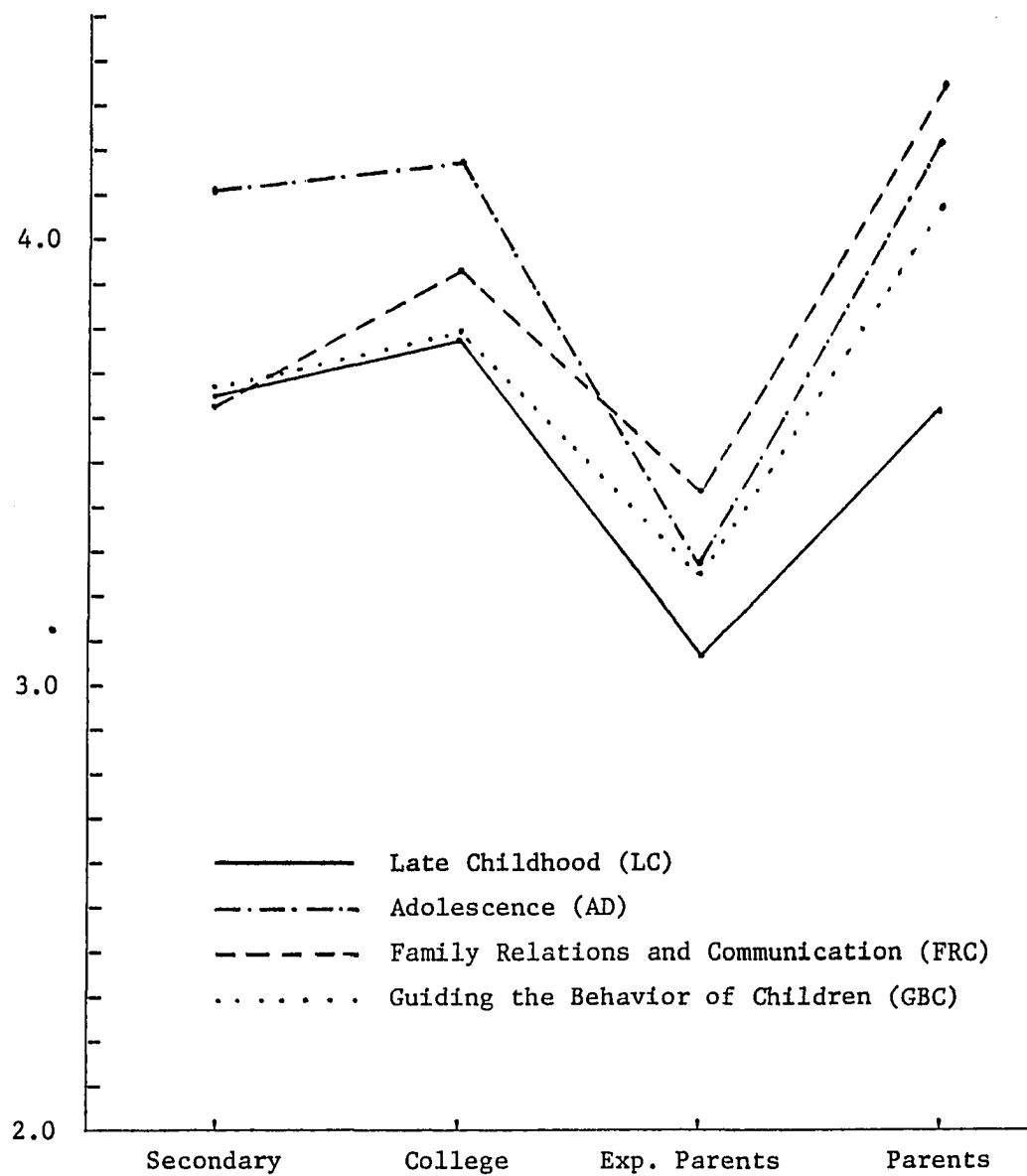


Figure 2
Trend of Modulating Importance

to developmental issues for the secondary students and educational issues for the college students. The secondary students are quite far from the practical aspects of parenthood indicated in two of the dependent variables being discussed and probably do not sense the importance of these topics. The college students, again, are preparing for careers related to family life and sense that all the topics are quite important.

Implications of the Findings

A review of the literature related to curriculum development and parent education pointed toward the need for consideration of the student's interests and needs when planning curricula. It was also noted that a student's developmental stage of life might play an important role in determining what they should be learning. Because of these arguments and also because of a seeming need for consensus among parent educators on what content should be included, this study was initiated. It is believed that this research can add important information to the body of knowledge concerning curriculum development for parent education.

Any discussion of the value of a research study must be linked to potential future use of the data. The most logical use of the data from this study is in curriculum planning. With the information provided from this study, it would be possible to plan a comprehensive curriculum of parent education starting with the secondary level and continuing to education for parents. Content could be determined and planned such that information relevant to student

needs at each stage of the development toward parenthood would be presented appropriately.

The discussion of the implications of the findings will be organized by educational level and will focus on applications of the significant differences found in this study to specific curriculum and program needs in parent education at the particular level.

Secondary Students

Curriculum planners and instructors of parent education for secondary students should be sensitive to the interests and needs of this group of individuals because of the great need to awaken and stimulate their interest in parenting topics. What happens at this level of parent education often determines whether an individual desires to participate in parent education at a later time in their life. Educators should also be aware that there is a potential foundation in the area of parent education that needs to be laid at the secondary level on which additional, later learning can be built.

Secondary students show more interest in some areas of parent education than other areas. However, educators at the secondary level should be encouraged by the overall high ratings secondary students gave to the importance of all the topics presented in this study. There appears to be a desire to learn about parenthood at this level and, as such, educators should seize the opportunity to meet the apparent needs.

Chapter V of this document outlines the findings of this research, but at this point it would be helpful to specifically apply

the findings to curriculum development in parent education at the secondary level. First, in laying groundwork for future learning and in meeting the overall high interest of the students for learning this type of information, curricula should cover a broad range of topics at this level. This will serve the purpose of exposing students to the world of parenting, so to speak. But in doing this, teachers should be sensitive to the presentation of topics for which students did not show great interest. Perhaps by organizing and presenting material that capture the students' interest first, the teacher would then be able to hold their attention for learning of other important topics that are of lesser interest to the students.

Topics that were rated most important in comparison to the others by the secondary students that might be used as "attention-getters" are Pregnancy and Childbirth, Adolescence, Health and Safety, Social Issues Related to Parenthood, and Career-Related Concerns. These are also important topics to cover at this level because individuals with parent status are not as interested in many of these.

Topics that are of lesser interest to secondary students (in comparison to the others) that are of greater importance to parents (in comparison to the others) should probably be covered at this level in a way that will provide a base for later learning. That is, giving students enough information to expose them to the topic area and communicate the fact that the topic will be of interest to them more later in their life. Family Relations and Communication was found to be such a topic. Specific methodology, i.e., how the topic

is presented, should be carefully considered for presenting topics that were rated as less important.

College Students

The college students who participated in this study seemed to attach a great deal of importance to the majority of the topics for inclusion in the college level parent curriculum, more than did other groups. Parent educators need to be cautious, however, in determining potential differences between topics that might be included in a parent education course for majors and minors (in Home Economics, Family Life, etc.) and a course for the general population of college students. Those not majoring or minoring in a family-related area are potentially more self-motivated toward learning about parenting than others because they have sought the learning experience on their own. Those planning a career in a family-related area may have a different orientation to the parent education topics. Because of this, parent educators need to be aware of the student composition of their parent education classes at this level and plan their curriculum accordingly.

Based upon the findings reported earlier in this research, it is recommended that a comprehensive curriculum be planned for this level of parent education. Students seem to feel that most all of the topics are important; and therefore, since the desire to learn is there, present them with as much information as time and energy permit. This will also provide a broad base of information for the student who is planning for a career in working with

families.

Given the differences found between college students and the expectant parents, perhaps topics that are of lower importance to expectant parents should be reinforced to a greater extent at the college level. Topics for which significant differences were found between these two groups were Late Childhood, Adolescence, Social Issues Related to Parenthood, Family Relations and Communication, Guiding the Behavior of Children, and Parenting Patterns. By giving extra attention to these topics, perhaps students will carry this knowledge with them into the next stages of their lives when pregnancy and childbirth will be eclipsing other important parenting information they will need but not show a great interest in. Also, those in professional training will have this knowledge to impart to those with whom they will be working who need this information.

Expectant Parents

Curriculum development for parent education at the expectant parent level is a difficult matter. These individuals are approaching one of the most life changing events in their developmental process but few are receiving the information that will help make the new demands easier. Most deliverers of parent education for the expectant parent are hospitals with the primary purpose of preparing the expectant couple for a healthy pregnancy and a safe, meaningful birth experience. This is a crucial mission and an obvious orientation given the medical focus of hospitals. However, more could be done that would benefit the expectant parent later in their life as

a parent.

Because of the single-mindedness of expectant parents for their pregnancy and birth, it is difficult to help them see past this 9-month experience. But this narrow focus can also provide an excellent opportunity for parent educators to reach these individuals with additional parenting information. It is proposed that hospitals have a group of individuals who are really at a "teachable moment" in regard to education for pregnancy and childbirth and are doing a good job of meeting this informational need. However, the information given during this "teachable moment" could be broadened to include other essential topics related to parenthood that expectant parents perhaps don't realize are going to be helpful to them later. Rather than giving a total focus to the pregnancy and birth, it is recommended that programs for expectant parents use topics related to this experience to provide a springboard or attention-getter for presenting additional information.

Differences between expectant parents and parents show that the topics expectant parents may not be interested in at the present but will be highly interested in as parents are Late Childhood, Adolescence, Social Issues Related to Parenthood, Family Relations and Communication, and Guiding the Behavior of Children. So it appears that these would be essential topics to at least introduce at the expectant parent level. However, the low importance attached to these topics by expectant parents would warrant careful attention to how the topics would be presented.

Parents

Individuals involved in parent education at this level are perhaps the most self-motivated of all parenting students. They have chosen to participate in a self-improving experience in spite of the constraints their life imposes (children, marriage, jobs, etc.). Because of this, these individuals know what they want and want to be involved in planning what they learn. Parent educators need to be sensitive to the differences between these individuals and those at the other levels of parent education. These individuals are clearly a different type of student and their needs in the area of parent education are specific and definite. But educators should be cautious that parent education at the adult level not only meet needs, but also achieve goals (Jensen et al., 1964).

Pedagogy should include methods appropriate to the adult learner. This could include involvement by students in curriculum planning, group discussion, and assignments that call for specific application of information learned in the class.

Parents in this study rated as very important topics related to Early Childhood, Adolescence, Family Relations and Communication, and Guiding the Behavior of Children relative to the other groups. The results of this study showed that parents were clearly different from the other groups in rating the importance of Pregnancy and Childbirth, Infancy, Health and Safety, Family Relations and Communication, and Career-Related Concerns. The differences seen in all of these topics except Family Relations and Communication were

evident because these topics were not seen as important by the parents in comparison to the other groups. Also, a possible explanation for the important ratings of Family Relations and Communication is the emphasis given these concepts by the STEP classes. The implications of this information is that if the topics are not relevant to the parent (who is in the process of parenting and therefore has a good feel for what is important for them to know at this stage), then do not focus the attention of parent education at this level on these topics. While this is not to say that these topics are not important for individuals at this stage of life to know, it is saying that perhaps this information is already possessed by these individuals and, therefore, not necessarily included at this level.

It should also be noted that recruitment of individuals into parent education classes at this level could possibly be increased by stressing the practical nature of the learning in these classes. By focusing more on these topics perhaps increased numbers of parents would be interested in participating.

Limitations of the Study

It should be noted that there are nearly always limitations of a research study such as this one. In this study, limitations were in the area of instrumentation and sampling characteristics.

Instrumentation

In constructing the instrument for this study, it was necessary to consider length in terms of how long it would take an individual

to complete the instrument. The researcher had to be sensitive to the needs and plans of the parent education instructors and thus develop an instrument that would not take more than 20 minutes of their class time.

Because of the magnitude of possible parenting concepts that could have been included in the instrument for rating of importance, many subconcepts had to be collapsed into concepts in order to make the instrument a reasonable length. It is possible that had these subconcepts not been grouped together into concepts (making the concept more general in nature), some of the concepts could have been rated differently. For example, under the topic Pregnancy and Childbirth there is a concept "Husband/Wife Considerations" which contained three subconcepts: husbands and pregnancy, contraception, and abortion. Because these are issues that husbands and wives must consider, they were deemed appropriate for the same concept. However, it is possible that because there is great potential for difference of opinion on the last two of these three subconcepts, this could have confused the ratings of this concept. In other words, more comprehensive measures of each of the variables might have produced different results.

Sampling Characteristics

Because data were collected from a specific set of individuals, it is only possible to generalize the findings of this study to individuals with similar characteristics.

Data were collected from females only. Thus, it is only possible to generalize the findings of this study to females. And

according to Douvan and Adelson (1966/1970), females and males have different orientations to their futures in terms of family life and careers so these differences must be acknowledged when discussing the results of this study.

Further, these females were enrolled in parent education classes. Therefore, one can only assume that there are differences among parent education students at varying levels of immediacy to parenthood in their perceptions of the importance of various parenting topics for individuals involved in a parent education course.

This limitation could also be viewed as a strength. If curriculum development information is desired for parent education classes, one could easily use the information in this study to ascertain which topics students in parent education classes want to learn about.

Recommendations for Future Research

As a result of this study, several potential future research efforts could be suggested. These will be described following.

It would be potentially helpful for research to be done with the same instrument, but with different approaches to data collection. First, it is suggested that one could study a group with a nearly equal male/female ratio as to differences in perceptions about the importance of parenting topics. This could be done quite easily with the expectant parent group because parent education at this level is nearly always inclusive of males. It would also be interesting to compare parent educators' perceptions of what are

important topics with students' perceptions. Given the fact that teachers probably perceive more topics to be of greater importance, the comparison between these two groups might yield discrepancies in what the teacher wants to teach and what the student wants to learn. The same instrument, or similar one, could also be used on special populations: teen expectant parents and parents, lower socioeconomic groups with high pregnancy rates, and individuals ordered by the courts to attend parent education programs because of child neglect/abuse problems. Many education programs for these populations are currently in operation, but one wonders what type of information needs assessment exercises have been performed in preparing the curricula.

Another possible study would be to gather information about parent education students' perceived personal need for learning about various topics rather than importance. A questionnaire similar to the one used in this study could be designed for students to rate their level of perceived personal need rather than perceived importance as was done in this study.

Future research could also be done in the area of perceived importance of various parenting concepts on a more specific scale. Information could be obtained about one or two topics (rather than many as was done in this study) which would enable the researcher to study, in more depth, what specific concepts are perceived to be important.

Summary

The findings of this study provided evidence to support the rejection of 10 of the 11 null hypotheses presented in this research. Specific differences between groups representing differing levels of immediacy to parenthood were determined on each of the 10 dependent variables (topics) where significant differences were found. These post hoc analysis findings were reviewed in this chapter along with a review of data collection procedures.

Although there were some limitations found with this study, its potential use in curriculum development for parent education appears fruitful. Specific recommendations for applying these findings to curriculum development at each of the levels of parent education were made. Other interesting research possibilities, which became evident as a result of this study, were also discussed.

APPENDICES

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Appendix A

Field Test Introductory Remarks and Questionnaire

Introductory Remarks, Field Test

Hello, my name is Nancy Gerard. I am a graduate student at WMU working on some research and I need your help. I am interested in finding out what you and other people like you in parenting classes think are important concepts to learn in a class such as this.

I have a questionnaire here that contains a long list of concepts that could be taught in a parenting class. What I need you to do, if you are willing to help me, is to rate how important you feel each concept is.

In addition, I need your help in making this a better instrument. And to do that, there is a scale on the questionnaire that will allow you to rate the clarity of each item. In other words, you are rating how clear and understandable the item is.

Please read the directions and I think you will be able to understand what you are to do. You should be able to fill out the questionnaire in 30 minutes or less. If you choose not to fill it out, just leave it unanswered on the table. I will collect all of the questionnaires at the end of the 30 minutes. Thanks again for your help!

PARENTING TOPICS QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: This questionnaire contains many concepts that could be taught in a parenting class. There are two important tasks that I need you to complete for me in regard to this questionnaire.

The first task is to rate the clarity of each item. You will:

1. Read the item
2. Rate the item for clarity
 - a. if the item is poorly worded or you don't understand some of the words, you will rate the item low (1 or 2)
 - b. if the item appears quite clear and you understand the wording, you will rate the item high (4 or 5)
3. Circle the word/s that aren't clear and/or write a comment about what is wrong with the item on the lines that are provided (unless you rated the item high)

The second task is to rate the concepts as to how important you feel they are. You will:

1. Read the item
2. Rate the concept for its importance (Is the concept important enough to be taught in a parenting class for people of your age and stage of life?)
 - a. if the concept does not seem very important to you, you will rate it low (1 or 2)
 - b. if the concept seems very important to you, you will rate it high (4 or 5)

On each page of the questionnaire you will find:

1. The clarity and importance scale explanations
2. A description of the general topic to which the concepts in each item are related
3. The items
4. The clarity and importance scales on either side of the items

Thanks for your participation!

[Note. The pages of the Parenting Topics Questionnaire have been reduced to 74% of the original size.]

CLARITY SCALE

- 1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

- 1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | | | | | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|--------------|---|--|--|--|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | | | | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | 1. | <u>How pregnancy occurs</u> | | | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | (the process of conception, signs of pregnancy) | | | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | 2. | <u>Hereditary considerations</u> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | (sex determination, genetically transmitted diseases, birth defects) | | | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | 3. | <u>Prenatal development of the fetus</u> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | (effects of the mother's health, diet, toxic substances, complications during pregnancy) | | | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | 4. | <u>Preparations for a new baby</u> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | (choosing an obstetrician, preparing siblings for the baby, financial/material preparations needed) | | | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | 5. | <u>Husband/Wife considerations</u> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | (husbands and pregnancy, contraception, abortion) | | | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | 6. | <u>Labor and delivery</u> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | (prepared childbirth, premature births, multiple births, cesarian section deliveries, bonding) | | | | | | | | |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on each item before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of INFANCY.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|--|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | 1. <u>Infant care</u> | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | (bathing, diapering, and dressing the infant; sleep; feeding: bottle vs. breast, schedule vs. demand, weaning) | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. <u>Physical growth and development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | (teething, maturational differences between boys and girls, motor activity, infant stimulation and skill development) | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. <u>Cognitive development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | (intellectual development, language development, how an infant learns) | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. <u>Emotional development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | (the development of attachment, the infant's need for attachment and love, establishing trust, deprivation & disruption of attachment) | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. <u>Social development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | (play, social responses such as looking, smiling, & crying) | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6. <u>The infant's home and family</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | (influences of the home environment, significance of birth order and family size) | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7. <u>Transition to parenthood</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | (parental life-style changes, the newborn's effect on the marriage handling stress, post-partum emotions) | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | | |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales before going on.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of EARLY CHILDHOOD.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|--|--|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 1. <u>Child care</u> (sleep, feeding/self-feeding, bedwetting, toilet training, providing clothing, teaching the child to self-dress) | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 2. <u>Physical growth and development</u> (motor activity, maturational differences between boys and girls, hyperactivity) | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 3. <u>Cognitive development</u> (intellectual development, helping children learn) | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 4. <u>Emotional development</u> (attachment patterns, temper tantrums, aggression and anger, development of independence, separation fears self-esteem, sex role/gender identity) | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 5. <u>Social development</u> (sibling/peer relationships, play) | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 6. <u>Moral development</u> (development of the conscience, training for concern for others) | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on each item before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of LATE CHILDHOOD.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|---|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1. <u>Child Care</u> (sleep, feeding, providing clothing) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. <u>Physical growth and development</u> (maturational differences between boys and girls, onset of puberty, motor activity, hyperactivity) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. <u>Cognitive development</u> (intellectual development, the gifted child, learning disabilities) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. <u>Emotional development</u> (teaching children to control emotions, school phobias) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. <u>Social development</u> (peer/sibling relationships, development of the individuality) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6. <u>Moral development</u> (development of the conscience, training for concern for others) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on each item before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of ADOLESCENCE.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|--------------|---|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 1. | <u>Physical growth and development</u> (sexual maturation) | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. | <u>Emotional development</u> (establishing a sense of identity) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. | <u>Social development</u> (peer relationships, dating, sexual behavior) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. | <u>Health related concerns</u> (use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs; diet) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. | <u>Parental concerns</u> (parent/teen relations, meeting personal and shared needs, maintaining communication) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6. | <u>Moral development</u> (developing concern for others, adolescent delinquency) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on each item before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of HEALTH AND SAFETY.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|---|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1. <u>Preventive safety measures</u> (selecting a pediatrician, child-proofing the home, first aid/emergency information, auto safety and car seats) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. <u>Nutritional needs of children</u> (eating patterns & habits, malnutrition in children, obesity in children, meal planning for children) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. <u>Meeting the needs of the handicapped child</u> (providing physical care, meeting educational and emotional needs) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. <u>Sex education in the family</u> (what children should be told about sexuality and when it should be told) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. <u>Health care for children</u> (immunizations, caring for the sick child, medical care of the newborn, dental health care) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on each item before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of SOCIAL ISSUES RELATED TO PARENTING

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | | | | | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|--------------|---|--|--|--|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | | | | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 1. | <u>Children and the courts</u> (child custody, child abuse and neglect, incest, foster care, adoption, delinquency) | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 2. | <u>Single parent families</u> (impact of divorce on children helping the child cope with death/divorce, effects of father absence on children) | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 3. | <u>Education of children in the U.S.</u> (parental involvement in the child's education, selecting educational services for the child) | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 4. | <u>Teen pregnancy and parenthood</u> (effects of unplanned pregnancies on unmarried teens and their families, exploring the options) | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 5. | <u>Step-families</u> (dealing with the problems of step-parenting) | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on each item before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of FAMILY RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION.

| <u>Clarity</u> | <u>Items</u> | <u>Importance</u> |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| VU U MC C VC 1 2 3 4 5 | | T U MI I C 1 2 3 4 5 |
| _____ | 1. <u>Self-esteem in the family</u> (building self-esteem in children, ways in which parents promote negative self-esteem, affirming family members) | |
| _____ | | |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. <u>The marriage relationship</u> (strengthening the marriage relationship, providing an example of marital behavior to children) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. <u>Communication in the family</u> (how to improve communication with children, understanding non-verbal communication, developing listening skills) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. <u>Family meetings</u> (conducting and making use of family meetings) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. <u>The parent/child relationship</u> (building positive relationships) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. <u>Redefining parental goals and identities</u> (setting goals, defining values, identifying strategies) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales for each item before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of GUIDING THE BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN.

| <u>Clarity</u> | <u>Items</u> | <u>Importance</u> |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| VU U MC C VC 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. <u>Methods of discipline</u> (various approaches to childrearing, use of physical punishment, parental control of behavior) | T U MI I C 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. <u>Strategies for constructive parent/child interaction</u> (helping children develop self-control, socialization of children through parent/child interaction) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. <u>Children and television</u> (decisions about viewing, effects of T.V. on the child's behavior) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. <u>Understanding why children behave and misbehave</u> (how children learn attitudes and values, parents as examples to children, parental expectations of children) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. <u>Negative patterns of parent/child interaction</u> (over-involved parents, results of lack of parental intervention in child behavior problems) | 1 2 3 4 5 |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on all items before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of PARENTING PATTERNS.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|---|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | 1. <u>Motivations for parenthood</u> (the decision whether or not to have children) | <hr/> | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. <u>Characteristics of parenting roles</u> (definition of parenting, the mother role, the father role) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. <u>Factors influencing parenting behavior</u> (why parents exhibit certain parenting behavior) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. <u>Historical and cultural views</u> (current childrearing practices in the U.S. and other cultures, historical childrearing practices) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. <u>Characteristics of effective parents</u> (developing confidence as a parent, parental warmth and affection) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on all items before going to the next page.

CLARITY SCALE

1=Very unclear
 2=Unclear
 3=Moderately clear
 4=Clear
 5=Very clear

IMPORTANCE SCALE

1=Trivial, should not be included
 2=Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=Crucial, must be covered as a unique concept

The following items are related to the general topic of CAREER RELATED CONCERNS.

| <u>Clarity</u> | | | | | <u>Items</u> | | | | | <u>Importance</u> | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----|--------------|---|--|--|--|-------------------|---|----|---|---|
| VU | U | MC | C | VC | | | | | | T | U | MI | I | C |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | 1. | <u>Child care for children of working parents</u> | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | (selecting day care, infant vs. preschool day care) | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 2. | <u>Division of labor in the home</u> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | (sharing home and child responsibilities when both parents work) | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 3. | <u>Career opportunities in child care</u> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | (establishing and managing child care facilities, careers in services for children) | | | | | | | | |

PLEASE check to see that you have completed both scales on all items before going to the next page.

DIRECTIONS: Please read the items below and check (X) or write the appropriate response.

1. My gender is: ☐ female
☐ male
2. My age is: ☐ 13-15 ☐ 19-23 ☐ 30-35
☐ 16-18 ☐ 24-29 ☐ 36 or older
3. I am: ☐ a non-parent (I have no children)
☐ expecting (pregnant with) my first child
☐ a parent, number of children
4. I am currently enrolled in a parenting class offered by:
☐ a high school
☐ a college or university
☐ a hospital
☐ other

Appendix B

Data Collection Introductory Remarks and Parent Education Questionnaire

Introductory Remarks, Data Collection

Hello, my name is Nancy Gerard. I am a graduate student at WMU working on some research and I need your help. I am interested in finding out what you and other people like you in parenting classes think are important concepts to learn in a class such as this.

I have a questionnaire here that contains a long list of concepts that could be taught in a parenting class. What I need you to do, if you are willing to help me, is to rate how important you feel each concept is.

Please read the directions and I think you will be able to understand what you are to do. You should be able to fill out the questionnaire in 15 minutes or less. If you choose not to fill it out, just leave it unanswered on the table. I will collect all of the questionnaires when you're finished. Thanks again for your help!

Parent Education Questionnaire

Directions: In this questionnaire you will find many concepts that could be taught in a parenting/child care course. Please read the concepts below and rate the importance of each one by circling the appropriate response. Please base your judgements on how important you feel the concepts are to be taught in a parenting/child care course for someone at your age/stage of life.

IMPORTANCE SCALE

- 1=(T) Trivial, should not be included
 2=(U) Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=(MI) Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=(I) Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=(C) Critical, must be covered as a unique concept

Example:

Importance
 (Circle one
 response only)
 T U MI I C

1. The infant's home and family
 (influences of the home environment, significance of birth order and family size)

1 2 3 4 5

PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

Importance
 (Circle one
 response only)
 T U MI I C

1. How pregnancy occurs
 (the process of conception, signs of pregnancy) 1 2 3 4 5
2. Hereditary Considerations
 (sex determination, genetically transmitted diseases, birth defects) 1 2 3 4 5
3. Prenatal development of the fetus
 (effects of the mother's health, diet, toxic substances; complications during pregnancy) 1 2 3 4 5
4. Preparations for a new baby
 (choosing an obstetrician, preparing siblings for the baby, financial/material preparations needed) 1 2 3 4 5
5. Husband/Wife considerations
 (husbands and pregnancy, contraception, abortion) 1 2 3 4 5
6. Labor and delivery
 (prepared childbirth, premature births, multiple births, cesarian section deliveries, bonding) 1 2 3 4 5

[Note. The pages of the Parent Education Questionnaire have been reduced to 74% of the original size.]

IMPORTANCE SCALE

- 1=(T) Trivial, should not be included
 2=(U) Unimportant, include only if there is enough time
 3=(MI) Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
 4=(I) Important, spend a substantial amount of time on this concept
 5=(C) Critical, must be covered as a unique concept

INFANCY

- | | T | U | MI | I | C |
|--|---|---|----|---|---|
| 7. <u>Physical growth and development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (teething, maturational differences between boys and girls, motor activity, infant stimulation and skill development) | | | | | |
| 8. <u>Cognitive development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (intellectual development, language development, how an infant learns) | | | | | |
| 9. <u>Emotional development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (the development of attachment, the infant's need for attachment and love, establishing trust, deprivation & disruption of attachment) | | | | | |
| 10. <u>Social development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (play, social responses such as looking, smiling, and crying) | | | | | |
| 11. <u>Transition to Parenthood</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (parental life-style changes, the newborn's effect on the marriage, handling stress, post-partum emotions) | | | | | |

EARLY CHILDHOOD

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. <u>Child care</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (sleep, feeding/self-feeding, bedwetting, toilet training, providing clothing, teaching the child to self-dress) | | | | | |
| 13. <u>Physical growth and development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (motor activity, maturational differences between boys and girls, hyperactivity) | | | | | |
| 14. <u>Cognitive development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (intellectual development, helping the child learn) | | | | | |
| 15. <u>Emotional development</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (attachment patterns, temper-tantrums, aggression and anger, development of independence, separation fears, self-esteem, sex role/gender identity) | | | | | |

IMPORTANCE SCALE

- 1=(T) Trivial, should not be included
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 3=(MI) Moderately important, spend some time on this concept
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 5=(C) Critical, must be covered as a unique concept

| | T | U | MI | I | C |
|--|---|---|----|---|---|
| 16. <u>Social development</u> (sibling/peer relationships, play) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. <u>Moral development</u> (development of the conscience, training for concern for others) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

LATE CHILDHOOD

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18. <u>Child care</u> (sleep, feeding, providing clothing) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. <u>Physical growth and development</u> (maturational differences between boys and girls, onset of puberty, motor activity, hyperactivity) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. <u>Cognitive development</u> (intellectual development, the gifted child, learning disabilities) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. <u>Emotional development</u> (teaching children to control emotions, school phobias) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. <u>Social development</u> (peer/sibling relationships, development of the individuality) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. <u>Moral development</u> (development of the conscience, training for concern for others) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

ADOLESCENCE

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24. <u>Physical growth and development</u> (sexual maturation) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. <u>Emotional development</u> (establishing a sense of identity) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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| | T | U | MI | I | C |
|---|---|---|----|---|---|
| 26. <u>Social development</u> (peer relationships, dating, sexual behavior) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. <u>Health-related concerns</u> (use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs; diet) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. <u>Parental concerns</u> (parent/teen relations, meeting personal and shared needs, maintaining communication) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. <u>Moral development</u> (developing concern for others, adolescent delinquency) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

HEALTH AND SAFETY

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30. <u>Preventive safety measures</u> (selecting a pediatrician, child-proofing the home, first aid/emergency information, auto safety and car seats) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 31. <u>Nutritional needs of children</u> (eating patterns and habits, malnutrition in children, obesity in children, meal planning for children) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 32. <u>Meeting the needs of the handicapped child</u> (providing physical care, meeting educational and emotional needs) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 33. <u>Sex education in the family</u> (what children should be told about sexuality and when it should be told) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. <u>Health care for children</u> (immunizations, caring for the sick child, medical care of the newborn, dental health care) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SOCIAL ISSUES RELATED TO PARENTING

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 35. <u>Children and the courts</u> (child custody, child abuse and neglect, incest, foster care, adoption, delinquency) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

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 concept

| | T | U | MI | I | C |
|---|---|---|----|---|---|
| 36. <u>Single parent families</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (impact of divorce on children, helping the child cope with death/divorce, effects of father-absence on children) | | | | | |
| 37. <u>Education of children in the U.S.</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (parental involvement in the child's education, selecting educational services for the child) | | | | | |
| 38. <u>Teen pregnancy and parenthood</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (effects of unplanned pregnancies on unmarried teens and their families, exploring the options) | | | | | |
| 39. <u>Step-families</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (dealing with the problems of step-parenting) | | | | | |

FAMILY RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40. <u>Self-esteem in the family</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (building self-esteem in children, ways in which parents promote negative self-esteem, affirming family members) | | | | | |
| 41. <u>The marriage relationship</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (strengthening the marriage relationship, providing an example of marital behavior to children) | | | | | |
| 42. <u>Communication in the family</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (how to improve communication with children, understand- ing non-verbal communication, developing listening skills) | | | | | |
| 43. <u>Family meetings</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (conducting and making use of family meetings) | | | | | |
| 44. <u>The parent/child relationship</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (building positive relationships) | | | | | |
| 45. <u>Redefining parental goals and identities</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (setting goals, defining values, identifying strategies) | | | | | |

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GUIDING THE BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN

- | | T | U | MI | I | C |
|---|---|---|----|---|---|
| 46. <u>Methods of discipline</u> (various approaches to childrearing, use of physical punishment, parental control of behavior) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 47. <u>Strategies for constructive parent/child interaction</u> (helping children develop self-control, socialization of children through parent/child interaction) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 48. <u>Children and television</u> (decisions about viewing, effects of TV on the child's behavior) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 49. <u>Understanding why children behave and misbehave</u> (how children learn attitudes and values, parents as examples to children, parental expectations of children) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 50. <u>Negative patterns of parent/child interaction</u> (over-involved parents, results of lack of parental intervention in child behavior problems) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PARENTING PATTERNS

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 51. <u>Motivations for parenthood</u> (the decision whether or not to have children) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52. <u>Characteristics of parenting roles</u> (definition of parenting, the mother role, the father role) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 53. <u>Factors influencing parenting behavior</u> (why parents exhibit certain parenting behavior) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 54. <u>Historical and cultural views</u> (current childrearing practices in the U.S. and other cultures, historical and cultural childrearing practices) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 55. <u>Characteristics of effective parents</u> (developing confidence as a parent, parental warmth and affection) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

p. 7

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CAREER-RELATED CONCERNS

- | | T | U | MI | I | C |
|---|---|---|----|---|---|
| 56. <u>Child care for children of working parents</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (selecting day care, infant vs. preschool day care) | | | | | |
| 57. <u>Division of labor in the home</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (sharing home and child responsibilities when both parents work) | | | | | |
| 58. <u>Career opportunities in child care</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (establishing and managing child care facilities, careers in services for children) | | | | | |

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Directions: Please read the items below and check (x) or write the appropriate response.

59. My gender is: _____
 _____ female
 _____ male
60. My age is: _____ 13-15 _____ 16-18
 _____ 19-23 _____ 24-29
 _____ 30-35 _____ 36 or older
61. I am: _____ a non-parent (I have no children)
 _____ expecting (pregnant with) my first child
 _____ a parent, number of children _____
62. I am currently enrolled in a parenting class offered by:
 _____ a high school
 _____ a college or university
 _____ a hospital

Appendix C

Descriptive Data From Nonusable Questionnaires

Table 58

Descriptive Data From Nonusable Questionnaires
(n - 48)^a

| Dependent variables | \bar{x} | <u>s</u> |
|--|-----------|----------|
| Pregnancy and Childbirth (PC) | 3.62 | .53 |
| Infancy (IN) | 3.61 | .65 |
| Early Childhood (EC) | 3.42 | .64 |
| Late Childhood (LC) | 3.22 | .73 |
| Adolescence (AD) | 3.56 | .81 |
| Health and Safety (HS) | 3.52 | .75 |
| Social Issues Related to Parenthood (SI) | 3.04 | 1.03 |
| Family Relations and Communication (FRC) | 3.39 | .74 |
| Guiding the Behavior of Children (GBC) | 3.27 | .92 |
| Parenting Patterns (PP) | 2.90 | .77 |
| Career-Related Concerns (CRC) | 3.04 | .86 |

^aThe composition, by group, of the 48 nonusable questionnaires was as follows:

2 secondary level
2 college level
43 expectant parent level
1 parent level

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