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Family Matters!: Examining the Relationship Between Family Climate and Suicidality, Depression, and At-Risk Behaviors Among Seventh-day Adventist Adolescents World-Wide

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Introduction

- Previous research has indicated that negative family climate was also associated with suicide attempts and depression (Lai, 2001).
- Perceived authoritarian parenting leads to increased substance abuse and promiscuous sexual behavior (Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, & Carrano, 2006).
- Perceived lower parental monitoring leads to increased alcohol and marijuana abuse and increased likelihood of fighting (DeClemente, et al., 2001).

Research Questions

- How does family climate effect the instances of at-risk behaviors in adolescents in a conservative religious population?

Methodology

Participants

- The participants of this study were students attending Adventist high schools across the United States, grades 9-12 (N = 10,832).

Measures

- The Valuegenesis survey subscales: Gender, Age, Ethnicity, At-Risk Behaviors, Frequency of Depression, Frequency of Suicide Attempts, Family Climate, Parenting Style (Rice & Gillespie, 1992).

Methodology (cont.)

Analysis

- The correlations between the listed subscales and suicide attempts was analyzed using a Pearson's *r*.
- A multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the variables with the strongest relationships.

Results

	Depression	Family Climate	More than Five Alcoholic Drinks in a Row	Caring Parenting (father)	Caring Parenting (mother)	
Suicide attempt	.312**	-.231**	.193**	-.191**	-.214**	
	Gender	Overprotective Parenting (mother)	Overprotective Parenting (father)	Ethnicity	Age	Alcohol
Suicide Attempt	.088**	.114**	.124**	-.013	.039**	.205**
	Marijuana	Cocaine	Physical Violence	Larceny	School Trouble	Tobacco
Suicide Attempt	.141**	.160**	.163**	.177**	.132**	.171**

	Suicide Attempt	Family Climate	More than Five Alcoholic Drinks in a Row	Caring Parenting (father)	Caring Parenting (mother)	
Depr.	.312**	-.303**	.092**	-.230**	-.200**	
	Gender	Overprotective Parenting (mother)	Overprotective Parenting (father)	Ethnicity	Age	Alcohol
Depr.	.181**	.181**	.195**	.011	-.010	.131**
	Marijuana	Cocaine	Physical Violence	Larceny	School Trouble	Tobacco
Depr.	.077**	.044**	.102**	.099**	.079**	.115**

Note 1. $R^2 = .138$ (N = 10,832, $p < .001$). CI = confidence interval for B.

Results (cont.)

- Correlational analysis revealed that most of the variables were statistically significant. Family climate, caring parenting (both parents) and overprotective parenting (both parents) were the strongest for depression and suicide attempts.
- Multiple regression analysis revealed that the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 18.0%, $F(17, 5847) = 75.17, p < .001$. Depression, caring parenting, overprotective parenting (mother), gender, alcohol, and negative family climate were the strongest predictors.

Discussion

- As expected, this study found significant relationships between the family climate and parenting style and suicide, depression, and at-risk behaviors.
- Higher levels of caring parenting and positive family climate did serve as protective factors for suicide, depression, and at-risk behaviors
- The higher levels of perceived caring parenting being protective factors for suicide were in line with the literature review.

Selected References

Bronte-Tinkew, J., Moore, K. A., & Carrano, J. (2006). The father-child relationship, parenting styles, and adolescent risk behaviors in intact families. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(6), 850-881.

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Lai, K. W., & McBride-Chang, C. (2001). Suicidal ideation, parenting style, and family climate among Hong Kong adolescents. *International Journal of Psychology*, 36(2), 81-87.