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J. N. Andrews Honors Program
Andrews University

HONS 497
Honors Thesis

Parental Influence on the Communicative Behaviors of Black Young Adults

Sarah R. Brockett

April 5st, 2019

Advisor: Dr. Desrene Vernon-Brebnor, PhD.

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Abstract

This study examined communicative behaviors of Black young adults and how they were impacted by the relational dynamics of their parents. Data were collected from a convenience sample of 73 Black young adults 18-35 years of age. The survey instrument measured the students' argumentative approach and avoidance behavior in interpersonal relationships. There were three directional hypotheses, but the data collected did not prove or disprove them. The findings revealed that the majority of respondents had parents that were still married. The results showed there to be no significant difference in argumentativeness between the "together" and "strained" groups. Verbal and physical abuse however, was found to be more prevalent in the "strained" group.

Key Words: Black Young Adults, Communicative Behaviors, Argumentativeness, Interpersonal Relationships, Verbal and Physical Abuse.

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PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON THE COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIORS OF BLACK YOUNG ADULTS

This study examines parental marital relations and how they influence the communicative behaviors of Black young adults. The strain of a parental union affects the key players within a family dynamic and has the potential to halt effective communication and long-term relationships. Parents are the primary agents of socialization and they are effective in value and attitude socialization because of the amount of time spent with their children (Kapinus, 2004). Parents are the first modeled relationship a child is exposed to and they use the relationship they have studied as reference in the future. By observing parents who are separated or divorced, children may learn that marriage is impermanent. Compared to adults from non-divorced families, those whose parents divorced disagree more with the notion that marriage is a lifelong commitment (Amato & DeBoer, 2001). According to the Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Violence and Control Web site (n.d), each year more than 10 million children witness interpersonal violence in their family. Husbands, ex-husbands, and boyfriends perpetrated 30% of all female murders. For a young adult, witnessing the familial disruption initiated either from birth or during early childhood, can shape their outlook on life or influence their future and communicative relationships in terms of their levels of argumentativeness and avoidance approach in interpersonal relationships.

For this study I honed in on examining argumentativeness as a means of analyzing the communicative behaviors of Black young adults. Argumentativeness is the tendency to advocate and present one's own positions on controversial issues while attacking counter positions (Infante & Rancer, 1982, 1996). People naturally vary in their level of argumentativeness, as high levels of argumentativeness suggest that individuals tend to have more confidence in their ability to

argue than people who possess the low argumentative trait (Infante & Rancer, 1982). People who are argumentative would be aggressive in participating in arguments and disagreements, but would focus on the topic instead of attacking the others involved. Research has shown consistently that trait argumentativeness is related to positive relationship outcomes, due in part because argumentative people are able to handle conflict without using personal attacks (Infante, 1987; Infante, Anderson, Martin, Herington, & Kim, 1993; Infante & Rancer, 1996; Onyekwere, Rubin, & Infante, 1991; Rancer, Baukus, & Amato, 1986). Some individuals tend to avoid arguments and conflicts at all costs taking on the avoidance approach. The low argumentative individual has very little confidence in terms of spearheading issues and combatting popular beliefs, so they tend to find pleasure in withdrawing, restorative methods and harmony in order to deter from arguments arising. The low argumentative person can spot when the relational dynamic is being threatened over arguments, and they find ways to diffuse any potential risks. In dating relationships, relational markers are used as indicators for the health or functionality of a relationship which includes how partners navigate through arguments (Rancer & Avtgis, 2014).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Examining the levels of argumentativeness and avoidance in the interpersonal relationships of Black young adults whose parents are either still married or have undergone a relational strain (divorce, separation, or never married) can serve as a precursor for analyzing and examining how their former environment influenced the way they navigate communicatively. Divorce is an act that affects the key players within a family dynamic and has the potential to stop effective communication and the formation of long-term relationships.

Divorce is a common trend that has become popular. Aside from a union or bond being broken, there may be a third party involved who will have to adapt to a new reality—the third party is defined as the young adult in this case. African Americans are more likely to go through familial disruption due to such factors as economic inequality or adaptability. As illustrated in the Adventist Review (2019), “Unity in Diversity” the Black population displays the lowest median income in the United States of America in comparison to different ethnic groups, Asians, White, Hispanic and Native American relative to the standard median level of \$57,617. The Black population has a median income of \$38,555 meanwhile the Asian population is ranked as the highest and brings in approximately \$80,720 as median income. Another prevalent fact, expresses the percentage of those receiving a bachelor’s degree. The black population was ranked the lowest as little as 36% of its population are receiving bachelor’s degrees in comparison to the Asian population which leaders with 45%.

The rates of marriage in the black community have declined and the rate of unique marital status such as separation, divorce, out-of-wedlock births have increased. Among other racial ethnic groups, African Americans have the highest rate of marital instability and divorce (Raley, R. K., Sweeney, M. M., & Wondra, D., 2015). Despite being foundational in the development of America, this marginalized group continues to face hardships and is disproportionately represented among African Americans experiencing academic failure, teenage pregnancy, female-headed families, unemployment, poverty, and criminal victimization (Oliver, 1989). According to the Adventist Review (2019), African Americans are more likely to be victims of ignorance, insults, invisibility, stereotypes, misconceptions, lack of acknowledgements, false narratives, sidelined from achievements, societal pressures and disadvantages associated with their hue due to their melanin pigment.

African American's have also been regarded as a muted group among other minority groups and have been categorized, and criminalized in wake of controversy and or crime. Unemployment and incarceration are the highest among black men who are disadvantaged (Raley, R. K., Sweeney, M. M., & Wondra, D., 2015). This nation desires to establish a blueprint for equal opportunity for all citizens, immigrant and native-born, but still continues to fail as equal opportunities are not created equal, access is more of a privilege then a natural right. As expressed in the Declaration of Independence, "Nature endows every human (without any distinction of time or space, and without regard to any age, gender, nationality, or race) with certain inalienable rights (such as the right to 'life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness' which cannot be abrogated or interfered with by any government. Whether or not these rights are enshrined in a national legal code, no government is lawful if it fails to uphold them. African Americans are the most disenfranchised, struggle oriented and inclined to hardships.

The numerous hurdles found prevalent in the Black community influenced me to further analyze and look more closely at the communicative dynamic established, specifically through Black young adults in their interpersonal relationships. I chose to focus on the young adult population specifically because it is the transitional period from an individual's teens into adulthood. Another interesting fact reveals the desire for millennials to establish relationships later on in life. As time goes on the desire to marry and settle down continues to extend later on in age. Shown by the "U.S. Census Bureau, Table MS-2, Estimated Median Age at First Marriage, by Sex: 1890 to the Present, "Young adults are taking their time and waiting longer to marry than any other time listed in the past century. Currently, women's median age for marriage is at 27 years of age, while men is at 29. In 1990, women's median age for marriage was at 24 and the men's median age was at 26.

Healthy communication in interpersonal relationships are a necessity and poor relationship skills serve as a factor for marital dissolution (Amato & Deboer, 2001). One of the most socially compelling manifestations of argumentativeness is within the family unit (Rancer & Avtgis, 2006). Dysfunction transmits over to the next generation influencing their communicative encounters with other individual's signaling intergenerational marital instability. The socialization theory outlines that children learn many behaviors through the observation of their adult models and parents represent the main source from which children learn about the nature of marital relationships. Children whose parents are divorced, compared with children whose parents remain married have fewer opportunities to learn positive communicative skills (Amato & Deboer, 2001). This serves as a prodrome or indicator for the risk of the transmission of intergenerational marital instability spilling over to young adults and influencing their communicative patterns in their future relationships. I strive to understand the effects of divorce and provide reasons as to why it is important for others to take it into account. After all, the hardships at home can make it difficult for a student to adjust to his or her own communicative external environment. The stress of having to adapt to a new family dynamic based on decisions beyond one's control is frightening. Although, courts seek to make divorce as amiable as possible the lack of exposure and knowledge of both participants, calls into question whether or not a sound decision was administered.

AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

The aim of this research was to conduct an analysis of the communicative behaviors measured by a scale of argumentativeness between Black young adults whose parents were either still married or experienced a “strain” of some sort in order to examine the participants’ scores on argumentativeness and assertiveness. Also, the aim of this study was to determine which familial group expressed higher levels of argumentativeness and whether or not familial disruption heightens the levels of argumentativeness within Black young adults. I formulated three hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The dissolution of a parent’s marriage and relationship would have the greatest influence on a student’s cautious approach in establishing relationships with others.

Hypothesis 2: Those with parents who went through relationship strains were more likely to exhibit higher levels of argumentativeness in their interpersonal relationships.

Hypothesis 3: The “strained” group would witness more verbal and or physical abuse in the household earlier on.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

With a fractured or severed relational bond, having a third-party present alters an individual’s sense of reality within their safe haven—The third party is defined as the young adult in this case. Findings have shown that young adults whose parents are divorced are more likely to express pro-divorce views because, they share their parent’s attitudes towards divorce. It has also been found that hardships at home can make it difficult for a student to adjust to his or her own communicative external environment (Amato & Deboer, 2001). The stress of having to adapt to a new family dynamic, based on decisions beyond one’s control is frightening. It can

alter a student's self-concept, interactions with others and interactions with organizations—the school, workplace and so on. In school students are all exposed to the same relative material in class, however, each student responds to each assignment differently. Some do well and some do not, and their environment can serve as an influential factor towards their successes and failures.

Hartman & Mccambridge (2011) emphasizes the need to focus on the communicative interactions and styles of the millennial generation to help aid them overcome communication deficiencies in an interpersonal setting. Disruption in a person's place of residence can increase stress and discomfort in life (Amato & Deboer, 2001). Raley, Sweeney, & Wondra (2015) expressed that there are racial and ethnic differences involved in interpersonal communication influencing marital views in the millennial generation. Compared to non-Hispanic Whites, African Americans wait longer to get married and are less likely to marry but are more likely to separate and divorce and to remain separated without a legal divorce.

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Oliver (1989) argues that individuals should be made aware of the structural disadvantages the Black population of young adult's face as a result of disruption inherent in their home environment. Although, this community has played a significant role in the development of America, research through the Adventist Review (2019), outlines that African American communities are the lowest population receiving bachelor's degrees in comparison to other ethnic groups. As it stands marital rates in this community have declined, instability and the rate of unique marital status' such as separation, divorce and out-of-wedlock births have increased (Raley, R. K., Sweeney, M. M., & Wondra, D., 2015).

THE COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIORS

ARGUMENTATIVE APPROACH

Argumentativeness is a ubiquitous dimension of human communication. People argue in interpersonal, small groups and public communication situations (Infante & Rancer, 1982). Argumentativeness is defined as being a conceptualized trait which predisposes an individual in communication to advocate positions on controversial issues. The individual perceives this activity as an exciting and intellectual challenge, a competitive situation which entails defending a position and “winning points (Infante & Rancer, 1982). This trait can be used to analyze the communicative behaviors of Black young adults in light of the influence of the relational dynamic established by participants’ parents. It has also been reported that the females, in couples, where the female experienced parental divorce, convey significantly lower levels of intimacy, mutually constructive communication and higher levels of demand-withdraw patterns, and mutual avoidance of conflict (Mullet & Stolberg, 2002).

For this study a 20-item argumentativeness scale was used as a means of analyzing the communicative behaviors found in Black young adults. Individuals were divided into primarily two categories, high argumentativeness or low argumentativeness. Infante & Rancer (1982) argue that argumentativeness aid in studying patterns and responses on controversial issues and reveal participants communicative style in social conflicts.

AVOIDANCE APPROACH

The avoidance approach involves the motivation and ability to avoid conflict and arguments at all cost in an effort to preserve harmony. Infante and Rancer (1982) asserts that the motivation to not fail causes individuals to avoid arguments due to low levels of confidence. The

individual that possess the low argumentative trait has unpleasant feelings before and after an argument. The overall pattern of findings casts argumentativeness and avoidance as two distinct yet related constructs (Guerrero & Gross, 2014). However, both argumentativeness and avoidance are related constructs for purposes of this study to categorize participants in a specified communicative style in the presence of conflict.

THE TRANSMISSION OF MARITAL INSTABILITY

Prior research done by Amato & DeBoer (2001) collected samples and organized longitudinal data from two generations analyzing the transmission of marital instability through relationship skills and commitment. Bumpass, Martin & Sweet (1991) express through their findings that parental divorce increases divorce views and marital disruption for their offspring by approximately 70%. It has also been found that partners who had divorced parents experienced more communicative problems within their relationship than partners who had parents that remained married (Sanders, Halford & Behrens, 1999). This foreshadowed the possible intergenerational transmission of marital instability and its effects impacting the next generation (Amato & Deboer, 2001). A lack of consistency towards exercising healthy relational discourse can onset result in numerous interpersonal problems. Further studies suggest that parental divorce increases the risk of how many offspring's will see their own marriages end in divorce (Amato & Deboer, 2001).

THE SOCIALIZATION THEORY

The socialization theory helps to explain the influence family communication can have on adolescents. If parents and youth are bonded, youths are less likely to engage in self-

destructive behaviors. According to Boundless Sociology, The Charles Horton Cooley's Looking glass self as the foundation for the theory of socialization, implies that a person's self grows out of society's interpersonal interactions and the perceptions of others. Kapinus (2004) emphasizes in his research the importance of socialization in regards to the parental influence earlier on. Given that parents are primary agents over time we adapt and learn their native tongue and subconsciously reenact their patterns of discourse. Based on exhibited behaviors off-springs can be at risk for aligning themselves with unhealthy communicative patterns and pro-divorce views expressed by parents.

III. METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants who fit the following qualifiers were recruited from a convenience sample of the millennial generation (18-35 years old) and social media. This survey was distributed to participants during the Spring semester (2019). Participants were required to be at least 18 years of age and the marital status of their parents was classified into two groups "strained" (Separated, Contested Divorce, Uncontested Divorce, Parents were never Married) and "together" (Parents still married). The full survey was completed by 73 participants (53 Females, 20 Males).

Instrumentation

The instrument was administered online via. Survey Monkey to a non-probability sample of 73 participants. The instrument consisted of Likert scale items which measured an individual's tendency to approach (ARG_{AP}) and avoid argument (ARG_{AV}). The difference between both components measure the overall argumentativeness (ARG_{GT}). Participants were given statements about arguing controversial issues and they had to indicate how often each statement is true for

them personally by choosing the appropriate number on a scale from 1-5. 1 being “Almost never true” and 5 being “Almost always true.” There were five demographic questions used to separate the two different sample pools, “together” and “strained.” For each sample there were 11 questions related to the avoidance approach, 12 questions relate to the argumentative approach in interpersonal relationships and, three questions related to measuring physical and verbal abuse between parents.

Data Analysis

The primary analytical strategy used was Chi-Square in order to test for relationships between the following variables within this study at a 0.05 level of significance to measure whether or not the “together” group answered “argumentative questions” differently from the “strained” group.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey, participants were given five options to choose from (1. *Almost never true*, 2. *Rarely true*, 3. *Occasionally true*, 4. *Often true*, 5. *Almost always true*) and instructed to indicate how often each statement was true for them personally by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of the statement. In analyzing the results option 3, “occasionally true” was removed from the chi square in both the avoidance and argumentative approach, in order to compare the two opposing categories “Yes” and “No” Options 1. *Almost never true*, and Option 2. *Rarely true* indicated that participants answered “No” towards the Argumentative and Avoidance questions asked. Option 4. *Often true* and Option 5. *Almost always true* indicated that participants answered “Yes” towards the “Argumentative” and “Avoidance” questions to measure argumentativeness. Figure 1. illustrates an avoidance approach question and the results

gathered between the “together” group and the “strained” group. The following statistics outline the demographics of the 73 participants who completed the survey. Participants from both the “together” and “strained” group outlined the marital status of both their parents and themselves, also they outlined their gender and age group.

Based on the survey, 70.21% (33) of females, 29.79% (14) of Males with a total of 64.38% (47) of participants identified that their parents were still married. While 76.92% (20) of Females, 23.08% (6) of Males with a total of 35.62% (26) participants acknowledged that, their parents were not married and experienced a disruption identified as a “strain” for purposes of this study. Of the “together” group 63.83% (30) of participants listed that they were single, 34.04% (16) listed that they were dating and 2.13% (1) reported that-were married. Of the “strained” group 65.38% (17) of the participants listed that they were single and 34.62% (9) of the participants listed that they were dating. There were no participants in this group who were married. Further, of the together group 31.91% (15) of the participants are between the age group 18-20, 57.45% (27) of participants are between the age group 21-23 and 10.64% (5) of the participants identified that they were between the age group 24-35. Of the “strained” group 23.07% (6) of the participants listed that they were between the age group 18-20, 53.85% (14) of the participants listed that they were between the age group 21-23 and 23.08% (6) of the participants outlined that they were between the age group 24-35.

MEASURING AVOIDANCE AND ARGUMENTATIVENESS

AVOIDANCE APPROACH QUESTION

Figure 1. Avoidance approach line graph illustrates the data comparisons for (Q1) between the “together” and “strained” groups.

"While in an argument, I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative impression of me."

Answered: 73 Skipped: 0

Table 1. The Chi-square statistic for avoidance approach summarized the results based on response to the avoidance question (Q1).

Avoidance Results			
Groups	No (1,2)	Yes (4,5)	Row Totals
Together	11 (11.78) [0.05]	12 (11.22) [0.05]	23
Strained	10 (9.22) [0.07]	8 (8.78) [0.07]	18
Column totals	21	20	41 Grand Total

The chi-square statistic was 0.2415 and the p-value was 0.623158 and as a result the test demonstrated that the results were not significant at $p < .05$. The remainder of the 32 (24 for the “together group and 8 for the “strained” group) participants choose option 3 answering “occasionally.” There were no significant differences between the responses of the “together” group for the avoidance question (Q2) when compared to the responses from the “strained” group.

ARGUMENTATIVE APPROACH QUESTION

Figure 2. Argumentative approach line graph illustrates the data comparisons for (Q2) between the “together” and “strained” groups.

"Arguing over controversial issues improves my intelligence."

Answered: 73 Skipped: 0

Table 2. The Chi-square statistic for argumentative approach summarized the results from both “together” and “strained” groups based on their response to the argumentative question (Q2).

Argumentative Results			
Groups	No (1,2)	Yes (4,5)	Row Totals
Together	2 (2.00) [0.00]	30 (30.00) [0.00]	32
Strained	1 (1.00) [0.00]	15 (15.00) [0.00]	16
Column totals	3	45	48 Grand Total

The chi square statistic was 0 and the p-value was 1. As a result, the test demonstrated that the results were not significant at $p < .05$. The remainder of the 25 participants (15 for the together group and 10 for strained) choose option 3 answering “occasionally.” There were no significant differences between the responses of the “together” and “strained” group for the argumentative approach question (Q2).

MEASURING PHYSICAL AND VERBAL ABUSE

PHYSICAL ABUSE QUESTION

Figure 3. Measurement of Physical Abuse line graph illustrates the data comparisons for (Q25) between the “together” and “strained” groups.

“Arguments between my parents sometimes get physical.”

Answered: 73 Skipped: 0

Table 3. The Chi-square statistic for physical abuse summarized the results based on response to the physical abuse question (Q25).

Physical Abuse			
Groups	No (1,2)	Yes (4,5)	Row Totals
Together	45 (41.94) [0.22]	0 (0.00) [0.00]	45
Strained	17 (20.06) [0.47]	5 (1.94) [4.82]	22
Column totals	62	5	67 (Grand Total)

The chi-square statistic was 7.4376 and the p-value was 0.006387 and as a result the test demonstrated that the results were significant at $p < .05$. The remainder of the 6 (2 for the “together group and 4 for the “strained” group) participants choose option 3 answering “occasionally.” There were significant differences between the responses of the “together” group for physical abuse question (Q25) when compared to the responses from the “strained” group. The “together” group outlined that physical abuse is not prevalent within their home with the

exception of the two participants that answered “occasionally,” however, the “strained” group expressed that they have witnessed arguments getting physical within their household, but it is not entirely prevalent.

VERBAL ABUSE QUESTION

Figure 4. Measurement of verbal abuse line graph illustrates the data comparisons for (Q26) between the “together” and “strained” groups.

"In my parents relationship I have observed situations in which one parent verbally attacked the other parent's position on a controversial issue."

Answered: 73 Skipped: 0

Table 4. Chi-square statistic for physical abuse summarized the results based on response to the physical abuse question (Q26).

Verbal Abuse			
Groups	No (1,2)	Yes (4,5)	Row Totals
Together	31 (26.03) [0.95]	9 (13.97) [1.77]	40
Strained	10 (14.97) [1.65]	13 (8.03) [3.07]	23
Column totals	41	22	63 (Grand Total)

The chi-square statistic was 7.4376 and the p-value was 0.006387 and as a result the test demonstrated that the results were significant at $p < .05$. The remainder of the 10 (7 for the “together group and 3 for the “strained” group) participants choose option 3 answering “occasionally.” There were significant differences found between the “together” and strained”

groups in their responses towards witnessing verbal abuse within the household. With the exception of the seven participants who choose to answer “occasionally” some participants from the strained group attested to the fact that there was some verbal and physical abuse present in the household. As for the “strained group” more participants with the exception of the three participants that choose to answer “occasionally,” more slightly agreed that they have witnessed verbal abuse or a heated exchange between their parents and the rest did not.

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

This qualitative portion of the survey was analyzed by identifying key terms and themes mentioned in participant responses. Participants were asked the following open-ended questions: 1. What does the term "marriage" mean to you? 2. How has your parent's relational climate influenced your own communicative behavior? 3. Has your parent's relationship influenced you to be more cautious when creating relationships? If so, please explain: Love, commitment, union and togetherness were some of the key terms identified in the responses to question # 1. In the responses, each participant overall expressed that “marriage” favors a union and lifelong commitment of togetherness that is supported by the foundation of love. For the second open-ended question the “together” and “strained” group had very similar themes in that they believed that their parents relational climate influenced their own communicative behavior, however, the level of influence varied per respondent. The “together” group mentioned the word “communication” and or “communicate” in their responses. I also noticed that the “together” group had more to say in regards to parental influence. Their responses expressed that they were aware of “what to do” and “what not to do” in a relationship. Whereas, the “strained” group outlined that they were aware of what unhealthy communication and discourse looks like within

the household. These findings were supported by the results gathered from the survey on physical and verbal abuse in the household (figure 6. and figure 8.).

The last question measured caution when forming new relationships. The “together” group’s responses expressed a mixture between caution and not at all based on the influence of their parents. Some participants within the group believed that there were other reasons for their level of caution and their parents were not the primary influential factor for them. For the “strained” group there was also a mixture of responses, however, more participants whose parents went through a contested divorce outlined that they were more cautious in comparison to participants whose parents were never married. It could be that participants whose parents went through the lengthy court system witnessed more parental relational disruption over an extended period of time.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The nature of this project was an exploratory study that was aimed at analyzing parental marital relations and how they influence the communicative behaviors of Black young adults. In this study participants levels of argumentativeness were examined in an effort to hone in on the communicative behaviors of Black young adults. Due to the limitations of this study the Socialization Theory and the intergenerational transmission of marital instability could not be accurately applied and examined because of the skewed sample of participants. Although, I received a convenience sample of 73 participants there were not enough individuals who fell under the “strained” group in order to compare levels of argumentativeness and accurately analyze the influence of parental marital relations. Also, in the sample there was not an even distribution of female and male participants to analyze how the potential effects varied by

gender. It is necessary to establish a quota for future studies so there would be representation for each of the subsets in the sample. This research could further be expounded by including participants from other ethnic backgrounds in comparison to the Black population.

Communicative behaviors analyzed through the levels of argumentativeness can express the varying differences which could further expand the study to examine how parental marital relations influence marginalized groups. In addition, religious affiliations can be added to the demographic section in order to see if there is an underlying relationship between parental marital relations and religious affiliation. This could be used in order to analyze whether or not pro marital views in religion serve as a factor in parental marital status' altering levels of verbal and physical abuse. Although, aggressiveness was outside of the scope of my study it is another relevant behavior to look into given its indirect relationship to argumentativeness.

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Appendices
Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

February 21, 2019

Sarah Brockett
 Tel. 269-961-1469
 Email: brockett@andrews.edu

RE: APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
IRB Protocol #:18-132 **Application Type:** modification **Dept.:**Visual Art, Communication & Design
Review Category: Exempt **Action Taken:** Approved **Advisor:** Desrene Vernon
Title: Parental influence on the communicative behaviors of black young adults

Your IRB **modification** application for approval of research involving human subjects entitled: *"Parental influence on the communicative behaviors of black young adults"* IRB protocol # 18-132 has been evaluated and determined Exempt from IRB review under regulation CFR 46.101 (b) (2). You may now proceed with your research.

Please note that any future changes (see IRB Handbook pages 12) made to the study design and/or informed consent form require prior approval from the IRB before such changes can be implemented. In case you need to make changes please use the attached report form.

While there appears to be no more than minimum risks with your study, should an incidence occur that results in a research-related adverse reaction and/or physical injury, (see IRB Handbook pages 18-19 this must be reported immediately in writing to the IRB. Any research-related physical injury must also be reported immediately to the University Physician, Dr. Katherine, by calling (269) 473-2222.

We ask that you reference the protocol number in any future correspondence regarding this study for easy retrieval of information.

Best wishes in your research.

Sincerely,

Mordekai Ongo
 Research Integrity and Compliance Officer

Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Document(s) For Email, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Sarah Brockett and I am an undergraduate student from the Department of Visual Art, Communication & Design at Andrews University. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study about Family Proceedings and The Communicative Effects of African American Young Adults. You are eligible to be in this study because you met all of the qualifiers which include: your parents having been separated or divorced within the last fifteen years, you are currently a teenager or young adult (18-35 years of age) and you identify as African American or Black.

I obtained your contact information through convenience sampling. If you decide to participate in this study, you will be given an Informed Consent form to review. Remember, this is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in the study or not. If you'd like to participate or have any questions about the study, please email or contact me at (269) 961-1469.

Thank you so very much,

Sarah Brockett

Appendix C: Informed Consent:

Parental Influence on Communicative Behaviors of Black Young Adults

By: Sarah Brockett

Thank you for agreeing to take part in an important survey that seeks to study the influence parents have on the communicative behaviors of Black young adults. Understanding the effects of family disruption is important to see whether or not it correlates with behavioral changes later on in life. Today we will be gaining your feedback and results in order to analyze levels of argumentativeness. This survey should take approximately seven minutes to complete. Be assured that all answers you provide will be kept in the strictest confidentiality.

BENEFITS

You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about communicative behaviors among Black young adults

RISKS

There is the risk that you may find some of the questions to be sensitive.

OR

There is the risk that some questions may cause emotional discomfort.

OR

Some of the survey questions ask about your family dynamic and may be distressing to you as

you think about your experiences.

OR

You may feel a little uncomfortable answering sensitive survey questions. The possible risks or discomforts of the study are minimal.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your survey answers will be sent to a link at [SurveyMonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com) where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Survey Monkey does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact Sarah via email at brockett@andrews.edu, or my advisor at desrene@andrews.edu, or the IRB, at IRB@andrews.edu.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Clicking "OK" indicates that:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older

Instructions

This questionnaire contains statements about controversial issues. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally by clicking on the appropriate option that best applies to you.

Appendix D: Survey

Part A: Instructions (The Argumentativeness Scale): This questionnaire contains statements about controversial issues. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of the statement.

1. Almost never true
2. Rarely true
3. Occasionally true
4. Often true
5. Almost always true

1. _____: While in an argument, I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative impression of me.
2. _____: Arguing over controversial issues improves my intelligence.
3. _____: I enjoy avoiding arguments
4. _____: I am energetic and enthusiastic when I argue.
5. _____: Once I finish an argument, I promise myself that I will not get into another.
6. _____: Arguing with a person creates more problems for me than it solves

7. _____: I have a pleasant, good feeling when I win a point in an argument.
8. _____: When I finish arguing with someone, I feel nervous and upset.
9. _____: It's better to be in groups where everyone's beliefs are the same as mine (av)
10. _____: I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue.
11. _____: I get an unpleasant feeling when I realize I am about to get into an argument.
12. _____: It's better to work independently rather than to work with other people and have (av) disagreements
13. _____: I enjoy defending my point of view on an issue.
14. _____: I am happy when I keep an argument from happening.
15. _____: I do not like to miss the opportunity to argue a controversial issue.
16. _____: I prefer being with people who rarely disagree with me.
17. _____: I consider an argument an exciting intellectual challenge.
18. _____: I find myself unable to think of effective points during an argument.
19. _____: I feel refreshed and satisfied after an argument on a controversial issue.
20. _____: I have the ability to do well in an argument.
21. _____: I try to avoid getting into arguments.
22. _____: I feel excitement when I expect that a conversation, I am in is leading to an argument.
23. _____: Disagreements always stimulates conversation and fuels communication (ap)
24. _____: My parents argue a lot.
25. _____: Arguments between my parents sometimes get physical
26. _____: In my parents' relationship I have observed situations in which one parent verbally attacked the other parent's position on a controversial issue (experienced)

Part B: Demographics

1. What is your gender:
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
2. What is your marital status:
 - a. Single
 - b. Dating
 - c. Married
3. What is your age group?
 - b. 18-20
 - b. 21-23
 - c. 24+
4. How would you describe your parents' relational status?
 - a. Parents are still married
 - c. Contested Divorce
 - e. Parents were never married
 - b. Separated
 - d. Uncontested Divorce

Part C: Open-Ended Questions

1. What does the term marriage mean to you?

2. How has your parent's relational climate influenced your own communicative?

3. Has your parents relationship influenced you be more cautious when creating relationships? If so, please explain.