

OVERPARENTING AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH EXTERNALIZING PROBLEMS IN
YOUNG CHILDREN

BY

NICOLE MARIE SCHMIDINGER

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF

ALFRED UNIVERSITY

IN PARTIAL FUFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

IN

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

ALFRED, NEW YORK

AUGUST 2020

OVERPARENTING AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH EXTERNALIZING PROBLEMS IN
YOUNG CHILDREN

BY

NICOLE MARIE SCHMIDINGER

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, B.A. (2014)

ALFRED UNIVERSITY, M.A. (2017)

ALFRED UNIVERSITY, C.A.S. (2019)

APPROVED BY _____ Andrea Burch, Psy.D.
Committee Chairperson

_____ Kevin A. Curtin, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____ Louis Lichtman, Ph.D.
Committee Member

ACCEPTED BY _____ Kevin A. Curtin Ph.D.
Chairperson, Division of Counseling & School Psychology

ACCEPTED BY _____ John D. Cerio, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Graduate and Continuing Studies

ACCEPTED BY _____ Beth Ann Dobie, Ph.D.
Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents. Thank you for being my biggest cheerleaders as I navigated through many years of school. Without your love and support this achievement would have never been possible.

Acknowledgements

I am lucky to have so many people in my life who continue to support my goals and dreams. To my dissertation chair, Dr. Andrea Burch, thank you for your guidance, encouragement, and feedback throughout this process. I appreciate the time you put into helping me complete my dissertation and the many hours of statistical knowledge you've provided me. Thank you to my other committee members, Dr. Kevin Curtin and Dr. Lou Lichtman, who took time to review and provide valuable feedback on my manuscript. I would like to thank Kelly Buisch for helping me with my data collection, which saved me many trips to New York. Thank you to the many faculty, staff, and students at Alfred University who helped to make New York feel like a second home. A special thanks to Dr. Lauback for always believing in me. I know I will continue to have many moments throughout my career where I ask myself "What would Dr. Lauback do?".

Thank you to my family and friends, especially my parents who always believed I could. Mom, your proofreading over the years made me a better writer. Dad, thank you for always crunching numbers and making it possible for me to afford post-secondary. To my mentors Lynne and Will, thank you for your knowledge, guidance, and for always encouraging me to follow my dreams. Thank you to my fiancé Ryan who has always supported my ambitions, despite them leading to years of long distance and an abundance of student debt. To my dear friend Bridget, I would have never made it through graduate school without you. You've kept me on track, pushed me to do better, and always been there to listen.

Last but not least I must thank my cat Zeus, who has been with me throughout my entire post-secondary career. Thank you for keeping me company on drives home and during many late nights of writing.

Table of Contents

Signature Page	ii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
Abstract	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Parenting Theory	2
Typologies	2
Autonomy	4
Family Systems	4
Overparenting	5
Related Parenting Styles	7
Externalizing Behaviour	8
Current Study	9
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
Parenting	11
Parenting Theory and Child Development	11
Parenting Typologies	11
The Importance of Autonomy Granting	15
Family Systems	17
Cybernetics and Circular Causality.....	17
Feedback Loops	18

Family Life Cycle	19
Bowen Theory of Family Systems	20
Family Systems Theory	20
Enmeshed Family Systems	23
Overparenting and Related Parenting Styles	24
Overparenting	24
Helicopter Parenting	27
Studies on Overparenting and the Effects on Children.....	28
Family Factors that Influence Overparenting	31
Overparenting and Parent Characteristics	31
Social Factors that Influence Overparenting	32
Overparenting and Economic Factors	32
Overparenting and Technological Factors	33
Parenting and Gender	34
Other Related Parenting Styles	34
Intensive Parenting	34
Parental Overprotection	35
Parental Psychological Control	36
Anxious Parenting	36
Overcontrolling Parenting	37
Potential Positive Outcomes of Overinvolved Parenting	40
Overparenting and the Study of Young Children	42
Externalizing Problems	43

The Development of Externalizing Problems	44
Child Characteristics.....	44
Social and Family Factors	45
Parent-Child Interaction	47
Externalizing Problems and Overparenting	49
Current Study	50
Research Questions	52
CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND PROCEDURE	53
Participants	53
Independent and Dependent Variables	55
Overparenting Scale	55
Externalizing Behaviours	57
Procedure	57
Analysis	58
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	59
Sample Description	59
Multiple Regression Analysis	62
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	65
Limitations	68
Implications for the Field of School Psychology	71
Future Research	72
Summary	73
REFERENCES	76

APPENDICES	88
Appendix A: Parent Letter and Consent Form	88
Appendix B: Teacher Letter and Consent Form	90
Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire	91
Appendix D: Overparenting Scale	94
FIGURES.....	98
Figure 1	98
Figure 2	99
Figure 3	100
TABLES	101
Table 1	101
Table 2	102
Table 3	103
Biographical Statement.....	104

Abstract

Overparenting is a concept that has gained recent popularity in media and research. It is characterized by developmentally inappropriate levels of overinvolvement in a child's life.

Overparenting can prevent children from developing the appropriate skills required to manage difficulties. Although previous studies have linked overparenting to various adverse effects in young adults, none have explored the presence of externalizing problems in young children. The current study looked to explore whether the presence of overparenting is associated with a presence of externalizing problems in school-aged children while controlling for SES, gender, and family composition. In addition, this study looked to examine whether parent and teacher ratings of externalizing behaviour in children differ with the presence of overparenting.

Caregivers of children in kindergarten through eighth grade completed a demographics survey, an overparenting survey, and a measure of child externalizing behaviour. Classroom teachers completed an additional measure of child externalizing behaviour. The results of this study provide evidence of a relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour as findings indicate that overparenting is a statistically significant predictor of change in externalizing behaviour. Results did not present insight on the difference between parent and teacher ratings or identify significant relationships between SES, gender, and family composition with overparenting. These insignificant findings are likely due to a small sample size, limited variability with regard to participant characteristics, and inadequate statistical power. It is important that future research address these limitations in order to further explore the current findings.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Typical parenting practices involve promoting and supporting the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of a child. The term parent encompasses not only the biological mother and father of a child, but can comprise of other caregivers including grandparents, adoptive parents, aunts, and uncles. Decades of research demonstrates that healthy child development is contingent on the parent-child dyad and family environment. Children learn how to build and refine their knowledge and skills with help from their parents. The home environment provides children a space to learn and practice their continuously developing skills, while those living in the home provide a reference for children to observe and emulate (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016).

Historically, child-rearing practices have transformed and progressed, as best practice in parenting constantly evolves. In 1928 John Watson theorized that parents should treat their children similar to miniature adults by withholding love and affection. Watson believed that by refusing affection, parents would prevent their children from having unrealistic expectations of the adult world (Watson, 1928). In the 1970s, parenting practices were anti-authoritarian as parents took a more relaxed approach to child-rearing. During this time, children were less closely supervised and learned to be independent and to function autonomously. Since this time, parenting practices in the United States have once again shifted. The average family structure and function has altered, for example, households have diversified as a result of increases in divorce, cohabitation, and new types of parenting relationships. In addition, developments in child-rearing research, shifts in regional demographics, and increased use of technology all contribute to changes in how families operate within today's society (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016; Marano, 2008). Today, many parents are becoming

overinvolved in developmentally inappropriate ways in their children's lives (Doepke & Zilibotti, 2019). Doepke and Zilibotti (2019) report that the societal shift in family structure and function has decreased the presence of child individualization and negatively influenced the development of autonomy. This is theorized to be the result of an increase in economic inequality, as parents become overinvolved while attempting to provide their children with every opportunity possible to live successful lives. (Doepke & Zilibotti, 2019). Although known by a variety of terms, and often synonymous with the term helicopter parenting, the term overparenting is used in this study to describe this intense and unintentionally maladaptive form of parenting.

Parenting Theory

A variety of theories exist within the literature that help to explain parenting practices as they relate to child development. These theories provide evidence to support the notion that parenting greatly influences child behaviour and that poor parenting practices can lead to adverse outcomes in children.

Typologies. Diana Baumrind (1971; 2013) discussed four typologies of parenting styles that differ in their levels of demandingness and responsiveness. She identified the first three styles which include authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting, and permissive parenting. The fourth style, neglectful parenting, was originally identified by Maccoby and Martin (1983) and later outlined by Baumrind in her subsequent work. Authoritative parenting is consistently identified in research and literature to be the most effective style of parenting. It involves high levels of demandingness as well as high levels of responsiveness. Children with authoritative parents are found to have higher levels of competence, social development, self-perception, and mental health when compared to peers with authoritarian or neglectful parents (Maccoby &

Martin, 1983). In contrast, authoritarian parents are those who have high levels of demandingness but low levels of responsiveness. These parents are often discontent, withdrawn, distrustful, strict, and less warm. This type of parenting is linked to higher levels of externalizing and internalizing problems, lower academic achievement, and lower levels of self-reliance, individuation, self-identity, and autonomy in children (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005; Barber & Harmon, 2002; Braza et al., 2015; Gadeyne et al., 2004; Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Rinaldi & Howe, 2012). Baumrind's third parenting style, permissive parenting, is defined as having low levels of demandingness and high levels of responsiveness and warmth. This type of parenting is often associated with low self-control and self-reliance in children (Power, 2013). Children of permissive parents are found to be less self-regulated, more likely to use drugs, and less achievement oriented (Baumrind, 1966). The fourth parenting style, neglectful parenting, is defined as having low levels of demandingness and low levels of responsiveness and warmth. Neglectful parenting style is associated with increased negative outcomes for children including illegal drug use, decreased resiliency, poor academic performance, decreased psychological competence, poor adaptive skills, and increased behavioural problems (Aunola et al., 2000; Calafat et al., 2014; Lamborn et al., 1991; Montgomery et al., 2008; Steinberg et al., 1994).

Of these parenting styles, authoritarian parenting is thought to be most closely linked to overparenting. Both overparenting and authoritarian parenting reflect deficits in providing age-appropriate levels of autonomy (Segrin et al., 2012). In addition, authoritarian parenting has also been found to significantly predict externalizing behaviour in children (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005; Braza et al., 2015; Gadeyne et al., 2004; Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018; Rinaldi & Howe, 2012).

Autonomy. Erik Erikson believed that it is important for parents to provide a sufficient amount of psychological autonomy to their children, and that a lack of autonomy can lead to the development of internalizing and/or externalizing problems. He believed that the role of a parent was to provide a strong base of security and to create an environment for which a child can learn to “stand on their own two feet” (Erikson, 1993). Parents who overparent discourage the development of autonomy as they look to protect their children from negative outcomes and provide high levels of advice and directive behaviour (Segrin et al., 2012). Therefore, by discouraging the development of autonomy and individuation, these parents may be placing their children at risk for developing internalizing and/or externalizing problems.

Family systems. Theories on family systems note that the structure and function of a family has a significant impact on how individuals’ function both within and outside the family unit. Cybernetics, feedback loops, circular causality, the family lifecycle, Bowen’s theory on family systems, and Minuchin’s family systems theory all contribute to our understanding of parenting and provide further insight into the effects of overparenting.

Cybernetics and feedback loops are utilized within a family system to maintain a state of homeostasis. For example, parenting involves making decisions that will either promote change or maintain equilibrium. Circular causality involves the notion that behaviour is complex and that actions interact with each other to ultimately cause an effect. For example, the parent-child relationship involves reciprocal interactions and these actions simultaneously shape each other (Gladding, 2014). The family life cycle proposed by McGoldrick et al. (2011) involves a six-stage cycle where different developmental tasks must be made or accomplished in order for the family unit and individual family members to thrive and develop. If family members are unable to master essential skills, they may struggle to transition to later stages and may encounter more

problems along the way. Murray Bowen (1993) theorized that excessive closeness (emotional fusion) in a family system can lead to children who struggle to become clearly defined individuals with well-defined ego-boundaries. In addition, these children are believed to be more vulnerable to developing emotional, physical, or social symptoms. Bowen believed that parents are an important part of a child's independence or individuation, as they actively promote the development of an autonomous identity. Salvador Minuchin (1974) believed that the development of a child's sense of identity occurs within the family context. Family interactions are thought to shape behaviour, while subsystems differentiate and carry out functions. Minuchin uses the term enmeshment to describe blurred boundaries within a subsystem. In enmeshed families, parents project their goals and desires onto their children and prevent them from individualizing (Segrin et al., 2012). As a child grows, they require increased autonomy and a decreased amount of guidance (Minuchin, 1974). Overparenting is theorized to be a by-product of enmeshment, and research has shown that being a part of an enmeshed family system greatly increases the likelihood that a child will exhibit internalizing and externalizing problems (Davies et al., 2004; Segrin et al., 2012).

The preceding theories help illustrate the importance of family function on the development and wellbeing of children. According to family systems, if overparenting occurs within a family, it is assumed that this form of maladaptive parenting would impact how children behave across settings, potentially leading to increases in both internalizing and externalizing behaviour in children.

Overparenting

The awareness of overparenting has significantly increased over the years, especially within the popular press. Overparenting has received consistent coverage, with many articles

appearing on social media and in magazines. Overparenting is known by a variety of terms (e.g. helicopter parenting, lawnmower parenting, etc.), that all involve developmentally inappropriate levels of control and support of one's own children. This type of parenting involves low levels of autonomy-granting as parents attempt to protect their children from negative outcomes (Segrin et al., 2012). Overparenting is viewed as a misguided attempt by parents to provide their children with an abundance of support so they may have the best chance at leading successful lives (Locke et al., 2012; Somers & Settle, 2010). These parents are preoccupied with their child's happiness and provide high levels of advice and directive behaviour. Overparenting is well defined in the adolescent and young adult populations, while requiring further research with young children. Elements of overparenting include anticipatory problem solving, advice/affect management, and an absence of child self-direction. Parents who overparent look to anticipate, solve, and eliminate problems with their children as they begin to develop academic and social skills. For example, parents who prevent their children from experiencing difficulties with peers or from receiving poor grades in school. These parents look to provide their children with excessive advice and attempt to protect them from experiencing negative emotions (e.g. frustration, sadness, anger). Parents who overparent also prevent their children from directing their own behaviour, for example, not allowing a child to figure out how to complete a developmentally appropriate task on their own (Segrin et al., 2012).

While overinvolved parents may believe they are simply providing warmth and care to their child, this parenting style often results in negative outcomes for children. Overparenting can prevent children from developing the appropriate skills required to manage difficulties and can result in the development of internalizing problems when subsequently presented with obstacles throughout development (Segrin et al., 2013). Overparenting is associated with adverse effects in

young adults, including increased levels of anxiety, depression, withdrawal, and insecure tendencies (Bayer et al., 2006; Gar & Hudson, 2008). In addition, overparenting is associated with lower levels of self-efficacy (Givertz & Segrin, 2013), higher levels of narcissism, ineffective coping skills, exaggerated psychological entitlement (Segrin et al. 2013), as well as lower quality parent-child communication (Segrin et al., 2012).

Related parenting styles. A variety of other related parenting styles exist that further describe the effects of overly involved parenting on child development. These include intensive parenting, parental overprotection, parental psychological control, anxious parenting, and overcontrolling parenting.

Intensive parenting is described by Schiffrin et al., (2014) as involving anticipatory problem solving, and the enrollment of children into multiple programs designed to enhance a child's physical, cognitive, and social abilities. This study concluded that for children to have positive social, academic, and developmental outcomes, parental involvement does not need to include expensive and time-consuming activities for pre-school aged children. Parental overprotecting is described by Parker (1983) as protective, vigilant and restrictive parental attitudes and behaviours. This type of parent attempts to protect their child from excessively real or imaginary danger while placing restrictions on their autonomy and independence. Parental psychological control is defined by Barber et al. (1994) as patterns of family interaction that do not allow for a child's individualization and impede upon levels of autonomy. Researchers found that this type of parenting is predictive of internalizing problems in children. Rapee (2009) describes anxious parenting as involving overprotecting children from problems, and the modelling of fearful behaviour in response to parents own problems. Results showed that perceived levels of anxious parenting by adolescent girls was associated with similar anxious

behaviour in the adolescents themselves. Perry et al. (2018) explain overcontrolling parenting as involving the limitation of moments where children can practice regulatory strategies. Research in this area shows that overcontrolling parenting is negatively correlated with emotional regulation and inhibitory control.

Despite extensive theory and research that suggests that overinvolved parenting leads to increases in adverse childhood outcomes, an association between overparenting and externalizing behaviour has yet to be explored.

Externalizing Behaviour

Externalizing behaviour is characterized by a multitude of problems including noncompliance, aggression, destructiveness, disruptiveness, defiance, attention problems, impulsivity, hostility, hyperactivity, and delinquency (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1978; McMahon, 1994; Rothbaum & Weisz, 1994). Externalizing problems in children are associated with a variety of negative outcomes including impaired social and academic skills, and difficulties transitioning to school (Ferner, 1999; Hinshaw, 1992; Ladd, 1996; Mash & Barkley, 1996). These problems develop in children for a variety of reasons and their severity is influenced by a range of factors including temperament, childrearing style, parent-child interactions, stability of the family, the presence of neglect, physical abuse, and/or sexual abuse, gender, socioeconomic status, and family composition (Bandura, 1977; Carlson & Corcoran, 2001; Delfos, 2004; Fox & Calkins, 2003; Gelfand & Drew, 2003; Pettit & Bates, 1989; Patterson, 1982; Pinquart, 2017; Reiss, 2013; Rothbaum and Weisz, 1994).

Although a direct relationship between externalizing behaviour and overparenting has yet to be studied, defining characteristics of overparenting, as well as related concepts and theories, provide circumstantial evidence for this association. Overparenting is closely related to various

poor parenting practices that are positively correlated with externalizing problems in children, for example, authoritarian parenting, a lack of autonomy-granting, increased levels of parental overcontrol, and enmeshed family systems (Segrin et al., 2012; Segrin et al., 2013; Strang, 2015).

Current Study

National survey data portrays a consistent trend in increased negative emotional and mental health outcomes for children over the years. For example, the National Survey for Children's Health shows a 10% decrease in the number of children reported by their parents to show resiliency to undesired outcomes between 2011/2012 and 2016/2017 (National Survey of Children's Health, 2011/2012, 2016/2017). Many individuals believe this trend is related to changes in parenting style, specifically the increases in overparenting. Parenting practices that restrict autonomy and enforce higher levels of psychological control are linked to decreased levels of emotional regulation, inhibitory control, and increases in the presence of internalizing and externalizing problems in children and adolescence (Crockenberg and Litman, 1990; Fox and Calkins, 2003; Lansford, et al., 2014; Perry et al., 2018). A decrease in autonomy can prevent children from being able to navigate challenges on their own, often leading to increased levels of maladjustment in social, emotional, and academic domains during preadolescence (Perry et al., 2018).

Although studies have looked at some effects of overparenting, none have explored the presence of externalizing problems in young children. Theories and research related to overparenting, such as those on parenting practices that limit autonomy-granting, as well as enmeshed family systems, demonstrate associations with externalizing behaviours in children.

Thus, it is important that a direct association between externalizing problems and overparenting be further explored.

It is hypothesized that because overparenting practices hinder the process of autonomy, children develop a limited ability to control their emotions and to problem solve when presented with obstacles. When parents provide their child with developmentally appropriate levels of autonomy the child is better able to manage their emotions in response to events. Without the freedom to make mistakes or handle problems on their own, children acquire a lesser ability to cope with future problems. These children consequently become overwhelmed when presented with difficulties, and this can lead to the development of externalizing problems. For example, children whose parents restrict opportunities to develop social problem-solving skills by stepping in to resolve conflict with peers, will find it difficult to handle similar situations in an environment where their parents are not present. These children may therefore present with externalizing behaviour in response to social problems they are unequipped to handle. This study will explore whether overparenting is associated with increased externalizing problems in children while controlling for SES, child gender, and family composition.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Parenting

Parenting, also known as child-rearing, is the practice of promoting and supporting the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of a child. Parenting practices differ internationally, across countries, and even within communities. Although genetics play an important role in the development of child behaviour, environmental conditions cannot be underrated.

Parenting theory and child development. There are a variety of theories within the literature that help to explain parenting practices as they relate to child development. These theories provide insight into the complexities of the parent-child relationship and help illustrate the effect overparenting has on the development and sustainability of child behaviour.

Parenting typologies. Diana Baumrind (1971; 2013) described four typologies of parenting styles that differ in their levels of demandingness and responsiveness. These styles include authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting, permissive parenting, and rejecting-neglecting parenting. Baumrind's typologies are used within this study to help better understand the origin and effects of overparenting.

Authoritative parents are those who have both high levels of demandingness as well as high levels of responsiveness. They have appropriate levels of control over their children while still encouraging autonomy and independence. Authoritative parenting was originally coined by Diana Baumrind to describe parenting that consists of acceptance, inductive discipline, nonpunitive disciplinary practices, and consistency in child rearing. This type of parenting is consistently identified in research and literature to be the most effective style of parenting. Children with authoritative parents are found to have higher levels of competence, social

development, self-perception, and mental health when compared to peers with authoritarian or neglectful parents (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Authoritative parents view the rights and responsibilities of the parent-child dyad as reciprocal rather than equal, as they understand that children's competencies and developmental needs are constantly changing and that both parent and child have distinct social roles. They respond appropriately to adolescent development by allowing and encouraging their children to learn to discuss and negotiate conflict, both at home and within other social contexts. They believe children should develop self-discipline, personal agency, and moral values while learning to comply with parent and teacher directives. Authoritative parents value independence and compliance in their children, as they balance the use of both freedom and control. While dealing with unwanted behaviour, authoritative parents use a high level of confrontive control, meaning they provide guidance (e.g. explaining reasons why a certain behaviour is desirable or undesirable), and set limits when their child is defiant. They rarely use coercive control and are open to changing rules or directives if their child has reasonable objections (Baumrind, 2013).

Children raised by authoritative parents are found to have better grades, better overall school performance, and increased school engagement (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg et al., 1992). They also present with higher levels of self-control, self-reliance, self-regulation, exploration, independence, maturity, and cooperation (Baumrind, 1971; Lemoyne & Buchanan, 2011). Steinberg et al. (1991) studied whether the positive effects of authoritative parenting style is moderated by ethnicity, class and/or parents' marital status. Their results show that regardless of these ecological factors, authoritative parenting leads to higher grades, increased self-reliance, less anxiety and depression, and lower levels of engagement in delinquent behaviour.

In contrast, authoritarian parents are those who have high levels of demandingness but low levels of responsiveness. These parents are often discontent, withdrawn, distrustful, strict, and less warm. They demand a lot from their children and have high expectations (Baumrind, 1971). Authoritarian parents believe in the importance of a parent's right and responsibility to assert control over their child, and disregard the importance of child autonomy (Baumrind, 2013). They appear more rigid with rules and often make decisions for their children rather than allowing their children the freedom of self-direction (Segrin et al., 2012). This type of parenting has been linked to higher levels of externalizing and internalizing problems, including anxiety, poor psychosocial adjustment, neuroticism, hostility, and problematic behaviour (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005; Barber & Harmon, 2002; Braza et al., 2015; Gadeyne et al., 2004; Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018; Rinaldi & Howe, 2012). Authoritarian parenting has been linked to lower levels of self-reliance, individuation, self-identity, and autonomy in children (Barber & Harmon, 2002). Children of authoritarian parents are also less open to new experiences, less independent, and demonstrate lower academic achievement (Barber & Harmon, 2002; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011).

Baumrind's third parenting style, permissive parenting, is defined as having low levels of demandingness and high levels of responsiveness and warmth. Permissive parents are responsive to their children's needs and desires and have few demands or expectations (Segrin et al., 2012). They are described as non-controlling and nondirective parents who provide their children with limited responsibility and endless positivity, acceptance, and self-direction (Baumrind, 1966; Baumrind, 1971; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011). This type of parenting is often associated with low self-control and self-reliance in children (Power, 2013). Children of permissive parents are

found to be less self-regulated, more likely to use drugs, and less achievement oriented (Baumrind, 1966).

The fourth parenting style, first identified by Maccoby and Martin (1983) and later outlined by Baumrind in her subsequent work, is called rejecting-neglecting parenting, often referred to as neglectful parenting. Baumrind describes these parents as rejecting their children and having lax behavioural control. They exhibit low levels of demandingness, responsiveness, and love. Baumrind hypothesizes that children of disengaged parents are less capable of functional forms of compliance and non-compliance, as these children are less engaged in reflective thought, and rewarded less for desirable behaviour (Baumrind, 2013).

Neglectful/disengaged parenting styles are associated with increased negative outcomes in children, as these children use more illegal drugs, are less resilient, have poorer academic performance, psychological competence, and adaptive strategies, and more behavioural problems (Aunola et al., 2000; Calafat et al., 2014; Lamborn et al., 1991; Montgomery et al., 2008; Steinberg et al., 1994).

Baumrind's description of authoritative and authoritarian styles of parenting both resemble aspects of overparenting. Both authoritative parents and parents who overparent present with high levels of affection. For example, both provide appropriate levels of warmth and are concerned for their child's wellbeing. In contrast, authoritarian parents provide low levels of warmth to their children. Overparenting differs from authoritative parenting in that parents who overparent also present with high levels of control over their child's life. A high level of control is also present in an authoritarian parenting style, as both authoritarian parenting and overparenting reflect deficits in providing age-appropriate levels of autonomy for children. For example, both types of parents become overly involved in helping their children reach success by

providing them with an abundance of developmentally inappropriate levels of support (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Segrin et al., 2012; Strang, 2015).

Strang (2015) explored the relationship between overparenting and parenting style in parents of school-aged children. Fifty-six parents of children in kindergarten through eighth grade were surveyed using measures of overparenting (Overparenting Scale) and parenting style (Parental Authority Questionnaire – Revised). This study found a significant positive correlation between authoritarian parenting and overparenting and no significant correlation between overparenting and permissive parenting or overparenting and authoritative parenting. The connection between overparenting, authoritarian parenting, and decreased autonomy within this study is important to note, as autonomy granting directly affects child development. These relationships help illustrate the importance of the current study and provide evidence for the connection between overparenting and externalizing behaviour in children.

The importance of autonomy-granting. Erik Erikson (1993) theorized “eight stages of man” that occur across human development. The second stage, *autonomy vs. shame and doubt*, involves the growth of autonomy, self-confidence, and self-control in a child’s life. Erikson believed it was important for children in early stages of development to be able to develop autonomy and to individuate themselves from their parents. According to Erikson, if a child is unable to develop a certain level of autonomy, they will instead develop a sense of shame and self-doubt. These negative feelings may express themselves in either internalizing or externalizing behaviours, depending on the individual (Erikson, 1993).

Autonomy and regulation are often identified as critical issues in child development. Developing children require a sufficient amount of psychological autonomy in their lives. For example, parents who allow their children a developmentally appropriate amount of autonomy

during social interactions with others will help their children to develop a sense of confidence as well as a clear sense of identity. Adults should provide structure to their children in order to help them develop skills but must not impede the process of individualization (Barber et al., 1994; Lansford et al., 2014). Roberts et al. (1999) researched the association between parental autonomy granting and adolescent wellbeing. They found that the more autonomy teens were granted, the more positively they rated their conduct, psychosocial development, mental health, and academics. They discuss how parents who provide appropriate levels of autonomy to their children embolden feelings of self-confidence and self-competence in both social and academic settings. Autonomy granting also promotes a child's desire to achieve, and a belief in their ability to succeed. Children who feel as though their parents have helped to support their individualization are less likely to present with internalizing problems, as they present with higher levels of self-esteem, academic mastery, and a greater sense of control over their lives. (Roberts et al., 1999).

Parents should provide a strong base of security and an environment for which a child can learn to "stand on their own two feet" (Erikson, 1993). It is a parent's responsibility to provide this type of environment in order to prevent children from developing feelings of shame and self-doubt. For example, if a child is prevented by their parents from completing a task that they are all too capable of doing, the child may develop shame and doubt about their ability to handle similar tasks or problems in the future. This may subsequently lead to internalizing and externalizing problems in children. Lansford et al. (2014) studied autonomy in adolescents aged 12-17, and its relationship with externalizing and internalizing behaviour. They found less autonomy and more psychological control predicted increases in internalizing problems in both

boys and girls, as well as an increase in externalizing problems in girls. They conclude that autonomy-granting is an important aspect of healthy adjustment during adolescence.

Parents who overparent discourage the development of autonomy as they look to protect their children from negative outcomes and provide high levels of advice and directive behaviour (Segrin et al., 2012). By preventing their children from experiencing developmentally appropriate levels of autonomy, parents who overparent may be putting their children at risk for developing internalizing and/or externalizing problems.

Family systems. The structure and function of the family system has a significant impact on parenting and affects how individual family members function both within and outside the family unit. A system is defined as “an interacting set of units, parts, or persons that make up a whole arrangement or organization” (Gladding, 2014). A number of theories exist that discuss family structure and function and how it affects individual growth and development. These theories are essential for conceptualizing overparenting as they add to the understanding of parent-child relations and how the parent-child dyad functions within the family system.

Cybernetics and circular causality. Cybernetics is a term used to describe systems that self-regulate through the use of feedback loops. Cybernetics is utilized within a family system to maintain a state of homeostasis or equilibrium through the use of a receptor, a center and effector, and a feedback system. A person’s receptor (e.g. ears; eyes) brings in information to the center where it is amplified (e.g. through speech) and carried to the effector (decision maker), which reacts to the information through an output (e.g. avoidance or engagement). In overparenting, this may involve a parent’s reaction to a difficulty in their child’s life. For example, if a parent who overparents sees (through their receptor) that their child is about to encounter something that may make them uncomfortable, they may choose (through their

effector) to remove their child from the situation before the child becomes distressed. Related to cybernetics is the idea of circular causality. Circular causality acknowledges the complexity of human behaviour and the system of relationships within which it always occurs. It involves the notion that behaviour is complex and that actions interact with each other to ultimately cause an effect (Gladding, 2014). For example, within a household a parent may practice overparenting while their child may exhibit externalizing behaviour. Under the notion of circular causality, one views child behaviour and overparenting practices as concurrently shaping each other. A parent who overparents looks to relieve as much distress for their child as possible, which in turn causes increased child externalizing behaviour as the child cannot learn how to handle stressful situations on their own. At the same time, the child's behaviour makes the parent want to continue to engage in anticipatory problem solving, so that occurrences of externalizing behaviour are reduced. Viewing interactions through circular causality allows better insight into the complexity and interconnectedness of family dynamics (Gladding, 2014).

Feedback loops. Feedback loops occur within a family system as a means to promote consistency or change. A negative feedback loop, also known as an attenuating feedback loop, involves actions that promote a return to equilibrium. For example, a parent who continues to utilize the same parenting techniques in response to an undesired behaviour will continue to elicit said behaviour. In contrast, a positive feedback loop, also known as an amplifying feedback loop, involves actions that promote change. For example, if the same parent decided to take a parenting course and implement different parenting strategies in response to their child's undesired behaviour, they would elicit a change in the behaviour of the child. It is important that families learn to maintain a balance between equilibrium and change. If change does not occur, a family can become stagnant as they fail to adjust in response to developmental needs. If there is

too much change, however, the family system may become chaotic (Gladding, 2014). Similar to the function of circular causality, feedback loops can create a pattern of behaviour within parent-child relationships. In overparenting, a parent creates a pattern of behaviour when they choose to protect their child from any and all difficulties they may experience in life. Reducing the amount of distress their child experiences causes increased child externalizing behaviour, as the child does not learn to effectively manage their emotions while in distress, making the parent want to continue to reduce distress. If parents instead choose to change their approach to parenting, this would promote a change in their child's behaviour. For example, if the parent allowed their child to experience developmentally appropriate levels of distress, their child may learn to better cope with stress and reduce their externalizing behaviour.

Family life cycle. McGoldrick et al. (2011) proposed a six-stage cycle that the majority of intact, middle-class, nuclear families experience. The cycle begins with the unattached adult and continues through to retirement. The stages, in order, include *single young adults leaving home, the new couple, families with young children, families with adolescents, families launching children and moving on, and families in later life*. Within each stage, there are different developmental tasks that must be made or accomplished in order for the family and individual family members to thrive and develop. McGoldrick et al. (2011) note that not all intact nuclear families will transition through each stage, and those that do may experience difficulties along the way. It is important that families learn to master the skills and milestones within each stage, or they may encounter difficulties with relationships or difficulties transitioning to later stages. For example, if parents do not learn to instill increased autonomy, independence, and confidence to make age-appropriate decisions within their children, this can prolong time spent in the *families with young children* stage. Parents who overparent may

therefore struggle transitioning to later stages and may encounter more problems if they are unable to master the skills necessary to provide their children with adequate levels of autonomy.

Bowen theory of family systems. Murray Bowen theorized that excessive closeness (emotional fusion) or distance (emotional differentiation) in a family system can lead to anxiety within the system. He used the term fusion to describe a person's reactions within a relationship. Fusion involves a lack of differentiation of the self within a family unit. A person in a fused relationship reacts immediately to perceived demands of another person. For example, a parent who overparents perceives their child is in distress and immediately responds to the issue. When a family has a greater tendency to fuse, they are less flexible in adapting to stress. Bowen believed that the differentiation of self was an important step to becoming clearly defined individuals with well-defined ego-boundaries. These individuals are able to form close relationships with others without a loss of self or identity. Children who are more emotionally fused with their parents are thought by Bowen to be more vulnerable to developing emotional, physical, or social symptoms. Bowen believed self-differentiation was vital for emotional and social growth and helped children to develop independence. Parents are thought to be an important part of a child's independence or individuation, as they should actively promote the development of an autonomous identity. Parents can support this process by supporting their child's efforts and helping to create and encourage opportunities to increase degrees of emotional separation (Bowen, 1993). Thus, Bowen would view overparenting as a fused relationship between parent and child, making it difficult for children to self-differentiate and increasing their risk for emotional, physical and social problems.

Family systems theory. Salvador Minuchin (1974) believed humans experience identity in two distinct ways, through a sense of belonging and through a sense of being separate.

According to Minuchin, the development of a child's sense of identity occurs within the family context. A child's sense of belonging comes from their interactions within the family group. Throughout a child's development the family system responds to the needs of the child, and as this process unfolds, areas of autonomy are uncovered where the child can experience separateness.

Family structure is defined by Minuchin as "an invisible set of functional demands that organizes the ways in which family members interact" (Minuchin, 1974, p. 51). Repeated interactions between members of the family establishes patterns of how, when, and to whom each individual relates to within the family system. For example, a mother instructing her child to finish their dinner and the child subsequently complying, defines who the mother is in relation to her child and vice versa, within this context and period of time. As similar interactions occur and repeat, a transactional pattern will form.

Transactional patterns were thought by Minuchin to regulate family member's behaviours, and he discussed how these patterns are maintained by two systems of constraint. The first system is thought to be universal to all families and involves both a power hierarchy in which parents and children hold different levels of authority, and a complementarity of functions in which parents operate as a team and accept interdependency. The second system is distinct to the individual and involves mutual expectations between each family member. These expectations originate from the daily interaction's members have amongst each other. Minuchin considers the system to be self-maintaining, as familial patterns are often resistant to change beyond a certain threshold, and members are often diligent about ensuring that others are fulfilling their expected roles if system disequilibrium does arise. He acknowledged, however, that family structure must be able to adapt to change. Families must be flexible in the use of

alternative transactional patterns when needed. They must respond to internal and external changes in a way that allows them to deal with the situation while still maintaining continuity and providing a frame of reference for family members.

Another important aspect of families, according to Minuchin, is that of family subsystems. Subsystems are how family systems differentiate and carry out functions. Each individual is their own subsystem within the family, and dyads such as husband and wife or mother and child are also thought of as subsystems. Subsystems can be formed in a multitude of ways including by sex, interest, generation, or function. Each individual belongs to different subsystems within the family where they have different roles and levels of power. For example, a woman can be a daughter, sister, mother, wife, niece, and so on. Within each individual subsystem the woman would enter into a different complementary relationship and throughout her life would need to learn to relinquish, retain, or balance power within her individual subsystems.

Minuchin discussed the importance of boundaries within a subsystem and describes these as the rules that define who participates in a subsystem and how. For example, the boundary of a parental subsystem is defined when a mother executes authority over her children. Each family subsystem has its own specific functions and demands on its members. When subsystems are free from interference by other subsystems, members gain important interpersonal skills. For example, when parents refrain from interfering within the sibling dyad, children are better able to develop the skills necessary for negotiating with peers. In order to have a functioning family unit, Minuchin believed it is important for the boundaries of a subsystem to be clearly defined. There needs to be a balance between independence and interdependence within a family. Families that present with rigid boundaries, also known as disengaged families, have a difficult

time communicating and sustaining their protective functions as a family unit. In contrast, those families who present with blurred boundaries, also known as enmeshed families, increase their communication and concern for each other, and tend to lack the resources necessary to adapt to stressful circumstances (Minuchin, 1974).

Enmeshed family systems. Minuchin (1974) described enmeshed family systems as those with a lack of subsystem differentiation that discourage autonomous exploration and mastery of problems. Subsystem differentiation occurs when family members have distinct roles within a family system (Minuchin, 1974). In enmeshed families, parents can project their goals and desires onto their children (Segrin et al., 2012). The behaviour of one family member has a strong influence on the behaviour of another, and stress experienced by one individual can disrupt multiple subsystems. Enmeshed family systems also often involve quick and intense reactions to variations from the norm (Minuchin, 1974). For example, a parent who becomes extremely upset when a child, who cannot typically wait to eat homemade cookies, chooses not to eat his dessert. This sudden change in habitual patterns would seem catastrophic to an enmeshed family.

Minuchin (1974) discussed how as a child grows, they require increased autonomy and a decreased amount of guidance. The child becomes more involved with their peers, school, and other socialization forces outside the family. This places pressure on the parental subsystem, which must be modified in response to these changes. If the child becomes overwhelmed or stressed by their social experiences outside of their family, this not only affects the parent-child relationship, but may also place stress on the spousal subsystem. The parenting process also looks different depending on a child's stage of development. When children are born, parents nurture and protect them, and as they age, parents must respond with increased control and

guidance. When children begin to mature into adolescents, the demands for age-appropriate autonomy grow and parents must respond to this process appropriately (Minuchin, 1974).

Research has shown that being a part of an enmeshed family system greatly increases the likelihood that a child will exhibit signs of insecurity as well as internalizing and externalizing problems (Davies et al., 2004). Overparenting is thought to be a by-product of enmeshed family systems, where parents project their goals onto their children. This behaviour often manifests itself in high levels of advice giving, protection from negative outcomes, and a preoccupation with their child's happiness (Segrin et al., 2012).

Overparenting and Related Parenting Styles

A variety of terms reflect Minuchin's theory on enmeshed family systems and parenting. These terms often describe parents who respond to their child's development with inappropriate levels of protection and direction, and a disregard for age-appropriate autonomy. Such terms include authoritarian parenting (Baumrind, 1971), overparenting, helicopter parenting (Segrin et al., 2012), intensive parenting (Schiffirin, et al., 2014), overprotective parenting (Parker, 1983), parental psychological control (Barber et al., 1994), anxious parenting (Rapee, 2009), and overcontrolling parenting (Givertz and Segrin, 2014; Perry et al., 2018). These examples of intrusive, overinvolved, and overly controlling parenting are believed to lead to negative child outcomes, as children become accustomed to having their problems solved and getting their needs and wants consistently met (Segrin et al., 2012).

Overparenting. Overparenting is one of many terms used to describe an intense and unintentionally maladaptive form of parenting that involves the active manipulation of a child's environment in order to help them avoid undesirable circumstances.

Child development often involves an increase in autonomous exploration and mastery of problems. Parents who overparent will discourage this development by protecting their children from negative outcomes, by being preoccupied with their child's happiness, and by providing high levels of advice and directive behaviour. Overparenting is measured in degree rather than presence, as some aspects of overparenting may be adaptive in mild forms. It is the excessive practice of these parenting behaviours that result in harmful child development (Segrin et al., 2012).

Overparenting is often described as developmentally inappropriate levels of control and support to one's own children (Segrin et al., 2012). This type of parenting is viewed as a misguided attempt by parents to provide their children with the best chance for personal and academic success (Locke et al., 2012). According to Segrin et al. (2012), factors of overparenting include anticipatory problem solving, advice/affect management, the absence of child self-direction, and tangible assistance. Anticipatory problem solving is the process of anticipating, solving, and eliminating problems, while advice/affect management involves providing children with excessive advice and managing their mood in order to ensure happiness. Child self-direction measures whether parents tend to prevent their children from directing their own behaviour while tangible assistance involves providing one's child with monetary funds, completing their chores, providing food, and providing transportation. This final factor relates more to the overparenting of young adults than it does children, as tangible assistance is deemed developmentally appropriate for school-aged children.

Individuals who overparent often become hyper-involved in their child's life in order to shield them from potential harm and attempt to foster success and happiness in their lives (Segrin et al., 2012). While these parenting strategies may at times be viewed as beneficial to children,

when provided at high levels and at developmentally inappropriate times, they can adversely affect a child's ability to cope (Segrin et al., 2013). Bayer et al. (2006) discuss the importance of making distinctions between providing warmth and the act of overparenting. They offer a helpful illustration of this distinction involving a parent who is providing physical affection to their child (providing warmth), versus one who quickly and anxiously gathers up their child in their arms when a stranger enters the room (overparenting). Parents who utilize overparenting may believe they are simply providing their child with warmth and safety, when in reality, they are exhibiting behavior that can adversely affect their child's wellbeing.

Locke, Campbell, and Kavanagh (2012) surveyed 128 psychology professionals who work with children and/or families to gain insight into how professionals generally define the term overparenting. These professionals completed surveys online. First, they were given a brief definition of overparenting and asked whether or not they have experience with this in their practice. Those who answered yes were asked to describe concrete, anonymous examples of overparenting practices and to respond whether or not a list of parenting beliefs and actions were, in their opinion, associated with overparenting. The results of this study showed that only eight percent of those surveyed reported no experience of overparenting with clients, meaning that most of these professionals have experience with overparenting in their work. Low demandingness was identified as a common overparenting characteristic, where parents look to solve their child's problems and reduce the chance that a child will experience difficulty or disappointment. Some professionals in this study noted that they observed a reduced sense of self-efficacy that they attributed to a lack of demandingness from parents. High demandingness was also identified as a common overparenting characteristic, where parents provide high levels of supervision and monitoring of behaviour, as well as high expectations for academics and

social and peer relationships. According to Locke et al. (2012), the combination of low demandingness in terms of child autonomy and high demandingness in terms of life expectations for the child, often leads to children feeling as though they are unable to ensue change or handle adversity within their own lives. High responsiveness, meaning having a child's needs at the centre of a parent's life regardless of age, was identified by professionals within this survey as an additional characteristic of overparenting.

Locke et al. summarize the general definition of overparenting as "...very high levels of parenting responsiveness and high demands for child success, often resulting in parental behaviours that reduce demands on the child to undertake actions that would affect change in their own life." (Locke et al., 2012, p. 261). They discuss how overparenting actions are often thought to result in low levels of child resilience, a sense of entitlement in children, anxiety, inadequate life skills, and a lack of self-efficacy or sense of personal responsibility.

Helicopter parenting. Helicopter parenting is a colloquial term used to describe a type of overparenting that often occurs in adolescence and emerging adulthood (Segrin et al., 2012). Helicopter parenting is often used synonymously with the term overparenting but is perhaps the most well-known and most commonly used term in popular literature. This term was coined by Charles Fay and Foster Cline in 1990 as a parent or guardian who hovers over a child of any age by becoming excessively involved in the child's life (Somers & Settle, 2010). Helicopter behaviour is thought to have both positive and negative effects. Positive effects are attributed to times where hovering is viewed as developmentally appropriate, such as when a child with a disability requires extra support from a parent. Negative effects are the result of parents becoming inappropriately enmeshed in their children's lives, such as a parent who attempts to steer their child into a sport that they themselves longed to play (Segrin et al., 2012). Helicopter

parenting is negatively associated with self-efficacy, overall well-being, life satisfaction, trust of peers, and physical health. It is positively associated with levels of alienation from peers, anxiety, depression, and recreational consumption of pain pills (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Reed et al., 2016; van Igen et al., 2012).

Studies on overparenting and the effects on children. Multiple studies on overparenting have been completed to help illustrate the effects on children. Although many of these studies have been completed with young adult children, the results still reflect important information on the negative consequences of overparenting.

In their paper, Segrin et al. (2012) surveyed 538 parent-young adult child dyad relationships from across the United States to measure parental levels of overparenting and the associated outcomes in their young-adult children. The primary goal of their investigation was to study the relationship between overparenting, quality of parent-child communication, and the negative and positive child traits that are influenced by overparenting. Segrin et al. (2012) found that overparenting was associated with lower quality parent-child communication, according to both parents and adult children. Overparenting was also associated with a higher sense of entitlement in adult children. However, there was no evidence in this study to suggest an association between adaptive traits (social self-efficacy, positive relations with others, general self-efficacy, emotional intelligence) and overparenting.

Segrin et al.'s (2013) paper collected data on levels of overparenting and maladaptive traits from 653 parent-adult child dyads from across the United States. There were two main focuses for this study. First, whether parental anxiety and regret were associated with overparenting, and how this association functions. Second, to examine the association between overparenting and the presence of specific child traits including narcissism, coping, stress, and

anxiety. Both parents and their adult children completed an overparenting scale (Segrin et al., 2012), as well as the anxiety subscale from the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale. In addition, parents completed the domains of regret scale that measured their levels of regret in eight different domains (i.e., career, education, parenting, family, finance, leisure, romance, and self). Adult children also completed scales on the degree to which they perceive situations in their lives as stressful, levels of self-perceived narcissism, and self-reported strategies for coping. Results from this study reveal a positive correlation between parental anxiety and overparenting, and that parental regret indirectly affects overparenting through increased levels of anxiety. In addition, overparenting is associated with higher levels of narcissism, and more ineffective coping skills (e.g. internalizing and distancing). The presence of ineffective coping skills was also found to be associated with greater levels of anxiety and stress for adult children.

Givertz and Segrin (2014) examined whether overparenting in the form of overinvolvement and control were associated with young adult child self-efficacy and psychological entitlement. 339 parent-child dyads were recruited through two universities and completed measures on family adaptability and cohesion, family communication, family satisfaction, open parent-child communication, parenting style, parental autonomy vs. control, parental psychological control, self-efficacy, and entitlement. The results indicated that the presence of parental overinvolvement and control predicted lower levels of family satisfaction for both parents and adult children. The presence of parental control was also associated with low levels of self-efficacy and heightened entitlement in young adult children.

Segrin et al. (2015) paper analyzed data from 477 emerging adult child-parent dyads to test two hypotheses. First, whether overparenting is associated with greater problems for the child, and second, whether overparenting is associated with a more critical (rather than

accommodating) family environment. The mean age of parent participants was 51.89 years while the mean age of adult children was estimated due to a technical problem. This estimation placed the adult-children in their 20s. Parents completed scales on overparenting, while both parents and children completed scales on self-perception of a critical family environment, and attitudes of parent/child towards each other. Adult children were assessed on their perception of whether positive and negative parental regard is conditional on academic performance, as well as problems they experience across a variety of domains including school, future, parents, relationships, leisure, romantic involvement, and self. Adult children were also surveyed on their perception of the degree to which their parent engages in overinvolved, anxious, and overprotective parenting. Results from this study found a significant association between overparenting and the presence of a critical family environment. Adult child reports of overparenting were also strongly associated with self-reports of their own problems (e.g. problems with relations to others), but parental reports did not yield the same findings.

Locke et al. (2016) used the Locke Parenting Scale to assess the relationship between overparenting and the levels of responsibility that teachers and parents take for students completing homework in elementary and high school. They surveyed 866 parents who completed questionnaires on their parenting practices, as well as their beliefs regarding the completion of their child's homework. The responsibility for homework was measured in two ways. First, the level of responsibility that the parents felt they/teachers/their child *should* have to ensure homework completion, and second, the level of responsibility parents felt they/teachers/their child *does* have in relation to their child's homework completion. This study found that parents who reported greater levels of overparenting also reported stronger beliefs that they themselves, as well as their child's teacher, had greater ideal and actual responsibility for

their child completing homework. Parents with high overparenting scores also tended to see teachers as falling short of their ideal responsibility for child homework completion. These results did not, however, demonstrate an association between overparenting and parent's perceived level of their child's ideal or actual responsibility for homework completion (Locke et al., 2016).

Family factors that influence overparenting. Glass and Tabatsky (2014) discuss potential reasons for the recent shift in parenting approaches, in their book *The Overparenting Epidemic*. Through discussions with family experts, the authors compiled a short list of some possible reasons for the increase in overparenting, including parent careers becoming more demanding; a reduction in help from extended family; parents wanting their child to be viewed as “perfect”; parents feeling they need unrestricted access to everyone in their child's school; more children being expected to go to college and do something significant after graduation; parents having fewer number of children, thus hyper focusing their attention on the children they do have; some children being less responsible and having little sense of boundaries; and there being a higher number of single parents and children of divorce. Although Glass and Tabatsky (2014) recognize the above factors as potentially increasing levels of overparenting in families, they also acknowledge that each one is controllable and/or manageable, and these factors should therefore not act as barriers to healthy parenting.

Overparenting and parent characteristics. Another factor that is often associated with higher levels of overparenting is the presence of parental anxiety, as these types of parents can become overly worried about their child's happiness and potential for success. Segrin et al.'s (2013) study surveyed 653 parent-adult child dyads and found that overparenting and parental anxiety are positively correlated. Strang made similar conclusions in their 2015 study exploring

the relationship between overparenting and anxiety in parents of school-aged children. Fifty-six parents of children in kindergarten through eighth grade were surveyed using measures of overparenting and parent anxiety. Results demonstrated that overparenting of school-aged children is positively correlated with parental anxiety.

Social factors that influence overparenting. Although individual and family factors influence the presence of overparenting, social and cultural factors can also contribute to parenting styles utilized by caregivers. Economics, technology, and gender are additional factors to consider when researching the presence of overparenting.

Overparenting and economic factors. Socioeconomic status (SES) includes both economic and social factors such as education, occupational status, income, family structure, and other measures of family environment (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Low levels of SES are associated with harsher and more punitive family environments, heightened family conflict, low levels of support, and increased exposure to family violence, when compared to higher levels of SES (Bornstein & Bradley, 2012; Conger et al., 1994; Repetti et al., 2002). In addition, low SES is associated with decreased physical health and mental health (Roubinov & Boyce, 2017).

Deopke and Zilibotti (2019) argue that differences in child rearing practices can be attributed to economic factors. Economic conditions influence the way parents interact with their children, as well as the parenting choices they make. There are a variety of economic constraints that limit parents in what they are able to provide for their children. For example, budgetary constraints can limit parents in providing nutritional food options, private school education, or the newest toy. Some families experience time constraints, as parents may not be able to spend a lot of time with their children. These parents may work multiple jobs, long hours, or even be serving time in jail. Parents can also be limited in their knowledge and abilities, which can

significantly influence how they parent their children. For example, some parents may not be aware of the importance of nutrition, and others may choose to use ineffective disciplinary practices.

Deopke and Zilibotti (2019) hypothesize that parenting styles are chosen based on the society in which parents imagine their children will live. Child-rearing practices are tied to the socioeconomic environment in which parents themselves grew up, as well as the interactions they have with their children. Parents look to prepare their children for the challenges they believe lie ahead. The recent shift in the intensity of parenting is occurring during a period of time where there are higher stakes for raising children, greater economic inequality, and a greater emphasis on education. Parents want to see their children succeed in life and recognize the large economic inequality that exists in today's society. For example, a good education is viewed as a means of achieving success, as many believe it leads to a higher paying job. Thus, parents are much more concerned about their child's performance at school and have responded by engaging in more intensive forms of parenting.

Overparenting and technological factors. The increased accessibility that parents have to their children is hypothesized to significantly influence the prevalence of overparenting (Marano, 2008). Parents have almost instant access to their children through technology. With younger children, many parents have access to classroom websites where they can get updates on their child's day to day activities. They may also have instant access to teachers through email, by phone, or even by text message. Many children have their own cellphones or other pieces of technology that parents can use to access their child throughout the day. One example of technology used by some parents includes the Ignore No More app that allows parents to shut down everything on their child's phone (except parent approved contacts) until the child calls

home to receive the unlock password. Parents also utilize smart home monitoring systems to keep a close watch on their children. These technological advances may further enable parents' ability to restrict their children's autonomy, thus leading to increased levels of overparenting.

Parenting and gender. In today's industrialized society, many parents and educators attempt to treat boys and girls the same. If differences do exist, it is often in response to differing behaviours and needs rather than gender. Aspirations for children tend to be similar for both boys and girls, as most parents hope their children will receive a good education and grow up to be independent adults. The small percentage of parents who choose to alter their parenting styles based on gender often have traditional views about gender roles, are more likely to be authoritarian in their parenting style, as well as of lower SES (Deopke & Zilibotti, 2019).

Other related parenting styles. A variety of other related parenting styles are explored in this study to help further describe the effects that overly involved parenting has on child development. Although many of these concepts are related to overparenting, differences exist that distinguish these concepts from overparenting.

Intensive parenting. Intensive parenting is described by Schiffrin, et al., (2014) as involving anticipatory problem solving and enrollment of children into multiple programs designed to enhance a child's physical, cognitive, and social abilities. Schiffrin et al. (2014) collected data from 241 parents of four-year-old children. Parents were asked to complete the Intensive Parenting Questionnaire (IPAQ) on their parenting beliefs, Segrin et al.'s (2012) Anticipatory Problem-Solving scale of their overparenting measure, a subjective happiness scale, and questions on enrollment in structured activities, gross and fine motor skills, and language use. This study found that parents who look to create a child-centered environment where the child is consistently intellectually stimulated may be more likely to exhibit anticipatory problem

solving for their children. In addition, results showed no support for intensive parents' assumptions that they were ensuring their child's happiness through enrollment in programming. There was no link between increased participation in cognitive/motor activities and improvement in the child's skill level or happiness, and the researchers conclude that for pre-school aged children to have positive social, academic, and developmental outcomes, parental involvement does not need to include expensive and time-consuming activities. Similar to overparenting, intensive parenting is viewed as involving anticipatory problem solving where parents look to prevent their children from having to resolve their own problems. Intensive parenting differs from overparenting, however, as it focuses more specifically on child enrollment in programming, whereas overparenting includes additional concepts such as tangible assistance, risk aversion, and excessive parental involvement.

Parental overprotection. Parker (1983) describes parental overprotection as protective, vigilant and restrictive parental attitudes and behaviours. This type of parent attempts to protect their child from excessively real or imaginary danger while placing restrictions on their autonomy and independence. Over-possessiveness is also a prominent feature of overprotective parenting, as parents are often unwilling to relinquish control over their child. These parents also tend to *infantilize* their children by babying them and restricting components of their socialization. It is important to note that control in the case of overprotective parents is sometimes described as *affectionless control*, where parents seem to care less about the child's wellbeing and more about conformity and discipline. A second style of overprotectiveness can be distinguished by a high level of caring for the child's wellbeing (Parker, 1983). Parent overprotection is a broad term that shares some similarities with overparenting, for example, both types of parents look to protect their children from perceived danger. Overparenting

however, is a term exclusively used for parents who exhibit warmth towards their children and does not include those parents who exhibit affectionless control.

Parental psychological control. Parental psychological control is defined as patterns of family interaction that do not allow for a child's individualization and impede upon the degree of psychological distance a child experiences from their parents and family (Barber, et al., 1994). Research in this area found that this type of restrictive parenting is more predictive of internalizing problems. Youth in grades five, eight, and ten participated in a study by Barber, et al. (1994) who found that increased levels of parental psychological control lead to increased levels of internalizing problems. The concept of parental psychological control is closely related to that of overparenting. Similar to overparenting, parental psychological control involves the restriction of autonomy and is associated with enmeshment of a family. Differences exist however between how each construct is measured. While overparenting is a self-report of parenting style, parental psychological control measures family factors such as levels of enmeshment and disengagement.

Anxious parenting. Rapee (2009) describes anxious parenting as a combination of overprotection of a child and the expression of anxiety by the parent. In other words, parents who engage in anxious parenting often overprotect their children from problems, and model fearful behaviour in response to their own problems. Rapee (2009) surveyed 421 adolescent girls about their mothers' level of anxious parenting using items that were designed to measure levels of possible protection from social harm, protection from physical harm, and overt expression of parental anxiety. Adolescents were also asked to complete a self-report of anxiety, while mothers completed their own self-report of anxiety and rated their daughter's perceived levels of anxiety.

This study found that perceived levels of anxious parenting by adolescent girls was associated with similar anxious behaviour in the adolescents themselves.

Strang (2015) studied the relationship between overparenting and parental anxiety, finding that parents who overparent are more likely to exhibit high levels of anxiety. Thus, this type of parenting seems to be closely related to overparenting in that both terms are used to describe a type of parent who anxiously protects their children from the world. These two concepts do differ however as the concept of anxious parenting assumes that anxiety is the cause of this restrictive parenting style, while a causal relationship between anxiety and overparenting has not been determined. In addition, overparenting is better defined in the literature and includes a formalized scale, while anxious parenting has yet to be validated in research.

Overcontrolling parenting. The concept of overcontrolling parenting closely resembles that of overparenting. Both overcontrolling parenting and overparenting look at levels of anticipatory problem solving in order to prevent emotional distress of a child. Within Perry et al.'s 2018 study, overcontrolling parenting was measured through direct observation as parents were rated on the frequency that they prevented their children from practicing regulatory strategies. In comparison, overparenting is a self-report of parent behaviour. In addition, the overparenting construct reflects supplementary factors that are not included within the overcontrolling parenting construct, including advice/affect management, child self-direction, and tangible assistance.

Perry et al. (2018) conducted a longitudinal study of 307 families measuring how overcontrolling parenting practices in toddlerhood affects a child's inhibitory control and emotional regulation in childhood, and their overall adjustment in preadolescence. Overcontrolling parenting, inhibitory control, and emotional regulation were all observed in a

laboratory. Overcontrolling parenting was coded as moments where parents did not allow their children to practice regulatory strategies, as they intervened to regulate their child's emotions or behaviour before the child had a chance to do so themselves. Inhibitory control was defined as the ability of a child to withhold inappropriate behavioural responses, while emotional regulation was defined as the process of controlling, maintaining, or enhancing the intensity and presence of emotional experiences.

The first goal of this study was to examine the association between overcontrolling parenting and children's level of inhibitory control and emotional regulation during early childhood. Second, Perry et al. (2018) looked to examine the association between the presence of inhibitory control and emotional regulation during early childhood and changes in social, emotional, and academic adjustment as the child develops into preadolescence. The third goal was to examine whether the presence of inhibitory control and emotional regulation skills during early childhood linked overcontrolling parenting in toddlerhood to changes in adjustment in preadolescence.

Perry et al. (2018) utilized multiple measures for this study. The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) for ages two to three-years-old was completed by mothers to measure the presence of externalizing behaviour in children at age two. Maternal overcontrol during toddlerhood was measured by observing a pretend play and cleanup session at age two using a four-point scale. Emotional regulation was measured at age five through the "I'm not sharing" task that functions to elicit child frustration. Inhibitory control was also measured at age five by using a Shape Stroop task that required children to select the appropriate answers as quickly as possible. This task was used to measure the child's ability to inhibit the urge to choose the incorrect choice. Teacher reports were also collected for this study. Teachers were asked to rate

internalizing behaviour, using the Behavior Assessment System for Children – Second Edition (BASC-2) at age five. They were also asked to rate academic productivity, using the Academic Performance Rating Scale, at ages five and ten. A child report of emotional and school problems was collected at age 10 using the BASC-2 Self Report of Personality.

The results of this study found that greater emotional regulation at age five was associated with fewer child-reported emotional problems, and greater teacher-reported social skills and academic productivity at age ten. Greater inhibitory control was also found to result in fewer child-reported emotional and school problems at age 10, and greater teacher reported academic productivity. In addition, Perry et al. (2018) found that overcontrolling parenting at age two was negatively correlated with emotional regulation and inhibitory control at age five. They also found that overcontrolling parenting at age two had significant indirect effects on preadolescent adjustment through inhibitory control and emotional regulation at age five.

Perry et al. (2018) discuss how children who develop effective emotional regulation and inhibitory control skills are better able to adjust to increasingly difficult environmental demands encountered as they develop into preadolescents. In order to develop these skills, children need to be provided with the opportunity to overcome challenges on their own. If, during development, parents attempt to control a situation, physically keep a child from experiencing frustration or fear, or step in to help before a child has the opportunity to handle the challenge independently, they may be unintentionally hindering the development of their child's self-regulatory abilities. The results of their study conclude that it is possible for overcontrolling parenting in early life to lead to lower levels of inhibitory control and emotional regulation during early childhood. This can prevent children from being able to navigate challenges on their

own, thus leading to increased levels of maladjustment in social, emotional, and academic domains during preadolescence (Perry et al., 2018).

Perry et al.'s (2018) results provide significant evidence for the present study, as they demonstrate an association between overcontrolling parenting and aspects of child behaviour that often present as externalizing problems. For example, children who are unable to regulate their emotions may yell, cry, or become physically aggressive when frustrated. Perry et al. (2018) provide evidence that indirect connections between overcontrolling parenting practices and the presence of externalizing behaviour may exist, however, further exploration is required to identify direct associations between overparenting and the presence of externalizing problems in children.

Potential positive outcomes of overinvolved parenting. High levels of parental involvement are not always found to lead to negative outcomes. Moriarty (2011) studied the relationship between parental contact, attachment, and influence, on the development of autonomy in first-year college students living in residence. The researcher looked to answer three main questions, whether there is a relationship between how frequently first-year college students contact their parents and student development of autonomy; whether there is a relationship between levels of attachment of first-year college students and student development of autonomy; and whether there is a relationship between parental influence and student development of autonomy. The Parental Attachment Questionnaire, which measures a student's perception of their parent's parenting characteristics including "availability, understanding, acceptance, respect for individuality, facilitation of independence, interest and interaction with parents, affect towards parents during visits or reunion, student help-seeking behaviour in situation of stress, satisfaction with help attained from parents, and adjustment to separation",

was used as a measure for this study (Kenny, 1987, p. 20). The Georgia Autonomy scale was also administered to students to measure perceived levels of educational autonomy, interdependence, emotional autonomy, and instrumental autonomy. The researcher compiled these measures, along with additional questions that looked at frequency and type of communication between students and their parents, into an online survey for students to complete (Moriarty, 2011).

Findings from this study suggest significant correlations between levels of contact, attachment, and influence on autonomy in first-year students. Meaning, frequent contact between student and parent, a secure attachment between student and parent, and high levels of parental influence on college decisions are all positively correlated with levels of student autonomy. Thus, in this study, students with higher levels of parental involvement were actually found to be more autonomous than students with lower levels. This research also pointed to a significant difference between genders on levels of autonomy, attachment, and influence. It suggests that women may be more closely attached to their parents and more strongly influenced by their parents when making college-related decisions, which leads to higher levels of autonomy (Moriarty, 2011). From these findings, Moriarty cautions university administration to not characterize all levels of parental involvement as “helicopter parenting”.

It should be noted however, that although this study looks at high levels of parental involvement, the concept of secure attachment differs from overparenting, as secure attachment involves the facilitation of independence and respect for individuality. Securely attached children have parents who are attuned to their needs and are aware of which behaviours are deemed developmentally appropriate for their child (Hong and Park, 2012). This differs from overparenting, where parents restrict child autonomy. Therefore, it is important to highlight that

high levels of parental involvement may not always lead to negative effects. Rather, the way in which involvement is executed may be the distinguishing factor for adverse outcomes.

Overparenting and the study of young children. The concept of overparenting is well defined in the adolescent and young adult populations, while requiring further research with young children. While overparenting may look slightly different when studied using elementary-aged children and their parents, three of the four overparenting constructs developed by Segrin et al. (2012) are applicable. Anticipatory problem solving, advice/affect management, and absence of child self-direction are all constructs of overparenting that are appropriate for studying the elementary-aged population. The process of anticipating, solving, and eliminating problems may occur with elementary-age children as they begin to develop academic and social skills. Parents who engage in overparenting may look to prevent their children from experiencing difficulties with peers or receiving poor grades in school. Parents may also look to provide their children with excessive advice while dealing with social problems or completing their work, and attempt to protect their children from experiencing negative feelings (e.g. frustration, sadness, anger, etc.). Young children still require developmentally appropriate levels of autonomy and independence, as this fosters the necessary skills for becoming independent adults. Parents of young children who overparent may look to prevent their children from directing their own behaviour, for example, not allowing a child to figure out how to complete a developmentally appropriate task on their own. Parents who engage in overparenting may unintentionally hinder the process of autonomy, looking to provide assistance and support to their children while preventing them from learning these skills themselves.

Although some studies with young-adult children have looked at the effects of overparenting on wellbeing, none have looked specifically at the presence of externalizing

problems in young children. Theories and research related to overparenting, such as that on autonomy granting and enmeshed families, show ties to externalizing behaviours in children. Therefore, it is important that a direct association between externalizing problems and overparenting be further explored.

Externalizing Problems

Externalizing behaviour, sometimes referred to as “acting out” behaviour is often characterized by a multitude of problems including noncompliance, aggression, destructiveness, disruptiveness, defiance, attention problems, impulsivity, hyperactivity, and delinquency (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1978; McMahon, 1994). Externalizing behaviour has also been defined by Rothbaum and Weisz (1994) as involving aggression (e.g. fighting, bullying, or cruelty), hostility (e.g. anger or tantrums), and noncompliance (e.g. disobedient, oppositional, negativistic behaviour).

Noncompliance or defiance is outlined by Barkley (2013) as involving three distinct categories of behaviour. These include the failure of a child to initiate behaviours that are requested by an adult within a reasonable time limit after said request is given (e.g. cleaning their room before using their tablet); a failure of a child to sustain compliance of a command from an adult until the requirements of the command have been met (e.g. cleaning up their room so that everything is put in its place); and a failure of a child to follow previously learned rules of conduct in varied situations (e.g. stealing, lying, aggressive behaviour towards others). Noncompliance may also involve passive avoidance of completing parental commands or following well-known rules. Defiance occurs when children fail to comply with requests and rules and in addition, exhibit active verbal or physical resistance to adult expectations. These behaviours may include verbal refusal, temper outburst, and/or physical aggression against an

adult. Common defiant behaviours are also included under the umbrella term externalizing problems. For example, yelling, complaining, defying, tantrums, arguing, sarcasm, stealing, lying, ignoring requests, running away, swearing, physical resistance, disrupting, physical fights, and destroying property (Barkley, 2013).

Externalizing problems in children are associated with a variety of negative outcomes including impaired social and academic skills. For example, children with externalizing problems are found to be at greater risk of developing peer relationship difficulties and academic problems (Hinshaw, 1992; Mash & Barkley, 1996). Previous research suggest that children who exhibit behavioural problems in the first several years of school are more likely to have difficulties transitioning to school, and perform worse on academic, social, and interpersonal indicators of school adjustment when compared to peers without behavioural problems (Ladd, 1996; Felner, 1999). Externalizing problems in children can develop for a variety of reasons and their severity is influenced by a range of factors.

The development of externalizing problems. Externalizing behavioural disorders, such as oppositional defiant disorder or other conduct disorders, are often the result of the interaction between a multitude of factors, rather than attributable to one single factor (Gelfand & Drew, 2003). These factors can include child characteristics, social factors, family characteristics, and parent-child dynamics.

Child characteristics. One important child characteristic that influences the development externalizing problems is temperament. Temperament is what creates opportunities for managing child emotional reactivity. In other words, the type of emotion and the frequency of emotional reactivity provide opportunities for external intervention from parents (Fox & Calkins, 2003). A difficult child temperament can be frustrating to parents, as these children are often demanding

and take up much of their parents' time. Such frequent demands often evoke negative interactions between children and their parents (Delfos, 2004). As children develop, their cognitive control increases, thus increasing their capacity to modulate emotional reactivity (Fox & Calkins, 2003).

Gender is an additional characteristic that influences the development of externalizing behaviour in children. Boys exhibit higher levels of externalizing behaviour than girls, as they present with more attention and behavioural difficulties, are less able to delay gratification, have lower levels of inhibitory control/perceptual sensitivity, and are more likely to be diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (Beaman et al., 2006; Else-Quest et al., 2006; Pinquart, 2017; Ready et al., 2005; Rothbaum and Weisz, 1994; Silverman, 2003). These differences can be attributed to a variety of factors, including both biological and social causes. For example, research has found differences between the female and male brains in children, as the female prefrontal cortex and temporal lobe develop significantly faster than that of males (Bertrand & Pan, 2013). Environmental factors may also affect boys differently than girls, increasing male risk of developing externalizing behaviours. For example, boys raised by single mothers are found to be at an increased risk of developing behavioural problems. Bertrand and Pan (2013) hypothesize that this may be due to a range of factors including single mothers not investing in boys as much as girls, and single mothers being less effective at controlling their sons' behaviour.

Social and family factors. Socioeconomic status (SES), and family composition also play a part in the development of externalizing behaviour in children. Research suggests that SES is negatively correlated with mental health and behavioural problems, and that socioeconomically disadvantaged children and adolescents are two to three times more likely to develop mental

health problems (Reiss, 2013). More specifically, household income and low parental education have a stronger impact on the presence of mental health problems than do parental unemployment or low occupational status (McLaughlin et al., 2011). While financial hardship is more strongly associated with the onset of mental health problems, it is not found to impact course or severity. Parental education, in contrast, is found to predict the persistence and severity of mental health problems in children, as research shows higher educated parents have greater access to mental health resources and treatment and can thus provide this to their children (McLaughlin et al., 2011).

Family composition can also influence the presence of externalizing problems in children. For example, number of siblings is found to affect the presence of externalizing behaviour, as having more siblings leads to fewer behavioural problems (Carlson & Corcoran, 2001). This association may be related to the type and frequency of interactions children have with siblings. Having siblings provides more opportunity to practice social skills and work through social situations, potentially increasing one's ability to handle social stress. Children coming from single parent homes are also shown to be at greater risk for behavioural problems, however research has found that SES mediates this relationship. Family income is often much less for single parent families than it is for two parent families, meaning these families have the added stress of having to worry about affording adequate food, shelter, and other material goods (Carlson & Corcoran, 2001).

Neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse are all additional risk factors for the development of externalizing behaviour (Delfos, 2004). Neglected children often develop negative self-images and a belief that they must fight to survive. Children who are physically

abused or who observe abuse in the home often learn that aggression is the solution to problems (Delfos, 2004).

Parent-child interaction. Childrearing style, parent-child relation patterns, and stability of the family are also known to be associated with externalizing behaviour in children. The quality of child-parent interactions highly influences the ability of children to exhibit self-control of their emotions. Parental negative control occurs when parents use maladaptive means to control their children, including coercion and reactive control. For example, parents who instantly react to their child's undesired behaviour by using intimidation and fear are engaging in negative control. Negative control and harsh discipline practices are associated with the development of behavioural problems that are characterized by a lack of emotional regulation (Pettit & Bates, 1989). Crockenberg and Litman (1990), believed that maternal negative controlling behaviours may actually inhibit the development of autonomy in children. Fox and Calkins (2003) also found in their study of aggressive children ages two to four years that increases in maternal negative behaviour and controlling behaviour lead to an increase in behavioural problems in boys.

Parents may also influence their child's development of externalizing behaviour through reinforcement, as children experience both positive and negative consequences in response to their behaviour (B. F Skinner, 1963). Externalizing behaviour can allow for a child to avoid or escape undesirable situations (negative reinforcement) and/or gain a desired outcome (positive reinforcement). Negative reinforcement of externalizing behaviour occurs when parents remove an undesired stimulus in response to their child's behaviour. For example, a child who throws a tantrum when asked to complete a homework sheet has their behaviour reinforced if the parent responds to this by then removing the homework sheet. Positive reinforcement of externalizing

behaviour occurs when parents provide desired stimuli in response to their child's behaviour. For example, a child begins yelling and kicking when told they cannot have candy from the store and is eventually given the candy when the parent becomes overwhelmed and wants the behaviour to stop. Although providing children with a desired stimulus or removing an undesired stimulus often brings short term relief, these reactions reinforce the externalizing behaviour as the child learns that their behaviour provides them with desired outcomes (Skinner, 1965).

Bandura (1977)'s social learning theory builds on Skinner's (1963) notion of operant conditioning, as it focuses on how others can learn by observing both behaviour and reinforcement. Bandura describes his theory as an explanation of human behaviour that involves a continuous and reciprocal interaction between cognition, behaviour, and environment. He emphasizes that both individuals and the environment are reciprocal determinants of each other. Individuals are not born with repertoires of behaviour, as these must be learned. Learning new response patterns can occur through direct experience or through observation. Biological factors such as genetics or hormones can also contribute to this acquisition process. Social learning theory, in connection with externalizing behaviour, involves the belief that noncompliant, defiant, and aggressive child behaviour is the result of poor role modeling, often by family members. Children learn behaviour by observing both the behaviour itself as well as the consequences of said behaviour. The latter is known as vicarious reinforcement (Bandura et al., 1963). For example, a child may observe a parent acting aggressively towards another individual and the parent being positively reinforced for their behaviour. Thus, by observing this interaction the child learns that aggression leads to reward.

Coercive family process, also known as coercion theory, outlines how negative reinforcement impacts parent-child interaction. Coercion theory was developed by Dr. Gerald R.

Patterson as a response to what he observed to be a failure of therapists to establish permanent change through their approach to treatment of the most aggressive childhood disorders. The goal of Patterson's theory is to describe and explain any and all variables that may increase aggressive behaviour, and the degree to which these variables contribute to aggression. He found that a child's aversive behaviours were not random but were instead more likely to occur in the presence of specific interactions with family members. A child's aversive behaviour is used to control the behaviour of their *victim*, while the reactions of the *victim* in turn produces both short-term effects (increasing the duration of the immediate interaction) and long-term effects (increase the likelihood of future aggression) (Barlow, 1984). Patterson believes that an essential characteristic of parents of aggressive children is that they cannot or do not punish well. These parents are thought by Patterson to instead engage in alternative, ineffective behaviours such as scolding or empty threats. When a child misbehaves, they quickly learn that their parents' behaviour has no follow through, thus negatively reinforcing their undesired behaviour. These children soon realize that continual misbehaviour and aggression towards their parents leads to desirable outcomes, thus maintaining the coercive family cycle. These parents are also unskilled at providing modeling and reinforcement for prosocial behaviour, often becoming aggressive themselves. Patterson has found that a parent's irritable aggression actually serves to escalate a child's aggressive behaviour, having the opposite intended effect. When families are unskilled in demonstrating and encouraging prosocial behaviour it creates an environment where family members look to avoid each other and avoid engaging in shared activities (Patterson, 1982).

Externalizing problems and overparenting. An abundance of research and literature supports the notion that parent-child interactions are an important part of the development of child behaviour. More specifically, Perry et al.'s (2018) study provides significant evidence for

the association between overparenting and the presence of externalizing problems in young children. Although Perry et al. (2018) used the term overcontrolling parenting, this type of parenting presents as a closely related construct to overparenting. The results of their study indicate that it is possible for overcontrolling parenting in early life to lead to lower levels of inhibitory control and emotional regulation during early childhood. This can prevent children from being able to navigate challenges on their own, thus leading to increased levels of maladjustment in social, emotional, and academic domains during preadolescence. Both emotional regulation and inhibitory control are negatively associated with externalizing behaviour, as children who have low levels of both are found to present with significantly higher levels of externalizing behaviour (Batum & Yagmurlu, 2007). Perry et al. (2018) research supports indirect connections between overparenting and the presence of externalizing behaviour and provides evidence for the need to further research this association.

Current Study

The National Survey for Children's Health portrays a consistent trend in increased negative emotional and mental health outcomes for children over the years (National Survey of Children's Health, 2011/2012, 2016/2017). Many individuals believe this trend is related to changes in parenting style, specifically increases in overparenting.

Although studies have looked at some effects of overparenting, none have explored the presence of externalizing problems in young children. Theories and research related to overparenting, such as those on parenting practices that limit autonomy-granting, as well as enmeshed family systems, demonstrate associations with externalizing behaviours in children. Thus, it is important that a direct association between externalizing problems and overparenting be further explored. In addition, overparenting is tied to increased internalizing problems in

young-adults, and a decrease in adaptive skills such as self-efficacy. Related parenting constructs are also indirectly linked to an increased presence of externalizing behaviour. It is therefore important to further explore the development of these issues in the school-aged population.

It is hypothesized that because overparenting practices hinder the process of autonomy, children do not develop an ability to control their emotions when presented with obstacles, nor acquire the skills necessary to solve such problems. When parents provide their child with developmentally appropriate levels of autonomy the child learns to manage their emotions in response to events. Without the freedom to make mistakes or handle problems on their own, children will not acquire skills to cope with future problems. These children consequently become overwhelmed when presented with difficulties, and this can lead to the development of externalizing problems. For example, a child whose parent restricts opportunities to develop social problem-solving skills by stepping in to resolve conflict with peers, will find it difficult to handle similar situations in an environment where their parent is not present. This child may therefore present with externalizing behaviour in response to social problems they are unequipped to handle. This study will explore whether overparenting is associated with an increased amount of externalizing problems while controlling for SES, child gender, and family composition.

Overparenting is a form of developmentally inappropriate parenting that occurs when caregivers are obsessive about ensuring the success and happiness of their children. This often involves the parent being largely in control of the child's life and removing perceived obstacles to positive outcomes (Segrin et al., 2012). Despite the presence of anecdotal evidence that supports the existence of consequences associated with overparenting, scientific research to support these claims is limited, especially in the school-aged population. Of those studies that

have looked at young children, most focus on the presence of internalizing problems in relation to overparenting and fail to explore its association with externalizing problems. Therefore, this study will look to provide statistically significant data in support of the relationship between overparenting and the presence of externalizing problems in school-aged children.

Research Questions

1. Is the presence of overparenting associated with a presence of externalizing problems in school-aged children when controlling for SES, child gender, and family composition?
2. Do parent and teacher ratings of externalizing behaviour in children differ with the presence of overparenting?

Chapter 3: Methods

The current study looked to explore the relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour in children. The study involved survey completion by caregivers and teachers of children in kindergarten through eighth grade. This chapter describes participants, variables, procedures, and data analysis.

Participants

Participants for this study identified as the primary caregivers of school-aged children in kindergarten through eighth grade. Initially, participants were to be excluded if one or more of their children was diagnosed with a significant disability, including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Down's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, deafness, blindness, a physical disability, a cognitive disability, serious mental illness, or any other condition that significantly impacts a child's development. These limitations were set so that the study could focus on the experiences of typical parenting practices, and to eliminate participants who parent children with externalizing behaviours that are related to the presence of a developmental disability, or who are required to provide increased supervision to their children. Despite this intent, subjects with disabilities were still included, as their exclusion would have further reduced the number of participants. In addition, within the current study, a difference of means was not found between the disability group and non-disability group for overparenting and externalizing behaviour.

Participants also included teachers of children whose parents agreed to participate, as an additional source regarding the presence of externalizing behaviour.

Initially, a total of 55 participants were to be recruited for this study. This requirement was calculated using G*Power, a statistical power analysis tool. A medium effect size of 0.80 was used to complete the power calculation for one dependent variable and four predictor

variables. However, due to limitations during participant recruitment, only 29 participants were recruited for the first multiple regression analysis (parent), and 25 for the second multiple regression analysis (teacher). Observed power was calculated via a post-hoc analysis and using Cohen's f^2 as a measure of effect size (Keith, 2006). This resulted in a power of 0.77 for the first multiple regression analysis, and 0.53 for the second multiple regression analysis. Power determines the probability of rejecting a false null hypothesis. It is important for researchers to attend to the power of a study in order to ensure that the results do not fail to detect a statistically significant difference when that difference truly exists (Wilson Vanvoorhis & Morgan, 2007).

Participants were recruited from a rural school district in Western New York. Parent participants completed a demographic questionnaire, a survey on overparenting, and a rating scale on externalizing behaviour, while teacher participants completed a rating scale on externalizing behaviour. According to the United States Census Bureau, the estimated 2017 population size of this school district is 905. There are approximately 97.5 males for every 100 females. The median income for households is \$50,217, while the percentage of persons at or below the poverty line is 16.4%. The population consists of 20.4% individuals under the age of 18. The racial make-up of the town is 98.1% White, 0.4% Black or African American, 0.2% native Hawaiian, and 0.3% mixed race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017a). Within the 380 households, 26.8% have children under the age of 18, 18.1% are married-couple families with children, 4.5% are male householders with children, and 3.4% are female householders with children. Householder is defined as "the person, or one of the people, in whose name the home is owned, being bought, or rented." (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). The average household size is 2.62 and the average family size is 3.10. One hundred and ninety-two children are enrolled in public school,

with 2.1% enrolled in kindergarten and 41.1% enrolled in grades one through eight (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017b).

Independent/Dependent Variables

Demographic information about parent participants and their children was collected including parent age, child's age, child's gender, child's grade, family composition information, and socioeconomic status (SES) information. Age was defined in years while gender was defined as male or female and transformed into a dummy variable. Based on past research that examines family composition, this variable encompassed the following factors: family size (number of children in the household plus the caregiver and caregiver's spouse if applicable), parent marital status (single or in a committed relationship, engaged, married, separated, divorced, widowed, other), and number of children in the household (Wu et al., 2019). Marital status was transformed into a dichotomous variable for the regression analysis that identified whether the parent participant was single or in a committed relationship. SES was measured by creating a composite variable that included approximate average household income, occupational prestige, and highest level of education completed. Occupational prestige was measured by asking participants to describe their employment and giving them a rating based on the Nakao-Treas prestige scores (Nakao & Treas, 1994).

Overparenting Scale. The overparenting measure developed by Segrin et al. (2012) was utilized in this study to determine participant parents' levels of overparenting. Items were developed for this study and subjected to an exploratory factor analysis. This analysis utilized principal axis factoring extraction and promax rotation, which assumes that the various factors of overparenting are correlated. The overparenting measure contains 39 five-point Likert scale items that ask caregivers to rate their parenting behaviour (e.g. *strongly disagree*, *strongly*

agree). It has an internal consistency reliability of $\alpha = .89$ and produces a total overparenting score as well as four subscale scores, including Anticipatory Problem Solving, Advice/Affect Management, Child Self-Direction, and Tangible Assistance. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher levels of overparenting.

The Anticipatory Problem Solving subscale assesses the degree to which a caregiver problem-solves for their child, and includes items such as “I try to anticipate things that will prevent my child from reaching his/her goals and act to eliminate them before they become a problem.”. The reliability for this subscale is $\alpha = .88$ while the percent of variance explained is 20.30. The Advice/Affect Management subscale assesses a caregiver’s tendency to control children’s decision making through the provision of advice and/or managing emotions and includes items such as “I share ideas with my child about how to handle the various situations that s/he encounters.”. The reliability of this subscale is $\alpha = .81$ while the percent of variance explained was 8.78. The Child Self-Direction subscale assesses the level of self-direction caregivers allow their children to have and includes items such as “I let my child work out the problems that s/he encounters on his/her own.”. Scores on this subscale are reversed so that high scores equal less child self-direction, and the reliability of this subscale is $\alpha = .79$ while the percent of variance explained was 5.11. The Tangible Assistance subscale assesses the level of financial support, material goods, and service support provided by caregivers to their children, and includes items such as “When my child has financial needs, I always try to help him/her out.”. The Tangible Assistance subscale was not used within this study, as it pertains to young-adult children and not school-aged children. Tangible assistance for the school-aged population is viewed as developmentally appropriate as parents are expected to still provide financial assistance, material goods, and plan services for their young children.

Externalizing Problems. The Behavior Assessment for Children - Third Edition, Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BASC-3 – BESS) is designed to screen for a variety of behavioral and emotional disorders that can lead to adjustment problems. The BESS has both teacher and parent forms that were utilized within this study. These forms are brief and range from 25-30 items, taking approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Both parent and teacher forms have two levels, Preschool (ages 3-5), and Child/Adolescent (grades K-12) (Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2015). The Child/Adolescent forms were utilized within this study.

The BESS is normed on a representative sample that closely matches recent U.S. Census population characteristics. The BESS provides an overall Behavioural and Emotional Risk Index score, as well as multiple subindex scores including the Externalizing Risk Index, Internalizing Risk Index, and Adaptive Skills Risk Index. Raw scores and associated classification categories (Normal Risk; Elevated Risk; Extremely Elevated Risk) are provided for each subindex (Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2015). The Externalizing Risk Index (ERI) score was utilized for this study as a measure of externalizing behaviour in children. The reliability of the ERI for the various parent and teacher forms is rated as good to excellent ($\alpha \geq .90$).

Procedure

Caregivers of school-aged children between kindergarten and eighth grade were asked to participate in research on different parenting practices and the effects on child behaviour. These caregivers were recruited through multiple means including text blasts from the school, posts on the school's Facebook page, and the principals' weekly e-newsletter. Each of these methods contained the link to the Google Forms survey for caregivers.

Consent was obtained from caregivers for their participation within the Google Form. Caregivers then completed a demographic survey and overparenting survey. They were also

asked to provide their email in order to receive the Q-Global link to the BASC-3 BESS Parent - Child/Adolescent form. Caregivers of multiple school-aged children were asked to focus on only one child while completing forms for this study. As an incentive, caregiver participants were given the option at the end of the Google Form to enter into a draw for a chance to win a \$50 gift certificate to Walmart.

Once caregiver data was obtained, children's teachers were notified of the opportunity to participate and asked to respond if they agreed to participate. Once consent was obtained from teachers, they were sent a Q-Global link through email that allowed them to complete the BASC-3 BESS Teacher - Child/Adolescent form.

Analysis

The current study included survey level research and used a correlational design. Survey data included demographic information, a total score on overparenting, and externalizing behaviour scores obtained from both parent and teacher participants. Two separate multiple regressions were completed in order to test the hypothesis that a high level of overparenting will predict a high level of externalizing behaviour. Parent-reported externalizing problems index scores for children was regressed on overall score of overparenting while controlling for SES, child gender, and family composition. In addition, teacher-reported externalizing problems index scores for children was regressed on overall score of overparenting, while controlling for SES, child gender, and family composition. Betas were then compared from the two models to determine if one was significantly stronger than the other and the difference in means was tested. This was used to determine whether teacher and parent scores on externalizing problems differ from each other when overparenting is present.

Chapter 4: Results

Data was collected over the course of two months from both caregiver and teacher participants. This included demographic information about caregivers and children, caregiver answers to the overparenting questionnaire, caregiver rating of the subject child's behaviour, and teacher rating of the subject child's behaviour. Using this data, two multiple regression analyses were conducted in order to answer the following questions:

1. Is the presence of overparenting associated with a presence of externalizing problems in school-aged children when controlling for SES, gender, and family composition?
2. Do parent and teacher ratings of externalizing behaviour in children differ with the presence of overparenting?

Sample Description

Participants were recruited from a rural school district in Western New York. A total of 39 caregiver participants completed the Google form. Five participant entries were removed for the analysis as they were determined to be duplicate participants. Caregiver participants ranged in age from 24-years-old to 66-years-old, with a mean age of 38.94. These participants were majority Caucasian with only one participant identifying as non-Caucasian. Twenty-six and a half percent of caregivers responded that they have a child with a disability, which represents a relatively large number of participants compared to the district's special education classification rate of 11% during the 2018-2019 school year (New York State Education Department, 2018/2019).

Children of caregiver participants varied in ages between 5 and 14 years with a mean age of 9.12 years. Children's class placements varied as well, with 5.9% in kindergarten, 17.6% in first grade, 8.8% in second grade, 11.8% in third grade, 17.6% in fourth grade, 17.6% in fifth

grade, 5.9% in sixth grade, 8.8% in seventh grade, and 5.9% in eighth grade. Child subjects were 35.3% male and 64.7% female, resulting in more female subjects than male subjects.

Information regarding household income, occupation, and caregiver educational achievement was collected in order to provide SES levels for each child. Two of the SES variables contained limited variation as parent participants did not significantly differ in terms of their income, or occupational prestige. All three variables were combined in order to construct one SES variable. This variable was also found to contain limited variation. Figure 1 contains a histogram of the SES variable and demonstrates how a large percentage of the sample appears just below the mean. In addition, family participant income was found to be positively skewed (Figure 2) while occupational prestige was found to be negatively skewed (Figure 3). Given that individuals of all SES levels were not present in the sample, the overall SES variable is not thought to be an accurate representation of SES within the general population.

In order to measure household income, caregivers were asked to choose between nine different ranges. The median of the income range chosen by the participant was used to represent household income. The mean household income of participant families was \$67,279 (SD = 41630.55), while the median was \$62,500. The median participant SES was considered to be a better representation than the mean. The district's median income of \$50,217 is significantly lower than New York State's median income of \$65,323. The participant median household income is higher than the district's median income but lower than New York State's median income (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018b).

Caregivers were also asked to report the highest level of education they completed by disclosing on a scale from one to six whether they had completed some high school (1), obtained a high school diploma (2), completed some college (3), obtained an associate's degree (4),

obtained a bachelor's degree (5), or obtained a master's degree (6). Results indicate that 2.9% of parents reported they completed some high school, 8.8% reported they obtained a high school diploma, 29.4% reporting they completed some college, 17.6% reporting they obtained an associate's degree, 14.7% reporting they obtained bachelor's degree, and 26.5% reporting they obtained a master's degree. The mean education level of caregivers was low at 3.12 with a standard deviation of 1.472. Caregiver occupational prestige scores ranged between 17 and 69, with an average score of 52.97 and a standard deviation of 11.32.

Information regarding number of children in the household, and caregiver marital status was collected in order to provide family composition levels for each child. The mean number of children in a household was 2.82 and the median was 2.5. A total of 28 caregiver participants reported being in a committed relationship (e.g. married, engaged, etc.) while six reported being single (e.g. widowed, divorced, etc.). The number of individuals living within a household was estimated by adding the number of children in a household with the caregiver participant and, if applicable, the caregiver's significant other. The mean number of family members within a household was calculated at 4.5 with a median of 4, which is relatively larger than the district's average household size of 2.62.

All 34 caregiver participants completed a demographic questionnaire and the overparenting survey. Of these 34, 29 completed the BASC-BESS Parent Form. An additional 25 teachers completed the BASC-BESS Teacher Form and no demographic information was collected about these participants. Thirteen subjects were missing data on externalizing behaviour, with 12 of these subjects having only a parent or teacher rating of externalizing behaviour, and one subject having neither. Therefore, 29 student subjects were included in the caregiver analysis, and 25 were included in the teacher analysis.

Multiple Regression Analyses

The present study was designed to determine whether the presence of overparenting is associated with the presence of externalizing problems in school-aged children when controlling for SES, gender, and family composition. In addition, the study looked to identify whether caregiver and teacher ratings of externalizing behaviour in children differ with the presence of overparenting. Results from preliminary analyses confirmed that the assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity were not violated. The two variables of interest, overparenting and externalizing behaviour, exhibited a linear relationship within the first regression model which used caregiver externalizing behaviour as the dependent variable. However, a non-linear relationship was found between overparenting and teacher externalizing behaviour. This violation of linearity is believed to be due to the study's small sample size and insufficient power. This result may also be because the linear model was not a good fit for the data (Keith, 2006). Although the variables co-vary, it may be that another kind of relationship is present between the two variables, such as curve linear.

In the first model, caregiver rating of externalizing behaviour was regressed on overparenting while controlling for SES, child gender, and family composition. The regression model predicted 32% of the variance in scores ($r^2 = .320$). The result was statistically significant at the .05 level ($F(4, 24) = 2.83, p = .047$). Overparenting had a significant association with caregiver ratings of child externalizing behaviour, as with each standard deviation unit increase in overparenting, externalizing behaviour scores increased by .226 standard deviation units ($B = .226; t(4, 24) = 3.208, p = .004$). In contrast, SES ($B = .198; p = .675$), child gender ($B = -.981; p = .566$), and family composition ($B = .108; p = .820$) had no significant effects on caregiver ratings of child externalizing behaviour. A post-hoc power analysis was conducted using

G*Power and revealed the observed power of this regression to be 0.77, meaning there is a 23% chance of making a type-II error within this model. Results for this first model can be found in Table 2.

The second model regressed teacher externalizing behaviour ratings on overparenting while controlling for SES, child gender, and family composition. This regression model predicted 25.7% of the variance in scores ($r^2 = .257$), however the overall model was not statistically significant ($F(4, 20) = 1.733, p = .182$). Despite this result, overparenting was still found to have a significant association with teacher ratings of child externalizing behaviour, as with each standard deviation unit increase in overparenting, externalizing behaviour scores increased by .226 standard deviation units ($B = .226; t(4, 20) = 2.614, p = .017$). In contrast, SES ($B = .090; p = .877$), child gender ($B = -1.714; p = .439$), and family composition ($B = .547; p = .291$) had no significant effects on teacher ratings of child externalizing behaviour. A post-hoc power analysis was conducted using G*Power and revealed the observed power of this regression to be 0.53, meaning there is a 57% chance of making a type-II error within this model. Despite the presence of a large and significant beta coefficient for overparenting and externalizing behaviour, large beta coefficients for overparenting and gender and overparenting and family composition, as well as substantial R^2 within the model, the overall model did not yield significant results. The values of this model are consistent with the values of the first model, but the results were not significant likely due to a statistical power problem. Results for this model can be found in Table 3.

The two regression models were compared in order to determine whether caregiver and teacher scores on externalizing problems differ from each other when overparenting is present. The first model analyzed caregiver ratings of externalizing behaviour and significantly predicted

32% of the variance in scores, while the second model that analyzed teacher ratings of externalizing behaviour was not significant but resulted in an R^2 of .257. Within both models, each standard deviation unit increase in overparenting increased externalizing behaviour scores by .226 standard deviation units ($B = .226$). Although both models resulted in consistent B values for overparenting, only the first overall model was significant. This result is most likely due to inadequate power within the second model.

The following chapter will further elaborate on possible reasons and factors that may have contributed to these results.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour in children. Caregivers of children in kindergarten through eighth grade completed a demographics survey, overparenting scale, and measure of child externalizing behaviour, while teachers completed an additional measure of child externalizing behaviour. The first multiple regression model analyzing parent-reported externalizing behaviour explained 32% of the variance in change in overparenting scores, but only overparenting was associated with a change in externalizing behaviour. The results indicated no significant relationship between SES, gender, and family composition with externalizing behaviour in children.

The second multiple regression model analyzing teacher reported externalizing behaviour resulted in a non-linear relationship and explained 25.7% of the variance in change in overparenting scores. These findings were not statistically significant. Despite this result, overparenting was still associated with a change in externalizing behaviour, as the second regression model obtained the exact same large beta as the first model. The results also indicated no significant relationship between SES, gender, and family composition with externalizing behaviour in children. These inconsistent findings are most likely due to inadequate power problem caused by a small sample size. While issues with linearity can be attributed to inadequate power, it may also be because the linear model was not a good fit for the data (Keith, 2006).

According to Keith (2006), adequate power is required in order to examine statistical significance of an equation. Power determines the probability of rejecting a false null hypothesis. It is important for researchers to attend to the power of a study in order to ensure that the results do not fail to detect a statistically significant difference when that difference truly exists (Wilson

et al., 2007). Button et al. (2013) reports that studies with low power have a reduced chance of detecting effect and are more likely to produce false negatives than high-powered studies. The statistical power of this regression was measured at 0.53, which is considered quite low and unlikely to produce statistically significant results (Button et al., 2013). The second overall model may have therefore yielded significant results if a larger sample size was available. The inadequate power within the second model also makes it difficult to conclude whether parent or teacher ratings of externalizing behaviour in children differ with the presence of overparenting.

SES, gender, and family composition did not yield significant relationships with externalizing behaviour within either regression model. This conflicts with prior research that consistently demonstrates the relationships between each of the three factors and externalizing behaviour. It is well established that boys exhibit higher levels of externalizing behaviour than girls (Beaman et al., 2006; Else-Quest et al., 2006; Pinquart, 2017; Ready et al., 2005; Rothbaum and Weisz, 1994; Silverman, 2003), and research also suggests that SES is negatively correlated with mental health and behavioural problems (Reiss, 2013). Family composition factors are also known to influence the presence of externalizing behaviour in children including number of family members living in the home, and parent marital status (Carlson & Corcoran, 2001). The present findings that these three variables are not associated with externalizing behaviour is most likely the result of a small sample size, decreased statistical power, and decreased variability of the sample's characteristics. According to Dr. Larry Greil (L. Greil, personal communication, May 4th, 2020), regression models with insignificant betas of .14 or higher are likely due to a statistical power problem. Thus, the insignificant betas for child gender and family composition are likely the result of inadequate power. In addition, the insignificant coefficient for SES is likely the result of decreased sample variance, as the study sample contained individuals with

unvaried levels of income and a limited range of job prestige. Family participant income was found to be positively skewed while occupational prestige was found to be negatively skewed. Given these results, the overall SES variable is not an accurate reflection of SES within the general population.

The results of this study provide evidence of a relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour. The first model indicates that children who have parents that engage in overparenting have higher levels of parent-rated externalizing behaviour, while controlling for SES, gender, and family composition. The second model indicates that overparenting was not indicative of higher levels of teacher-rated externalizing behaviour in children while controlling for SES, gender, and family composition. Despite this latter result, both models indicate that overparenting is a statistically significant predictor of change in externalizing behaviour. It is important however to caution these results as there were multiple problems with the sample. First, the sample was quite small and was not an adequate representation of the overall population. In addition, the sample yielded little variance in terms of population characteristics as the sample had similar levels of SES and family composition, and subject children were majority female. These sample limitations make it difficult to conclude with absolute certainty that overparenting leads to increased externalizing behaviour in children. In addition, correlational, cross sectional research does not provide information on the direction of significant relationships and it is possible that higher levels of externalizing behaviour in children are predictive of higher levels of overparenting. Despite these limitations, it is clear that the results provide evidence for the existence of a relationship between the two variables.

The results from this study add critical information to the literature on overparenting. First, the current study demonstrates the importance of further exploring the effects of

overparenting on young children. Existing research on overparenting focuses on the young adult population, and this study provides a solid foundation for additional research with school aged children. Second, this study provides supplementary information on the adverse outcomes related to overparenting. Previous research has found relationships between overparenting and increased internalizing problems (Segrin et al., 2013), decreased self-efficacy (Givertz & Segrin, 2013), increased narcissism, poor coping skills, increased psychological entitlement (Segrin et al. 2013), and poor parent-child communication (Segrin et al., 2012). The present study adds to this research by providing evidence of a relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour.

Limitations

The current study contains several limitations which may have affected the above results. First, a small convenience sample was utilized, as participants included parents and teachers from a small, rural school district in Western New York. The use of this population limited the generalizability of findings to the sample that was used. The participants within this study were caregivers and teachers within the district, while the subjects of the study were children of caregiver participants. Subjects were between the ages of 5 and 14 years and were enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Diversity of the sample population was low, as the district used within the study has a lower median income when compared to New York State. According to the United States Census Bureau, the racial make-up of the district used within the current study is 98.1% White, 0.4% Black or African American, 0.2% native Hawaiian, and 0.3% mixed race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017a). In comparison, within New York State, 63.3% of residents are white, 15.7% of residents are Black or African American, < 1% are American Indian and Alaska Native, 8.5% are Asian,

and 3.3% identify as multiracial (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018a). The majority of the participants in this study were Caucasian, with only one participant identifying as non-Caucasian. Child subjects were 35.3% male and 64.7% female, resulting in more female subjects than male subjects for the analysis. It would be important for future research in this area to utilize a more diverse sample in order to generalize the findings within the wider population.

In addition, 26.5 percent of caregivers in the current study responded that they have a child with a disability, which represents a relatively large number of participants compared to the district's special education classification rate of 11% during the 2018-2019 school year (New York State Education Department, 2018/2019). Initially, participants were to be excluded if one or more of their children was diagnosed with a significant disability. Despite this intent, subjects with disabilities were still included, as their exclusion would have further reduced the number of participants. Furthermore, within the current study, a difference of means was not found between the disability group and non-disability group for overparenting and externalizing behaviour. Future research may choose to exclude this population from studies on overparenting and externalizing behaviour in order to focus on the experiences of typical parenting practices, and to eliminate participants who parent children with externalizing behaviours that are related to the presence of a developmental disability, or who are required to provide increased supervision to their children.

The SES variable was also found to contain limited variation. The study found that an that participants did not vary in terms of income or occupational prestige. A histogram of the SES variable (Figure 1) shows a large percentage of the sample just below the mean. In addition, family participant income was found to be positively skewed (Figure 2) while occupational

prestige was found to be negatively skewed (Figure 3). Given these results, the overall SES variable is not thought to be an accurate reflection of SES within the general population.

During the development of the demographic questionnaire, the researcher did not include a question regarding the total number of individuals living in the household. Instead, an estimation based on number of children and marital status was used. In addition, the researcher assumed certain facts about participants based on their answers to the marital status question. For example, if a participant disclosed that they were divorced, the researcher assumed they were single, and if they indicated they were in a committed relationship, the researcher assumed they were living with their significant other. These estimations may have therefore resulted in inaccurate family composition data.

Due to difficulties with data collection, the researcher was unable to gather enough participants to provide adequate power for the second regression. According to Button et al. (2013) studies with low power have a reduced chance of detecting effect and are more likely to produce false negatives than high-powered studies. In addition, insufficient power may signify that the study failed to detect a statistically significant difference when one truly existed (Wilson et al., 2007). Therefore, the second regression model fails to provide information on whether or not overparenting results in higher levels of teacher-rated externalizing behaviour in children when controlling for SES, gender, and family composition.

Data collection was done online and required caregiver participants to complete a second rating scale that was emailed after the completion of the demographic and overparenting questionnaires. This method proved more difficult than anticipated, as many of the participants did not complete the rating scale right away and required further prompting from the researcher

in order to complete their participation. Even after receiving additional emails, not all participants completed the final aspects of the study which resulted in incomplete data.

Limitations also exist with regard to the scales that were used within this study. The BASC-BESS screening tool was utilized in order to decrease the amount of time parent participants needed to complete the study. This screener provided limited details regarding the types of externalizing behaviour of subject children. A rating scale such as the BASC-3 may have provided a more in depth look into the externalizing problems of subject children. In addition, the overparenting scale developed by Segrin et al. (2012) was created for use with young adults and was not developed for research with young children. The fourth subscale within the overparenting scale, Tangible Assistance, was also removed for this study, as the questions within this subscale did not pertain to parenting practices of school aged children. Therefore, the use of this scale may not be the most suitable measure of overparenting in school-aged children.

Implications for the field of School Psychology

Externalizing problems in children are associated with a variety of negative outcomes including impaired social and academic skills. For example, children with externalizing problems are found to be at greater risk of developing peer relationship difficulties and academic problems (Hinshaw, 1992; Mash & Barkley, 1996). They are also more likely to encounter difficulties transitioning to school, and perform worse on academic, social, and interpersonal indicators of school adjustment when compared to peers without behavioural problems (Ladd, 1996; Felner, 1999). While school psychologists do not directly intervene with parenting practices, they are often involved with children who exhibit externalizing problems in schools. More specifically, school psychologists help with assessment, intervention, and planning for

these students. Many school psychologists directly observe the implications externalizing problems have for children in school. Having a better understanding of child-rearing influences can help school psychologists to better explain to teachers, parents, and administrators the presence of externalizing behaviour. In addition, this information can provide further insight and direction for intervention planning. According to Segrin et al. (2012) overparenting involves low levels of autonomy-granting as parents attempt to protect their children from negative outcomes. A decrease in autonomy can prevent children from being able to navigate challenges on their own, often leading to increased levels of maladjustment in social, emotional, and academic domains during preadolescence (Perry et al., 2018). If school psychologists are able to identify that a child's parent is engaging in overparenting, they may be able to develop an intervention that allows the student to increase their level of autonomy at home and school, which in turn may help to decrease their level of externalizing behaviour when faced with obstacles.

Future Research

Despite some promising results that imply the existence of a relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour in children, it will be important for future research to address the limitations of this study in order to further support these findings. First, having a larger and more diverse sample would allow for research to conclude that the presence of overparenting is related to an increase in child externalizing problems.

The current correlational, cross-sectional research design did not provide an understanding of the direction of any relationships, nor did it provide information regarding causation. Therefore, future research should utilize a longitudinal design that studies the effect of overparenting on the presence of adverse outcomes in children over time. In addition, future studies should examine mediating and moderating variables by utilizing more complex models.

Incorporating direct observation of overparenting and externalizing behaviour within studies, rather than relying on survey data, may also provide stronger evidence for the existence of this relationship.

Future research may look to further expand upon the research questions within this study. For example, additional demographic information and child characteristics, which were not a part of the current study, were collected from participants including age, grade, presence of internalizing problems, and presence of adaptive skills. Research may look to further analyze the relationship between these variables and overparenting as it would allow for greater understanding of how overparenting affects school-aged children. Moreover, further exploring the relationship between SES and the prevalence of overparenting would provide further insight into whether overparenting affects families of various SES levels in different ways. For example, whether overparenting is more prevalent in higher SES populations than lower SES populations.

The current study involved the use of multiple online platforms for data collection, which resulted in multiple incomplete externalizing behaviour responses. Future research may look to consolidate data collection into a single online platform or to collect data in person, so that participants are able to complete all aspects of the study at one time.

Summary

The awareness of overparenting has significantly increased over the years as many parents are becoming overinvolved in developmentally inappropriate ways in their children's lives (Doepke & Zilibotti, 2019). Overparenting can prevent children from developing the appropriate skills required to manage difficulties, and previous research has linked this type of parenting to various adverse effects in young adults including increased levels of anxiety, depression, and withdrawal, insecure tendencies, lower levels of self-efficacy, higher levels of

narcissism, ineffective coping skills, exaggerated psychological entitlement, as well as lower quality parent-child communication (Bayer et al., 2006; Gar & Hudson, 2008; Givertz & Segrin, 2013; Segrin et al., 2012; Segrin et al. 2013). Although previous studies have looked at some effects of overparenting, none have explored the presence of externalizing problems in young children.

The results of this study provide evidence of a relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour as findings indicate that overparenting is a statistically significant predictor of change in externalizing behaviour. Results did not exhibit significant relationships between SES, gender, or family composition with externalizing behaviour, which is likely due to a small sample size, limited variability with regard to participant characteristics, and inadequate statistical power. It will be important for future research to address these limitations in order to further support the results of this study. Future research may also look to further explore how additional demographic variables and child characteristics, such as age, grade, SES, the presence of internalizing problems, and adaptive skills relate to overparenting.

Externalizing problems in children are associated with a variety of negative outcomes including impaired social and academic skills, and difficulties transitioning to school (Hinshaw, 1992; Mash & Barkley, 1996). While school psychologists do not directly intervene with parenting practices, they are often involved in the assessment, intervention, and planning for students who present with externalizing problems at school. This research provides school psychologists with a better understanding of child-rearing influences and how they relate to the presence of externalizing behaviour at home and at school. In addition, this information can provide further insight and direction for intervention planning.

In conclusion, the present study provides preliminary evidence for the existence of a relationship between overparenting and externalizing behaviour in children, however, it will be important to replicate this study with a larger and more diverse sample in order to conclude that overparenting leads to increased levels of externalizing behaviour in children.

References

- Achenbach, T. M., & Edelbrock, C. S. (1978). The classification of child psychopathology: A review and analysis of empirical efforts. *Psychological Bulletin*, 85(6), 1275-1301. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.85.6.1275
- Aunola, K., & Nurmi, J. E. (2005). The role of parenting styles in children's problem behavior. *Child Development*, 76(6), 1144-1159. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3696624>
- Aunola, K., Stattin, H., Nurmi, J.E., (2000). Parenting styles and adolescents' achievement strategies. *Journal of Adolescence*. 23(2), 205-222. doi:10.1006/jado.2000.0308
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A., Ross, D., & Ross, S. A. (1963). Vicarious reinforcement and imitative learning. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67(6), 601. doi:10.1037/h0045550
- Barber, B.K., & Harmon, E.L. (2002). Violating the self: Parental psychological control of children and adolescents. In B.K. Barber (Ed.), *Intrusive parenting: How psychological control affects children and adolescents* (pp. 15-52). American Psychological Association. doi:10.1037/10422-022
- Barber, B. K., Olsen, J. E., & Shagle, S. C. (1994). Associations between parental psychological and behavioral control and youth internalized and externalized behaviors. *Child Development*, 65(4), 1120-1136. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1994.tb00807.x
- Barkley, R. A. (2013). *Defiant children: A clinician's manual for assessment and parent training*. Guilford Press.
- Barlow, D. H., Patterson, G. R., & Wells, K. C. (1984). A social learning approach, vol. 3: Coercive family process. *Behavior Therapy*, 15(1), 121-127. doi:10.1016/S0005-7894(84)80046-5

- Batum, P., & Yagmurlu, B. (2007). What counts in externalizing behaviors? The contributions of emotion and behavior regulation. *Current Psychology*, 25(4), 272-294.
doi:10.1007/BF02915236
- Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child Development*, 37(4), 887-907. doi:10.2307/1126611
- Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology*, 4(1pt2), 1-103. doi:10.1037/h0030372
- Baumrind, D. (2013). Authoritative parenting revisited: History and current status. In R. E. Larzelere, A. S. Morris, & A. W. Harrist, (Eds.), *Authoritative Parenting: Synthesizing nurturance and discipline for optimal child development* (pp. 11-34). American Psychological Association.
- Bayer, J. K., Sanson, A. V., & Hemphill, S. A. (2006). Parent influences on early childhood internalizing difficulties. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 27(6), 542-559.
doi:10.1016/j.appdev.2006.08.002
- Beaman, R., Wheldall, K., & Kemp, C. (2006). Differential teacher attention to boys and girls in the classroom. *Educational Review*, 58 (3): 339-366. doi:10.1080/00131910600748406
- Bertrand, M. & Pan, J. (2013). The trouble with boys: Social influences and the gender gap in disruptive behavior: Dataset. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 5(1), 32-64. doi:10.1257/app.5.1.32
- Bornstein, M. H., & Bradley, R. H. (Eds.). (2012). *Socioeconomic Status, Parenting, and Child Development*. Routledge.
- Bowen, M. (1993). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. Jason Aronson.

- Braza, P., Carreras, R., Munoz, J. M., Braza, F., Azurmendi, A., Pascual-Sagastizabal, E., Cardas, J., & Sanchez-Martin, J. R. (2015). Negative maternal and paternal parenting styles as predictors of children's behavioral problems: Moderating effects of the child's sex. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 24(4), 847-856. doi:10.1007/s10826-013-9893-0
- Button, K. S., Ioannidis, J. P. A., Mokrysz, C., Nosek, B.A., Flint, J., Robinson, E. S. J., & Munafo, M. R. (2013). Power failure: Why small sample size undermines reliability of neuroscience. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 14(5), 365-376. doi:10.1038/nrn3475
- Calafat, A., García, F., Juan, M., Becoña, E., & Fernández-Hermida, J. R. (2014). Which parenting style is more protective against adolescent substance use? Evidence within the European context. *Drug and alcohol dependence*, 138, 185-192. doi:10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2014.02.705
- Carlson, M. J., & Corcoran, M. E. (2001). Family structure and children's behavioral and cognitive outcomes. *Journal on Marriage and Family*, 53(3), 779-792. doi:10.1111/j.17413737.2001.00779.x
- Conger R. D., Ge X., Elder G.H., Lorenz F. O., Simons R. L. (1994). Economic stress, coercive family process, and developmental problems of adolescents. *Child Development*, 65(2), 541-561. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1994.tb00768.x
- Crockenberg, S., & Litman, C. (1990). Autonomy as competence in 2-year-olds: Maternal correlates of child defiance, compliance, and self-assertion. *Developmental Psychology*, 26(6), 961-971. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.26.6.961
- Davies, P. T., Cummings, M., & M. A. Winter. (2004). Pathways between profiles of family functioning, child security in the interparental subsystem, and child psychological

problems. *Development and Psychopathology*, 16(3), 525-550.

doi:10.1017/S0954579404004651

Delfos, M. (2004). *Children and Behavioural Problems: Anxiety, Aggression, Depression and ADHD—A Biopsychological Model with Guidelines for Diagnostics and Treatment*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Doepke, M., & Zilibotti, F. (2019). *Love, money, and parenting: How economics explains the way we raise our kids*. Princeton University Press.

Dornbusch, S., Ritter, P., Leiderman, P., Roberts, D., & Fraleigh, M. (1987). The relation of parenting style to adolescent school performance. *Child Development*, 58(5), 1244-1257.
doi:10.2307/1130618

Else-Quest, N. M., Shilbey Hyde, J., Goldsmith, H. H., & Van Hulle, C. A. (2006). Gender differences in temperament: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132(1), 33-72.
doi:10.1037/0033-2909.132.1.33

Erikson, E. H. (1993). *Childhood and society*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Felner, R. D. (1999). An ecological perspective on pathways of risk, vulnerability, and adaptation: Implications for preventive interventions. In S. W. Russ & T. H. Ollendick (Eds.), *Handbook of psychotherapies with children and families* (pp. 483– 503). Kluwer Academic/Plenum Press Publishers.

Fox, N. A., & Calkins, S. D. (2003). The development of self-control of emotion: Intrinsic and extrinsic influences. *Motivation and Emotion*, 27, 7–26. doi:10.1023/A:1023622324898

Gadeyne, E., Ghesquière, P., & Onghena, P. (2004). Longitudinal relations between parenting and child adjustment in young children. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 33(2), 347-358. Retrieved from

<http://ezproxy.alfred.edu:2061/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mnh&AN=15136199&site=ehost-live>

Gelfand, D. M., & C. J. Drew. (2003). *Understanding child behavior disorders (4th ed.)*.

Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.

Givertz, M., & Segrin, C. (2014). The association between overinvolved parenting and young adults' self-efficacy, psychological entitlement, and family communication. *Communication Research*, 41(8), 1111-1136.
doi:10.1177/0093650212456392.

Gladding, S. T. (2014). *Family therapy: History, theory, and practice (6th ed.)*. Pearson.

Glass, G., & Tabatsky, D. (2014). *The overparenting epidemic: Why helicopter parenting is bad for your kids... and dangerous for you, too!*. Skyhorse Publishing, Inc..

Hinshaw, S. P. (1992). Externalizing behavior problems and academic underachievement in childhood and adolescence: Causal relationships and underlying mechanism. *Psychological Bulletin*, 111(1), 127–155. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.111.1.127

Hong, Y. R., & Park, J. S. (2012). Impact of attachment, temperament and parenting on human development. *Korean journal of pediatrics*, 55(12), 449. doi:10.3345/kjp.2012.55.12.449

Hosokawa, R. & Katsura, T. (2018). Role of parenting style in children's behavioral problems through the transition from preschool to elementary school according to gender in Japan. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(1), 1-17.
doi:10.3390/ijerph16010021

Kamphaus, R. W., & Reynolds, C. (2015). BASC-3 BESS Behavioral and Emotional Screening System [Assessment Instrument]. Pearson.

Keith, T. Z. (2006). *Multiple regression and beyond, 2nd Ed*. Routledge.

- Kenny, M. E. (1987). The extent and function of parental attachment among first-year college students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 16(1), 17-29. doi:10.1007/BF02141544
- Ladd, G. W. (1996). Shifting ecologies during the 5 to 7 year period: Children's adjustment during the transition to grade school. In A. J. Sameroff & M. M. Haith (Eds.), *The five to seven year shift* (pp. 363–386). University of Chicago Press.
- Lamborn, S. D., Mounts, N. S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child development*, 62(5), 1049-1065. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1991.tb01588.x
- Lansford, J. E., Laird, R. D., Pettit, G. S., Bates J. E., & Dodge, K. A. (2014). Mothers' and fathers' autonomy-relevant parenting: Longitudinal links with adolescents' externalizing and internalizing behavior. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 43(11), 1977-1889. doi:10.1007/s10964-013-0079-2
- LeMoyne, T., & Buchanan, T. (2011). Does “hovering” matter? Helicopter parenting and its effects on well-being. *Sociological Spectrum*, 31, 399-418. doi:10.1080/02732173.2011.574038
- Locke, J. Y., Campbell, M. A., & Kavanagh, D. (2012). Can a parent do too much for their child? An examination by parenting professionals of the concept of overparenting. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*, 22(2), 249-265.
- Long, N. (2004). *The changing nature of parenting in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.aapd.org/assets/1/25/Long-26-02.pdf>
- Marano, H. E. (2008). *A nation of wimps: The high cost of invasive parenting*. Broadway Books.

- McGoldrick, M., Carter, B., & Garcia-Petro, N. (2011). *The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family, and social perspectives (4th ed.)*. Pearson.
- McLaughlin, K. A., Breslau, J., Green, J. G., Lakoma, M. D., Sampson, N. A., & Zaslavsky, A. M. (2011). Childhood socio-economic status and the onset, persistence, and severity of DSM-IV mental disorders in a US national sample. *Social Science & Medicine*, 73(7), 1088-1096. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2011.06.011
- McMahon, R. J. (1994). Diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of externalizing problems in children: The role of longitudinal data. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 62(5), 901. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.62.5.901
- Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*. Harvard University Press.
- Montgomery, C., Fisk, J. E., & Craig, L. (2008). The effects of perceived parenting style on the propensity for illicit drug use: The importance of parental warmth and control. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 27(6), 640-649. doi:10.1080/09595230802392790
- Moriarty, E. A. (2011). *Relationship of helicopter parenting on autonomy development in first-year college students*. (Published Doctoral Dissertation, Johnson and Wales University).
- Maccoby, E., & Martin, J. (1983). *Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interactions*. In E. M. Hetherington & P. H. Mussen (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4. Socialization, personality, and social development* (pp. 1- 101). Wiley
- Mash, E. J., & Barkley, R. A. (1996). *Child psychopathology*. Guilford Press.
- Nakao, K., & Treas, J. (1994). Updating occupational prestige and socioeconomic scores: How the new measures measure up. *Sociological Methodology*, 24, 1-72. doi:10.2307/270978
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2016). *Parenting matters: Supporting parents of children ages 0-8*. The National Academies Press.

National Survey of Children's Health (2011/2012). *Child health measures*. Retrieved from

<https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=2591&r=1>

National Survey of Children's Health (2016/2017). *Child health measures*. Retrieved from

<https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=5369&r=1>

Parker, G. (1983). *Parental overprotection: A risk factor in psychosocial development*. Grune & Stratton.

Patterson, G. R. (1982). *Coercive family process* (Vol. 3). Castalia Publishing Company.

Perry, N. B., Dollar, J. M., Calkins, S. D., Keane, S. P., & Shanahan, L. (2018). Childhood self-regulation as a mechanism through which early overcontrolling parenting is associated with adjustment in preadolescence. *Development Psychology*, 54(8), 1542-1554.
doi:10.1037/dev0000536

Pettit, G. S., & Bates, J. E. (1989). Family interaction patterns and children's behavior problems from infancy to 4 years. *Developmental Psychology*, 25(3), 413-420. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.25.3.413

Pinquart, M. (2017). Associations of parenting dimensions and styles with externalizing problems of children and adolescents: An updated meta-analysis. *Developmental Psychology*, 53(5), 873-932. doi:10.1037/dev0000295

Power, T. G. (2013). Parenting dimensions and styles: A brief history and recommendations for future research. *Childhood Obesity*, 9(1), 14-21. doi:10.1089/chi.2013.0034

Rapee, R. M. (2009). Early adolescents' perceptions of their mother's anxious parenting as a predictor of anxiety symptoms 12 months later. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 37(8), 1103-1112. doi:10.1007/s10802-009-9340-23

- Ready, D. D., LoGerfo, L. F., Burkám, D. T., & Lee, V. E. (2005) Explaining girls' advantage in kindergarten literacy learning: Do classroom behaviors make a difference? *Elementary School Journal*, 106(1), 21-38. doi:10.1086/496905
- Reed, K., Duncan, J. M., Lucier-Greer, M., Fixelle, C., & Ferraro, A. J. (2016). Helicopter parenting and emerging adult self-efficacy: Implications for mental and physical health. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25(10), 3136-149. doi:10.1007/s10826-016-0466-x
- Reiss, F. (2013). Socioeconomic inequalities and mental health problems in children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Social Science and Medicine*, 90(1), 24-31. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2013.04.026
- Repetti, R. L., Taylor, S. E., & Seeman, T. E. (2002). Risky families: Family social environments and the mental and physical health of offspring. *Psychological bulletin*, 128(2), 330. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.128.2.330
- Rinaldi, C. M., & Howe, N. (2011). Mothers' and fathers' parenting styles and associations with toddlers' externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive behaviors. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 27(2), 266-273. doi:10.1016/j.ecresq.2011.08.001
- Roberts Gray, M. & Steinberg, L. (1999) Unpacking authoritative parenting: Reassessing a multidimensional construct. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(3), 574-587. doi:10.2307/353561
- Rothbaum, F., & Weisz, J.R. (1994). Parental caregiving and child externalizing behavior in nonclinical samples: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 116(1), 55-74. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.116.1.55

- Roubinov, D. S., & Boyce, W. T. (2017). Parenting and SES: Relative values or enduring principles? *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 15(1), 162-167.
doi:10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.03.001
- Schiffrrin, H. H., Godfrey, H., Liss, M., & Erchull, M. J. (2015). Intensive parenting: Does it have the desired impact on child outcomes. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 24(8), 2322-2331. doi:10.1007/s10826-014-0035-0
- Segrin, C., Wosidlo, A., Givertz, M., Bauer, A., & Taylor Murphy, M. (2012). The association between overparenting, parent-child communication, and entitlement and adaptive traits in adult children. *Family Relations*, 61(2), 237-252. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2011.00689.
- Segrin, C., Wosidlo, A., Givertz, M., & Montgomery, N. (2013). Parent and child traits associated with overparenting. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 32(6), 569-595. doi:10.1521/jscp.2013.32.6.569
- Segrin, C., Givertz, M., Swaitkowski, P., & Montgomery, N. (2015). Overparenting is associated with child problems and a critical family environment. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 24(2), 470-479. doi:10.1007/s10826-013-9858-3
- Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. (Eds.). (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. National Academies Press.
- Silverman, I. W. (2003) Gender differences in delay of gratification: A meta-analysis. *Sex Roles*, 49(9-10), 451-463. doi:10.1023/A:1025872421115
- Skinner, B. F. (1963). Operant behavior. *American psychologist*, 18(8), 503.
doi:10.1037/h0045185
- Skinner, B. F. (1965). *Science and human behavior*. Simon and Schuster Inc.

Somers, P., & Settle, J. (2010). The helicopter parent. *College and University*, 86(2), 2.

Retrieved from: <https://search.proquest.com/docview/863245922?pq-origsite=summon&accountid=8263>

New York State Education Department (2018/2019). *Special education data profile*. Retrieved from <https://data.nysed.gov/profile.php?instid=800000038051>

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Darling, N., Mounts, N. S., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1994). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child development*, 65(3), 754-770. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1994.tb00781.x

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Dornbusch, S. M. & Darling, N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development*, 63(5), 1266-1281. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1992.tb01694.x

Steinberg, L., Mounts, N., Lamborn, S. D., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Authoritative parenting and adolescent adjustment across various ecological niches. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 1, 19-36. Retrieved from: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED324558>

Strang, K. (2015). *The relationship between overparenting, parenting style, and anxiety in parents of school aged-children*. (Doctoral dissertation, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology).

U.S. Census Bureau (2017a). ACS demographic and housing estimates. Retrieved from <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>.

U.S. Census Bureau (2017b). Selected social characteristics in the United States. Retrieved from <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>.

- U.S. Census Bureau. (2018a). Data. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/data.html>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). Glossary. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/glossary/#term_Householder
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2018b). Quick facts: New York. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NY/INC110218>
- Van Ingen, D. J., Freiheit, S. R., Steineldt, J. A., Moore, L. L., Wimer, D. J., Knutt, A. D., Scapinello, S., & Roberts, A. (2015). Helicopter parenting: The effect of an overbearing caregiving style on peer attachment and self-efficacy. *Journal of College Counseling*, 18(1), 7-20. doi:10.1002/j.2161-1882.2015.00065.x
- Watson, J. B. (1928). *Psychological care of infant and child*. W. W. Norton & Co.
- Wilson Vanvoorhis, C. R., & Morgan, B. L. (2007). Understanding power and rules of thumb for determining sample sizes. *Tutorials in Quantitative Methods for Psychology*, 3(2), 43-50. doi:10.20982/tqmp.03.2.p043
- Wu, W., Stephens, M., Du, M., & Wang, B. (2019). Homeownership, family composition and subjective wellbeing. *Cities*, 84(1), 46-55. doi:10.1016/j.cities.2018.07.004

Appendix A – Consent to Participate in Research: Parent Form

Please read the following important information:

Researcher: Nicole Schmidinger, M.A. (nms8@alfred.edu)

Supervisor: Dr. Andrea Burch, Psy.D. (burcha@alfred.edu)

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you with information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to give your permission to participate. If you decide to take part in this study, this form will be used to record your permission.

Purpose of the Study

If you agree, you will be asked to participate in a research study about parenting style and child behaviour. The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a connection between parenting styles and a child's behaviour at home and/or school.

What am I going to be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a demographic questionnaire about you, your child, and your family
- Complete a brief questionnaire about your parenting style
- Complete a brief questionnaire about your child's behaviour

In addition, your child's teacher will be asked to:

- ☐ Complete a brief questionnaire about your child's behaviour

Your child will not need to directly participate in any aspects of this study and will only be the subject of the demographic questionnaire as well as the child behaviour questionnaire that yourself and your child's teacher will be asked to complete.

It will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete all questionnaires.

What are the risks involved in this study?

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

You and your child will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the information you provide will help to increase our understanding of parenting styles and their influence on child behaviour.

Do I have to participate?

No, your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusing to participate will not affect your relationship with the school district or with Alfred University in any way. You can agree to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

Will there be any compensation?

You will not receive any type of payment by participating in this study. However, if you do participate you will be entered for a chance to win a \$50 gift card to Walmart.

How will you and your child's privacy and confidentiality be protected if you participate in this research study?

Any information collected will be used for the purposes of this research project. None of the information gathered will be used to inform any educational or treatment decisions concerning your child. Once data has been collected, your information will be coded, and any identifying information will be destroyed. The primary researcher, supervisor, and graduate student assistants will be the only individuals with access to this data.

Who do I contact with questions?

If you have questions about your participation in this study that you would like to ask before participating, please contact the lead researcher, Nicole Schmidinger, electronically at nms8@alfred.edu or faculty supervisor Dr. Andrea Burch, Licensed Psychologist, Dissertation Chair at burcha@alfred.edu. This study has been reviewed and approved by The University Institutional Review Board and the study number is **2019-10**.

Please confirm the following: *

- ☐ I have read and understood the above information and agree to participate in this study.

Please confirm the following: *

- ☐ I am the primary caregiver of at least one child who is currently enrolled at the School District and who is an elementary-aged student (Kindergarten – 8th Grade).

Appendix B – Consent to Participate in Research: Teacher Form

You are invited to participate in a research study on the effects of parenting styles on child behaviour. You were selected as a possible participant because you are 21 years of age or older and a teacher within the school district. We ask that you read this form before agreeing to be in this study. This study is being conducted by Nicole Schmidinger, M.A., Alfred University, Alfred, NY, 14802 under the supervision of Andrea Burch, PsyD., Licensed Psychologist, Dissertation Chair, Alfred University, Alfred, NY, 14802.

Background Information

The current study will investigate the relationship between parenting styles and child behaviour at home and in the classroom.

Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, I ask that you complete a brief, 5-minute behavioural questionnaire on each of your students whose parent has agreed to be a part of this study. This form will be emailed to your email of choice.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study.

Confidentiality

The data of this study will be kept private and confidential. In any report that may be published, it will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you or any other participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file and only the researcher, supervisor, and graduate student assistants will have access to the records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the school district or Alfred University. If you decide to participate you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Contacts and Questions

If you have questions about your participation in this study that you would like to ask before participating, please contact the lead researcher, Nicole Schmidinger, electronically at nms8@alfred.edu or faculty supervisor Dr. Andrea Burch, Licensed Psychologist, Dissertation Chair at burcha@alfred.edu. This study has been reviewed and approved by The University Institutional Review Board and the study number is **2019-10**.

Consent: If you have read the above information and consent to participate in the study, please confirm by responding to this email. In your response, please provide an email address that I can send the questionnaire(s) to.

Appendix C – Demographic Information Questionnaire

What is your current age? _____

What is your marital status?:

- ☐ Single
- ☐ In a Committed Relationship
- ☐ Engaged
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Other: _____

What is your ethnicity?:

- ☐ Caucasian
- ☐ African American
- ☐ Latino/a
- ☐ Asian American
- ☐ American Indian
- ☐ Bi-Racial
- ☐ Other: _____

What is your approximate average household income?

- ☐ < \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 - \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 - \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$124,999
- ☐ \$125,000 - \$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000 - \$174,999
- ☐ \$175,000 - \$199,999
- ☐ > \$200,000

What is your highest level of education?

- ☐ Some High School
- ☐ High School Diploma
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ Associates Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Doctorate Degree

What is your current employment status? (e.g. full-time, part-time, unemployed, retired, disability, etc.) If full/part-time, please specify your occupation.

If applicable, what is your spouse's current employment status? (e.g. full-time, part-time, unemployed, retired, disability, etc.) If full/part-time, please specify their occupation.

If you are a divorced, separated, or single caregiver, do you have sole or joint custody of your child or children?

- ☐ I have sole custody
- ☐ I have joint custody
- ☐ I am not divorced, separated, or a single parent
- ☐ Other: _____

How many children, by age, live within your household?

Less than 1 year old: _____
1-2 years old: _____
3-5 years old: _____
6-8 years old: _____
9-11 years old: _____
12-14 years old: _____
15- 17 years old: _____
18 years old or older: _____

Has one or more of your children been diagnosed with any of the following?

- ☐ Autism
- ☐ Asperger's Disorder
- ☐ Down's Syndrome
- ☐ Cerebral Palsy
- ☐ Deafness
- ☐ Blindness
- ☐ A physical disability
- ☐ An intellectual disability
- ☐ Serious mental illness, such as bipolar disorder or psychosis
- ☐ Any genetic or acquired condition that significantly impairs his or her development
- ☐ None of my children have been diagnosed with any of the above conditions

For the following information, please think of one child for whom you are a guardian, who attends the School District and is elementary age (Kindergarten through Grade 8).

Please provide the following information about your child:

What is your child's first and last name? _____

How old is your child? _____

What grade is your child in?

- ☐ Kindergarten
- ☐ 1st grade
- ☐ 2nd grade
- ☐ 3rd grade
- ☐ 4th grade
- ☐ 5th grade
- ☐ 6th grade
- ☐ 7th grade
- ☐ 8th grade

What is your child's gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

How many years have you been the primary caregiver for this child? _____

What is your relationship to the child:

- ☐ Mother
- ☐ Father
- ☐ Grandmother
- ☐ Grandfather
- ☐ Aunt
- ☐ Uncle
- ☐ Adoptive Parent
- ☐ Foster Parent

What is the name of your child's current classroom teacher? _____

Appendix D – Overparenting Questionnaire

For each statement below, please circle the response that best characterizes how you feel about the statement, where 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Disagree, or 5 = Strongly Disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I try to help my child steer clear of any troubles that s/he might encounter in the world.	1	2	3	4	5
2. If I can see that my child is about to have some difficulty, I will intervene to take care of the situation before things get difficult for him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I try to solve problems for my child before s/he even experiences them.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I get actively involved in helping my child solve the problems that s/he experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I try to anticipate things that will prevent my child from reaching his/her goals and act to eliminate them before they become a problem.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I take a lot of responsibility for seeing to it that my child is happy.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I tell my child how to plan out certain activities.	1	2	3	4	5

8. I invest a lot of energy helping my child troubleshoot and solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Whenever possible I try to keep my child away from environments that might lead him/her into trouble.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I try to stay one step ahead of what my child is doing so that I can help him/her minimize any obstacles that could be encountered.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I do anything that I can to keep my child out of harm's way.	1	2	3	4	5
12. If my child is having problems with another person, I am not afraid to contact that person directly on my child's behalf.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I give my child advice on how to do things.	1	2	3	4	5
14. If I see that my child is feeling badly, I try to cheer him/her up.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I make suggestions to my child to help him/her get things accomplished.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I talk to my child about most of the things that s/he is involved in these days.	1	2	3	4	5
17. When my child gets anxious, I will say things to calm him/her down.	1	2	3	4	5

18. I say or do things to cheer my child up.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I share ideas with my child about how to handle the various situations that s/he encounters.	1	2	3	4	5
20. When times get tough for my child, I talk to him/her about trying to look on the bright side of things.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I give my child the space and freedom to do things on his/her own.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I let my child work out the problems that s/he encounters on his/her own.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I let my child figure out how to do things on his/her own.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Even though I have opinions about how my child should do certain things, I tend to keep them to myself.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Whenever my child gets upset, s/he can usually get things under control without too much input from me.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I let my child solve most problems on his/her own.	1	2	3	4	5
27. These days I try not to pry too much into my child's business.	1	2	3	4	5

28. Even though I can see potential problems developing before my child sees them, I will let my child resolve them on his/her own for the learning experience.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I believe that my child will benefit most in the long run by working through problems on his/her own.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I am willing to let my child take some chances in life.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I try not to intrude into my child's private affairs.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I let my child take personal responsibility for his/her own happiness in life.	1	2	3	4	5

Figures

Figure 1

Histogram of SES Variable

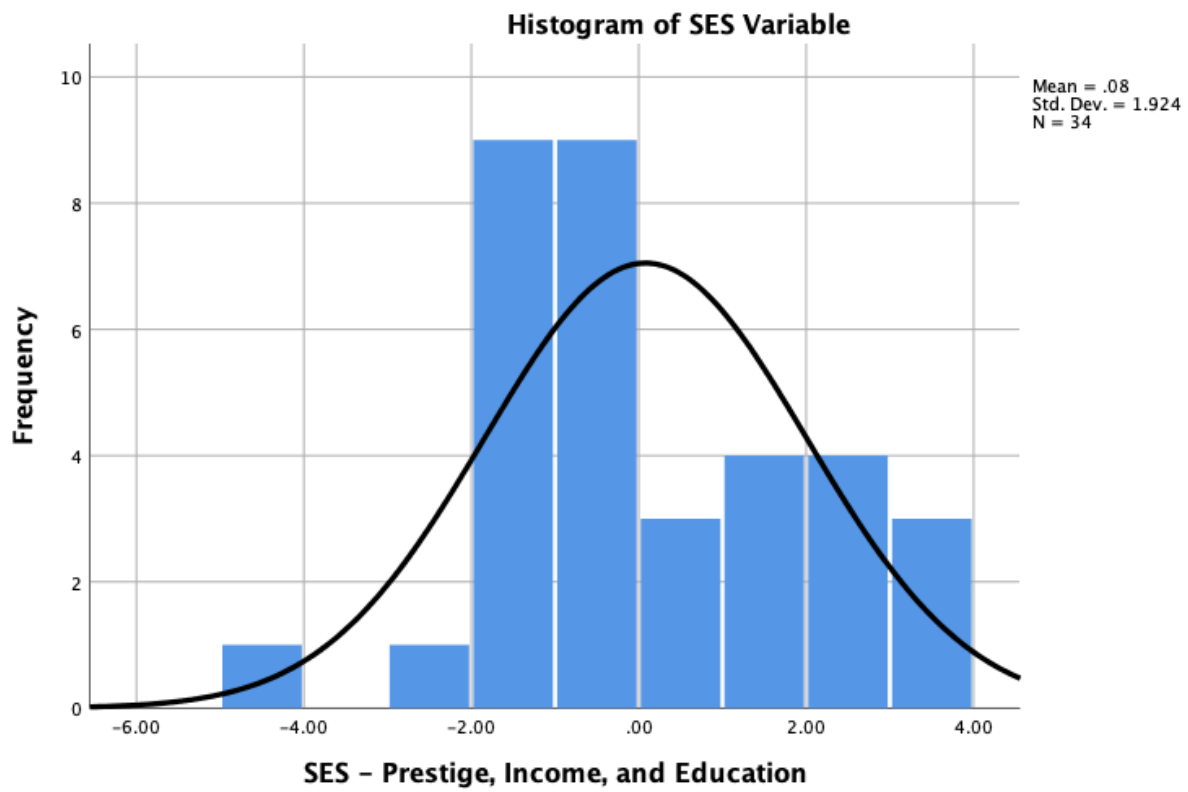


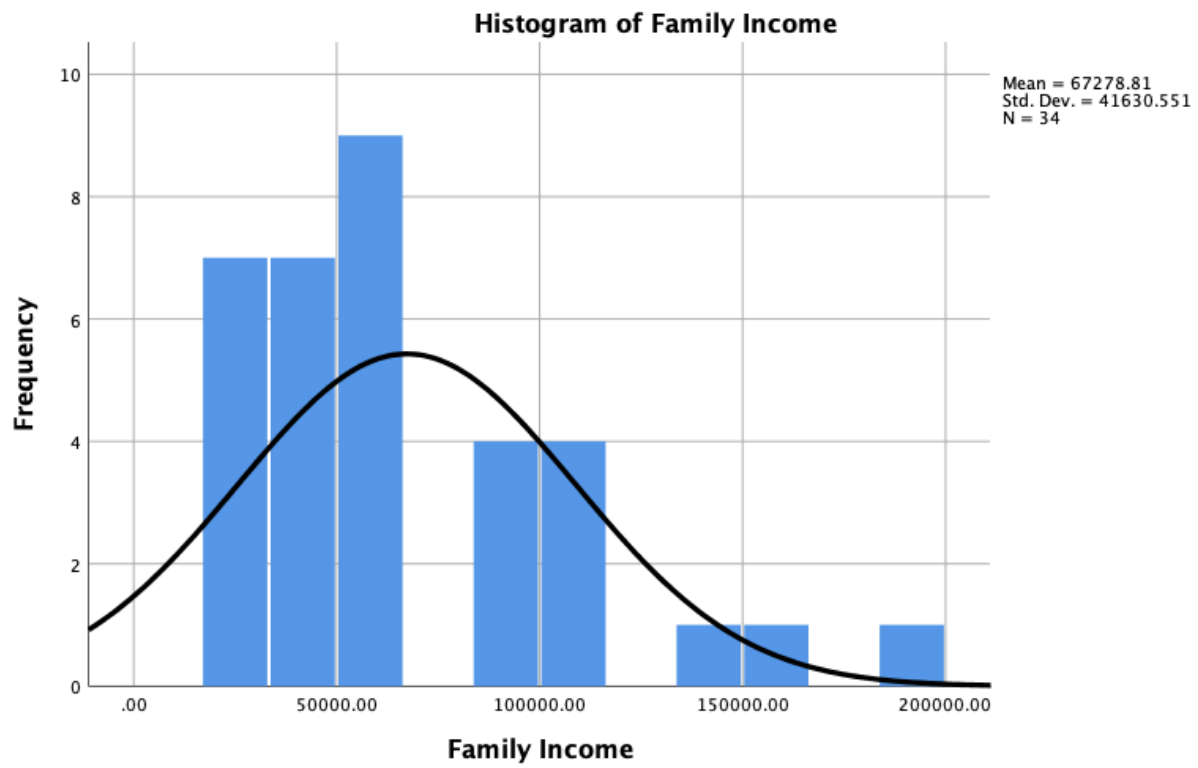
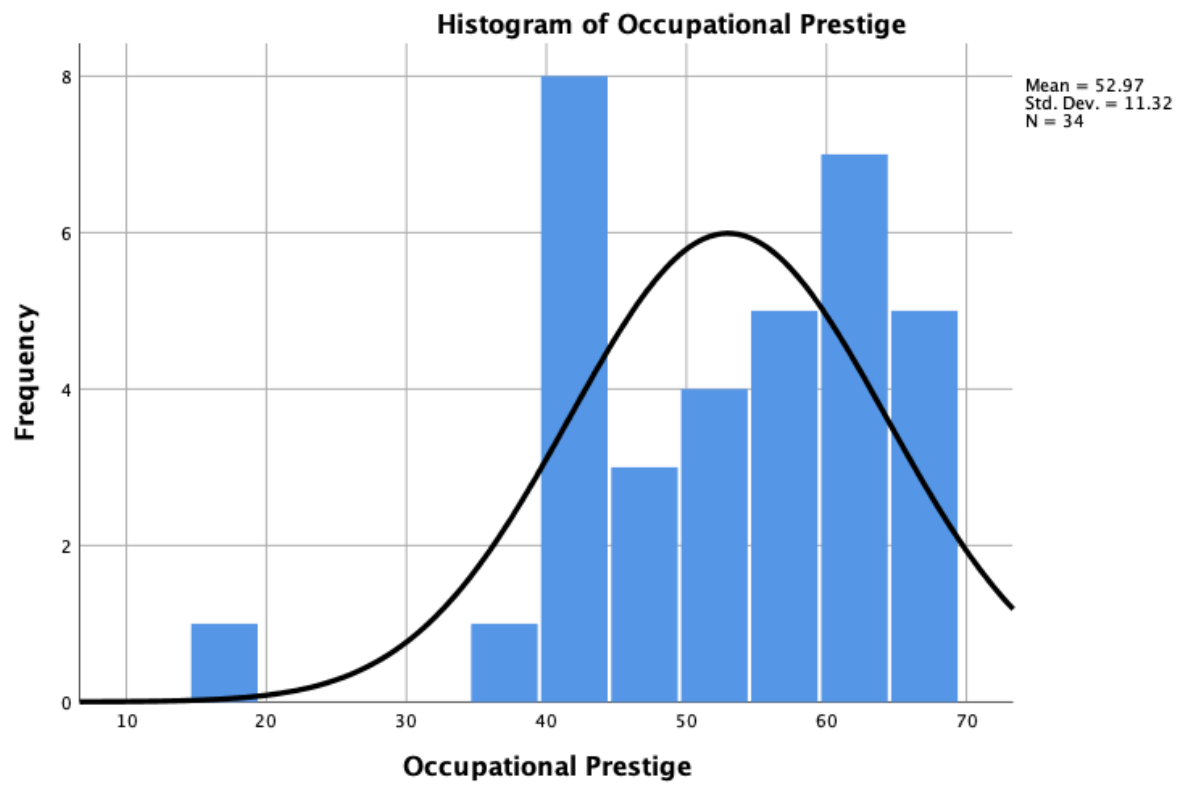
Figure 2*Histogram of Family Income Variable*

Figure 3*Histogram of Occupational Prestige Variable*

Tables**Table 1***Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Control Variables*

Variable	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
SES	.0809	1.92372
Gender	1.65	.485
Family Composition	-.11	2.317

N = 34

Table 2

Multiple Regression Analysis Between Overparenting and Parent-Rated Externalizing Behaviour in Children While Controlling for SES, Gender, and Family Composition

Variable	Overparenting		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sig (2-tailed)</i>
Constant	-16.108	-2.029	.054
Overparenting	.226	3.208	.004*
SES	.198	.425	.675
Gender	-.981	-.583	.566
Family Composition	.108	.230	.820
<i>R</i> ²	.320		
<i>F</i>	2.825		.047*

N = 29, * p < .05

Table 3

Multiple Regression Analysis Between Overparenting and Teacher-Rated Externalizing Behaviour in Children While Controlling for SES, Gender, and Family Composition

Variable	Overparenting		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sig (2-tailed)</i>
Constant	-17.635	-1.954	.065
Overparenting	.226	2.614	.017*
SES	.090	.157	.887
Gender	-1.714	-.789	.439
Family Composition	.547	1.083	.291
<i>R</i> ²	.257		
<i>F</i>	1.733		.182

N = 25, * p < .05

Biographical Statement

Nicole Schmidinger works as a psychoeducational clinician for the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board in Ontario, Canada. In addition to her work in schools, she works within a private practice setting providing counselling to children and adolescents. Nicole graduated with her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Sociology from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario and further pursued both her Master of Arts, and Doctor of Psychology at Alfred University in New York State. She can be contacted via email at nmschmidinger@gmail.com.