

SELF-ESTEEM IN HISPANIC ADOLESCENT FEMALES  
AND ITS RELATION TO  
DUAL PARENT HOUSEHOLDS AND SINGLE MOTHER HOUSEHOLDS

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#### Abstract

The development of a sense of self in adolescence has been shown to be influenced by the perceived level of warmth of the mother. Additionally, the nature of the home environment has been found to relate to an adolescent's level of self-esteem (Buri, 1990; Field, Lang, Yando, and Bendell, 1993). Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers in both dual parent households and single mother households face social challenges that affect self-esteem. A number of societal concerns such as lower availability of higher education, fewer high salaried jobs and inadequate health care influence the sense of identity and self-esteem of these females (Allen, Hauser, Bell, and O'Commer, 1994; Ex and Janssen, 1998).

Women of color, especially Hispanic women, may consider themselves of lower worth than the majority culture due to their own expectations (Anderson, 1996). Studies report white adolescent's self-esteem is higher than that of minority adolescents, especially females (Dukes and Martinez, 1994). Hispanic female headed households are more likely to live in poverty than Anglo and African American female headed households (Baca-Zinn and Dill, 1994). The General Accounting Office (1991) reported that Hispanics dropped out of school at rates considerably higher than did Anglo and African American students.

Women with low self-esteem often raise children with similar self-esteem. Women in divorced families as well as their children especially from Latin American culture offer experience lower self-esteem that continues to be exacerbated by societal expectations and relegation. (Frey and Carlock, 1989).

The purpose of the study was to examine the self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers in dual parent and single mother households. The sample consisted of a convenience sample of ninety Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers from an urban area. Fifty-nine mother-daughter pairs lived in dual parent households and thirty-one mother-daughter pairs lived in single mother households. Both correlational and causal comparative research designs were used

The mothers completed the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory-Adult Form (1981) and mother questionnaires. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory-Adult Form ascertained the self-esteem, while the mother questionnaire provided information about the mother-daughter relationship, ethnicity, and household living situation. The adolescents were given the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory- School Form to ascertain their self-esteem. *t*-tests were used to compare the self-esteem subscale scores for general, “household parent,” “school academic,” “social settings and peers,” and total self-esteem for the Hispanic adolescent females from dual parent and single mother households. The Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent and single mother households showed no statistically significant differences in general and total self-esteem. However, the results indicated an educational significance with the Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households having higher general and total self-esteem than the Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. The mothers

living in dual parent and single mother households also showed no statistically significant difference with respect to general and total self-esteem. The Pearson product moment correlation indicated a significantly positive correlation between the Hispanic adolescent females' total self-esteem and their mothers' level of total self-esteem.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Problem.....	9
Hypothesis.....	10
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	13
Definition of Self-Esteem.....	14
Development of Self-Esteem.....	15
Theories of Self-Esteem.....	19
Summary.....	37
Research Questions and Hypothesis .....	40
III. METHODOLOGY.....	44
Research Design.....	45
Participants.....	46
Instrumentation.....	46
Procedures.....	51
IV. RESULTS.....	54
V. CONCLUSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS.....	68
Conclusions and Interpretations.....	68
Implications.....	79
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	85

APPENDICES.....	98
Appendix A Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory School Form.....	99
Appendix B Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form.....	100
Appendix C Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form (Spanish Translation) .....	101
Appendix D Mother Questionnaire (English) .....	102
Appendix E Mother Questionnaire (Spanish).....	104
Appendix F Committee for Human Subjects Approval.....	106
Appendix G Mothers' Consent to Participate in Research (English) .....	110
Appendix H Mothers' Consent to Participate in Research (Spanish) .....	115
Appendix I Adolescent's Assent to Participate in Research.....	120

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 General Self-Esteem Scores of Hispanic Adolescent Females.....	55
2 Home Parent Self-Esteem Scores of Hispanic Adolescent Females.....	57
3 School-Academic Self-Esteem Scores of Hispanic Adolescent Females.....	59
4 Social Self-Peers Self-Esteem Scores of Hispanic Adolescent Females.....	61
5 Total Self-Esteem Scores of Hispanic Adolescent Females.....	63
6 Total Self-Esteem Scores of Mothers.....	64
7 Correlations of Adolescent Females' and Their Mothers' Total Self-Esteem.....	66

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Bar Graph of General Self-Esteem Mean Scores for Adolescent Females.....	56
2	Bar Graph of Home-Parent Self-Esteem Mean Scores for Adolescent Females.....	58
3	Bar Graph of School-Academic Self-Esteem Mean Scores for Adolescent Females.....	60
4	Bar Graph of Social Self-Peers Self-Esteem Mean Scores for Adolescent Females.....	62
5	Bar Graph of Total Self-Esteem Mean Scores for Adolescent Females.....	63
6	Bar Graph of Total Self-Esteem Mean Scores for Mothers.....	65
7	Scatter Graph Correlation of Adolescent Females and their Mothers' Total Self-Esteem Scores.....	67



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of healthy female identity, especially ego identity and self-esteem, has been investigated frequently since the early 1960's. That research has shown that a number of societal concerns such as lower availability of higher education, fewer high salaried jobs, and inadequate health care may influence the sense of identity and self-esteem of both adolescent females and their mothers (Allen, Hauser, Bell, and O'Conner, 1994; Ex and Janssen, 1998). Additionally, the literature indicates that a firm sense of identity and a positive resolution of the identity crisis during adolescence is the natural and necessary precursor for the positive resolutions of subsequent psychosocial crises (Erikson, 1968, 1997) and healthy self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1981).

However, for many women it seems that the sense of worth of the self has not been allowed to fully develop. Many women, spurred by the revival of the feminist movement, are presenting themselves more proudly and confidently in public, but in the privacy of their mind, too few seem to have favorable images of themselves, hold themselves in high regard, or consider themselves truly valuable (Sanford and Donovan, 1985). Women of color, especially Hispanic women, may consider themselves to be of even lower worth than the majority culture due to their own expectations and societal expectations (Anderson, 1996). Studies report the global self-esteem of Anglo adolescents, especially females, is higher than that of minority adolescents (Dukes and Martinez, 1994). Possibly, minority group members have lower self-esteem because they

compare unfavorably with the majority group in ways other than their group membership. It has been argued that unfavorable comparisons, such as low social class position, poor school performance, and stigmatized family structures are themselves the consequences of prejudice and discrimination (Rosenberg, 1979; Gutierrez and Lewis, 1999).

The home life and parent relationships also influence the self-esteem of the adolescent. Children with high self-esteem are more likely to be close to their parents, to confide in them, to respond to the punishments they administer, to be socially skilled, and emotionally responsive (Coopersmith, 1981; Neighbors, Forehand, and McVicar, 1992). The perception of adolescents regarding school achievement may also play a part of the concern for the self worth of the individual.

During adolescence, the individual is ascertaining an identity that will influence his or her adult well being (Erikson, 1968, 1997). Erikson and Coopersmith (1981) view the adolescent respectively, as working through identity crisis and as developing adequate levels of self-esteem. Erikson argues that the interaction of the individual with his or her social environment produces a series of psychosocial crises the individual must work through in order to achieve eventual ego identity and psychological health. Each crisis is a struggle between two opposite or conflicting personality characteristics. Coopersmith (1981) indicates that the work of Erikson is clearly related to self-esteem. Erikson's work provides an increased understanding of the subjective basis of human behavior. Persons with high self-esteem tend to make independent decisions, take risks, vigorously pursue new ideas and untried approaches, and act on their own initiative (Ellis, 1999).

In Erikson's theory, ego identity has an inner and an outer focus. The inner focus is the person's recognition of his or her own unified sameness and continuity, of knowing

and accepting oneself. The outer focus is the individual's recognition of, and identification with, the ideals and essential pattern of his culture and includes sharing the essential character of others. The person with a healthy ego identity has a clear picture and acceptance of both his inner essence and the group culture in which he lives (Thomas, 1995).

Erikson (1968, 1997) described the human strengths or ego qualities that emerge from the satisfactory resolution of the hierarchical stages of psychosocial development. The stages are as follows: (1) basic trust versus basic mistrust develops during the first year of life as the infant learns to trust his/her caretakers; (2) autonomy versus shame and doubt emerges during ages two through three as, the child learns self-control and independence in performing tasks; (3) initiative versus guilt develops from ages three through six as the child learns to use imagination, to make things, and to play; (4) industry versus inferiority occurs from ages six through twelve as the child learns to complete things he makes and learns how to work with others; (5) identity and repudiation versus identity diffusion is the primary issue between ages twelve through eighteen. During this period, the adolescent tries out different roles and groups to see who he/she really is; (6) intimacy and solidarity versus isolation is resolved during the individuals twenty's, as a person seeks a mate and seeks friendship, competition, and cooperation; (7) generativity versus stagnation and self-absorption occurs between the late twenty's and fifty's with a person yearning to help future generations and guide others; and (8) integrity versus despair occurs in the fifty's and beyond as a person faces their life and looks for the meaning in it. The manner in which a psychosocial crisis is resolved and personality characteristics are displayed depends on the way he or she

interacts with the social institutions of the particular culture (Thomas, 1995).

Erikson's fifth stage of identity versus identity diffusion corresponds to adolescent growth. There is emotional and psychological growth with increased sexual awareness that threatens the existing body image and ego identity. Adolescents become preoccupied with the perception of what others think of them as compared with how they see themselves. Thus, adolescents, confused about their own social roles, try out numerous other roles. They may over-identify with movie stars, pop singers, sports figures, and political leaders. Adolescents have a strong need for social belonging and recognition. Their identities are often defined within the social setting in relation to their peer group. The group becomes cohesive, even clannish, and often intolerant of differences of others. "Self doubting adolescents use different or 'out group' peers as targets for their own feelings of inferiority. The contrast with the 'out groups' lack of acceptance seems to provide those who are included a sense of status and belonging in the group." (Fox and Weaver, 1990, page 18)

Adolescent social roles take on a new form. The views that the adolescents hold of themselves in childhood no longer fit their new appearance. New feelings toward the opposite sex emerge. Adults and peers adopt new expectations for them as they move from childhood into adolescence. The great danger of this period is either role confusion or identity diffusion. In both instances, the adolescent does not know who he or she is to himself or herself and to others.

Youth who solve the problems of adolescent years come through with a strong sense of their own individuality and a recognition that they are acceptable to their society. Those who fail to work their way through the identity crisis continue to display in later life such marks of immaturity as intolerance, clannishness, cruel treatment of people who are different,

blind identification or loyalty to heroes and idols, and the like. (Thomas, 1995, pages 242-243)

As adolescents struggle through Erikson's psychosocial stage of identity versus identity diffusion, they become progressively more knowledgeable of the self.

As part of the identity crisis, female adolescents experience a variety of feelings about themselves. These feelings may be partially dependent upon the situation and environment. How an individual identifies and perceives the self may be analogous to the concept of self-esteem. The term self-esteem is often interchanged with terms like self-respect, self-love, self-worth, and self-concept (Sanford and Donovan, 1985). Actually, self-concept is the view of oneself derived from a personal perception and others' perception. The self-concept encompasses the whole self, while self-esteem is seen as a part of the whole. What a person thinks and what others think influences the person's self-concept (Fitts, 1972). Bandura (1977, 1997) describes a negative self-concept, as a devaluing of oneself, while a positive self-concept or image is the set of beliefs and images one holds to be true of the self. By contrast, the level of self-esteem (self-respect, self-love, or self-worth) is the measure of how much one likes or approve of the self-concept (Sanford and Donovan, 1985).

“Self-esteem has a social and psychological reality.... Self-esteem is both universal and culturally specific. Self-esteem is universal in the same way that the self is universal” (Hewitt, 1998, page 124). Coopersmith (1981) describes in general that self-esteem is the evaluation that the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to him/herself. Self-esteem expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval. The person's self-esteem indicates the extent to which the individual believes him/herself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. Frey and Carlock (1989) define

self-esteem as having two components: the feeling that one is competent to live and the feeling that one is worthy of living. Being competent is a confidence in one's mind, feelings, and beliefs as these relate to the reality of one's existence. Feeling worthy is an affirmation of oneself and having a feeling of self-respect. The self has ability for reflexivity, which is the capacity of human beings to be the object of their own thoughts, feelings, and actions. Individuals share the capacity to think about themselves, attach feelings to them, and become the object of their own actions (Hewitt, 1998).

Bandura (1986) writes that individuals possess beliefs that enable them to exercise a measure of control over thoughts, feelings, and actions. Together these beliefs, thoughts, and feelings compose a self-system; human behavior is the result of the interplay between this system and external forces (Purkey, 2000). The self-esteem of adolescent females and their mothers are important to their own psychological well being as well as to those around them. The self-esteem of adolescent females and the self-esteem of their mothers are the result of their identity in society (including ethnicity and gender), home life, and school academic performance for the adolescent (Der-Karabetian and Ruiz, 1993).

In general, the way the adolescent believes, thinks, and feels about personal characteristics may be the result of cognitive processes and the environment in which the adolescent lives (Bandura, 1977, 1997). These beliefs, thoughts, and feelings influence self-esteem. Phinney, Chavira, and Tate (1993) examined one such variable in determining the effects of ethnic threat on adolescent ethnic self-concept. In a study of 109 Hispanic high school students (ages 14-17), the students received either negative threats or neutral information about their ethnic group. The results of their study indicated

that general self-esteem and ethnic identity are related.

In a study by Fleming (1982), Hispanic mothers were found to have a greater influence on their children than African American and White mothers. The cultural environment and modeling the adolescent observes may play a part in influencing the Hispanic adolescent females more than African American and White adolescent females. The Hispanic cultures' strong family emphasis may also effect female socialization toward the role of mother and caregiver (Chodorow, 1978; Fuentes and Vasquez, 1999). The family is close and the most important social unit in the Hispanic culture. The family is extended to others such as distant relatives as well as close family friends. The manner in which the adolescent females value themselves may be the result of the role models in the community as well. Unfortunately, many of the adult role models in the Hispanic communities may have lower levels of education, fewer financial resources, and lack of available health care (United States Bureau of Census, 1992; United States Bureau of Census, 1991; Quiroz and Tosca, 1992).

The home life and parents of adolescents influence their perception of self (Rosenberg, 1965, 1984). For example, adolescents who live with parents who are more democratic have higher self-esteem than adolescents who live with controlling or authoritative parents (Buri, 1990). Individuals positively encouraged by their parents to be assertive and influence their environment may have higher self-esteem than adolescents whose parents provide little encouragement, while those with little encouragement from their parents may feel they have no control of their environment. In general, parental influence is stronger for female adolescents than for male adolescents (Buri, Kirchner, Misukanis, Mueller, and Walsh, 1986).



The middle school years of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade are times of fluctuation and change in the self-concept and self-esteem of the adolescent with the self-esteem of female adolescents in middle school being lower than that of male adolescents (Seidman, 1994; Wigfield and Eccles, 1994). Newbill and Clements (1995) report that females in the middle school grades showed a significant decline in self-esteem, experience greater stress, were twice as likely to be depressed, and were four times as likely to attempt suicide than males. Other studies have found a decline in self-esteem in reference to school and academic matters for adolescent females. For example, Larned and Muller (1979) detected a decline in academic success and school achievement in self-esteem in sixth through ninth grades in adolescent females. In “Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America” (American Association of University of Women, 1990), 3000 boys and girls, nine through fifteen years old, were polled on their attitudes toward self, school, family, and friends. For the female, the passage into adolescence was marked by a loss of confidence in herself and her abilities. Orenstein (1994) adds that many adolescent females fall into traditional patterns of low self-esteem, self-image, self-doubt, and self-censorship of their creative and intellectual potential. It appears that the self-regard of females decreases more than males and never catches up.

The General Accounting Office (1991) reported that Hispanics dropped out of school at rates considerably higher than those of White and African American students. Half of all the Hispanics living in the United States aged 25 or older had not finished high school in 1989 (Petrovich and Parsons, 1989), and Greene in 2001 reported that the national high school graduation rate for Latino students was 54%. Latin American female-headed families in 1994 were more likely to live in poverty, with almost half

(48.3 percent) living below the poverty line (Baca-Zinn and Dill, 1994). Female heads of households are confronted by numerous factors that relegate them to persistent poverty, among them, a weakened family support structure and social policies that prevent them from exiting from poverty. Having limited education, Hispanics often lack employment options, and those available to them often have restricted or no benefits (Gutierrez and Lewis, 1999). The issues of finances and health care are concerns for Hispanic mothers, especially those who are single. Many of these mothers face ambivalence and stress over conflict between motherhood and employment. Inadequate income and cycles of unemployment add to psychological distress (Ortiz, 1994). Health care benefits are scarce for Hispanic mothers and children (Quiroz and Tosca, 1992).

Factors such as lack of educational opportunities, persistent poverty, and scarcity of adequate health care may well influence the self-perception of individuals. This present study specifically examines the relationship of the self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent and single mother households. It theorizes that the impact of the family situation may affect general self-esteem, the level of self-esteem as it relates to home and parents, self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance, and self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of the Hispanic adolescent female and the total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers. It also examines the correlation between the female adolescents' and their mothers' self-esteem. Adolescents who live in dual parent households and single mother households were thought to exhibit differing levels of self-esteem. Thus, this study addresses the following research questions.

1. How does general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent

females living in single mother households?

2. How does self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
3. How does self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
4. How does self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
5. How does total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
6. How does total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers in dual parent households compare to total self-esteem of Hispanic mothers living in single mother households?
7. What is the nature of the relationship between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers?

These research questions were the basis for the following directional research hypotheses:

1. The general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households;
2. Self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households;
3. Self-esteem as it relates to school and academic performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to school and academic performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households;
4. Self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households;
5. The total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households;
6. The total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of the

Hispanic mothers living in single mother households.

7. There is a statistically significantly positive relation between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A wealth of literature is available for exploring the development and characteristics of self-esteem. Within Erikson's (1968, 1997) theory of psychosocial development the identity stage associated with adolescence has been examined profusely. There are studies that indicate differences in adolescent males' and females' self-esteem, studies that indicate changes in adolescent females' self-esteem during middle school transition, and studies that indicate adolescents' and their parents' self-esteem (American Association of University Women, 1992; Orenstein, 1994; and Buri, Kircher, Misukanis, Mueller, and Walsh, 1986). However, there appears to be few studies that focus directly on the identity and self-esteem of adolescent females and their mothers. There appears to be even fewer studies directly relating to Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers' self-esteem. Therefore, this review of the literature will be limited to information about the areas that are most germane to this investigation.

Beginning with definitions, this study will address development of identity and theories relating to self-esteem as it relates to adolescent females and their mothers. The discussion of self-esteem will be based on Bandura's social learning theory (1977) and Coopersmith's research on self-esteem (1967, 1984). Both self-concept and self-esteem will be defined and similarities and differences indicated. The development of self will be viewed through Erikson's theory of psychosocial conflicts, with issues relating to ethnic identity and culture being highlighted.

## **Definitions of Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem has a social and psychological reality, which can be both universal and culturally specific. It is universal in the same way the self is universal (Hewitt, 1998), yet individuals have a self and value the self in response to the culture. Self-esteem is culturally specific in that it is based on a personal perception as well as the perception of others. Steffenhagen (1987) defines self-esteem as the totality of the individual's perception including the physical, mental, and cultural self. Self-esteem is based on feelings of personal worth and importance. It is multifaceted. Coopersmith (1981) describes self-esteem as a subjective experience wherein the individual's determination of worth is reflected in the attitudes he or she holds toward him or herself. Bandura (1977, 1997) defines self-concept as valuing oneself either negatively or positively. However, the self-evaluation standards and competencies may vary for different activities. For example, an individual may regard himself or herself highly in school and academic performance, while low in parent and home relationships. Coopersmith also believes that the measures of self-evaluation in specific areas, such as home, school, or relationships, provide more information than the general area of self-esteem.

Self-esteem is dependent on the need to belong and to be loved as well as feelings of competency. Bandura (1977, 1999) refers to this sense of competency as "self-efficacy," which is the evaluation of one's ability to handle life situations and the judgment about how well a task or activity is performed. Self-efficacy expectations influence choices of activities and influence expectations and goals one sets for oneself (Joseph, 1995) and therefore influence self-esteem.

## **Development of Self-Esteem**

Theories of personality and growth are important for understanding female development of self-esteem. Male and female adolescents tend to differ in average level of self-esteem, but adolescents with high self-esteem regardless of gender, exude an inner and outer self-confidence (Dukes and Martinez, 1994). Males and females are socialized differently due to their impending roles in adulthood (Chodorow, 1974; AAUW, 1990); however, differential socialization does not necessarily mean one group is superior to the other. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (1968, 1997) indicates that the major task of adolescence is one of identification, while the individual faces conflict between identity and identity diffusion. Erikson theorized that the child is attempting to obtain a stable ego identity. The individual is seen as progressing through a series of identifiable series of psychosocial stages as they grow. His theory focuses on (1) the development of healthy personality, (2) the process of socializing a person into a particular culture by passage through a series of innately determined psychosocial stages, and (3) the individual's task of achieving ego identity by means of solving identity crises faced at each stage (Thomas, 1995).

According to Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, the fifth stage of development, identity and identity diffusion, corresponds to adolescence. The task for the adolescent is to resolve the psychosocial conflict that occurs. The resolution of the conflict will help make possible the adult capacity to enter into and maintain, intimate relationships (intimacy versus isolation), to contribute to the community (generativity versus stagnation), and to feel their life has been worthwhile (integrity versus despair). Adolescence is an initiating autonomous time for the male adolescent. The male is



becoming more independent and gaining a sense of self and purpose. For the female, Erikson (1968) says the sequence is a bit different. Erikson believes the female holds her identity in abeyance as she prepares to attract the man by whose name she will be known, by whose status she will be defined, the man who will rescue her from emptiness and loneliness by filling the inner space. The female remains stalemated and “waiting to be rescued by the man of her dream.”

Chodorow's (1974, 1978) work differs from Erikson's (1968) perception of female development. Chodorow proposes that male development entails an individuation and firming of experienced ego boundaries. Separation and individuation are tied to gender identification and separation from mother is essential for the development of masculinity. Female development entails an individuation that includes experiencing others needs or feelings as one's own. Girls emerge through adolescence with a basis for empathy built into their primary sense of self in a way that boys do not (Chodorow, 1978). Gender expectations and career stereotypes result in lower educational aspirations for girls, which begin to be evident in early adolescence (Vasquez and Fuentes, 1999; AAUW, 1992; Rogers and Gilligan, 1988). Masculinity is defined through separation while femininity is defined through attachment, male identity is threatened by intimacy while female identity is threatened by separation (Gilligan, 1982).

The sense of ego identity reflects confidence in one's ability to maintain inner sameness and continuity. An individual will remain the same and continue to exist in a world that has meaning for him or her. Thus, ego identity represents a conviction that one is developing a defined personality within a social reality which one understands (Erikson, 1968). Miller's (1993) view, based on Erikson's theory, indicates that the basic

task for the adolescent is to integrate the various aspects of identity from childhood into a more complete identity. Adolescents who successfully integrate the identifications from childhood years come through adolescence with a strong sense of their own individuality and recognition that they are acceptable to their society. Those who fail to work their way through the identity crisis continue to display in later life marks of immaturity such as blind identification or loyalty to heroes and idols (Thomas, 1995).

The conflict of identity versus identity diffusion may be exacerbated by one's minority group status (Miller, 1993). Ethnic identity refers directly to one's knowledge of personal ownership or membership in the ethnic group and the correlated knowledge, understanding, values, behaviors, and proud feelings that are direct implications of that ownership (Knight, Bernal, Garza, and Cota, 1993). According to Bernal, Saenz, and Knight (1995) ethnic identity is a set of self-ideas specifically related to one's ethnic group membership. Although some minority adolescents have not explored their ethnicity, individuals who have internalized negative societal stereotypes of their ethnic group are likely to experience lower self-esteem and self-confidence, and may have difficulty in finding meaning in their lives.

According to Phinney (1995), ethnic identity is a process that has three stages of formation and may continue throughout the lifespan. The first stage is called "unexamined" which refers to young people who have not examined their ethnic identity. The next stage of formation is the "searcher" which refers to adolescents who are beginning the process of exploration that involves experimentation and inquiry. The search process may include reading relevant books, taking courses at school, discussing ethnic issues, trying out different lifestyles, becoming more politically conscious, and

becoming involved in political movements. Individuals who have completed the search were labeled “identity achieved” because they had reached a state of clarity and understanding about the meaning of their ethnicity. There was an acceptance and internalization of one’s ethnicity and the person had high ethnic identity (Phinney, 1995).

Ethnic identity is an important and intricate part of self-concept and self-esteem. The development of ethnic identity is influenced by normative socialization processes and by the inter-group phenomena resulting from the minority status of the ethnic individual. The ethnic identity in the Hispanic culture includes the extended family group, which is the most important social unit. Family ties are strong. The group needs take precedence over the individual. There is an emphasis on family and family obligations. They believe the family is honored through hard work and providing financial support (DeNeve, 1997). Hispanic families tend to settle and remain in geographic areas close to other related families for material and social support (Hurtado, 1995). In a study conducted by Knight, Bernal, Garza and Cota, (1993), ethnic identity was positively related to self-esteem, self-confidence, and purpose in life. Findings for gender showed that self-esteem was statistically significantly different with males scoring higher than females.

Chodorow (1974) postulates that females experience lower self-esteem than males because of their social role as mothers. She does not agree with Erikson’s idea that adolescent females are waiting to be rescued by males. Women, as Chodorow perceives, are socialized differently due to their impending roles as mothers. She attributes the differences in masculine and feminine personality to the idea that woman, are universally largely responsible for early childcare. The different patterns of social role changes

associated with pubertal development for females and males may have differential impact on female and male self-esteem.

Chodorow (1978) believes that female's self-esteem is engendered in relationships, while male's self-esteem is related to accomplishment and achievement. Gilligan (1982) describes the differences in the "voice" of the female. The things females say and do not say are indicative of the perception of the female that is different for male. The conventional feminine voice emerges with great clarity, defining the self and proclaiming its worth based on the ability to care for and protect others (Gilligan, 1982). Because the early social environment differs for and is experienced differently by male and female children, sex differences may be seen in personality development. As a result, in any given society, feminine personality often comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than masculine personality does (Chodorow, 1974).

Chodorow (1978) argues that the existence of gender differences in early experiences allows the female to emerge from this period with a basis for empathy built into their definition of self in a way that boys do not. Thus, the daughter's gender role attitudes are similar to their mothers' gender role attitudes (Ex and Janssen, 1998). Girls emerge with a stronger basis for experiencing another's needs and feelings. The roles, which girls learn, are more interpersonal, particularistic, and affective than the roles which boys learn. Processes of identification and role learning for girls also tend to be pluralistic and affectively embedded in an interpersonal relationship with their mothers.

### **Theories of Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem is an evaluation of the self, based on personal perception and others

perception of the individual. Bandura's (1977, 1999) social learning theory and Coopersmith's (1967, 1984) work with self-esteem are helpful to further understanding the multifaceted nature of self-esteem.

### **Bandura's Research**

Bandura (1997) provides a view of human behavior and motivation in which beliefs that people hold are manifested in inner speech. These behaviors and motivations are key elements in the exercise of control and personal agency. Individuals are viewed as both products and producers of their environments and of their social systems. What a person believes is manifested in their actions and creates their world. A strong sense of self-efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well being in countless ways. People with a strong sense of personal competence approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than threats to be avoided. They have greater intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities, set challenging goals for themselves, maintain strong commitment to them, and heighten and sustain their efforts in face of failure. Moreover, they quickly recover their sense of efficacy after failures and setbacks. Person with high self-efficacy attribute failure to insufficient effort, to deficient knowledge, and to lacking skills. Conversely, people with low self-efficacy may believe that things are tougher than they really are. This belief fosters stress, depression, and a narrow vision of how best to solve problems. Because of these influences, self-efficacy beliefs are strong determinants and predictors of the levels of accomplishment that individuals finally attain (Purkey, 2000).

Bandura's theory (1977, 1997) states that the environment, through modeling and

observational learning influences the adolescents' behavior and self-efficacy. Bandura (1986) emphasizes that the manner in which children copy behaviors may reflect society's beliefs about characteristics worthy of copying. The behaviors that adolescents copy are valued by those adolescents and often the society in which the adolescents live. Many human behaviors are learned through modeling. Observing the manner in which others behave, helps the individual form ideas of how new behaviors are to be performed.

Important features of modeling include: (1) goals the child hopes to achieve, (2) the availability of models who are apparently attempting to reach such goals, (3) the methods the models employ, (4) the degree of success models appear to enjoy in terms of the consequences that result from their actions, (5) the ability of the child to copy the model's behavior, and (6) the consequences the child experiences when applying the modeled actions in her or his life. (Thomas, 1999, page 85)

The observations are coded information that serves as a guide for action. In order for observational learning to occur, four component processes must be present. These are the attentional process, the retentional process, behavioral reproduction, and motivational process.

As Thomas (1999) points out, attentional processes determine what the individual selectively observes. What is extracted from these observations determines learned behaviors. The individual must attend or perceive accurately the significant features of the modeled behavior in order to learn effectively. Then the modeled behavior must be represented in memory in symbolic form for retention to occur. There are two representational systems in the retentional process, imaginal and verbal. As a result of repeated exposure, modeling stimuli produce enduring, retrievable images of modeled performances. Verbal coding of modeled behaviors accounts for the notable speed of observational learning and retention in humans. Most cognitive processes that regulate

behavior are verbal rather than images.

The third component of modeling involves converting symbolic representations into appropriate actions. Behavioral reproduction is achieved by organizing one's responses spatially and temporally in accordance with the modeled patterns. People do not always enact everything they learn. They are more likely to adopt modeled behavior if it results in outcomes they value more than if it has unrewarding or has punishing effects.

The fourth component of observational learning is the motivational processes. The motivational processes influence the likelihood of a behavior being repeated. Repetition is contingent upon the value of the outcome. If the outcome is pleasant, the behavior will tend to be repeated. Of course, if the outcome is unpleasant, the behavior most likely will not be repeated.

Observational learning is a key part in developing identity and self-esteem. The roles that adults learn are formed as young children by observing adults in the form of parents, teachers, family, and friends. The roles are reproduced contingent upon the motivation of the individual. The reproduction of the behaviors is contingent also upon the responses from valued people in society. The cultural or social worth placed upon the actions plays a part in the value that one places upon the modeled behaviors. This in turn may affect how one perceives and values the self. The comments and acknowledgements of these role rehearsals help in forming identity.

Observational learning for the minority child leads to both enculturation and acculturation. Enculturation, according to Berry (1993), is the socialization process by which developing individuals acquire the cultural and psychological qualities that are

necessary to function as a member of one's group. Enculturation is a process in which parents, in particular, play a significant role. Parents are the first to teach children of acceptable behaviors in the culture. Acculturation is the product of cultural learning that results from contact between the members of two or more culturally distinct groups. It is also a process of attitudinal and behavioral change. These changes are undergone, willingly or unwillingly, by individuals who reside in multicultural societies or who encounter a new culture due to colonization invasions or other political changes (Marin, 1992). Through enculturation and acculturation, the adolescent develops a sense of who they are in their world. Through interactions with the family and those from different cultures, the adolescent forms their beliefs, thoughts, and self-esteem.

Observing others and imitating their behaviors help the adolescent as he/she develops their identity. When imitated behaviors are encouraged or rewarded, the behaviors continue, while discouraged or non-rewarded behaviors often cease. The behaviors that are often rewarded are based on the beliefs and thoughts of the adult models. These models are again mostly parents, teachers, family, and friends. The adolescent may form their self-esteem and ethnic identity partially based on the beliefs and thoughts of those valued in their culture.

Self-esteem and ethnic identity are significantly related as mentioned earlier. According to Hurtado, Rodriguez, Gurin, and Beals (1993), the social/ethnic identity of the parents themselves serves as a mediating variable for determining what aspects of ethnicity are maintained by Hispanic origin persons. The parents' identities in turn are what are inculcated in their children. The unique aspect of ethnic identity development process for Hispanics is that their ethnic identity is defined and formulated by their



cultural environment and the dominant group interaction (Berry, 1984). The people within a given culture influence an individual's perception and self-esteem. The issues of ethnicity and gender are determiners of self-esteem for adolescents in multicultural settings. In the traditional Mexican culture, the man is in control of the family in public spaces and activities, while the woman assumes informal power within the household, depending on the control given by the husband (Anderson, 1996). Many non-English speaking Hispanic women remain at home while their husbands work and negotiate with the broader culture outside of the family. The older children often serve as translators for these mothers while the husbands are working. The mothers and daughters emotional ties are close. The more Hispanic the environment is, especially in reference to the continued use of the Spanish language, the less likely the acculturation process is to influence the ethnic identity of the Hispanics living and working predominately in a non-White environment (Casas and Pytluk, 1995). The demographic and social characteristics of the community and work environment also influence self-esteem.

### **Coopersmith's Research**

Coopersmith (1967, 1984) proposed four types of experiences (significance, competence, power and virtue) that provide a sense of increased self-worth when attained. When individuals had these types of experiences, the individual tended to have high self-esteem, especially in the areas related to those experiences. *In Women and Self-Esteem* (1985), Sanford and Donovan continued the concepts of significance and competence. They argue that a sense of connectedness balanced by a sense of separateness and sense of realism about self and the world provide women with a sense

of power. Additionally, Sanford and Donovan also modified the construct of virtue to relate to ethics and values.

The first aspect, significance of the individual, is noticed in the acceptance, attention, and affection of others. The person high in self-esteem, in contrast to one deficient in self-esteem, feels that he or she is meaningfully engaged with other people. The person high in self-esteem feels that it is important to be involved with, and valued by the significant people in his or her life. Because the individual feels genuinely liked by others, he or she consequently comes to feel that he or she is a likeable person with likeable qualities (Coopersmith, 1981). In unconditional love, parents send a definite message of significance to the child.

A child will be most certain of her own significance if she believes she is loved unconditionally. Unconditional love is communicated through both word and action...When parents love a child unconditionally, they still love her in the face of her misbehavior. They dislike the behavior, and point this out, but that does not change their feelings toward their child; they do not communicate to her that she is bad because she has done something bad (Sanford & Donovan, 1985, page 39-40).

The second aspect of Coopersmith's theory, competence, is the successful performance of meeting demands for achievement. The individual with high self-esteem typically feels capable, adequate, competent, and successful in one or more important aspects of her life. These aspects may include family, school for teens, career for adults and relationships (Coopersmith, 1981). Children learn they are competent mainly from coming up against their parent's limits and expectations and surpassing them. "For instance, parents tell their daughter that she is not ready to ride her bike without training wheels. She convinces them that she is. They remove the extra wheels and she rides away, shaky at first, but successful. Not only has she surpassed the limits her parents

placed on her, she has also learned that she is competent (Sanford and Donovan, 1985, page 41).” Competence is referred to as a set of reasonable levels, with expectations representing the strongest vote of confidence possible. Self-esteem grows out of successfully doing those things thought too difficult or impossible.

Coopersmith’s third area of experiences is feelings of power. Feelings of power are the result of the ability to influence and control others. Developing a sense of power through control in coping with environmental situations is important to enhancing self-esteem. An individual high in self-esteem believes that she can have an effect, and meaningful impact on other people as well as on her environment. Feelings of power also include a sense of connectedness balanced with separateness from others (Sanford and Donovan, 1985). Chodorow (1978) and Gilligan (1982) suggests that because girls are the same gender as the primary care giving parent, usually the mother, they do not develop a full sense of their difference and separateness from her. This lack of “individuation” that marks the first and most powerful relationship in girl’s lives stays with them, extending to other relationships. Later adult women see themselves as connected in complex bonds to others.

A sense of realism means being aware, that no one is perfect. Children need a realistic view of their behaviors with guidance and constructive suggestions on how to do better. Concrete information about how the world works is needed if children are to develop a sense of realism about themselves and possibilities for the future. Concrete, realistic information about how the world works and how to function successfully in it is also necessary. The more children know about the world, the better able the child will be to exercise control over their fate (Sanford and Donovan, 1985).

The fourth aspect of Coopersmith's experiences helps an individual to increase self-esteem by achieving a sense of virtue. Virtue is living up to standards of conduct one sets for his or her life. Sanford and Donovan (1985) wrote that virtue is a coherent set of ethics and values, a clear sense of what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad. High self-esteem implies feelings of control, self-determination, and autonomy. Glasser (1965) views a well functioning person as one who has developed responsible and effective ways of meeting his or her needs. Achieving a sense of virtue through learning appropriate values and/or ethical standards enhances feelings of self-worth.

Many of these experiences relating to significance, competence, power, and virtue may be obtained for adolescent females through interactions with their mothers. For example, when an adolescent experiences success in completing a household chore that adolescent may experience significance, a sense of accomplishment; competence is in doing well; power in being able to perform the task at hand; and virtue in completing the job and living up to their personal standard. The adolescent will most likely have a high self-esteem in the area of that household task. The individual who consistently is unsuccessful in completing task may feel insignificant, thinking he or she does not make a difference. They may well feel incompetent or incapable, lacking in power and virtue, not able to live up to their personal standards. The self-esteem of this person obviously may suffer as a result.

### **General Self-Esteem**

Psychological studies of self-esteem in children find few basic differences between boys and girls in terms of how they feel about themselves (Maccoby and Jacklin,

1974). Although there are few gender differences in self-esteem during childhood, adolescent girls are reported to have a more difficult time with their self-image than adolescent boys (Simmons and Rosenberg, 1975). Jaquish and Savin-Williams (1981) found that adolescent girls consistently report themselves to be lower in self-esteem than adolescent boys. Block and Robins (1993) conducted a study of developmental change in self-esteem from early adolescents through adulthood. They found that females high in self-esteem impressed observers as self-satisfied and socially at ease, and as neither moody nor negativistic. Newbill and Clements' (1995) national studies suggested that for girls, the middle grades were a time of significant decline in self-esteem. Compared to the boys, adolescent girls experienced greater stress, were twice as likely to be depressed and were four times as likely to attempt suicide. Females during early adolescence have been found to have significantly lower self-esteem than males and that the disparity of self-esteem for males and females continues to increase over time (Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford, 1994).

Late adolescence is crucial for the achievement of identity, when the consolidation of the self begins to emerge as an important developmental task (Erikson, 1997). Gender features of self-esteem may be particularly apparent during this developmental period. In junior high and high school, social activities continue to show gender differences, with female activities more likely to emphasize communion and male activities more likely to emphasize agency or competition (Brown and Gilligan, 1999). Indeed, high self-esteem females tend to be concerned with connecting with others (Thorne and Michaelieu, 1996). Additionally, female self-esteem may be linked to a process in which "connections and attachments" to important others are emphasized

(Joseph, Markus, and Tafarodi, 1992, page 391).

With respect to general self-esteem, adolescent females have lower self-esteem than adolescent males and adolescent females' self-esteem appears to decrease overtime (Knight, Bernal, Garza, and Cota, 1993; Orenstein, 1994; Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford, 1994). Hispanic adolescent females' self-esteem has been shown to be lower than the Anglo and African American adolescent females' self-esteem (Dukes and Martinez, 1994).

In 1996 Bynum and Durm compared a heterogeneous group of children ages 13 to 18 of divorced homes with children of intact homes, using the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992). Results indicated that even though both groups tended to have a high level of self-esteem, the group from intact families scored significantly higher than those from divorced families.

### **Self-Esteem as It Relates to Home and Parents**

Parents and households influence the adolescent's level of self-esteem with parental nurturance being positively correlated with their children's self-esteem (Buri, Kirchner, Misukanis, Mueller, and Walsh, 1986). Children living in happy families scored higher in self-esteem than those who perceive their homes as being unhappy. Parental acceptances, interest, warmth, respect, and closeness are positively associated with children's and adolescent's self-esteem (McCurdy and Scherman, 1996).

The messages adolescents receive from their parents influence self-esteem. These messages are the unspoken and spoken thoughts and interactions that are perceived by the individual (Sholomskas and Axelrod, 1983). When an adolescent lives with parents who

encourage healthy risk taking, like trying out for basketball or trying out for cheerleading, that adolescent may receive a message that he or she is okay. That adolescent might also interpret the unspoken message to mean the parents value and trust their abilities. When an adolescent lives with parents who discourage healthy risk taking by saying things like, “Don’t waste your time, you know you won’t make the team,” the adolescent may feel incapable and not valued for his or her abilities. These messages influence an adolescent’s self-esteem.

Davidson (1981) conducted a study examining 944 family pairs each consisting of one adult and one adolescent child. The study traced the relationship between family socialization and self-esteem in two generations. The results indicated that different family patterns within each culture are important factors in accounting for variations in self-esteem.

In a survey of 65 mothers and 44 fathers (Rosenberg, 1984), the results indicated that high self-esteem in mothers and fathers was associated with mature and resilient children. It concluded that parental self-esteem was significantly related to the emerging personality of the child throughout adolescence. Garner (1995) studied the level of self-esteem of fourth and seventh graders to see if it was related to gender, grade level, race, socio-economic status, and family structure. The results indicated that students living with both biological parents have greater self-esteem than those living in other types of families. Kurtz (1994) studied children of non-divorced and divorced parents. The results indicated that children of divorced parents had lower levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Mahabeer (1993) studied 204 Indian mothers and their children from intact,

widowed, or divorced low socio-economic status families. The Semantic Differential Scale and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory were given. The results showed the higher the mother's self-esteem the more positive the children's perception of their mother and that the children's perception of their mother was also positively correlated with the children's self-esteem.

Burnett and Demnar (1995) had children in fourth and seventh grade rate their closeness to their mother, father, two closest friends, and teachers. The results indicated a significant difference between closeness to mother and closeness to father with the mother being rated as closer. Closeness to mother was also a more significant predictor of children's self-esteem.

Since parents influence their adolescents, adolescents living in dual parents versus single parent households may have different levels of self-esteem as well. Rosenberg (1965) agrees that the living environment of the adolescent influences their self-esteem. If parents label their children with compassion and accuracy, the labels teach the child in a way that enhances self-esteem and realism about self. If labels were applied without sensitivity to their importance, the labels might turn out to be inaccurate and even destructive (Sanford and Donovan, 1985).

However in a couple of more recent studies, children in intact families indicated no significant difference in level of self-esteem. Hofmann and Zippco (1986) compared self-esteem scores from the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1984) from children of divorced and intact families. There was no significant difference in the scores. Gonzalez, Field, Lasko, Harding, Yando, and Bendell (1995) administered several scales measuring intimacy with parents and peers, self-esteem, depression, and



risk-taking to 440 adolescents in a heterogeneous gender and ethnic group. Although there were slight differences, no significant differences were found in self-esteem.

A survey by the Academy of Educational Development (1992) reported that compared with other groups, Hispanics had the sharpest decline in self-esteem during adolescents and that a girl's role within her family was important to her overall self-esteem. Of the Hispanic adolescent females in this study, 38% of the high school and 59% in the middle school students felt good about themselves within their families.

### **Self-Esteem as It Relates to Academic Achievement in School**

A number of studies have shown that high self-esteem is correlated with high achievement. Hispanics were less likely to find support at home or in school for high educational achievement than other young women in U. S. Society (Hernandez, 1995). Recent research has clarified the connection between self-esteem and academic achievement, especially in math and science. Girls and boys who enjoy science and math consider themselves more important, like themselves more, and feel better about their school work and family relationships. They are more likely to hold professional career goals. Thirty-one percent of the girls in elementary school say they are good in math, but by middle school, only eighteen percent think they are mathematically capable (Sadker, Sadker, and Klein, 1991; Sadker and Sadker, 1994). When girls lose confidence in their ability to learn math and science, they avoid these subjects. When they believe they cannot succeed, they become less capable, "as their competence withers, so does their self-esteem, and the vicious, connected cycle continues; attenuation of self-confidence that leads to loss of mental ability and results in the diminished of self-confidence"

(Sadker, Sadker, and Klein, 1991 page 97).

Orenstein (1994) believes the American culture is ambivalent toward female achievement, proficiency, independence, and right to a full and equal life. The culture devalues both women and qualities such as nurturance, cooperation, and intuition. Women may be taught to devalue themselves, their abilities, to denigrate their work, and discount success. Often women do not feel they have a right to their dreams. If they achieve their dreams, they feel undeserving. Orenstein (1994) also believe that small failures may confirm the women's own sense of inevitable failure, making them unable to take necessary risk. Many women look outward for markers of acceptability and are vulnerable, valuing themselves based on the approval from lovers or husbands.

Marin (1990) conducted a study that evaluated the personal, academic, and social factors associated with high school graduation and non-graduation among Hispanic adolescents. In the study, there were 56 high school graduates, 58 general high school equivalency (GED) students, and 58 dropouts from high school. The findings indicated the dropout group had lower self-concept than the graduates and GED groups. The graduates were less likely to be involved with drugs, alcohol, and crime than the GED and dropout groups, and graduates had better academic records and behavior than others.

Strassburger, Rosen, Miller, and Chavez (1990) explored differences in academic achievement between 67 Hispanic and 304 Anglo seventh through ninth graders in academic self-esteem, locus of control, and socio-economic status. Using the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, self-esteem accounted for the largest amount of grade point average variance.

Waxman, Huang, and Padron (1997) compared the motivational learning

environment of 60 resilient and 60 non-resilient Latino middle school students. The results indicated that resilient students had significantly higher perceptions of involvement, satisfaction, academic self-concept, and achievement motivation than did non-resilient students. The resilient Latino students had higher self-esteem than non-resilient students.

Fligstein and Fernandez (1982) analyzed data to identify factors important to high school graduation for Mexican American and Whites. For Hispanics, large family size and low parental education are related to poor school attendance and to delays, while mothers education significantly increased the likelihood of high school completion. Ortiz (1994) indicated that Mexican American had lower educational achievement than other Hispanic subgroups and the total United States Population. Ortiz also noted that Hispanic students were over-represented in classes for special education, English as a Second Language and bilingual education, and under represented in gifted classes.

### **Self-Esteem as it Relates to Peers in Social Settings**

As mentioned earlier, adolescent females experience greater stress, are twice as likely to be depressed, and attempt suicide four or five times as often as adolescent males (Newbill and Clements, 1995). It is believed that this stress and depression may be caused by self-image concerns of the adolescent female. Poor body image and obesity concerns are more prevalent in adolescent female than males (Orenstein, 1994). These concerns are enhanced by the gender stereotypes in television, movies, books, and fashion, which pose challenges to healthy psychological development (Orenstein, 1994) and thus healthy levels of self-esteem.

Adolescent females may also attempt to keep up with the impossible demands of the unrealistic view of a perfect feminine image. Some researchers attribute self-image problems to the “perfect girl” or “nice girl” syndrome (Brown and Gilligan, 1999). The adolescent female may continue to experience lower levels of self-esteem in relating with peers, especially adolescent males.

Many Hispanic adolescents are caught between conflicting demands and expectations of the family and community and the dominant culture found in the school and society. Cultural environment may be stressful for adolescents who often function in two different cultures of family and peers in school. The roles and relationships the adolescent is expected to maintain in the family and in the school with peers are often different. How many generations the family maintained residence in the present culture versus the Latin American country of family origin impact the social and peer relationships for Hispanic adolescent females. Families that continue to speak Spanish at home influence the self-worth of the females as they balance the differences in order to adjust successfully to both social environments. The psychosocial stressors of peers and family with low achievement in school cause the adolescents to experience conflicts and difficulties in group relationships (Alva, 1991). When females experience stress in relationships, they have lower self-esteem since female self-esteem is often defined through attachment (Gilligan, 1982).

### **Mothers Self-Esteem**

Demo and Acock (1996) surveyed a sample of 2,781 mothers on their well being (personal happiness, self-esteem, and depression) across four family structures: first

married, remarried, divorced, or continuously single families. Mothers in their first year of marriage enjoyed the highest well being, mothers in stepfamilies fared nearly as well, and divorced and continuously single mothers had the lowest well-being. Married women were happier with higher self-esteem, while single mothers were lowest in happiness and lowest in self-esteem. Mothers attributed their success to their own mothers and hard work.

Hernandez (1994) interviewed nine Mexican American mother, daughter, and grandmother triads. They administered questionnaires asking who had inspired them to perform well in school. The major factors associated with the daughters' level of aspiration was the mothers' encouragement. The importance of the daughter's education to the mother and the mothers' aspirations for their daughters, were major contributors to the daughters aspiration for future academic goals.

The Gandara study (1980) provides information on earlier successful Hispanics. Retrospective interviews were conducted with 45 Chicanos, of whom one-third were females; all were 40 years old or less and possessed a J.D., M.D., or Ph.D. from recognized universities. The women in the study all demonstrated a high level of self-esteem. They all came from families in which neither parent had completed high school or held jobs higher than skilled laborers. All subjects translated parental regard for the work ethic to their work at school. Half viewed their mother as dominant supportive figure in the home. Almost two thirds attended highly integrated Anglo schools, competing successfully against students representing the dominant society. By high school, 82% were considered "college material." Most came from Chicano communities acknowledged as "better than other Chicano neighborhoods." Most felt persistence first,

then hard work and ability, were most important to their academic success. All were bicultural, coming from Spanish speaking homes with strong Mexican cultural ties, but able to adapt to the dominant Anglo culture. Many were influenced by personal attention of role models or mentors.

### **Summary**

Self-esteem, dependent on the need to belong and to be loved as well as feelings of competence, is influenced by socialization through observational learning from role models normally beginning in the family, especially in the Hispanic culture. The close family unit of the Hispanics provides emotional and financial support as needed (Hurtado, 1995). Yet for many in the traditional Mexican culture, the man is in control of the family in public spaces and activities, while the women assumed some power within the household (Anderson, 1996). Though this is not as prevalent in the 2000's, there remain some of the influences of the traditions within the Hispanic culture. As mentioned earlier, Orenstein (1994) believes the American culture remains ambivalent toward female achievement and full right to a equal life. Self-esteem is a concern for females in this cultural environment, especially Hispanic females.

Based on the review of the literature, Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers in dual parent households and single mother households face social challenges that affect their self-esteem. The core of self-esteem of female adolescents generally is lower than that of males (Alpert-Gillis and Connell, 1989; Raymore et al, 1994, Newbill and Clements, 1995). Dukes and Martinez (1994) indicated that public self-esteem generally is lower for racial minority adolescent than for Anglos.

Mexican American youth have lower educational achievement than other subgroups in our society (Ortiz, 1994). In 1990, only 44 percent of the Hispanics aged 25 or older completed high school, compared to 80 percent of non-Hispanics. Hispanics who do choose to continue their education beyond high school are more likely to select a proprietary or technical school or community college to acquire work related skills. This information may be indicative of lower self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females (Shafer, 1993).

Recent reports have documented the absence of Hispanics among college teachers and administrators. The problem of students seeing few teachers and administrators like themselves is perpetuated through the educational pipeline where insufficient numbers of Hispanic university students have been prepared to serve as teachers and administrators. The pipeline narrows still further at the baccalaureate level (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1991). Hispanic youth have few role models in public education and as they continue toward four years and higher degrees there are even less Hispanics as teachers and administrators.

About half of the Hispanic females in the labor force were located primarily in low paying jobs with poor or inadequate working conditions and little job security (Ortiz, 1994). Segura and Pierce (1993) emphasized the heterogeneity among the Mexican American families that influence finances: the immigration status, urban/rural residence status, household size, acculturation, and class status.

Hispanic families are primarily working class and often among the working poor (Segura and Pierce, 1993). A third of the Hispanic population has no insurance or other coverage (such as Medicaid) compared to 13 percent Anglo and 29 percent African

American (Quiroz and Tosca, 1992). These general statistics tend to be even greater for Hispanic single mothers. As Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers become more aware of the opportunities available for increased education, finance, and health care, they may have the ability to help provide more quality of life for themselves and their children in the future. The Hispanic adolescents and their mothers may have an increased opportunity to begin to meet their optimal potential if levels of self-esteem are adaptive. This in turn may give them an opportunity to positively influence the educational, financial, and health care concerns the society presents.

The type of home situation, parents, and school influence the self-esteem of individuals (Boes, 1995). High parental self-esteem is crucial to the ability to nurture high self-esteem and personal effectiveness in children. Although, there is a connection between self-esteem and academic achievement, especially in math and science, self-esteem tends to diminish in females, especially Hispanic females, through secondary school. There are often limited role models in education for the Hispanic adolescent females to identify with.

While self-esteem has been explored often in the literature, there is a need to examine how dual parent households and single mother households may influence the sense of self-esteem in Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers. Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers in either dual parent households or single mother households, face social challenges that affect their sense of self-esteem. The educational trends toward lower achievement, as well as the trend of lower finances, and below normal health care availability continue to affect sense of self-esteem. The trend of lower self-esteem in the Hispanic females and the relative lack of specific research in this area



pointed to a need to examine how these characteristics may influence the sense of self-esteem in Hispanic adolescent females and their Hispanic mothers.

The purpose of the present study was to determine whether the relationship between self-esteem in Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households is significantly higher than Hispanic adolescent females in single mother households. The study intended to determine whether the mother, in dual parent households, has significantly higher self-esteem than mothers in single mother households. The study also intended to determine whether these adolescent females' self-esteem was similar to their mothers' self-esteem.

This study addressed the following research questions.

1. How does general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
2. How does self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
3. How does self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
4. How does self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it

relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?

5. How does total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households?
6. How does total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers in dual parent households compare to total self-esteem of Hispanic mothers living in single mother households?
7. What is the nature of the relationship between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers?

Researchers have indicated that the children of divorced parents have lower levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1984; Kurtz, 1994). Fleming (1982) indicated the Hispanic mothers have a greater influence on their children than do African American mothers and Anglo mothers. Based on this research, it is feasible to predict that the self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent female in relation to the home and parent, school and academic performance, and self-esteem in relation to peers in social settings will be higher for those Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households. This leads in turn to the directional hypotheses of One, Two, Three, Four, and Five.

1. The general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households;
2. Self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than

self-esteem as it relate to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households;

3. Self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households
4. Self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households; and
5. The total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households.

Demo and Acock's (1996) survey on well-being which included personal happiness, self-esteem and depression indicated that divorced and continuous single mothers had lower well-being and self-esteem when compared with women first married, and remarried. This leads to the following directional hypothesis:

6. The total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers living in single mother households.

As mentioned earlier, the research indicates that the closeness of the mother and the mother's self-esteem may be a predictor of the adolescent females' self-esteem. In Mahabeer's (1993) study, it was indicated the higher the mother's self-esteem and higher

the children's self-esteem. Burnett and Denmar's (1995) research indicated that closeness to mothers was a significant predictor of children's self-esteem. Based on this, directional Hypothesis Seven was formulated.

7. There is a statistically significantly positive relation between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of the present study is to determine whether the relationship between self-esteem in Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households was significantly higher than Hispanic adolescent females in single mother households. The study also sought to determine whether the mother; in dual parent households had significantly higher self-esteem than mothers in single mother households and whether the adolescent females' self-esteem was similar to their mothers' self-esteem.

This study called for six comparisons and one description of self-esteem in Hispanic adolescent females and their Hispanic mothers. The study compared: (1) the general self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent household with the general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households; (2) self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of the Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent household and self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households; (3) self-esteem as it relates to school and academic performance of the Hispanic adolescent female living in a dual parent household and self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households; (4) self-esteem as it relates to the social and self-peer relationships of the Hispanic adolescent female living in a dual parent household and self-esteem as it relates to the social and self-peer relationships of the Hispanic adolescent females living in

single mother households; (5) the total self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent household and the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households; (6) the total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers in dual parent household and the total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers living in single mother households; and (7) the relationship between the total self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers.

### **Research Design**

The research designs used in this study were causal-comparative and correlational. Hypotheses One, Two, Three, Four, Five, and Six were examined using a causal-comparative research design, while Hypothesis Seven was examined using a correlational design. The causal comparative method was used to explore causal relationships. To explore possible cause and effect relationships, the causal-comparative method is used to compare similar subjects (Borg, Gall, and Gall, 1999). The causal-comparative method is used here because cause-and-effect relationship does not easily lend to experimental manipulation (Wallen and Fraenkel, 1991; Mertens, 1998).

In the testing of Hypothesis Seven, a correlational research design was used to describe the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables, the total self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers. The resulting correlation coefficient will summarize the magnitude and direction of the relationship between the adolescents' self-esteem and their mothers' self-esteem. It allows a description of the strength and direction of association between pairs of variables (Glass and Hopkins, 1984).

## **Participants**

The participants in this study were seventh and eighth grade Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers. The students were selected from four middle schools (grades seventh and eighth) in an urban school district. The questionnaires were obtained through required physical education classes and English as a Second Language classes in order to provide a wide sample of students.

The sample consisted of a convenience sample of ninety Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers, fifty-nine Hispanic adolescent females and their Hispanic mothers living in dual parent households and thirty-one Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers living in single mother households. Only adolescent females who had lived with their biological mothers or had lived with their stepmothers for at least the last two years, were used in this study. All students and parents were volunteers.

## **Instrumentation**

This study examined seven variables: (1) general self-esteem of the adolescent females, (2) self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of adolescent females, (3) self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance, (4) self-esteem as it relates to social and self-peer interactions of the adolescent females, (5) total self-esteem of the adolescent females, (6) total self-esteem of the mothers, and (7) the nature of the household structure in which the adolescents were living (dual parent households or single mother households). Three instruments were used for these purposes. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory School Form (1967) (Appendix A) was used with the adolescent females. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form (1975)

(Appendix B) was used with the mothers. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form was translated in Spanish (Appendix C). Additionally, demographic instruments, Mother Questionnaire (Appendix D) and Mother Questionnaire in Spanish (Appendix E) were utilized in order to gather information relating to marital status of parents, ethnicity, and length of time of household living situation for the student. Of the ninety mothers who responded to the questionnaire, fifty used the Spanish version.

### **Self-Esteem of Adolescent Females**

For this study, the general self-esteem, "home-parent," "school-academic," and "social self-peer" sub-scales and total self-esteem of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Instrument School Form (SEI) were used with the adolescent females. SEI measured the attitudes toward self in general, self in the home with parents, self in school and academic concerns, and self in social, self-peer relationships and total self-esteem. Self-esteem was defined by this instrument as an evaluation a person makes and maintains of his or herself. It is an expression of approval or disapproval, indicating the extent to which a person believes himself competent, successful, significant and worthy. Self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness expressed in the attitudes a person holds toward the self (Coopersmith, 1981).

This inventory may be used with students eight to fifteen years old and consists of fifty-eight items. Fifty of the items are self-esteem items, while eight items constitute the Lie Scale. The Lie Scale is a measure of the students' defensiveness. The self-esteem items yield a score for general self, home-parents, school-academic and social self-peers and total self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1981). The adolescent's general



self-esteem was examined through the general self-esteem subscale score. The manner in which the home and parents influence self-esteem was examined with the home parent subscale. The manner in which the adolescent feels about school and school performance was assessed through the results of the academic school subscale. The total self-esteem is the result of the total score.

Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory School Form is a self-report inventory intended to measure the evaluation a person makes and customarily maintains with regard to him or herself. The inventory presents favorable or unfavorable statements about the self, which the individual indicates as being "like me" or "unlike me." The adolescent will select either "like me" or "unlike me" for the fifty-eight items of the inventory.

Studies of the reliability of the SEI have determined the instrument is reliable on test retest for most participants. Bedeian, Geagud, and Zmud (1977) computed test-retest reliability for 103 college students using the short form. The reliability coefficients were .80 for males and .82 for females. In a three year longitudinal study of 380 children (9,12,15 year olds), Rubin (1978) found that children tested at 12 years old and again at 15 years old showed greater test retest consistency ( $r = .64$ ) than children tested at earlier ages of 9 and 12 year old ( $r = .42$ ). Rubin concluded that self-esteem becomes more stable as young people move into early adolescence.

Validity studies indicate that the SEI measured the level of the self-esteem of adolescents. Kokenes (1978) investigated children in fourth through eighth grade to observe the comparative importance of the household, peers, and school to the global self-esteem of preadolescents and adolescents. The factorial analysis of the responses of 7600 children indicated little factorial differences from grade level to grade level.

Although there were some differences related to gender, most researchers have found little differences between means and standard deviations of the SEI total and subscale scores of male and females (Coopersmith, 1981).

Roberson and Miller (1986) studied the SEI through factor analysis using 1387 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. The results indicated SEI to be complex with well-defined subconstructs that confirm the multidimensionality of the self-esteem construct. The correlation among related constructs supports the construct validity of the instrument.

Johnson, Redford, Miller, and Simpson (1983) found the SEI had convergent validity with regard to the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers, 1969; Piers and Harris, 1964). The Piers Harris' Inventory, Children's Self-Concept Scale, is a group administered self-report instrument to measure general self-concept. The SEI and the Piers Harris were given to 105 participants and a stepwise multiple regression analysis provided evidence of convergent validity for the Coopersmith and the Piers Harris inventories. It was internally consistent with coefficient alpha of .86. These instruments measured similar constructs in self-esteem and self-concept.

### **Self-Esteem of the Mothers**

The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form (SEI) (Appendix B) was administered to the mothers in English. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory was also administered in Spanish (Appendix C). The SEI was designed for use with individuals sixteen and above. It consists of twenty-five items modified from the School Form to make the items more meaningful to people out of school. The SEI was administered to

226 college students with a mean age of 21.5 years ranging from 16 to 34 years. The mean difference in scores between 16-19 year old and 20-34 year old approached significance. There was a slightly higher self-esteem for participants 20 and older. The reliability ranged from .75 to .85 (Coopersmith, 1981).

Martin and Coley (1984) examined the intercorrelation of the SEI with the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS). They used 50 undergraduate students. The TSCS was devised by Fitts (1968) and contains 100 self-descriptive statements. It is used with individuals twelve years and older who have a sixth grade reading level. The SEI and TSCS were administered in groups. Significant correlations ( $r = .640, p < .0001$ ) were found between the scores on the SEI and the TSCS. The positive correlation between the SEI and TSCS indicates that the tests measures similar traits and provides evidence of convergent validity.

### **Demographic Instrument**

The demographic instruments, Mother Questionnaire in English (Appendix D) and Mother Questionnaire in Spanish (Appendix E) were used to ascertain background information about the family of the participants. There were four items to identify the adolescent and mother pairs, to determine the living situation, and ethnicity of the participants.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

### **Data Collection from the Mothers**

Following the approval of the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of Houston and Aldine Independent School District (Appendix F), the prospective mothers and daughters were informed of the proposed project. The physical education teachers in the middle schools involved in the study informed the students about the proposed project. The primary investigator met with the prospective students, explained the project and answered questions about the project for the students. The primary investigator provided forms for the students to take home to their mothers and return to their teachers when completed by their mothers. The students were given a Consent to Participate in Research (Appendix G), the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form (Appendix B) and Mother Questionnaire (Appendix D) for their mothers to complete. The mothers received the English or Spanish versions of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form (Appendix C). The mothers received the English or Spanish versions of the questionnaires (Appendix E) depending on their preference for reading English or Spanish. The mothers agreed to participate in the project by signing, completing the inventories and returning them by their daughters to the teachers. The completed inventories and questionnaires were collected by the primary investigator from the teachers.

### **Data Collection from Adolescent Females**

After receiving the mothers' completed and signed Consent to Participate in Research (Appendix G), SEI (Appendix B), and Mother Questionnaire (Appendix D), the

seventh and eighth grade adolescents were informed orally about the project in small groups by the primary investigator. The questions of the participants were answered. The students who elected to participate completed the Assent to Participate (Appendix G) and the Coopersmith SEI given by the primary investigator, during class time. The completed inventories were collected by the primary investigator.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Hypotheses One, Two, Three, Four, Five, and Six were tested using *t*-tests for unpaired samples. Hypothesis Seven was tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation technique. In all instances, the ninety-five percent confidence level ( $p < .05$ ) was used as the criterion for statistical significance. For those analyses that called for comparisons, an effect size equivalent to one-third of a standard deviation was used to determine whether differences were educationally meaningful.

### **Limitations**

This study may be somewhat limited. It was conducted on only participants in a large urban southwestern United States area. The study used only a convenience sample of volunteers and only sampled students in grades seven and eight. The study used only one measure of self-esteem. The nature of the instrument was a self-report and assumed honesty on the part of the participants. There was the translation of the instruments to Spanish, which could have changed the meaning of the items due to cultural differences. There also may be limitations in that the schools from which the participants attended were in primarily middle class and lower middle class socioeconomic. Further research

from larger samples with a cross section of economic groups may reduce the limitations of the findings of this study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS**

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between self-esteem in Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households versus those in single mother households. The study also sought to examine whether self-esteem of mothers in dual parent households was greater than the self-esteem of mothers in single mother households and to determine whether the adolescent females' self-esteem was correlated to their mothers' self-esteem.

Chapter Three described the research designs, participation, instrumentation, procedures, and analysis techniques used. A causal-comparative research design was used to examine the relationships between the self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households and the self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent females in single mother households and the relationship between the self-esteem of mothers in dual parent households with mothers in single mother households, while a correlational research design was used to examine the Hispanic adolescent females' self-esteem with their mothers' self-esteem. The participants were seventh and eighth grade Hispanic adolescent females from urban middle schools and their mothers. Self-esteem was measured using the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory-Student Form and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory-Adult Form with the Adult Form being translated into Spanish. Six research questions were analyzed using a *t*-test for unpaired samples, while the seventh research question was analyzed using a Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

This chapter presents the results obtained when the research questions were tested.

The results of the seven hypotheses are included.

### Results for Research Question One

The first of seven research questions addressed by the study was: How does general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the following directional research hypothesis was tested: The general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than is the general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescents living in single mother households. Table 1 presents the results obtained when the data collected were analyzed using a *t*-test.

Table 1

*General Self-Esteem of Hispanic Adolescent Females*

Dual Parent Households			Single Mother Households			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	$\Delta$
<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
59	33.76	8.98	31	29.94	9.04	1.92	.059	0.42

As shown in Table 1, the analysis yielded a *t* of 1.92 that was not statistically significant (*p* = .059) and an effect size of ( $\Delta$  = +0.42) that was educationally significant. The statistical significance determines the extent to which the difference or relationships



found may have occurred due to chance. When a  $p$  value is set at .05 that means there is a 95 percent level of confidence that the results were not due to chance. Figure 1 presents the means obtained for the Hispanic adolescent females' general self-esteem in dual parent households and single mother households. The effect size indicates the extent to which the difference between the two means is "educationally meaningful." Generally, an effect size equal to one-third a standard deviation is viewed as educationally meaningful.

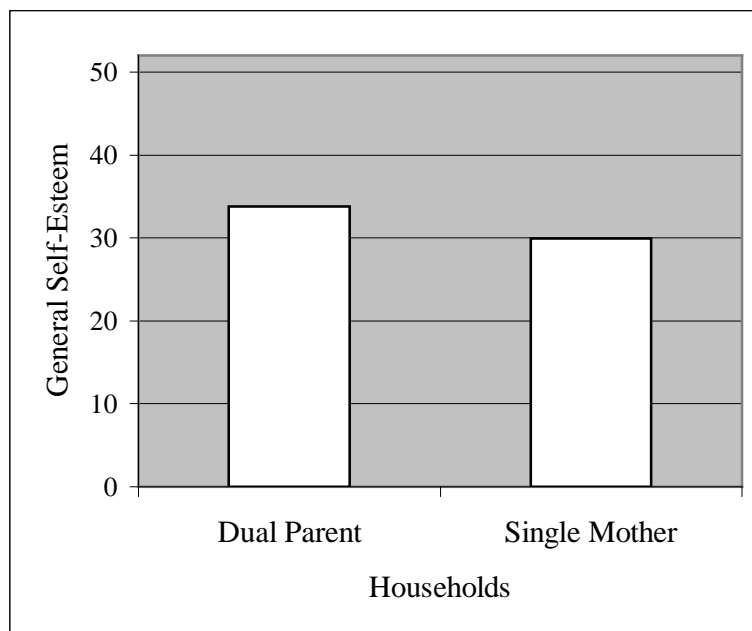


Figure 1

General Self-Esteem Mean Scores for Hispanic Adolescent Females in Dual-Parent and Single-Mother Households

## Result for Research Question Two

The second research question addressed in the study was: How does self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional research hypothesis: Self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Table 2 presents the results obtained when the data collected were analyzed using a *t* test for unpaired samples.

Table 2

### *Home Parent Self-Esteem of Hispanic Adolescent Females*

Dual Parent Households			Single Mother Households			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	$\Delta$
<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
59	8.98	4.70	31	7.94	3.29	1.11	.272	0.22

As shown in Table 2, the *t*-test for unpaired samples yielded a *t* of 1.11 that was not statistically significant (*p* = .272) and an effect size ( $\Delta$  = +0.22) that was not

educationally significant. Figure 2 presents the means for the Hispanic adolescent females self-esteem as it relates to home and parents in dual parent households and single mother households.

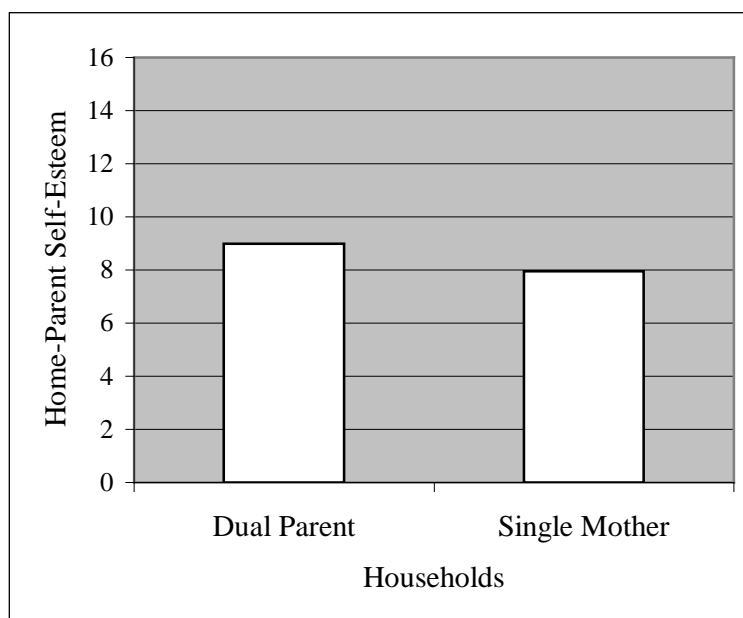


Figure 2

*Parent-Home Self-Esteem Means Scores for Hispanic Adolescent Females in Dual-Parent and Single-Mother Households*

### **Results of Research Question Three**

The third research question addressed in this study was: How does the self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional research

hypothesis:

Self-esteem as it relates to school and academic performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to school and academic performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Table 3 presents the results obtained when the data collected were analyzed using a *t*-test for unpaired samples.

Table 3

*School and School Performance Self-Esteem of Hispanic Adolescent Females*

Dual Parent Households			Single Mother Households			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	$\Delta$
<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
59	10.14	3.85	31	8.97	3.65	1.37	.173	0.30

As shown in Table 3, the *t*-test for unpaired samples yielded a *t* of 1.37 that was not statistically significant ( $p = .173$ ) and an effect size of ( $\Delta = +0.30$ ) that was not educationally significant. Figure 3 presents the means for the Hispanic adolescent females self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance in dual parent households and single mother households.

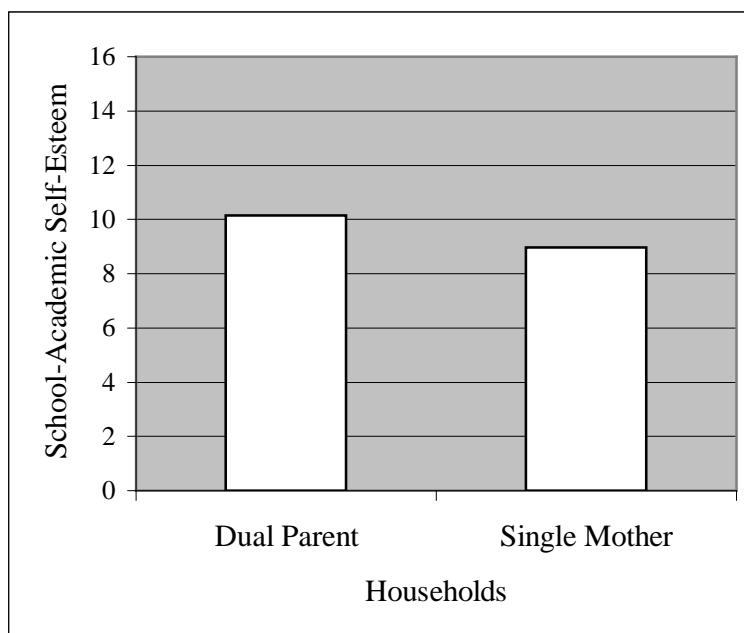


Figure 3

*School-Academic Self-Esteem Means Scores for Hispanic Adolescent Females in Dual-Parent and Single-Mother Households*

#### **Results for Research Question Four**

The fourth research question addressed in this study was: How does self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional research hypothesis: Self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to

peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Table 4 presents the results obtained when the data collected were analyzed using a *t*-test for unpaired samples:

Table 4

*Peers in Social Settings Self-Esteem of Hispanic Adolescent Females*

Dual Parent Households			Single Mother Households			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	$\Delta$
<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
59	12.34	3.47	31	12.19	3.16	0.20	.846	0.04

As shown in Table 4, the *t*-test for unpaired samples yielded a *t* of 0.20 that is not statistically significant ( $p = .846$ ) and an effect size ( $\Delta = +0.04$ ) that was not educationally significant. Figure 4 presents the means for the Hispanic adolescent females self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings in dual parent households and single mother households.

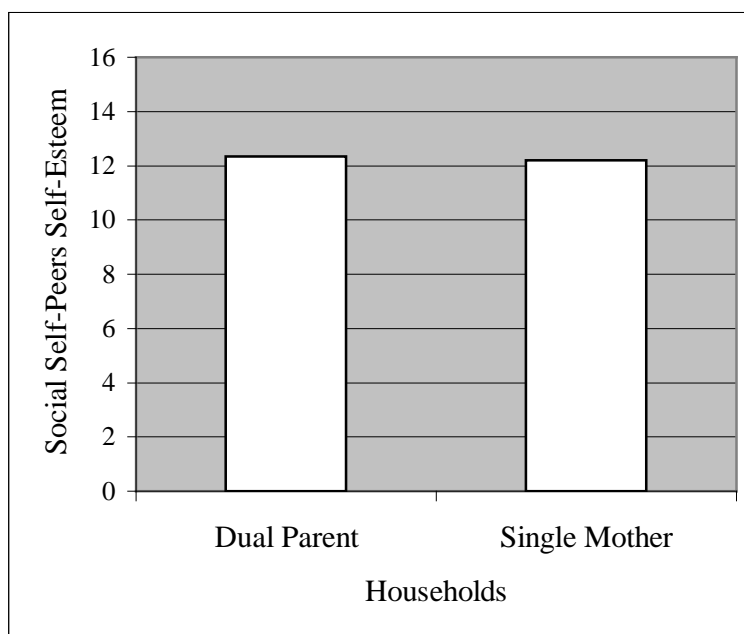


Figure 4

*Social Self-Peer Self-Esteem Means Scores for Hispanic Adolescent Females in Dual-Parent and Single-Mother Households*

### **Results for Research Question Five**

The fifth research question addressed in this study was: How does total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional research hypothesis: The total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescents females living in single mother households. Table 5 presents the results obtained when the data collected were analyzed using a *t*-test for unpaired samples:

Table 5

*Total Self-Esteem of Hispanic Adolescent Females*

Dual Parent Households			Single Mother Households			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	$\Delta$
<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
59	65.36	16.82	31	59.03	14.97	1.77	.081	0.38

As shown in Table 5, the *t*-test for unpaired samples yielded a *t* of 1.77, this was not statistically significant ( $p = .081$ ) and an effect size of ( $\Delta = +0.38$ ) that was

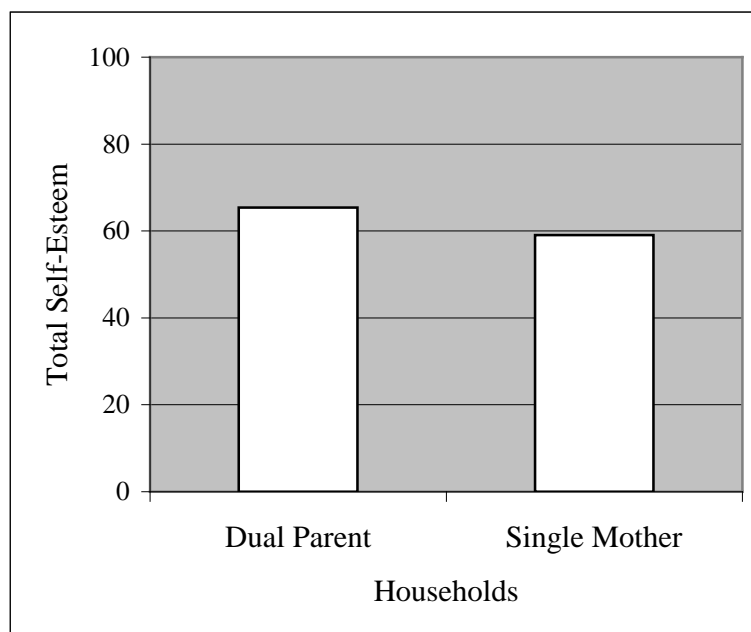


Figure 5



Total Self-Esteem Means Scores for Hispanic Adolescent Females in Dual-Parent and Single-Mother Households educationally significant. Figure 5 presents the means for the Hispanic adolescent females total self-esteem in dual parent households and single mother households.

### Results for Research Question Six

The sixth research question addressed in the study is: How does total self-esteem of the mothers living in dual parent households compare to the total self-esteem of mothers living in single mother households. In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional research hypothesis: The total self-esteem of the mothers living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of the mothers living in a single mother households. Table 6 presents the results obtained when the data collected were analyzed using the *t*-test for unpaired samples:

Table 6

#### *Total Self-Esteem of Hispanic Mothers*

Dual Parent Households			Single Mother Households			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	$\Delta$
<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
59	63.25	21.82	31	59.61	20.54	0.77	.445	0.17

As shown in Table 6, the  $t$ -test for unpaired samples yielded a  $t$  of 0.77 that was not statistically significant ( $p = .445$ ) and an effect size of ( $\Delta = 0.17$ ) that was not educationally significant. Figure 6 presents the means for the total self-esteem of the mothers living in dual parent households and mothers living in single mother households.

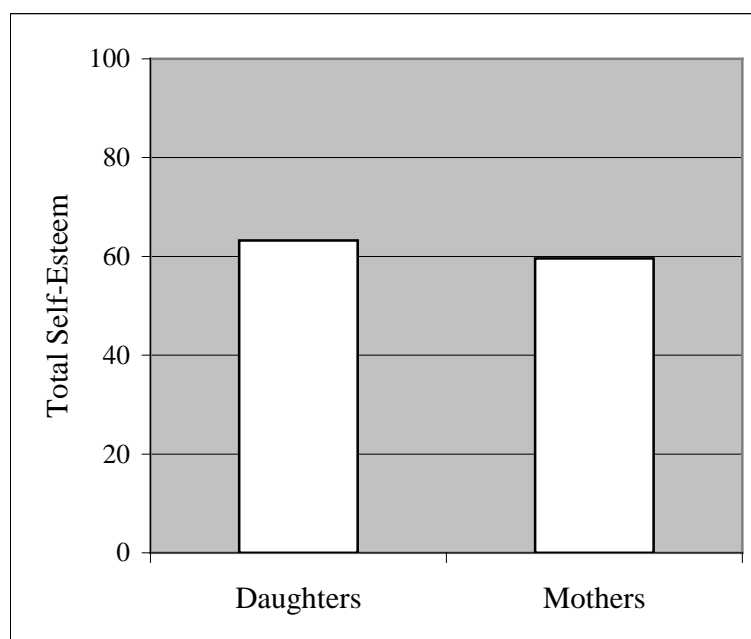


Figure 6

*Total Self-Esteem Means Scores for Hispanic Mothers in Dual Parent Households and Single Mother Households*

### **Results for Research Question Seven**

The seventh research question addressed in this study was: What is the nature of the relationship between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the

following directional hypothesis: There was a statistically significantly positive relation between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers. Table 7 presents the results obtained when the data collected were analyzed using the Pearson product-moment correlation technique:

Table 7

*Correlations of Adolescent Females' and Their Mothers' Total Self-Esteem*

Adolescents' Self-Esteem			Mothers' Self-Esteem			<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>		
90	62.00	21.34	90	63.18	16.32	+.38	.001

As shown in Table 7, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation yielded a correlation coefficient of  $r = +.38$  which was statically significant ( $p = .001$ ). Figure 7 presents a scatter plot depicting the correlation of total Hispanic adolescent females self-esteem scores and their mothers' total self-esteem scores.

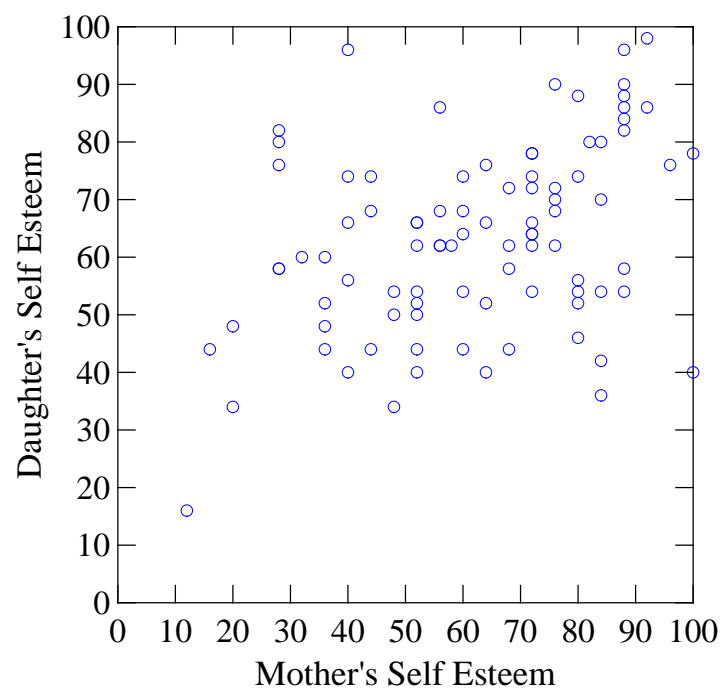


Figure 7

*Correlation of Total Hispanic Adolescent Females' Self-Esteem Scores and their Mothers Total Self-Esteem*

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

The purpose of the present study is to examine the relationship between self-esteem in Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households and Hispanic adolescent females in single mother households. The study also examines whether the self-esteem of mothers in dual parent households is greater than the self-esteem of mothers in single mother households and determines whether the adolescent females' self-esteem is correlated to their mothers' self-esteem.

The previous chapter presented the results of the testing of the directional research hypotheses. Research hypothesis one through six indicates no statistically significant difference in the self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent and single mother households. There are no statistically significant differences between the self-esteem of the mothers in dual parent and mothers in single mother households. There is a significant correlation of the Hispanic adolescent females' self-esteem with their mothers' self-esteem.

This chapter presents the conclusions and interpretation from the results of the testing of the hypotheses.

#### **Conclusion and Interpretation for Research Question One**

The following is the first of seven research questions addressed by this study: How does general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in

single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study tested the following directional research hypothesis: The general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the general self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Table 1 on page 55 indicates that the mean for the dual parent households group (33.76) is not statistically significantly more positive ( $t = 1.92, p = .059$ ) than the mean for the single mother households (29.94). Therefore, the directional research hypothesis is not accepted.

The general self-esteem of females in dual parent households is not greater than the general self-esteem of females in single mother households. Since female self-esteem is linked to relationships with significant people in their lives, it can be interpreted that lack of a father for the single mother household is being compensated for by other relationships in the Hispanic adolescent females life. Yet, inasmuch as the obtained effect size ( $\Delta = +0.42$ ) is greater than one third of the standard deviation, it can be argued that the difference favoring the adolescent females in dual parent households is educationally significant. The educational significance noted may be indicative of a need to address the difference in self-esteem favoring the Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households and Hispanic adolescent females in single mother households.

### **Conclusion and Interpretation for Research Question Two**

The second research question addressed in the study was: How does self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to Hispanic adolescent females living in

single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addresses the following directional hypothesis: Self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to the home and parents of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Table 2 on page 57 indicates that the mean for the dual parent households group (8.98) is not statistically significantly more positive ( $t = 1.11, p = .272$ ) than the mean for the single mother households group (7.94). Therefore, the directional research hypothesis is not accepted.

The self-esteem as it relates to home and parents of females in dual parent households is not greater than the self-esteem as it relates to home and parents of females in single mother households. The way Hispanic adolescent females relate to their families and home environment is not different if the family has dual parent or single mother households. The Hispanic cultures' importance placed on family relations and the strong mother daughter relationship (Hernandez, 1994, Gandara (1980) may offset the differences in self-esteem that is common in similar heterogeneous populations. However, these results support Hofmann and Zippco (1986) who compared self-esteem scores from the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1984) from children of divorced and intact families, finding no significant differences in the scores. Although unexpected, these results also supported Gonzalez, Field, Lasko, Harding, Yando, and Bendell (1995) who administered several scales including self-esteem to 440 adolescents, finding no significant differences in self-esteem.

### **Conclusion and Interpretation of Research Question Three**

The third research question addressed in this study was: How does the self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional research hypothesis: Self-esteem as it relates to school and academic performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to school and academic performance of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Table 3 on page 59 indicates that the means for the dual parent households group (10.14) is not statistically significantly more positive ( $t = 1.37, p = .173$ ) than the single mother households group (8.37). Therefore, the directional research hypothesis is not accepted.

Self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of females in dual parent households is not greater than self-esteem as it relates to school and school performance of females in single mother households. Hispanics were less likely to find support at home or in school for high educational achievement for females (Hernandez, 1995). The expectation that the adolescent females in single mother households would have lower academic self-esteem than adolescent females in dual parent households was not supported by the studies of Rosenberg (1965, 1984) and Garner (1995) whose research indicates that the living environment of adolescents influences their self-esteem.

### **Conclusion and Interpretation for Research Question Four**



The fourth research question addressed in this study was: How does self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addresses the following directional research hypothesis: Self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Table 4 on page 61 indicates that the results of the means for the dual parent households group (12.34) is not statistically significantly more positive ( $t = 0.20$ ,  $p = .846$ ) than the means for the single mother households group (12.19). Therefore, the directional research hypothesis is not accepted.

The self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of females in dual parent households is not greater than the self-esteem as it relates to peers in social settings of females in single mother households. The conflicting demands of the dominant culture and peers do not impact the self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females differently in dual parent households and single mother households. Again, the strong family ties with family members assisting each other with life issues may contribute to the lack of difference in levels of self-esteem. The way the Hispanic adolescent females value herself in the cultural environment with family peers in social activities is not different for adolescent in dual parent household and single mother households.

### **Conclusion and Interpretation for Research Question Five**

The fifth research question addressed in this study was: How does total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households compare to total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional research hypothesis: The total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescents females living in single mother households. Table 5 on page 63 indicates that the mean for the dual parent households group (65.36) not was statistically significantly more positive ( $t = 1.77$ ,  $p = .081$ ) than the mean for the single mother households group (59.03). Therefore, the directional research hypothesis is not accepted.

The total self-esteem of females in dual parent households was not significantly different from the total self-esteem of females in single mother households. These results, similar to those for Hypothesis One are unexpected, not supporting the Bynum and Durm (1996) study that indicated that gender and ethnic heterogeneous adolescents in intact families with dual parents scored higher in self-esteem than adolescents from divorced families. The total self-esteem for the Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households is not different than the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Indeed, inasmuch the obtained effect size ( $\Delta = + 0.38$ ) was in excess of one-third standard deviation, it can be argued that this difference was educationally significant. More research, specifically of the Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households and single mother households is warranted.

### **Conclusion and Interpretation for Research Question Six**

The sixth research question addressed in the study was: How does total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers living in dual parent households compare to the total self-esteem of Hispanic mothers living in single mother households. In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional hypothesis: The total self-esteem of the Hispanic mothers living in dual parent households was statistically significantly more positive than the total self-esteem of the mothers living in a single mother households. Table 6 on page 64 indicates that the means for the dual parent households group (63.25) was not statistically significantly more positive ( $t = 0.77$ ,  $p = .445$ ) than the means for the single parent households group (59.61). Therefore the directional research hypothesis is not accepted.

The total self-esteem of mothers in dual parent households is not greater than the total self-esteem of mothers in single mother households. In the dominant culture, most research acknowledges a greater level of self-esteem for mothers in dual parent households and single mother households. The results of the present study surprisingly did not support the findings of the dominant culture. The Hispanic culture in contrast to the dominant culture may support the difference in self-esteem for this population. The Hispanic population with the language differences, cultural differences, and strong family ties indicate a difference in self-esteem for mothers in dual parent and single mothers households. These findings do not support Demo and Acock (1996) survey of 2,781 mothers indicating that married women had higher self-esteem while single mothers had the lowest self-esteem. Much of the current literature contradicts these findings yet much

of the current literature is not based on empirical data, but on self-report without quantitative support.

### **Conclusion and Interpretation for Research Question Seven**

The seventh research question addressed in this study was: What is the nature of the relationship between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers? In addressing this research question, the study addressed the following directional hypothesis: There is a statistically significantly positive relation between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the total self-esteem of their mothers. Table 7 on page 66 indicates that self-esteem as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (School Form) is statistically significantly positively related ( $r = +.38, p = .001$ ) to self-esteem as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Adult Form) used with the mothers. Therefore, the directional research hypothesis is accepted.

The total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females is correlated to their mothers' total self-esteem. This result supports previous studies: the Gandara (1980) study of successful Hispanics who attributed their success to parental influence, Bandura's (1977, 1997) theory and studies of observational learning, and Barnett and Denmar's (1995) study of adolescents and their mothers' identity in society. In Gandara's (1980) study the successful Hispanic women viewed their mothers as dominant and supportive figures in the family. Girls growing up with mothers high in self-esteem and encouragement through observational learning (Bandura, 1977 & 1997) from their

mother role models. Burnett and Denmar's (1995) study indicated that closeness to mothers was a significant predictor of children's self-esteem.

## **Summary**

Levels of self-esteem as they relate to home and parents, school and school performance and peers in social settings were not significantly different for Hispanic adolescents in dual parents households and single mother households. This was unexpected and different from most research of the heterogeneous population of females in dual parent and single mother households. The results are not supportive of the previous research of Davidson (1981) that indicated that family pattern within different cultures account for variations in self-esteem, Kurtz (1994) results indicated that children of divorced parents had lower levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem, and Garner (1995) study indicated that children living with biological parents have greater self-esteem than those living in other types of family. The way Hispanic adolescent females interact with their family and culture influences the formulation of ethnic identity and of self-esteem (Berry, 1984). The family cohesion in the Hispanic culture is stronger than in the dominant group culture. The parents identity is inculcated in their children (Hurtado, Rodriguez, Gurin, and Beals, 1993). Even though the Hispanic female faces two cultures to negotiate, the family relationships seems to provide support to adolescents living in single mother households that allows her to maintain self-esteem levels that is not lower than the levels of Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households.

Although the results indicated no statistically significant difference in self-esteem as it relates to home and parents, school and school performance, and peer in social

settings for the Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households and single mother households, there was educational significance in the difference in the general and total self-esteem of the adolescent females in dual parent households and single mother households. The educational significance provides weak support to the hypothesis. The effect size indicates the magnitude of difference between the means of the two groups of adolescent females is not by chance, although not statistically not significant supporting the earlier mentioned studies of Davidson (1981), Kurtz, (1994) and Garner (1995).

There was also no statistically significant difference in the mothers' self-esteem in dual parent households and single mother households. These results were unexpected and did not support the findings of Demo and Acock (1996). As mentioned earlier, the cohesiveness of the Hispanic family or the strong ethnic identity may play a part in the Hispanic mothers feeling equally comfortable with the self in both dual parent and in single mother households. Relationships with family members and cultural traditions oriented to foster attachment and are engendered in higher levels of female self-esteem. There appear to be no exclusions of family members due to marital status. For the Hispanic children without fathers in the households, grandfathers, uncles, and other older males help in guiding the younger generations.

Yet, there was a correlation of the Hispanic adolescents' self-esteem with their mothers' self-esteem. The significance found and the correlation of the adolescents' self-esteem with their mother leads to some implications of practice and further research.

The results were unexpected in that the adolescent females in dual parent households were not higher in self-esteem than adolescent females in single mother households and the mothers in dual parent households were not higher in self-esteem than

mothers in single mother households. These results did not support the previous research of Rosenberg, (1965, 1984); Kurtz, (1994); and Demo and Acock, (1996). These previous studies were using a heterogeneous population of different ethnic groups instead of the homogeneous populations of the present study using the Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers. The general and total self-esteem had educational significance, which provides weak support to the work of the researchers.

It was expected that adolescents in dual parent households would have higher levels of self-esteem than adolescents in single mother households. The adolescents in dual parent households would be expected to have balanced guidance and acceptance from their parents because both parents are present in the household, while the adolescents with single mothers might often experience the lack of the paternal influence and balanced parental influence experienced by the adolescent in dual parent households. Of course the lack of the paternal figure and balanced parenting is expected to affect the adolescents' sense of worth and identity and thus her self-esteem. The findings of this study do not support these assumptions.

These findings indicate that in the Hispanic culture that adolescent females living in a dual parent households versus a single mother households does not result in significant different levels of self-esteem. It may be that strong ethnic or racial identity allows minority girls to maintain a sense of self-worth greater than girls from the dominant culture. Hispanic adolescent females may find a large source of strength in the extended family (APA, 2002) that goes beyond the nuclear family to include non-blood relatives. In most Hispanic families, the father is the head of the family and the mother is responsible for the home. Gender roles are clearly defined with males being in

superior roles within a well-defined hierarchy (DeNeve, 1997). This extended family is a resource. The older members provide advice and nurturance when needed to younger family members.

The adolescent females and their mothers self-esteem is correlated which was supportive of previous work of Boes (1994) and Demnar (1995), the higher the mothers' self-esteem the higher the adolescent females self-esteem.

### **Implications for Practice**

In the present study there was a statistically significant correlation between the total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and the self-esteem of their mothers. This supports Boes' (1994) study which indicates the home, parents, and school environment influence the self-esteem of individuals. Burnett and Demnar's (1995) study indicates that the closeness of the mother was a significant predictor of children's self-esteem.

Although this present study did not directly address lower self-esteem levels of Hispanic adolescent females and their mother in comparison to self-esteem of the heterogeneous population of adolescent females and their mothers, there remains the implied need to assist in increasing self-esteem of Hispanic females. It may be inferred that by changing the thoughts and beliefs changes self-esteem, making it advantageous to implement innovative educational opportunities. The adolescents and their mothers might be provided with additional educational opportunities and resources not provided for in the community and schools. These opportunities and resources should be offered to both the adolescent females and their mothers. Adolescent females might learn more about (1)



parent and child relationships, (2) social and peer relationships and its impact on success, and (3) expectations for academic success through school performance. The mothers might be provided with educational opportunities to learn more about (1) parent's role in the parent and child relationship, (2) how peers and social pressures impact teens, and (3) how to make academic achievement a priority for adolescent daughters.

There are opportunities already available for the Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers to use in the school and in the community. Some of the opportunities to increase learn are not known to them. Making the already available resources in the school and community more appealing and applicable to the Hispanic culture can be of assistance as well as the creation of different educational resources. The adolescent females can learn more about (1) parent and child relationships, (2) social and peer relationships and its impact on success, and (3) expectations for academic success through school performance. Interactive classes and support groups with trained peer facilitators or older females can be designed to allow the adolescent to learn about parent child relationships through parenting classes. The adolescents may have an opportunity to do such things as reading and teaching money sense to elementary or preschool children after school as they practice the skills taught in the parenting classes. The adolescent females may be offered opportunities to develop peer support groups to express concerns about desires, goals, fears, family, society, and friends with an intent for providing a safe place to express needs and brainstorm possible solutions from peers and trained facilitator. A series of successful Hispanic females may present guest motivational talks to encourage increased desire to achieve academic success. The speakers will share with the students the value of learning in school and out of school.

Just as the adolescent females may be provided opportunities to learn in order to enhance self-esteem, so will their mothers. The mothers may be given opportunities to learn comparable things with their daughters in order to increase interactions and understanding. The mothers may be provided innovative ways to learn of: (1) parent's role in the parent and child relationship, (2) how peers and social pressures impact teens, and (3) how to make academic achievement a priority for adolescent daughters. The mothers may be offered support groups to share their experience with younger mothers and brainstorm ways to better interact with the changing adolescent as they mature. A facilitator trained in adolescent or educational psychology may assist the mothers providing guidance and accurate information from current research. The mothers may be offered innovative lessons about interactions of the adolescent females with the males and female peers and peer influences. The interactive lessons may use activities, role-play, and adolescent participation to help the mothers implement changes in their guidance techniques to build more resilient adolescents. The resilient adolescent may learn at an early age to identify their strengths and weaknesses and overcome situational obstacles in order to reach their relational and academic goals. The mothers can be offered the guest motivational talk series with their daughters to enhance understanding desire to increase academic achievement. This will give the adolescent female and their mothers time to spend building their relationship as well as learning new information.

Providing additional non-traditional opportunities for the Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers to learn more about relationships and academics most likely will bring about a change in the self-esteem. By making completing high school or its equivalent more appealing to the Hispanic females, employment options may increase.

Since women's self-esteem is related to attachments, closeness and relational issues (Brown and Gilligan, 1999), mentors can be a way of providing different opportunities for the adolescent females and their mothers to build healthy relationships with successful women. Mentors should be professional Hispanic women who could assist the adolescent females and their mothers. The mentors could spend time with the adolescent females and mother as part of the introduction from school to work programs. Listening to the adolescent female and their mother concerns, the mentors can help enhance the sense of worth and belonging to both adolescent and their mother which is key to strengthening their self-esteem. Mentors for both the Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers could assist them as they navigate the educational and social systems to be successful in obtaining needed information and resources. Making higher education more appealing and accessible, in turn will increase a sense of worth and accomplishment for the Hispanic females.

The findings of this present study may be the result of the changing norms within the American culture. The culture has changed from one where the majority of adolescents being raised by dual parent households to where now more adolescents are being raised by single or divorced parents. Now over 50% of the adult population is divorced or have experienced divorce (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000). Adolescent females living in single mother households are no longer in the minority but moving into the majority of the population, while the dual parent households are becoming more of the minority family structures. This is in no way acknowledges that one type of family structure is better than another. This study supports that in the Hispanic culture the

adolescents and their mothers in dual parent households report no difference in self-esteem than those in single mother households.

### **Implications for Research**

The findings for research questions one, five, and seven warrant further study, a further exploration of the relationship between the general and total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females in dual parent households and in single mother households. Although neither comparison demonstrated significant differences ( $p = .059$ ,  $p = .08$ ), educational significance was demonstrated in each instance ( $\Delta = + 0.42$ ,  $\Delta = + 0.38$ ) This suggest there is greater general and total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households than the general and total self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. Research question seven findings indicated a positive correlation of the self-esteem of adolescent females with their mothers, suggesting support for the studies of Davidson (1981) and Rosenberg (1984) that indicates that different family patterns within each culture are important factors in accounting for variations in self-esteem. Adolescent females in dual parent households having higher self-esteem scores than do adolescent females in single parent households also support the findings of Garner (1995) and Kurtz (1995) that children living with biological parents have greater self-esteem than those living in other types of families. This in turn implies that the issue of the self-esteem of Hispanic adolescent females and their mothers warrant additional research with an intent to discover areas of specific needs.

The research could begin in the Hispanic female population who experiences more persistent poverty, lower education, and lower health care availability, expanding to other ethnic female populations.

In conclusion, the results of this study indicate that the general, home parent, school academic, and social peer relations self-esteem levels of the Hispanic adolescent females living in dual parent households is not statistically significantly greater than the general, home parent, school academic and social peer relations self-esteem levels of Hispanic adolescent females living in single mother households. This is an unexpected outcome and is not supported by the previous research of Kurtz (1994) and Garner (1995). The results of the general and total self-esteem for the female adolescents in dual parent households were also not statistically significantly greater than the general and total self-esteem female adolescents in single mother households, yet the difference were educationally significant. Hispanic adolescent females' self-esteem and their mothers' self-esteem were correlated, supporting the results of Boes (1994) and Demnar (1996). There is a need for further studies of the self-esteem of the Hispanic adolescents and their mothers with respect to socioeconomic influence, length of family living outside of the original country, the influence of maintaining the Spanish language upon self-esteem and more details about family interactions that might affect self-esteem.

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## **APPENDIX A**

Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory School Form

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## **APPENDIX B**

Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form

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## **APPENDIX C**

Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Adult Form

(Spanish Translation)

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**APPENDIX D**

MOTHER QUESTIONNAIRE

### Mother Questionnaire

Please complete the blanks or circle the answer that best answers the question for you.

Mother's name \_\_\_\_\_

Daughter's name \_\_\_\_\_

1. How do you describe yourself? (please circle one)

Anglo American

African American

Hispanic

Latin American

Asian American

Native American

2. What is your relationship to the student?

Natural mother \_\_\_\_\_

Stepmother \_\_\_\_\_

Aunt \_\_\_\_\_

Grandmother \_\_\_\_\_

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which best describes your household?

Dual parent \_\_\_\_\_

Single mother \_\_\_\_\_

Natural parents \_\_\_\_\_

Stepmother \_\_\_\_\_

Stepfather \_\_\_\_\_

4. How long has your living situation been the way it is now? \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX E**

**MOTHER QUESTIONNAIRE**

(Spanish Translation)



### Cuestionario para la Madre

Favor de llenar los blancos o circule la respuesta que contesta mejor la pregunta.

Nombre de la madre \_\_\_\_\_

Nombre de su  
estudiante \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Cómo se describe a usted misma? ( favor de circular una)**

Anglo Americana

Afro Americana

Hispana

Latino Americana

Asiático Americana

Nativo Americana

**2. Cuál es su parentesco con la estudiante?**

Madre natural \_\_\_\_\_

Madrastra \_\_\_\_\_

Tía \_\_\_\_\_

Abuela \_\_\_\_\_

Otro (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Con quien vive su hija/estudiante \_\_\_\_\_?**

a. Con ambos Padres o  
Padrastrós. \_\_\_\_\_

b. Con la Madre solamente. \_\_\_\_\_

c. Con el Padre solamente \_\_\_\_\_

d. Otro (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Cuánto tiempo hace que la situación en que vive su hija/estudiante ha estado como hoy?**

\_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX F**

Committee for Protection of Human Subjects

**APPENDIX G**

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH  
MOTHERS

**PROJECT TITLE:** Relationships of Adolescent Females and their Mothers in Dual Parent Households and Single Mother Households

You and your daughter are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Linda Stevens from the Educational Psychology Department at the University of Houston. This project is in partial completion of a dissertation for a Doctoral Degree in Educational Psychology.

**NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT**

You and your daughter's participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate, or withdraw at any time without penalty of loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any question.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this project is to examine the relationship of teenage females and their mothers in two parent homes and in single mother homes.

**PROCEDURES**

You and your daughter will be one of approximately 240 subjects at two schools to be asked to participate in this project. You will be one of approximately 120 subjects asked to participate at this school.

After receipt of granted permission for participation in this project, two questionnaires will be sent home for you to complete and return to your daughters' school within a week.

After receipt of the questionnaires, your daughter will be given a questionnaire to complete at school. The total time needed for completion of the questionnaires will be twenty to thirty minutes.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of you and your daughter in this project. Each person's name will be paired with a code number by the principal investigator. The code number will appear on all written materials. The list pairing the subject's name to the assigned code number will be kept separate from all research materials and will be available only to the principal investigator. The questionnaires will be collected and sorted, pairing mothers and daughters.

**RISKS/DISCOMFORTS**

The material for this project may be regarded as sensitive and/or distressing. Some sample statements are:

- I get upset easily at home.
- I am not as nice looking as most people.
- Things are all mixed up in my life.

**BENEFITS**

While you and your daughter will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand mothers and their adolescent daughters' relationships.

**PUBLICATION STATEMENT**

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual subject will be identified.

**ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE/ REFERRAL**

If you experience discomfort after completing the questionnaires, you may receive assistance by calling Linda Stevens at 281-878-6927 or Dr. John Gaa at 713-743-9819.

## SUBJECT RIGHTS

1. I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.
2. All procedures have been explained to me and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
3. Any risks and /or discomforts have been explained to me.
4. Any benefits have been explained to me.
5. I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Linda Stevens at 281-878-6927. I may also contact Dr. John Gaa, faculty sponsor, at 713-743-9819.
6. I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.
7. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING MY RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713-743-9204). ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY INVESTIGATORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE HOUSTON ARE GOVERNED BY REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
8. All information that is obtained in connection with this project and that can be identified with me will remain confidential as far as possible within the legal limits. Information gained from this study that can be identified with me may be released to no one other than the principal investigator, Linda Stevens and Dr. John Gaa, faculty sponsor. The results may be published in scientific journals, professional publications, or educational presentations without identifying me by name.

I HAVE READ (OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME) THE CONTENTS OF THIS CONSENT FORM AND HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO ASK QUESTIONS. I HAVE RECEIVED ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS. I GIVE MY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I HAVE RECEIVED (OR WILL RECEIVE) A COPY OF THIS FORM FOR MY RECORDS AND FUTURE REFERENCE.

Please print your name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I HAVE READ THIS FORM TO THE SUBJECT AND /OR THE SUBJECT HAS READ THIS FORM. AN EXPLANATION OF THE RESEARCH WAS GIVEN AND QUESTIONS FROM THE SUBJECT WERE SOLICITED AND ANSWERED TO THE SUBJECT'S SATISFACTION. IN MY JUDGMENT, THE SUBJECT HAS DEMONSTRATED COMPREHENSION OF THE INFORMATION.

Principal Investigator: Linda Stevens

Signature of Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX H**

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

(Spanish Translation)



UNIVERSIDAD DE HOUSTON  
CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN ENCUESTA  
MADRES

**TITULO DEL PROYECTO:** Relaciones entre muchachas adolescentes y sus madres en hogares con ambos padres y en hogares de madres solteras.

Usted y su hija están invitadas a participar en un proyecto de encuesta conducido por Linda Stevens, del Departamento Educacional de Psicología de la Universidad de Houston. Este proyecto es una tesis para obtener un Doctorado en Psicología Educacional.

**DECLARACIÓN DE NO-PARTICIPACION**

Su participación y la de su hija es voluntaria, por lo tanto, usted puede escoger participar o retraerse en cualquier momento. Usted puede, además, rehusarse a contestar cualquier pregunta.

**PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO**

El propósito de este proyecto es examinar la relación entre las adolescentes y sus madres, en hogares con ambos padres y en hogares de madres solteras.

**PROCEDIMIENTOS**

Usted y su hija formarán parte de un grupo de 240 voluntarios, tomados de dos escuelas, que fueron invitados a participar en este proyecto. Ustedes serán parte del grupo de 120 invitados de esta escuela.

Al recibir su permiso de participación en este proyecto, le enviaremos a dos cuestionarios su hogar, para que usted los responda y los regrese a la escuela de su hija dentro de una semana.

Al recibir los cuestionarios, se le entregará a su hija un cuestionario para que lo conteste en su escuela. El tiempo que toma responder los cuestionarios es entre veinte y treinta minutos.

**CONFIDENCIALIDAD**

Todo esfuerzo será hecho para mantener la confidencialidad de sus respuestas y las de su hija. Al nombre de cada persona mencionada aquí, se le asignará un número, y este código será usado en todos los materiales. La lista donde aparecen su nombre y su código, se mantendrá separado de los cuestionarios, y estarán disponibles únicamente a mi persona. Los cuestionarios serán colectados y sorteados en pares de madres e hijas.

**RIESGOS / DISCONFORMIDADES**

El material para este proyecto puede ser considerado como sensitivo y/o angustioso.

Algunos ejemplos de declaraciones son:

- En mi casa me disgusto con facilidad.
- No soy tan atractiva como las demás.
- En mi vida las cosas están completamente desordenadas.

**BENEFICIOS**

Aun cuando usted y su hija no serán beneficiadas directamente al participar en este estudio, su participación nos ayudará a entender mejor la relación entre las madres y sus hijas adolescentes.

**PUBLICACIÓN DE LA DECLARACIÓN**

Los resultados de este estudio pueden ser publicados en boletines profesionales y/o científicos. También, podrán ser usados con propósitos educativos o para presentaciones profesionales. De cualquier modo, ninguna persona será identificada, ni sus nombres serán usados.

**ASISTENCIA ADICIONAL/REFERENCIA**

Si se siente incomoda al terminar los cuestionarios, puede recibir asistencia llamando a Linda Stevens al 381-878-6927 o al Dr. John Gaa al 713-743-9819.

## DERECHOS DEL SUJETO

1. Entiendo que es un requisito que todas las personas que participan en este proyecto, son informadas antes de dar su consentimiento.
2. Todos los procedimientos me han sido explicados y todas mis preguntas han sido contestadas satisfactoriamente.
3. Me han explicado todos los riesgos e/o incomodidades.
4. Me han explicado todos los beneficios.
5. Entiendo que si tengo alguna pregunta, puedo llamar a Linda Stevens al 281-878-6927. También, puedo llamar al Dr. John Gaa, patrocinador de la facultad, al 713-743-9819.
6. Se me ha dicho que puedo negarme a participar o detener mi participación en este proyecto en cualquier momento, antes o durante el proyecto. También, puedo negarme a responder cualquier pregunta.
7. CUALQUIER PREGUNTA RESPECTO A MIS DERECHOS COMO SUJETO DE INVESTIGACIÓN PUEDE SER DIRIGIDA AL COMITÉ PARA LA PROYECCIÓN DE SUJETOS HUMANOS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE HOUSTON (713-743-9204). TODOS LOS PROYECTOS DE INVESTIGACIÓN CONDUCTOS POR LOS INVESTIGADORES DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE HOUSTON SON GOBERNADOS POR REQUISITOS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD Y EL GOBIERNO FEDERAL.
8. Toda información que es obtenida en conexión con este proyecto, que se identifique conmigo, permanecerá confidencial hasta donde sea posible. Cualquier información que se identifique conmigo, podrá ser vista solamente por la investigadora principal, Linda Stevens y el Dr. John Gaa, patrocinador de la facultad. Los resultados pueden ser publicados en boletines científicos, publicaciones profesionales, o presentaciones educativas sin revelar mi nombre.

HE LEIDO (O ME HAN LEIDO) EL CONTENIDO DE ESTE ACUERDO Y HE SIDO ANIMADO A PREGUNTAR. HE RECIBIDO RESPUESTA A MIS PREGUNTAS. DOY MI CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN ESTE ESTUDIO. HE RECIBIDO (O RECIBIRE) UNA COPIA DE ESTA FORMA PARA MIS ARCHIVOS Y REFERENCIAS FUTURAS. ESTOY DE ACUERDO EN QUE MI HIJA Y YO PARTICIPEMOS COMO VOLUNTARIOS.

Escriba su nombre con letra de molde \_\_\_\_\_

Firma \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

HE LEIDO ESTA FORMA A LA VOLUNTARIA Y/O LA VOLUNTARIA HA LEIDO ESTA FORMA. SE LE HA DADO UNA EXPLICACIÓN DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN Y SE LE HA SOLICITADO QUE HAGA PREGUNTAS Y HAN SIDO CONTESTADAS SATISFACTORIAMENTE. EN MI OPINIÓN, LA VOLUNTARIA HA DEMOSTRADO QUE HA ENTENDIDO LA INFORMACIÓN.

Investigadora Principal: Linda Stevens

Firma de la Investigadora Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX I**

**ASSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH**

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
ASSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH  
DAUGHTERS

**PROJECT TITLE:** Relationships of Adolescent Females and their Mothers in Dual Parent Households and Single Mother Households

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted by Linda Stevens from the Educational Psychology Department at the University of Houston. This project is in partial completion of a dissertation for a Doctoral Degree in Educational Psychology.

**NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT**

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty of loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any question. A decision to participate or not or to withdraw your participation will have no effect on your class standing.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this project is to examine the relationships of teenage females and their mothers in two parent homes and in single mother homes.

**PROCEDURES**

You will be one of approximately 240 subjects at two schools to be asked to participate in this project. You will be one of approximately 120 subjects asked to participate at this school.

Your mother has granted permission for you to participate in this project.

After signing the assent for participation in this project, you will be given a questionnaire to complete at school. The total time needed for completion of the questionnaires will be twenty to thirty minutes.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Every effort will be made to keep private of your participation in this project. Each person's name will be paired with a code number by the principal investigator. The code number will appear in all written materials. The list pairing the subject's name to the assigned code number will be kept separate from all research materials and will be available only to the principal investigator. The questionnaires will be collected and sorted, pairing mothers and daughters.

**RISKS/DISCOMFORTS**

Some material in this project may be regarded as sensitive and/or distressing. Some sample statements are:

- Most people are better liked than me.
- I often wish I were someone else.
- Things are all mixed up in my life.

**BENEFITS**

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand mothers and their adolescent daughters' relationships

**PUBLICATION STATEMENT**

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual person will be identified.

**ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE/REFERRALS**

If you experience discomfort after completing the questionnaires, you may receive assistance by calling Linda Stevens at 281-878-6927 or Dr. John Gaa at 713-743-9819.

**SUBJECT RIGHTS**

1. I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.
2. All procedures have been explained to me and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
3. Any risks and /or discomforts have been explained to me.
4. Any benefits have been explained to me.
5. I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Linda Stevens at 281-878-6927. I may also contact Dr. John Gaa, faculty sponsor, at 713-743-9819.
6. I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.
7. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING MY RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713-743-9204). ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY INVESTIGATORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE HOUSTON ARE GOVERNED BY REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
8. All information that is obtained in connection with this project and that can be identified with me will remain confidential as far as possible within the legal limits. Information gained from this study that can be identified with me may be released to no one other than the principal investigator, Linda Stevens and Dr. John Gaa, faculty sponsor. The results may be published in scientific journals, professional publications, or educational presentations without identifying me by name.

I HAVE READ (OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME) THE CONTENTS OF THIS CONSENT FORM AND HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO ASK QUESTIONS. I HAVE RECEIVED ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS. I GIVE MY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I HAVE RECEIVED (OR WILL RECEIVE) A COPY OF THIS FORM FOR MY RECORDS AND FUTURE REFERENCE.

Please print your name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



I HAVE READ THIS FORM TO THE SUBJECT AND/OR THE SUBJECT HAS READ THIS FORM. AN EXPLANATION OF THE RESEARCH WAS GIVEN AND QUESTIONS FROM THE SUBJECT WERE SOLICITED AND ANSWERED TO THE SUBJECT'S SATISFACTION. IN MY JUDGMENT, THE SUBJECT HAS DEMONSTRATED COMPREHENSION OF THE INFORMATION.

Principal Investigator: Linda Stevens

Signature of Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_