

THE EFFECT OF PARENT TRAINING
ON THE
SELF-ESTEEM, SELF-CONCEPT OF ACADEMIC ABILITY
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF
LOW-ACHIEVING EARLY ADOLESCENTS

A DISSERTATION
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
at
St. John's University
New York, New York
by

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St. John's University

Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine whether an eight-week, 20-hour parent training program could teach parents to increase self-esteem, self-concept of academic ability (SCAA), and academic achievement in their low-achieving, early adolescents.

A parent training program was designed based upon the findings of the major self-esteem and SCAA investigators. The format of the program was small group and interactional, utilizing cognitive presentations, discussion, role-playing, and written responses.

A sample of 108 low-achieving early adolescents was identified from a total population of 1380 junior high school students. Invitations sent to the parents of these 108 students yielded 24 positive responses to participate in training. Each child of the 24 parents was matched with a control member on intelligence, age, sex, grade level, and Parent Occupational Status.

The research design selected for the study was reported by Kerlinger (1966), number 17.7, as the compromise pre-test, posttest control group design.

Nineteen parents of the original 24 completed the program. Students' scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI), Brookover Self-Concept of Ability Test (SCAT) and second and fourth quarter Grade Point Averages (GPA) in

English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science served as dependent variables for the Experimental and Control groups.

In the analysis of the data, appropriate t-tests were used to insure that the Experimental and Control groups did not differ significantly on any of the dependent variables prior to parent training.

One-way analysis of variance and direct mean comparisons were used to test the null hypotheses that there would be no significant differences between the Experimental and Control group posttest scores on the SEI, SCAT and GPA.

The findings show that the parent training program was not effective in increasing self-esteem, self-concept of academic ability, or grade point average of the low-achieving, early adolescents. Although mean comparisons did indicate a weak trend on the part of the Experimental students to outpace the Control students on pre- to post assessment SEI and SCAT score increases. This trend was not observed for changes in GPA.

These results tend to confirm the notion of stability in the self-esteem and SCAA of early adolescents. They also demonstrate the complexities involved in working with the parents while taking data only from their children. Future researchers in this area would be wise to consider lengthening the overall time period for the training, although not necessarily increasing the absolute number of hours spent in training. They would also do well to take some salient measures on the parents, particularly attitudinal and child-

perceived behavioral measures. Clearly such personality variables as self-esteem and SCAA in early adolescents are going to take time to change, and it seems unlikely that there are going to be significant changes in the academic achievement of such students prior to their enjoying positive changes in their self-estimations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writing of this dissertation has been a real learning experience for me. The following people have helped make the experience a meaningful one.

To Dr. Shirley Griggs and Dr. James Campbell, my sincere thanks for your guidance and excellent suggestions.

To Dr. Robert Doyle, my mentor, a warm thanks for your wisdom, continual support, and great patience.

To Dr. Richard Dusansky, Mel Ingber and Bill Randolph, my appreciation for your help in the statistical analysis.

To Mrs. Cookie Troiano and Natalie Damiani for your typing of the P.R.A.I.S.E. manuscript and the dissertation, my thanks.

To Aime Lacoste, Frank Mattfeld, Paul Feinberg, Barbara Lehmann, Jim Scully, the students and parents of the R. C. Murphy Jr. High School, for your friendship, enthusiasm and trust, my heartfelt thanks.

A special and sensitive thanks to my daughter, Beth, and my son, John, for their patience and understanding over the years.

And a most unique and loving thanks to Suzanne, my wife, for her caring, warmth and love throughout.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

Researchers have successfully demonstrated that parental attitudes and behaviors exert an influence on children's self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965; Coopersmith, 1967; and Gilmore, 1974) as well as on children's self-concept of academic ability (SCAA), (Brookover et al., 1962, 1965).

A positive correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement has been found by numerous investigators (Fine, 1967; Purkey, 1970; Gilmore, 1974; and Dean, 1977). Similarly, self-concept of academic ability has been found to positively correlate with academic achievement (Brookover et al., 1962, 1965; Amarjit, 1972; and Krupczak, 1972).

In light of the above findings, the notion that training parents to enhance their children's self-esteem and self-concept of academic ability in the hopes of raising their academic achievement, seems reasonable. The effectiveness of such parent training has been investigated, but the results have not been uniform.

Miles (1974), Toto (1973) and Turrall (1975) found no significant increases in students' self-esteem following parent training. However, Miles (1974) found a clear trend toward higher self-esteem scores for students whose parents had been in training. And Turrall (1975) found significant

increases in the self-esteem of sons whose fathers had been through Adlerian parent training while the sons had participated in sensitivity training.

The results of studies focusing on enhancing students' self-concept of academic ability (SCAA) have also been mixed. Brookover et al. (1965) found significant increases in students' SCAA and academic achievement following his training of parents, while Birr (1969) found no significant increases in either SCAA or academic achievement following a seven-month parent training program.

Clearly, investigators present conflicting results in the study of parent training effectiveness. Moreover, they have studied various populations of parents and students.

One population which seems in particular need of study in this regard is that of the low-achieving, early adolescent. Low achievement during the early adolescent phase of development may well be symptomatic of self-esteem deficits. Rapid physical and sexual maturation (Tanner, 1971), moodiness and irritability (Hurlock, 1975), heightened self-consciousness and a greater instability of self-image (Simmons, Rosenberg, and Rosenberg, 1973) are the frequent concomitants of low achievement during early adolescence.

The present study focuses upon this population in an attempt to answer the question: What are the effects of parent training on the self-esteem, self-concept of academic ability and academic achievement of low-achieving early adolescents?

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Achievement, the measured academic success of students, is one of the most compelling reasons for the existence of the modern public schools. As a goal of the schools, achievement is particularly important when viewed in the context of the society within which the schools operate. That society is becoming increasingly more complex and technocratic. It is a society which demands a great deal of the responsible individual. Not only do students need to have some understanding of the technocratic hardware abounding in their daily environment, but they need to have the ability to compile, analyze and synthesize the masses of data made available to them via the mass media in order to make intelligent decisions about their changing world.

Yet at a time when achievement should be at an all-time high because of advances in miniaturization and data processing, just the opposite appears to be occurring. Achievement seems to be waning in the schools. Recent comparisons of Scholastic Aptitude Test scores clearly indicate a decline over the past decade (Ryor, 1977). This decline in achievement scores occurs during a period of substantial unrest among taxpayers. The taxpayer rebellion is the behavioral manifestation of an era in which parents are becoming more aggressive regarding public education, and in some ways they are becoming more discriminating consumers of the educational product. Whereas the decade of the 1960's might be considered one of efforts to humanize and find alternative educational

vehicles in the schools, the present era is concerned with a return to basic skills education and increased competency and achievement among students. New York State is one among several that have responded to the above concerns by the establishment of minimal competency examinations. A student will be required to pass these examinations in order to obtain his diploma.

This renewed interest in academic achievement reawakens concern about that population of students who fail to achieve academically at the level which would be expected for their age and intelligence. These are the schools' low-achievers.

According to Lichter et al., (1962) more than half of those who drop out of high school are low achievers with average and above-average intelligence.

Ross (1966) emphasizes how serious parents perceive low achievement in their children to be. He indicates that almost one-third of the cases involving children at the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic present low achievement as the primary problem.

Low achievement and the causes and correlates of low achievement have been the focus of many research investigations (Hornrich, 1965). Of the many factors associated with academic achievement, the home environment continues to surface as a major influence.

Ericklin and Ericklin (1967) view the low achiever as a bright child who performs poorly in school because of an underlying emotional conflict. Their proposed solution is

to help parents produce an emotional climate around the home that will change the low achiever into a high achiever. Similarly, Fine (1967) believes that the schools will not be able to really help the low achiever unless they help the parents make basic changes in their parenting styles. A more recent connection between parenting and children's achievement is a finding by Furves (1977). He reports that "home" variables accounted for 17.5 percent of the variance between students in achievement, while "school" variables accounted for 2.9 percent of the variance. This dramatically underscores that a closer relationship exists between home-environment factors and achievement than between school factors and achievement.

Importance of the Problem

A society which is becoming increasingly complex and technological cannot afford to waste academic talent nor minimize scholastic achievement. The inability or unwillingness of the present educational system to develop programs specifically designed to intervene positively in the family system of the low achiever is a sad indictment of that system. The fact that thousands of capable students drop out or fail at some point along the educational continuum, be it during high school or college, represents a human potential loss which functions as a detriment to our society. It behooves our educational systems to develop, advertise, and implement effective and powerful training programs for the parents of those low-achieving students who make up a

sizeable portion of the student population.

A second concern which should be taken into account is that of age and developmental period of the low achiever. Although developmental authorities would generally agree that early intervention will likely have more profound effects on the child, the investigator notes the dearth of parenting programs designed specifically for the parents of early adolescents. A brief overview of the stresses which normally operate on early adolescents helps clarify the importance of focusing upon them as a school population in particular need of effective intervention.

The early adolescent is subject to rapid growth and changes in physical appearance. Most girls will have their first menstruation and most boys their first ejaculation during early adolescence (Shock, 1960). This period of rapid physical and sexual growth causes the adolescent to undergo a series of painful reappraisals of himself, other people, and the world. A period of instability follows each of these reappraisals until a new integration takes place (Gordon, 1975).

Along with physical changes, the early adolescent also makes real changes in social relations. Peer relations become very important during this period. Douvan and Adelson (1966) believe that the young adolescent does not actually choose friendship, but rather is driven to it. Garrison's (1965) admonition to parents is most compelling in this regard.

He states,

"Because peer pressure is the dominant force during adolescence, parents have only 12 to 14 years in which to give the child the judgment necessary for adult responsibilities. Those who fail to acquire this during the period of childhood and early adolescence are at the mercy of their peers."

(p. 279)

The early adolescent also undergoes institutional changes in the move from self-contained sixth grade classrooms to departmentally-structured junior high schools. Shannon (1960) investigated the effect of institutional structures and found that the self-contained classroom was best at maintaining attitudes of self-acceptance in students.

One of the most important aspects of the present study is that it focuses on the intervening variables of self-esteem and self-concept of academic ability (SCAA) in the early adolescent. These are the variables which are directly affected by the above-mentioned stresses as well as the home stresses. Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) studied 1,917 children in grades three to twelve. They found that there is a definite disturbance in the self-image which arises during early adolescence. Thus, the notion of training parents to raise self-esteem and SCAA in their children appears particularly salient for the early adolescent period.

This concern over low self-esteem, low SCAA and low achievement may be linked to larger and more visible concerns. Low self-esteem has been correlated with negative and maladaptive behaviors in adolescents. Underachievement, failure,

truancy, dropping out, pre-delinquency, delinquency and criminality have all been linked to self-concept and self-esteem variables in youthful populations (Fitts, 1971, 1972 a and c). In regard to delinquency alone, the scope of the problem appears to be increasing. Empey (1978) notes that over one million delinquency cases, excluding traffic offenses, were handled by juvenile courts in 1973. This represents an increase in cases of 124 percent over the 1960 figure, while the youth population increased by only 33 percent within this same period.

It would seem a safe assumption that a significant portion of the low self-esteeming, low-achieving students are those who cause some portion of the in-school problems, i.e., class disruption, vandalism, verbal abuse of other students and teachers, and sometimes, physical abuse of other students and teachers. This latter possibility ought not to be taken lightly. These are extreme cases, and cannot be said to result from self-esteem or SCAA deficits, but there is enough of a relationship in the literature to merit efforts to remedy these problems.

Another reason why it is important to develop parent training programs specifically focusing on parents of early adolescents is because it may well be the last stage of development in which parent training will prove effective (Garrison, 1965). By the time the student experiencing low self-esteem, low SCAA, and low achievement has reached late adolescence, the family inertia, the resistance to change,

will be higher than during early adolescence. If family life has become more toxic, restrictive and destructive than it is supportive, accepting and nourishing, then the late adolescent's resentment of his parents as well as his perception of himself will be difficult to change through parent training.

The parents of early adolescents are at an important stage in their own development as parents. As their elementary age children grow into junior high school adolescents, parents will need to feel secure in their knowledge of parenting as well as in their relationship with their child. They will need to know what to expect of their early adolescent, which behaviors and demands are reasonable and which are unreasonable. They should be able to rationally discuss issues and set parental expectations before negative situations develop. They should be knowledgeable and competent in discussing sex, drugs, dating, home responsibilities, school responsibilities, etc. The parent who cannot address these issues in a non-authoritarian manner will likely experience a real distancing on the part of the early adolescent. The adolescent will cling to an involvement with his peers, being unable to maintain an involvement with his parents.

A number of studies have been done on the effects of parent training on adolescents, although the bulk of such studies have focused on younger children. Those which dealt with adolescents yielded mixed results. Kuhlman (1973) and

Conway (1971) found that adolescent academic achievement was raised significantly following parent training, while Turrall (1975) found no similar changes. Miles (1974), Toto (1973) and Turrall (1975) found no significant increases in self-esteem of children whose parents participated in parent training, although Miles' findings indicated clear trends toward positive increases.

Brookover et al. (1965) found changes in both SCAA and academic achievement following parent training, however, their treatment phase lasted approximately seven months and therefore seems impractical for large-scale applications.

Turrall (1975) in his review of the literature notes the lack of any research on the self-esteem of adolescents who are experiencing low achievement.

The absence in the literature of any parent training programs designed specifically to enhance self-esteem, self-concept of academic ability (SCAA), and increase academic achievement in low-achieving early adolescents within a reasonable time span (eight weeks) delineates the parameters of the present investigation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Low-achieving early adolescents are students selected from grades 7, 8, and 9 who meet all three of the following criteria:

A. They are not emotionally handicapped, learning disabled, nor neurologically impaired.

B. They demonstrate an ability-achievement discrepancy

based on the following three levels:

i. A total score of 100 to 116 on the California Short Form Test of Academic Ability (SFTAA) and two or more D's or E's in the four major areas of English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science on the Second Quarter Report.

ii. A total score of 117 to 132 on the SFTAA and two or more C's, D's, or E's in the four major areas,

iii. A total score of 133 and above on the SFTAA and two or more B's, C's, D's, or E's in the four major areas.

C. They have received one or more Negative Teacher Comments (NTC) on the Second Quarter Report. These are coded comments based upon the teacher's perception of each student's effort to achieve academically. They are taken from the Second Quarter Report. Using the NTC, the teacher is able to indicate, either singly or in combinations, the following perceptions of the students' academic efforts: a) Poor work and study habits, b) Inattentive, c) Poor homework, and d) Disruptive.

Thus each low-achieving student must be free of any debilitating conditions, demonstrate an ability-achievement discrepancy, and have received one or more Negative Teacher Comments.

2. Self-Esteem is operationally defined as that which is measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) when reference is made to it as a criterion variable. However, generally throughout the study a liberal definition

is used to mean those attitudes towards the self by which a person evaluates himself favorably or unfavorably.

3. SCAA (Self-Concept of Academic Ability) is operationally defined as that which is measured by the Brookover (SCAT) Self-Concept of Ability Test (1962). It is a measure of the evaluations and perceptions students hold of themselves in the academic sphere alone.

4. Academic achievement is operationally defined as the Grade Point Average (GPA) in English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science in grades 7, 8, and 9.

5. Parent training is that set of procedures developed by the investigator to teach parents:

a. To accept their low-achieving children and communicate that acceptance through the use of empathetic responses.

b. To send positive parental messages to their children in the form of praise, encouragement and affection.

c. To understand their own influence on their children's academic self-concept, and to identify ways in which they may be helping their children maintain a low self-concept of ability.

d. To set clearly defined limits but encourage a wide variety of behaviors within those limits for their children.

The purpose of training parents to meet the above objectives is to increase the self-esteem, SCAA and academic achievement of their low-achieving early adolescents.

The presentation format is a small group, lecturette, role-playing, interactional model which meets for 2½-hour weekly sessions for eight successive weeks. Development of the cognitive aspects of the program rests heavily on the findings of Coopersmith (1967), Rosenberg (1965, Matteson (1974), and Gilmore (1974).

6. SCAT (Self-Concept of Ability Test) is the test devised by Brookover (1962) to determine a student's general self-concept of academic ability.

Statement of Hypotheses

The research hypothesis is stated in the null form since the evidence from the literature is conflicting in regard to the degree of change in the dependent variables following parent training. The three hypotheses to be tested in the present investigation are as follows:

1. There is no significant difference between the posttest SEI score means for the Experimental and Control group students following parent training.
2. There is no significant difference between the posttest SCAT score means for the Experimental and Control group students following parent training.
3. There is no significant difference between the posttest (Fourth Quarter) GPA means of the Experimental and Control group students following parent training.

Limitations of the Study

1. The volunteer population of parents of low-achieving adolescents from a single junior high school limits the generalizability of the findings.
2. Limitations of the instruments - Both self-esteem and SCAA are operationally defined as that which is measured by the respective instruments. There are inherent limitations in the reliability and validity of these instruments.
3. Limitations in the length of the training program - The parent training was conducted for eight weeks, a total of 20 hours of training. This may or may not have been sufficient to produce significant change in the students.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This second chapter is a presentation of the literature and research findings which are relevant to the questions and hypotheses set forth in Chapter I. The pertinent studies are presented within the following framework:

1. Early Adolescence
2. The Relationship between Self-Esteem and Achievement
3. The Relationship between Self-Concept of Academic Ability (SCAA) and Achievement
4. Parent Influence on Self-Esteem
5. Parent Influence on Self-Concept of Academic Ability
6. Effects of Parent Training on Self-Esteem, SCAA, and Academic Achievement

Early Adolescence

It is clear from the literature that early adolescence is a distinct and unique developmental phase and ought not to be confused with the psychological or biological developments of late adolescents.

Kagan (1971) in attempting to formulate a clearer conception of early adolescence, emphasizes that there is a specific psychological stage called early adolescence.

he bases his thinking on two criteria: 1) the rapid physical growth characteristics of the early adolescent, whose speed of physical development during this period is matched only during the first five years of life; and 2) the new cognitive ability of the early adolescent which enables him to entertain more complex hypothetical questions, some of which may be disconcerting, e.g., "Is there really a God?," "My parents have always seemed right, but now they seem to know so little. Perhaps they are wrong about many of the things they've taught me to believe in!," and a myriad of other such concerns.

This new ability to think and question occurs just at a time when the early adolescents are undergoing major institutional changes according to Kagan (1971). The student enters junior high school where many different individuals hold varying opinions about studying, sex, authority figures, alcohol and drugs, etc. Many of the people holding these new beliefs are important to the early adolescent and therefore he finds it difficult not to believe what they tell him. The student is forced to deal with the dissonance between what he has been taught to think and believe at home, and that which these new and attractive influences promote.

Tanner (1971) studied the sequence, tempo and individual variation in the growth and development of boys and girls aged twelve to sixteen. He is in close agreement with Kagan (1971) in his emphasis on the rapidity and sequence

of growth during this stage. He compares this period of physical development to that of the infant, but points out that, unlike the infant, the early adolescent is highly developed cognitively and emotionally. These qualities enable the pubescent boy or girl to be a, "...fascinated, charmed, or horrified spectator who watches the developments, or lack of developments of adolescence." (p. 907)

Tanner (1971) further emphasizes the importance of developmental speed during early adolescence in noting that students in American and Northern European schools who are more physically advanced, score higher on tests of mental ability than the less physically mature students of the same age.

These physiological, cognitive, and institutional changes have a marked impact on the personality of the early adolescent. Hurlock (1967) states that the pubescent child is often moody, irritable, sensitive, and quarrelsome. She stresses the need for parents to recognize that there is a relationship between the changes taking place in the child's body and his behavior. If parents are overly critical and punitive in their treatment of the child, it will increase his feeling that he is not loved nor loveable, thus widening the gap between parents and child. (p. 589)

Hurlock views this period of early adolescence as one of the most difficult for the entire family. She states:

"The home climate is more likely to be poor than good during the early years of adolescence, when friction with different family members is at its peak."

(p. 589)

In a more recent publication, Hurlock (1975) reaffirms her earlier conclusion. She writes:

"Family relationships, which began to deteriorate during childhood, normally reach their low point in early adolescence and begin to improve as parents, siblings, grandparents, and other relatives treat the adolescent as an adult or near-adult."
(p. 202)

Howard and Stoumbis (1970) similarly note that by adult standards, the early adolescent is extremely emotional. He seems unable to compromise or find an emotional half-way mark. He tends to speak of people, places, and events only in superlatives. The authors note that, "Although inclined toward idealism, the early adolescent will probably become quite self-centered and selfish." (p. 35)

Early adolescence, if it is to be a clearly delineated developmental phase, ought to have its concomitant developmental tasks. The major developmental theorists have not yet devised such tasks specifically for the early adolescent, but some tasks may be inferred for this stage from their writings on adolescence.

Havighurst (1953) wrote of the eight developmental tasks of adolescence. The last five tasks fit the period of late adolescence, while the first three tasks fit the early adolescent phase. A free adaptation of the first three phases is as follows:

1. Accepting a changing body and learning to use that body in effective and appropriate ways.
2. Achieving a masculine or feminine sex role which is both satisfying and socially acceptable.

3. Becoming comfortable with oneself and one's peers and achieving more mature relations with those peers.

In Identity: Youth and Crisis, Erikson (1968) delineates three specific tasks of adolescent development.

1. To maintain strong ego defenses against powerfully intense impulses in the new, sexually mature and physically powerful body.

2. To learn to consolidate the most important achievements in line with work opportunities.

3. To resynthesize all childhood identification in some unique way, and yet one which is consonant with the role offered by society.

(p. 156)

Erikson also differentiates between early and late adolescence. A reading of the three above tasks demonstrates that the first is meant for the early adolescent phase. In this, the author is in agreement with the later writers on early adolescence that it is a period of marked physical and sexual maturation, both of which have an impact on the early adolescent's personality.

Kagan (1971) does not write of specific tasks, but rather of four preoccupying motives which he believes are foreground for most American early adolescents. These are:

1. Resolving uncertainty over sexual adequacy.
2. Interpersonal power.
3. Autonomy of belief and action.
4. Acceptability to peers.

Of these four motives, numbers two and three, power and autonomy, seem to have the greatest potential for causing disturbances in the family systems of early adolescents. These family disturbances, particularly as they effect the parent-adolescent relationship, may leave the early adolescent hurt, confused, shaken in self-confidence, and lacking in self-esteem.

Several other researchers have noted the tenuous quality of self-esteem during early adolescence. Garrison (1965) emphasizes that the self-image evolves from an interaction of physical and social factors in the development of the individual, and that during early adolescence the self-esteem is greatly influenced by physical experience because the body has greater realism than other aspects of the personality.

One of the most important studies for pointing out the crucial nature of the early adolescent phase is that of Simmons, Rosenberg, and Rosenberg (1973). They performed a cross-sectional study, measuring several dimensions of self-image development in 1,917 urban school children, grades three through twelve. The results of their study indicate that a definite disturbance of the self-image is shown to occur in adolescence, particularly early adolescence. This disturbance rises especially when the child is twelve years old, which is the mean age for entrance into junior high school. The authors write:

"During early adolescence, compared to the years eight to eleven, the children exhibited"

"heightened self-consciousness, greater instability of self-image, slightly lower global self-esteem, lower opinions of themselves with regard to the qualities they valued, and a reduced conviction that their parents, teachers and peers of the same sex held favorable opinions of them. They were also more likely to show a high depressive affect."

(p. 564)

It becomes clear from the above conclusions, as well as the results of the other research presented, that the following statements may be made with reasonable confidence:

1. Early adolescence is a specific and unique developmental stage.
2. Early adolescence is a problematic stage for the child, personally, interpersonally, and institutionally.
3. Early adolescence is a problematic stage for the family of the child.

The literature has emphasized the rapid physical, sexual, and cognitive growth of the early adolescent, the institutional, social, and family changes associated with this stage, and the concomitant instability and lowering of the early adolescent's self-esteem.

The Relationship between Self-Esteem and Achievement

Two of the established authorities on self-esteem are Rosenberg (1965) and Coopersmith (1967). It is appropriate to begin this section with a clear understanding of what is meant by self-esteem.

In Society and the Adolescent Self-Image, Rosenberg (1965) writes of the self-image, that it is, "an attitude toward an object. The term 'attitude' is used broadly to

include facts, opinions, and values with regard to the self, as well as favorable or unfavorable orientation toward the self." (p. 5)

In The Antecedents of Self-Esteem, Coopersmith (1967) offers a more expanded definition.

"By self-esteem we refer to the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself. It is a subjective experience which the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and other overt behavior." (pp. 4-5)

Self-esteem then is not self-concept, although the two are closely related, and at times are used interchangeably in the literature. While this section of the review is specifically concerned with self-esteem, several authors have written saliently on self-concept. Their findings are reported here since their use of the term self-concept so closely approximates the definitions of self-esteem.

In an early and critical review of the research on self-concept, Wylie (1961) concluded that the studies were ambiguous and the results were frequently contradicting. She noted that the use of different methodologies produced different results. Further, she found that many of the studies' subjects tended to overestimate rather than underestimate themselves. She reasoned therefore, that the underachiever does not necessarily have a low self-concept.

Eleven years later, Fitts (1972) arrived at a somewhat more positive conclusion regarding the relationship between self-concept and achievement. He reviewed over 90 studies which measured self-concept using his Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) and summarized his findings as follows:

"An individual's general image of himself as a person (as measured by the TSCS) will usually show some slight relationship to his academic achievement. If he has an optimal self-concept, he is apt to use his intellectual resources more efficiently, and this may be a critical factor in his achievement if his intellectual resources or educational background are borderline."

(p. 43)

Rushton (1966) in his review of the literature on children, found that 70 percent revealed a positive correlation between stability and adjustment, and academic achievement. High self-esteem is closely related to stability and good adjustment.

In his monograph, Self-Concept and School Achievement, Purkey (1970) summarizes his review of the literature in the statement:

"...the overwhelming body of contemporary research points insistently to the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement and suggests strongly that the self-concept can no longer be ignored by parents and teachers."

(pp. v-vi)

This sense of a strong correlation between self-esteem and achievement is epitomized by Gilmore (1974) in his book, The Productive Personality. Following an exhaustive review of the literature, he concludes that of all the personality factors which may be related to productive

functioning, self-esteem is the one factor which repeatedly appeared in the literature. Gilmore writes:

"In light of current theory and research, ..., the concept of self-esteem appears to be the most effective explanation of the differences between highly productive and less productive persons."

(p. 15)

Garrison (1965), writing on adolescent development, summarizes his literature review by concluding that male achievers feel more positive about themselves than male underachievers, but female underachievers are more ambivalent with regard to their self-feelings because of their less well defined role.

Similarly, Fine (1967) makes the connection between self-esteem and achievement in his book, Underachievers. He explains that underachievers have an expectation of failure; they tend to put academic tasks off to the last minute; they have personality characteristics that rationalize, excuse and explain their problems. He indicates that they are more hostile than other students, are suspicious of others, and show little trust. All of this, he emphasizes, stems from their poor self-esteem.

Of the many individual studies done on self-esteem, the following are presented here because of their relationship and salience to the present investigation.

More than 23 years ago, Blackman (1955) performed a study on the personality and adjustments of students who were underachievers and high achievers in reading. Using the Rorschach and TAT projective instruments with 15 underachievers

and 15 high achievers in the 8th and 9th grades, he found that the underachievers differed from the high achievers in their behavior maturity, emotional instability, attitudes about physical contact and feelings of inadequacy. This last characteristic is particularly related to low self-esteem.

Chickering (1958) achieved similar results in his study on self-concept and ideal self-concept. He administered a Q-sort two times to each of his 9th grade subjects. The first time they were to describe themselves as they are, and the second time as they would like to be. Thus he derived a score which showed the congruency of their self- or ideal self-concepts. He compared this score with each student's academic achievement and found that the closer the congruence between the self- and ideal self-concept, the higher the academic achievement. It seems safe to assume that high self-esteem would be indicative of the students who were highly congruent.

An early study which has important implications for the present investigation is that of Shaw, Edson, and Bell (1960). Using the Sarbin Adjective Checklist as a measure of self-concept, they compared groups of achieving and underachieving high school students. They found that differences in self-concept did discriminate between high and low achievers. Specifically, male underachievers tended to have more negative feelings toward themselves than high achieving males. But perhaps more importantly, they found

that the underachieving males were more hostile than the achieving males, and that this hostility was not a product of the school framework, but was brought into the school. This lends weight to the notion that the family, and particularly the parents of underachievers, have a great impact upon their motivation to achieve.

Carter (1961) performed a study which is important because it uses 725 seventh graders as subjects. This grade for the great majority of students, epitomizes pubescence and its inherent difficulties. He administered the Stanford Achievement Test, the Henmon-Nelson Tests of Mental Ability, and the California Study Methods Survey to each student. In his analysis of the results, he concludes that the high achieving students were happier in school, exhibited better morale, and had more self-confidence. High self-confidence infers high self-esteem, particularly when combined with high morale. Conversely, the low achievers were less happy in school, had low morale and suffered from a lack of self-confidence. These are the clear concomitants of low self-esteem.

Similar findings were reported by Fink (1962) a year later. His study used early adolescent subjects at the later end of the phase, i.e., ninth graders. Working with 20 matched pairs of males and females, he administered the California Psychological Inventory, the Bender Visual-Motor Gestalt Test, the Draw-a-Person Test, the Gough Adjective Checklist, a personal data sheet, and an essay on their future

lives. Three psychologists judged the data on each student, rating them on adequacy of self-concept. A chi-square was performed correlating the judgments to the students' grade point averages (GPA). The results confirmed that there is a positive relationship between adequacy of self-concept and academic achievement for boys. The relationship was not clear for the girls.

In a similar study to Chickering's (1958), Gill (1971) investigated the relationship between patterns of achievement and the self-ideal congruence of 408 ninth grade students. Her findings reaffirm those of Chickering (1958), i.e., a low level of self-ideal congruence is associated with under-achievement. The relationship between self-esteem and self-ideal congruence is not clearly established in the literature, but it seems highly likely that low self-ideal congruence is positively related to low self-esteem. The rationale for this statement lies in the realization that the further the subject perceives himself to be from his ideal self, the less positive, confident, and pleased he will be with himself. This perception defines the major parameters of low self-esteem.

Following Gill's (1971) study, Kunce, Getsinger, and Miller (1972) published the results of a study on the relationship between self-esteem and a series of variables. The subjects of this investigation were 247 ninth grade students. Utilizing the abbreviated version of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI), they found only a nominal relationship

between self-esteem, academic achievement, and home environment.

Sontakey (1975) adds more weight to the notion that self-esteem and achievement are related. In a study attempting to identify the factors responsible for affecting the achievement of bright students, he used 50 bright underachieving and achieving male students. All subjects were between 11 and 16 years old, i.e., all were early adolescents. He gave each student a problem and study habit inventory, a self-concept blank, and an interview. His findings demonstrate that: 1) underachievers had more emotional problems and needs than achievers, 2) they were less cooperative and social than achievers, and 3) they had less clear self-concepts than the achievers. Each of these characteristics is far more indicative of low self-esteem than high self-esteem.

Many and Many (1975) examined the relationship between self-esteem and anxiety, both general and test anxiety. They tested 4,367 students in fourth through eighth grade. So the sample is representative of late childhood, pre-adolescent, and early adolescent students. Their findings indicate a moderate negative relationship between self-esteem and general and test anxiety. Since high achieving students are not characteristically anxious, this moderately supports the self-esteem - achievement correlation.

A more recent investigation by Dean (1977) examines the influence of self-concept on verbal free recall and

non-verbal paired associate learning tasks with gifted seventh and eighth graders. Using the Coopersmith SEI, Dean divided the subjects into high and low self-esteem groups and administered his recall and paired associate tests. He found that the high self-esteem students demonstrated significantly greater mastery of all learning tasks than the low self-esteem students. This study reconfirms the positive relationship between self-esteem and achievement, but differs from the other studies in that it uses verbal recall and paired associate learning rather than achievement test scores or GPA as the achievement criteria.

This review has presented some of the relevant literature on self-esteem and achievement. An attempt has been made to present studies dealing particularly with early adolescent subjects. The overall results seem to indicate a positive relationship between self-esteem and achievement during the early adolescent period.

The Relationship between Self-Concept of Academic Achievement (SCAA) and Achievement

The Self-Concept of Academic Ability (SCAA) is a construct which was initially investigated by Brookover and his associates (Brookover, Paterson, and Thomas, 1962; Brookover et al., 1965) and has continued to receive the attention of researchers (Humphrey, 1968; Lewis, 1974; and Cohen, 1974).

The theoretical basis for Brookover's SCAA is the self-concept theory of George H. Mead (1934) known as symbolic interaction theory.

In Mind, Self, and Society (1934), Mead delineates two stages in the full development of the self. He writes:

1. "...the individual's self is constituted simply by an organization of the particular attitudes of other individuals towards himself and towards one another in the specific social acts in which he participates with them."

and

2. "...at the second stage in the full development of the individual's self, that self is constituted not only by an organization of these particular individual attitudes, but also by an organization of the social attitudes of the generalized other or the social groups as a whole to which he belongs."
(p. 158)

Mead's theoretical notions were formalized by Kinch (1968) who further defined and clarified the manner in which the self-concept developed from interaction with others.

Kinch expanded on the theory by offering a set of three basic postulates from which a series of propositions were derived. The three postulates are as follows:

- "1. The individual's self-concept is based on his perception of the way others are responding to him.
2. The individual's self-concept functions to direct his behavior.
3. The individual's perception of the responses of other toward him reflects the actual responses of others toward him."

(p. 482)

Within these three postulates, there are four variables:

1) The individual's self-concept (S), 2) his perception of the responses of others toward him (P), 3) the actual responses of others toward him (A), and 4) his behavior (B).

From postulates 1 and 3 he derives a fifth proposition:

"5. The actual responses of others to the individual will determine the way he sees himself (self-concept)."

(p. 482)

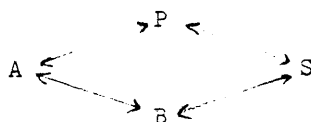
A sixth proposition is then derived from postulates 5 and 2, or 3 and 4. That is,

"6. The actual responses of others toward the individual will effect the behavior of the individual." (p. 482)

This model could then be expressed symbolically as A - P - S - B. Thus indicating linearity from A (Actual responses of others) to B (the behavior of the individual). However, this is incomplete, since the final proposition is as follows:

"7. The behavior that the individual manifests influences the actual responses of others toward that individual." (p. 483)

This final postulate thus completes the cycle, changing what appeared to be a linear model into a circular or feed-back model which Kinch expresses symbolically as:



The importance of Kinch's formal model is that it helps elucidate the interactionist's contention that the

self-concept is formed through interaction with others, and it demonstrates the notion that the individual's self-concept is the intervening variable between the perception of others' responses and the ultimate behavior of the individual.

Although Kinch's model offers the highest development of the interactionist's self-concept theory in the completeness of its circularity, Brookover and his associates (1962) also contributed importantly to the interactionist's theory. Specifically, Brookover hypothesized that a student would only learn what he perceived he was able to learn. He also believed that this particular self-perception was acquired as the student interacted with significant others who had academic expectations of him. Brookover further contended that it was not simply innate ability or intelligence which was the limiting factor on achievement level, but also the level of SCAA a student had which would operate as a functionally limiting factor.

To test his hypothesis, Brookover and his associates (1962) developed two scales: a General SCAA Scale measuring student SCAA in all school subjects, and a Specific Subject SCAA Scale to measure student SCAA in each of the four major academic areas, i.e., English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science. He administered these two scales to 1,050 7th grade students and compared the results to the students' achievement in each subject, separately and combined. A summary of the results of the study are as follows:

1. SCAA is significantly related to school achievement of 7th grade students. The correlation was .57 for each sex.

2. When measured intelligence is controlled, SCAA is positively related to academic achievement. With I.Q. partialled out the correlations were .42 for boys and .39 for girls.

3. High achievers have significantly higher SCAA than low achievers with similar I.Q. scores.

4. Specific subject SCAA is related to achievement in those subjects to the same degree that general SCAA is related to achievement in all four subjects.

Following up on this study, Brookover et al. (1965) undertook a longitudinal investigation as well as three year-long experimental studies. The results of this work further supports the authors' contention that SCAA is significantly correlated with academic achievement. The specific correlations for each grade level were:

for males,	.57 for 513 7th graders
	.63 for 731 8th graders
	.61 for 446 9th graders
	.56 for 425 10th graders

for females,	.57 for 537 7th graders
	.65 for 751 8th graders
	.64 for 508 9th graders
	.59 for 517 10th graders

(p. 57)

They further found that SCAA is derived essentially from the perceived evaluations of significant others; for most students, SCAA is a functionally limiting factor in academic achievement; and SCAA intervenes between evaluations

of others and performance. In effect this means that a relatively high SCAA is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for high academic achievement. A student with a high SCAA may or may not be a high achiever, depending upon other factors, e.g., modeling, identification, need for achievement, etc.. But a student with a low SCAA is very unlikely to achieve at a high level, regardless of other factors.

One of the factors that appears to have a positive relationship to achievement in a specific subject is the tendency for the student to like that particular subject. Humphrey (1968) gave a questionnaire to middle school students who were from individually prescribed classrooms (IFI) and non-IPI classrooms. She found that there was a positive relationship between a student's specific subject SCAA and the amount that the student liked that particular subject. Although this does not necessarily indicate a positive relationship between SCAA and achievement, it seems safe to infer that achievement is likely to be higher in the subjects the student prefers.

In a study designed to show the impact of significant others on SCAA and achievement, Lewis (1973) worked with a group of low-achieving black students. She administered a School Attitude Scale (Lewis, 1973), the General and Specific SCAA Scales (Brookover, Paterson, and Thomas, 1962), the Perceived Teacher Evaluation Scales (Brookover et al., 1962), the Perceived Parent Evaluation Scales (Brookover et

al., 1962) and the reading comprehension scores of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. She found that the significant others - affects SCAA - affects achievement model of Brookover et al. (1962, 1965) was not upheld for those students who had negative, i.e., defensive attitudes toward school. But for those with positive, i.e., non-defensive attitudes toward school, the model was substantiated. These results seem to indicate that a defensive attitude protects the self-concept, which for these students has little or no relationship to school achievement.

Cohen (1974) investigated the effect of alienation on certain personality and school-related variables. He found a negative correlation between SCAA and alienation. Since alienation would likely operate as an antagonist to school achievement, it seems reasonable to infer that those least alienated would be the high achievers. Thus, the relationship between SCAA and achievement is supported by inference.

In summarizing the findings of these SCAA-related studies, there seems little doubt that the evidence supports the contention that: 1) there is a positive relationship between SCAA and academic achievement; and 2) SCAA operates as an intervening variable between the evaluations of significant others and academic achievement.

Parental Influence on Self-Esteem

This section presents an overview of the relevant literature on the effect parents have on their children's self-esteem.

The literature related to these variables has its roots in the writings of the self-theorists. In his General Law of Interpersonal Relationships, Rogers (1961) clarifies the powerful effect each person has on the other in an ongoing dyadic relationship. Although he does not specify the parent-child relationship, it can be readily inferred from his words.

He writes:

"The greater the congruence of experience, awareness and communication on the part of one individual, the more the ensuing relationship will involve; a tendency toward reciprocal communication with a quality of increasing congruence; a tendency toward more mutually accurate understanding of the communications; improved psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties; mutual satisfaction in the relationship."

(p. 344)

Combs and Snygg (1959) are clear in their estimate of the parental influence on children. They place it in the forefront of all influences when they state that, "No experience in the development of the child's self-concept is quite so important or far-reaching as his earliest experiences in the family." (p. 134)

In her extensive review of the literature on self-concept, Wylie (1961) concludes that a child's self-concept is generally comparable to the view which he believes his parents hold of him. There is also limited evidence that a child's self-esteem is related to the reported level of esteem his parents hold for him.

Rosenberg (1965) and Coopersmith (1967) are two highly respected authorities on self-esteem. Their studies served to clarify the usefulness of self-esteem as an intervening variable and spawned a decade of related investigations.

In Society and the Adolescent Self-Image, Rosenberg (1965) devotes three chapters to the effects of the family on the adolescent's self-esteem. Working with 5,024 New York State high school students, 15 to 18 years old, he found that family structure, sibling position, and parental behavior all have an effect on the adolescent's self-esteem. In examining the parent variable, Rosenberg chose to focus on the effect of parental interest on child self-esteem. In this regard he studied the adolescents' remembrances of parental interest in the child's friends, the parents' reaction to the child's report card, and the parents' responsiveness to the child at the dinner table.

He found that: 1) the high self-esteem children reported that their mothers knew most of their friends while low self-esteem children recalled exceptional parental indifference; 2) the high self-esteem children reported their parents to be supportive or supportive/punitive in reaction to their report card, while low self-esteem children reported indifference to the report card; and 3) the low self-esteem children reported that they rarely spoke at the dinner table, or that no one was interested in what they said.

In summarizing his findings, Rosenberg writes:

"Apparently more than deprecation and chastisement, and certainly more than praise or support..., indifference is associated with lower self-esteem in the child." (p. 141)

A later study which supports the contention that punitive parental responses are less dangerous to the child's self-esteem than indifference, was done by Robins (1966). He studied the childhood records of psychiatric patients and found that strict discipline during the adolescent years yielded the fewest adult sociopaths, whereas a lack of supervision yielded the greatest number of sociopaths. Although self-esteem is not a variable in his study, it is safe to assume that it is at the opposite end of the psychological continuum from a sociopathological condition.

This notion that parental caring is communicated to the child in many ways other than simply warmth and support is reaffirmed by Coopersmith's (1967) investigation. He believed, as did Brookover and his associates (1962, 1965), that self-esteem is a judgment of one's worthiness and that such judgments are made in a person's immediate, effective, interpersonal environment. For the pre-adolescent, this effective interpersonal environment is largely and importantly provided for him by his parents.

Working with 1,748 pre-adolescent children, Coopersmith (1967) studied the effect upon self-esteem of four different parenting variables: acceptance, permissiveness and punishment, training for independence, and democratic practices.

He found that there are four basic criteria which operate as antecedents of self-esteem. These are summarized as follows:

1. A total or nearly total acceptance of the children by their parents.
2. Clearly defined and enforced limits.
3. Respect and latitude for individual action that exists within the defined limits.
4. Parental self-esteem.

Coopersmith advises that all of the above are not necessary for high self-esteem in children. There should be more than one, and less than four operating in the home, along with a minimum of devaluing conditions, such as rejection, ambiguity, and disrespect.

In a similar study, Lanza (1970) investigated various antecedents of self-esteem in relation to race and sex. Gathering data from a late adolescent sample, he found that neither race nor sex were significantly related to self-esteem. He concluded that high self-esteem students are likely to have:

1. Mothers with high self-esteem.
2. Parents who know most of their children's friends.
3. Fathers who are stable in their employment.
4. Parents who enjoy academic achievement in their children.
5. Parents who have an affectionate and healthy relationship in their marriage.

This last condition for high self-esteem in children has been more recently studied by Matteson (1974). She administered the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and two questionnaires from Bienvenu's Adolescent Communication Inventory to 111 early adolescents in order to elicit their perceptions of their communication with their parents. The 10 males and 10 females with the highest and lowest self-esteem scores were placed into two groups. The parents of these students completed questionnaires on parent-adolescent communication and marital communication and adjustment.

She found that,

1. Adolescents with low self-esteem perceived communication with parents as less facilitative than adolescents with high self-esteem.
2. Parents of low self-esteem adolescents perceived communication with spouse as less facilitative and rated marriage less satisfying than high self-esteem parents.
3. Parents of low self-esteem adolescents perceived parent-adolescent communication as more facilitative than did the adolescents themselves.

Elock (1971) in his longitudinal study arrived at similar conclusions. He found that the best adjusted adults, i.e., those most likely to exhibit high self-esteem, were those who in childhood had warm relationships with their parents in the context of a successful marital relationship.

Parental love, affection, and warmth have been found to be related to high self-esteem in children by several researchers (Dinkmeyer, 1965; Medinnus, 1965; Sears, 1970; Lachman, 1970; and Miller, 1971).

Conger (1971) writing of the importance of these parenting responses to the development of the child states,

"A background of love and trust are, as Erik Erikson asserts, fundamental. Without them the child's chances of becoming a reasonably happy, effective, contributing adult, of developing a positive self-image and a sense of his own identity, are seriously impaired." (p. 1121)

Another variable which has received some attention in the literature on self-esteem is parental identification. Erik Erikson (1968) has written eloquently on the identity crisis of adolescence, and the importance of its being resolved in a positive and socially acceptable manner.

Carlson (1958), in an investigation of parental identification with 43 6th graders, found that the children who identified with the more supporting of their two parents were more self-accepting, less dependent upon social relations, and more accepted by their peers. These are all indicative of high self-esteem children.

A decade later, Stanford (1969) tested 71 students and their parents. He found no systematic relationship between self-esteem and parental identification.

Hollander (1973) administered three self-esteem measures to 36 males and 36 females who were undergraduates. He found that with females, two of the three self-esteem measures correlated positively with parental identification.

These seemingly conflicting results demonstrate the complexities involved in interpreting self-esteem scores when there are other complex factors operating.

Three examples of self-esteem research which demonstrate the importance of careful interpretation are those of Bruch, et al. (1972); Thomas, et al. (1974); and Ziv, et al. (1977).

Bruch and his associates (1972) measured the self-esteem of 159 high school males as well as their parents' self-esteem and cultural classification. They found that both black and white disadvantaged students had significantly higher self-esteem scores, and that the older students had lower father-esteem scores. This was not the case for mother-esteem scores. The authors reasoned that the low father-esteem and high self-esteem scores indicated a parental devaluation which operated as a defense of the self-esteem in the disadvantaged students. The discrepancy in esteem scores was particularly vivid for disadvantaged seniors. The authors interpreted this overestimation of personal attributes as a psychological readying for independent functioning in the near future.

Ziv, et al. (1977) also achieved apparently conflicting results in their investigation of average and gifted under-achievers. They administered a self-concept test based on Osgood's Semantic Differential to 134 pre- and early adolescents. They found in the average sample that underachievers had lower self-concepts than achievers, but unexpectedly in the gifted sample, the achievers had lower self-concepts than the underachievers.

One study on self-esteem which is outstanding for its demonstration of the need to carefully control the variables and cautiously interpret findings, is that done by Thomas, et al. (1974). Working with 620 adolescents, they focused on two main hypotheses; 1) that parental support is positively related to the child's self-esteem; and 2) parental control is positively related to the child's self-esteem. Controlling such factors as sex, religion, and culture, they found that,

1. "Parental support is significantly and consistently related to adolescent self-esteem for males, females, lower class as well as middle class subjects, Protestants, Catholics, Latins and Anglos. This is true for general self-esteem as well as self-esteem Power and self-esteem Worth."
2. "Parental control has a much more specific or selective influence on self-esteem. It is positively correlated to high self-esteem in Protestant males, but not for Catholic males. It is negatively correlated to self-esteem for lower-class Catholic males."

(p. 3)

Another important finding of this study was contributed by Gecas (1971). He studied parental behavior and contextual variations in adolescent self-esteem and found that late adolescent's self-esteem is highest in the context of friends and lowest in the context of classroom. Moreover, he showed that parental support is context-bound, i.e., it is related to late adolescent's self-esteem primarily when adult frames of reference are used.

This tendency for late adolescents to derive more satisfaction and personal self-esteem in the context of friends rather than parents, is re-confirmed in an investigation by O'Donnell (1976). His study further clarifies the

differences between early and late adolescents in regard to the antecedents and correlates to their self-esteem. He administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Fitts, 1965), and the Otis-Lemon I.Q. test to 138 eighth graders and 139 eleventh graders. His findings indicated that the eighth grader's self-esteem is more highly correlated with feelings toward parents ($p < .001$) than feelings toward friends. This same tendency was found for the eleventh graders, however, feelings toward parents were not significantly greater than feelings toward friends in terms of correlation to self-esteem. These results suggest that as the child moves into the late adolescent period (16 - 21 years old), he increasingly derives his general self-esteem within the context of friends and peer relations. This emphasizes the importance of helping parents develop more esteeming parent response patterns prior to or during the early adolescent period when the impact of such responses would have its greatest effect.

This section has presented the results of a group of studies which primarily have focused on the influence of parents on their adolescent child's self-esteem.

Parental Influence on Self-Concept of Academic Ability (SCAA)

Brookover and his associates (1962; and 1965) developed the construct of SCAA. As mentioned in the section on SCAA and achievement, they developed a model which hypothesized that SCAA was the result of the student's perception of

significant other's academic evaluations of him. To test this hypothesis, the researchers gathered data from 110 high and low achieving 7th grade students, giving each student a one and one-half hour interview. The interview consisted of two open-ended questions which the student filled out, and an open-ended interview schedule.

To the question, "Who are the people who are important in your life?," virtually all of the students named their parents.

To the question, "Who are the people who you feel are concerned about how well you do in school?," parents were named by 99 per cent of the male high achievers, 100 per cent of the male low achievers, 94 per cent of the female high achievers, and 96 per cent of the female low achievers.

Clearly, parents were named more often than any other person in the students' lives as important to them and as being concerned with their school success. Also, parents were almost always the first people named by the students.

The researchers concluded that: 1) the hypothesis regarding the positive relationship between a student's SCAA and the image he perceives significant others hold for him is supported; 2) family socio-economic status is positively related to SCAA, but does not affect the correlation between SCAA and achievement; and 3) parents are almost universal significant others for the student, and as such offer the best hope of making positive changes in students' SCAA.

In the second phase of this study, Brookover, et al. (1965) performed three year-long experiments to determine

whether it was possible to increase students' SCAA which in turn would increase their academic achievement.

From a pool of 193 low achievers, they selected three groups. Parents of these students were assigned to an experimental, a placebo, and a control group. The experimental group of parents underwent a year-long training program designed to help them raise their images and expectations of their low achieving children, and communicate these new perceptions and expectations to them.

A second, independent experiment involved measuring the effects of formal presentations by a person defined as an "expert" on the SCAA and achievement of low achieving students.

A third experiment focused on studying the effects of counseling on low achieving students, with the counselor providing a set of high expectations to each student.

The results of these experiments indicate that a significant increase in both SCAA and students' grade point averages occurred only in the Parent Experiment.

In a similar experiment, Eirr (1969) sought to measure the differential effects of parents and teachers on the SCAA of underachieving early adolescent students. He chose 120 students who received a "C" grade point average at the end of the first marking period in English, Math, and Social Studies, and whose I.Q.'s ranged from 83 - 137. He trained the parents of 30 students for a period of seven months in methods to increase SCAA in their children. He simultaneously trained 50 teachers to focus on raising another 30 students'

SCAA by their responses to the students in the classroom. A third group functioned as a control.

He found, 1) no significant association between SCAA and grade point average of students in the parents, teachers, or control categories; 2) the parent group students had higher mean SCAA than the other two groups, but not significant at the .05 level; 3) the same was true for students' grade point averages in the parent group; and 4) increases in parents' perception of their child's ability led to increases in the child's SCAA. This was significantly correlated.

It is not clear why Birr's findings were not as definite as Brookover's, but it could be because there is no proven methodology for teaching parents to raise SCAA in their children.

In a later study, Lewis (1973) confirmed Brookover's (1962 and 1965) findings particularly for nondefensive, low achieving students. However, she found the Brookover model was not substantiated for the low achieving student who also had negative attitudes toward school. These students' perceived evaluations of parents and their SCAA were disproportionately high and unrelated to their achievement. She interpreted the findings to mean that students with negative attitudes toward school may maintain this attitude as a defense of their self-concept.

A summary of the results of the above studies would tend to indicate that there is a relationship between parents' perceptions of their children's academic ability and the child's SCAA. Further, the SCAA seems to function

as an intervening variable between the child's perception of significant other's evaluations of him, and his subsequent performance in school. As such, it is a functionally limiting variable which can place an upper limit on academic achievement. If optimum achievement for all students is one of the hopes of education, then increasing students' SCAA becomes a cogent goal of educators.

Effects of Parent Training and Counseling on Self-Esteem, SCAA, and Academic Achievement.

Self-Esteem -

A number of investigators have focused upon the effects of parent training on the child's self-esteem. Schofield (1976), Kuhlman (1973), Perkins (1970) and Stearn (1970) found significant increases in children's self-esteem following parent training, while Turrall (1975), Miles (1974), Overman (1974), and Toto (1973) found no such changes.

Three of these studies used adolescents or early adolescents as their subjects, and thus are particularly cogent to the present study. They are presented here.

Turrall (1975) investigated the differential effects of sensitivity training and Adlerian parent training upon the self-esteem of academic underachievers. He administered the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Pumroy's Maryland Parent Attitude Survey to measure the hypothesized changes. The sensitivity training consisted of six successive two and one-half hour sessions which were minimally structured

personal growth experiences. The Adlerian group had the same number and length of sessions, but consisted of an informal series of readings, group discussions, and practical demonstrations designed to help parents raise their adolescents in a positive manner. Three groups were run. Group A were students involved in the sensitivity training; Group B were parents receiving parent training; and Group C was a combination of both A and B.

Turrall found that neither sensitivity training nor Adlerian parent training had any differential effect upon students' mean GPA's, or upon students' self-esteem. However, significant improvement in student self-esteem occurred when sons participated in sensitivity training and fathers participated in parent training. This finding came about as the result of a three-month follow-up posttesting.

Toto (1973) in a similar study, sought to measure changes in parent attitude toward child-rearing, as well as changes in the adolescent's self-esteem following Adlerian training or a group-centered experience. He administered the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory to all 234 eighth graders and invited the parents of those whose measured self-esteem was in the lower quartile. He randomly divided the parents into three groups: an Adlerian lecture group, a group-centered group, and a control group.

He found that: 1) parental attitudes toward child-rearing moved in a positive direction; 2) no significant differences occurred between the three groups following treatment; 3) student self-esteem scores increased significantly for all three

groups; and 4) there were no significant gains in self-esteem as perceived by the students' teachers.

These results failed to demonstrate that changes in self-esteem can be effected through parent training. Clearly, researchers are not certain as to which types of training will yield significant changes, if any.

Miles (1974), like Toto (1975), conducted a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of two types of interventions in altering levels of self-esteem in adolescents. Her study adds another dimension in that it compared a direct approach to an indirect approach, i.e., Verbal Reinforcement Group Counseling (VRGC) with the students, and Parent Effectiveness Training (PET) with the parents. Working with a total of 62 adults and 60 students, she divided them randomly into four groups: PET; PET-VRGC; VRGC; and control. Parents in PET met for eight three-hour sessions, while students in VRGC met for six forty-five minute sessions.

She found:

1. Significant differences among experimental and control groups on students' classroom behavior as rated by teachers.

2. Regarding student self-esteem scores following treatment, the analysis of variance indicated significant differences among treatment groups. However, post hoc comparisons failed to locate differences. Thus the findings related to the effects of treatment groups on students' self-esteem was inconclusive.

3. Students from two-parent families had significantly higher self-esteem than those from one-parent families.

4. Parents who had PET did not demonstrate higher self-esteem scores than those who did not attend.

The importance of Miles' findings for the present study is that she found the students in the three treatment groups were more positive in their self estimations from the pre- to post assessment. In this regard she found that the PET and PET-VRGC treatment groups enjoyed the largest gains. The VRGC group showed a slight gain, while the control group demonstrated a clear decrease on the self-esteem measure. These results, although not conclusive, tend to suggest a positive relationship between parent participation in training and children's self-esteem. This is all the more cogent because this positive trend in self-esteem scores occurred in the space of approximately eight weeks, indicating a rapid change for a personality variable which is generally considered quite stable.

This review has presented evidence that parent training tends to have a positive effect on the self-esteem of children, and that this training can begin to show its effect on their self-esteem within the space of eight to fifteen weeks.

Self-Concept of Academic Ability (SCAA) -

Conway (1971), Birr (1969) and Brookover, et al., (1965) are the main researchers in this area. Birr (1969) and Brookover, et al., (1965) have been extensively reviewed in

the section entitled Parental Influence on SCAA, therefore a brief summary of their findings will suffice.

Brookover and his associates trained a group of parents of underachieving 9th graders. The training period covered almost an entire academic year. During that time, the trainers attempted, through films, tapes, and discussions, to modify the images and expectations each parent held of his child. They found that training the parents resulted in significant increases in both SCAA and grade point averages (GPA) for the students.

Firr (1969) held seven monthly meetings designed to help parents increase their low-achieving child's SCAA. At the conclusion of training he found no significant association between SCAA and GPA for the students. The parent group students did have a higher mean SCAA and GPA than the other two groups, although not at the .05 level. A significant correlation as noted between the parents' perception of his child's ability and the child's SCAA.

Conway's (1972) study was designed to measure the effectiveness of parents' use of behavior modification to increase their children's SCAA and academic achievement. He trained parents of low-achieving pre-adolescents in a series of nine $1\frac{1}{2}$ -hour behavior modification workshops over a three month period. Utilizing an experimental group of 23 parents, a placebo group, and a control group, he found that: 1) the students of the experimental parents scored significantly higher on selected sub-test of a standardized achievement test; 2) experimental parents had significantly higher

perceptions of their children's ability after training; and 3) the female students enjoyed significantly greater increases in achievement than the male students. The SCAA and GPA variables were also enhanced in the experimental group, but not significantly over the control group.

Although relatively few studies have been done in this area, the investigations reviewed indicate that training parents to increase their child's SCAA is a viable method of treatment, and considering the functionally limiting aspect of SCAA, should be seen as an effective intervention for low-achieving students.

Academic Achievement -

Several investigators have measured the impact of parent training on children's academic achievement. Bar-Lev (1976), Larson (1972), and Conway (1971) used elementary school students as subjects. Gilmore (1974 and 1971), Perkins (1971), Edgerly (1971), and Pigott and Gilmore (1969) worked with early adolescents, which makes their findings more salient to the present study.

Pigott and Gilmore (1969) studied the effectiveness of counseling parents in couples to raise their child's academic achievement. They chose students whose average grade was "C" or below, and who placed in the 75th to 95th percentiles on the Lorge-Thorndike I.Q. Test. Working with a total of 27 families and 60 children, they found that the greatest increases in academic achievement occurred with the 7th graders. This finding supports the contention that early adolescence is

a period of great instability for the child, and that an increase of nurturance on the parent's part can often produce positive changes.

Birr (1969) trained 30 parents in seven monthly meetings designed to teach them methods of behavior modification. He also had 50 teachers focusing on increasing 30 other students' SCAA. He found that the parent training did increase both the SCAA and the GPA of the students, but not to a significant degree.

In a study designed to investigate the effects of group counseling with bright underachievers and their mothers, Perkins (1971) found that mothers could be taught to be more empathic and genuine. These changes resulted in significant increases in the students' GPA's. But more importantly, Perkins found that the changes in the students could be effected by working entirely with the mothers.

Gilmore (1971) presented a summary of the results of parent counseling done by students in a clinical practicum class at Boston University. Many of the parents' children were in their early adolescence. Of the four projects presented, two found significant academic gains following parent counseling while the other two showed gains but did not reach statistical significance.

Throughout the past decade, Gilmore (1971 and 1974) and his associates have worked with over 450 families. They have run parent counseling projects at all levels of public schooling. Each project has been designed for a control group of matched academic achievement, I.Q. level, and

percentile rank on achievement tests.

The counseling usually occurs with small groups of parents who attend 15 weekly $\frac{1}{2}$ -hour sessions. The counselor attempts to teach the parents techniques which will help them be more empathic, nurturant, and expressive with their children. These techniques are taught in order to raise the self-esteem of the children, which in turn is expected to promote improved academic achievement. Specifically, parents are counseled to use such behavioral expressions as smiles, words of approval, affection, and encouragement, and warm demonstrations of physical affection.

Instead of measuring self-esteem changes through the use of some standardized instrument, Gilmore chooses to assume that increases in academic achievement directly indicate increases in self-esteem.

In a review of the comparisons of parent-counseled and control groups, Gilmore relates that 70 per cent of the parent-counseled students demonstrated significant academic improvement over the course of a year. On the social behavior ratings of teachers, he found positive changes had occurred in 80 per cent of the experimental students.

Edgerly (1971) also counseled the parents of early adolescents to effect increases in academic achievement. He met with parents in couples or in foursomes. The counseling consisted of giving direct suggestions and information to the parents regarding their children, helping fathers better organize their families, and teaching both parents how to be more supportive of their child through the use of

praise and attention while reducing the use of criticism and punishment. He found that students did increase in achievement, but the differences between the experimental and control groups did not reach significance. In the experimental group, 62 per cent gained one or more grade points, while 25 per cent lost points. In the control group, 25 per cent gained points, and 75 per cent lost points.

However, the experimental group enjoyed a significant increase over their prior years' marks. Moreover, 66 per cent of the experimental group's siblings had higher grades than in the prior year.

Turrall (1975) measured changes in achievement levels of 135 9th, 10th and 11th graders following parent participation in Adlerian Parent Groups. He found that sensitivity training and Adlerian Parent Groups have no differential effect upon underachieving students' GPA's.

In distinct contrast to this, Brookover, et al., (1965) demonstrated that parent training can have a marked impact upon adolescent student academic achievement. In their 1965 study, the researchers trained a group of parents to modify the images and expectations they held of their underachieving adolescents. At the conclusion of a year of training, the experimental students demonstrated significant increases in their GPA's.

Clearly, working with parents in a counseling and/or training relationship is a viable means of altering parent responses so as to encourage greater academic achievement in adolescent students. Increasing nurturing and supportive

parent responses becomes somewhat crucial during the early adolescent years when self-esteem is tenuous and other influences may lead to decreased productivity and decreased happiness.

Summary.

This review of the literature has attempted to show that: 1) there is an important and unique phase of development called early adolescence; 2) there is a strong and consistent relationship between an early adolescent's self-esteem and his subsequent achievement in school; 3) there is a clear association between SCAA and academic achievement, and this is particularly upheld during early adolescence; 4) parents have a great impact upon the development of self-esteem in their early adolescent children; 5) the model that significant others can increase a student's SCAA, which in turn can increase his academic achievement, is particularly substantiated for early adolescents; and 6) training and/or counseling parents can be an effective way to increase a child's self-esteem, SCAA, and academic achievement.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter is to present the methods and procedures used to test the hypotheses of this investigation. The chapter is subdivided into the following sections: description and selection of sample, treatment, design, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis of the data.

Description and Selection of the Sample

The sample involved in this study includes a select group of low-achieving, early adolescents and their parents. The low-achieving students were selected from the 7th, 8th, and 9th grade population of a North Shore Long Island, New York junior high school. This school is part of a school district which serves the northwest corner of the Town of Brookhaven. Brookhaven is located in Suffolk County, approximately half-way between either end of Long Island. It is the largest in land area of any Long Island Township. Of the total population of 320,677 in Brookhaven, 39481 (12.32%) reside in the school district. Of this group, 95.68% are classified as white, 1.82% as black, and 2.5% as other races. The early adolescent population, i.e., those between the ages of 12 and 15, numbers 3,411. Of this group,

only 1.42% are black, and .82% are other races (Special Censuses, Brookhaven Town, 1976).

The school district encompasses a major New York State University Center, S.U.N.Y. at Stony Brook. The university employs many of the district's parents in a wide array of occupations, from grounds keepers to university administrators. The district also encompasses an incorporated village which has the highest median family income of any Brookhaven village (Special Censuses, 1975). However, this is not to suggest that the school population is from predominantly wealthy families. There is a wide range of socio-economic levels represented, but the bulk of the population is middle class. The median family income for Brookhaven Town is \$11,143, while the median family income for the school district residents is somewhat higher at approximately \$15,000 (Special Censuses, Income, 1976).

Another reference system which can be used to classify the school district is that established by the New York State Pupil Evaluation Program. They have drawn up a reference system based on seven public and non-public community types. According to their system, the school district from which the population was defined is a Type 5, (village and large central districts having enrollments of over 2500 pupils). This places the school district approximately half-way between Type 7, (small rural districts, enrollment less than 1100) and Type 1, (New York City, population over 1,000,000). (Bureau of Pupil Testing and Advisory Services, 1972).

Sampling Considerations

Each of the 1380 permanent record folders were evaluated by the investigator to determine the I.Q. of each student. The instrument used to determine the I.Q. of the students was the Short Form Test of Academic Ability (SFTAA), (Sullivan, E., Charles W. and Tiegs, E.; 1970). The test is administered at grade levels 2.8, 5.0, 8.0 and 10.0 to all students in the district. For the purpose of this investigation, the most recent SFTAA Total I.Q. Scores were used to determine the students' academic ability. These I.Q. scores were then compared to each student's second quarter grades in the four major academic areas: English Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science. Low-achieving students were those selected because of the discrepancy between their intelligence and their academic achievement as observed at the conclusion of the second quarter marking period. The second quarter marks offered the latest official grade reports prior to parent training.

A system was devised to insure that discrepancies between academic ability and achievement would be observed at the higher I.Q. levels as well as the lower. Table 1 presents the system and the criteria for selection.

Students were placed into the three categories according to their SFTAA I.Q. scores: those scoring from 100 to 116; those scoring from 117 to 132 and those scoring 133 and above. The SFTAA Manual (Sullivan, E., Charles, W. and Tiegs, E.; 1970) presents percentile ranks for I.Q.

Table 1
Selection Criteria and Categorization
of Low-Achieving Sample

Cate- gory	SFTAA Total I.Q.	National Percentile	Standard Deviations	Achievement Criteria	MTC
1	100 to 116	50th to 84th	0 to +1	2 or more D's or E's	1 or more
2	117 to 132	85th to 98th	+1 to +2	2 or more C's, D's, or E's	1 or more
3	133 and above	98th to 99.9th	+3 and above	2 or more B's, C's, D's or E's	1 or more

Note: MTC means Negative Teacher Comments taken from
Second Quarter Grade Report

scores based on a norming population of 197,912 students. Scores of 100 to 116 represent the 50th to the 84th percentiles, 117 to 132 represents the 85th to the 98th percentiles, and scores of 133 and above represent the 98th to the 99.9th percentiles. The investigator chose the I.Q. scores of 100, 116 and 131 as logical divisions of the scale because their percentile ranks correlate to the first, second and third standard deviations above the mean. Therefore, a student whose SFTAA I.Q. total is between 100 and 116 can be considered to be functioning intellectually within the first standard deviation above the mean, those scoring between 117 and 132 are functioning within the first and second standard deviations, and those scoring above 133 are functioning within or above the third standard deviation above the mean.

Utilizing criteria such as the above for defining low achievement has been a typical procedure for researchers. Hornrich (1965) notes the lack of any standardized procedures for selecting low achievers. He offers instead a number of examples demonstrating the sundry criteria which have been employed effectively by investigators. Among these examples are the following:

Goldberg (1959), in a three-year experimental program to help bright underachievers at the high school level, defined underachievers as tenth graders whose I.Q.'s on the CTMM were 120 and above, and whose ninth year G.P.A. fell below 80 percent. Out of 102 tenth graders who scored above a 120 I.Q., 70 had achieved less than an 80 percent G.P.A.

Gowan (1957) defined underachievement in his study as gifted children, having I.Q.'s of 130 and above, who fall in the middle third scholastically. He differentiated between underachievers and severe underachievers. The latter he defined as those with I.Q.'s of 130 and above who fall in the bottom third scholastically.

Baymur and Fatterson (1960) defined underachievers as those high school students whose percentile rank based on grades was 25 or more points below their percentile rank on the Differential Aptitude Test using the Verbal and Abstract Reasoning subtests.

These examples indicate the wide range in the degree of precision which researchers have accepted in the definition of underachievement.

As in the above examples, the present study uses an achievement-ability discrepancy as a basis for defining low-achievement. However, in addition to this criteria, the investigator also insists that none of the students chosen has been determined to be emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, or neurologically impaired, and that each of them has received at least one NTC as an indicator of teacher dissatisfaction with their academic efforts.

The criteria used for selection in the present study yielded a population of 108 low-achieving early adolescents. Table 2 presents data which tends to support the notion that the criteria were effective in selecting a true low-achieving population.

Table 2
Category, Number, Mean I.Q., Mean GPA,
and
Mean Number of Negative Teacher Comments
For Low-Achieving Students, Grades 7,8,9

Category	N	Mean I.Q.	Mean GPA	Mean Number NTC
1	80	107.49	1.67	3.33
2	25	119.40	2.57	2.24
3	3	141.67	2.75	2.30

Note: NTC means Negative Teacher Comments, which are coded comments given on the quarterly reports. They indicate: 1) Poor work and study habits; 2) Inattentive; 3) Poor homework; and 4) Disruptive.

As other investigators have noted (Fine, 1967; Kornrich, 1965), Male low achievers outnumber female low achievers. In this sample there are nearly two and one-half times as many boys as girls. A comparison of the mean I.Q. in each category with the appropriate Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) demonstrates that these students perform nearly a letter grade below that which could be reasonably expected for their intelligence. Combine this fact with the average number of negative teacher comments received and the profile of low achievement becomes quite clear.

In order to insure that the selected population was underachieving due to normal causes, any student who had been classified as learning disabled or emotionally handicapped by the district's handicap committee was withdrawn from the selection. The resulting selected population of low-achieving students totalled 108, which represents 7.83% of the school's enrollment.

The Experimental Sample

In late March, 1979, the investigator sent out letters to the parents of the 108 identified low-achieving students. The letters explained briefly the nature and goals of the parent training program, and invited them to participate, (see Appendix I).

Following the sending of the invitations, parents phoned or visited the investigator at the school to ask questions and learn more about the program. This registration

period continued for two weeks. At the end of this period, 24 parents (couples are counted as single parenting units) had responded favorably to the invitation to participate. Phone calls were then made to each parent informing them of the day and time of their training sessions. A follow-up letter was then sent out to each parent regarding the day and meeting times. The intent of this letter was to function as both a reminder as well as a continued reinforcement to participate, (see Appendix II).

The 24 parents who responded positively to the invitation represented 22.22 percent of the identified low-achievers' parents. Due to certain administrative and time constraints, as well as the uncertainty of the treatment mortality rate, the decision was made to accept all of the children of the responding parents as the Experimental group for purposes of research design.

The Experimental group thus defined had the following characteristics:

1. Nineteen males and five females.
2. Nineteen Category 1 students (100 to 116 I.Q.), five Category 2 students (117 to 132 I.Q.), and no Category 3 students (133 I.Q. and above).
3. Eleven 9th graders, eight 8th graders, and five 7th graders.

The Control Sample

In order to delineate an appropriate Control group for statistical comparison, a number of variables were examined for their saliency in describing the members of the Experimental group. Five variables were chosen as being the most effective overall descriptors of each Experimental group member. These variables are listed as follows:

1. Academic Ability, as measured by the most recent SFTAA Total I.Q. score.
2. Age, as indicated on official school records.
3. Grade, as indicated on official school records.
4. Sex, female or male.
5. Parent Occupational Status (P.O.S.), as a gross measure of socioeconomic status. From the data available on official school records, parents were classified as Professional, Business, Uniformed, and Skilled.

The records of each of the 34 students whose parents had decided not to participate in training were examined for their similarity to Experimental group members. It was thus possible to match each Experimental group member with a Control group member who had the same intelligence, age, grade, sex, and Parent Occupational Status (P.O.S.). Grade, sex, and P.O.S. were all direct matches, whereas intelligence and age were allowed slight variation since direct matching of these variables was impossible. In no case, however, did the SFTAA Total I.Q.

score of an Experimental and matched Control group member differ by more than five points, nor did the age differ by more than six months. A total of 24 matched Control group members were thus identified.

Assignment of Treatment Groups

The initial letter sent to all 108 parents of the identified low-achievers allowed four separate response possibilities, (Appendix I). Parents could indicate whether they preferred a Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday meeting time. And if none of these were possible, parents could write in a fourth meeting time. Parents were asked to indicate their first, second and third choices in order that the investigator would have some flexibility to arrange groups.

The parent responses indicated strong preferences for the Tuesday and Thursday evening meeting times. Only two parents asked for a Saturday meeting time, and these two were able to arrange their schedules so that they could attend the Tuesday and Thursday groups.

The investigator was able to satisfy the parents' meeting time preferences while at the same time maintaining a numerical balance. In this manner the investigator was able to assign 12 parents to the Tuesday evening group and 12 parents to the Thursday evening group. With the exception of a single parent who moved from the Thursday to the Tuesday group after the second session, all of the parents who completed the training program remained within their assigned group.

The investigator conducted both the Tuesday and Thursday groups. No clear differences were noted between the groups regarding the manner in which they engaged in parent training. Some initial resistance was noted in both groups. This resistance was particularly noted toward the notion that the parents had had and continued to have an influence on their low-achieving children's self-esteem, SCOA, and academic achievement. However, much of this resistance was worked through by the end of the second session. And by the third session both groups of parents seemed ready to work on their parenting responses.

Treatment

The treatment for this study is a parent training program specifically designed to help parents learn to raise their child's self-esteem and self-concept of academic ability (SCOA) in the expectation that this would effect increases in academic achievement.

The program was designed to incorporate cognitive, affective and interactional elements so that participants would have the opportunity to become engaged on several levels. Each session was two and one-half hours in length, and the meetings were held once a week for eight successive weeks. The number of sessions was decided upon after a review of the literature revealed that even such a relatively stable variable as self-esteem could be positively affected within an eight-week period (Schofield, 1976; and

Stearn, 1971). Turrall (1975) found no significant increases in self-esteem following parent training alone, but he did find a positive self-esteem increase in the sons of fathers who attended a six-session Adlerian training program, while the sons simultaneously attended sensitivity training.

The theme for each session was chosen after a careful review of the literature on self-esteem and SCAA. Pertinent references are included in the outline of the program's elements and activities which appears in Appendix III.

The use of a theme for each parent training session is similar to the Theme-Centered Interactional Method developed by Cohen (1969). Whereas Cohen's method developed from her group supervision of other therapists as a way to maximize awareness of countertransference difficulties, the present training design follows a more confluent format. That is, the didactive-cognitive aspect of each session is presented at the outset, this is followed by the affective-experimental activity, and these are brought to integration through discussion and interaction. This type of design might best be termed a confluent education design since there is a conscious attempt to have the cognitive and affective elements of the learning flow together or integrate (Brown, 1971).

Instrumentation

The Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI), (Coopersmith, 1967)

The notion that a child's self-esteem can be modified through constructive and nourishing parenting behaviors is central to Coopersmith's (1967) work, The Antecedents of Self-Esteem. With the presentation of this work, Coopersmith established himself as an authority in the field. He also produced at that time his Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI).

In the present investigation, major portions of the experimental treatment are focused on those parenting conditions which Coopersmith identified. For these reasons, as well as the ample reliability and validity data supporting it, the Self-Esteem Inventory was chosen to measure global self-esteem in the low-achieving students.

The instrument measures attitudes towards the self in the academic, family, social, and personal areas. Because there is a tendency for socialized responses to emerge, Coopersmith added an eight-item lie scale.

The SEI is composed of 58 items. Each item is a short statement to which the subject is asked to respond, "Like me." or "Unlike me." Because of the simplicity of the statements and format, the test can be administered effectively to a wide range of ages, from pre-adolescents to adults.

Reliability data on the SEI has been supportive. Taylor and Reitz (1968) report a coefficient of .90 and Fullerton (1972) reports a .87 for split half reliability.

Test-retest reliability was found to be .88 over a five-week period, and .70 over a three-year period by Coopersmith (1967).

Studies to validate the SEI have been done and seem to indicate that the instrument is capable of measuring that body of self-perceptions we call self-esteem. Taylor and Reitz (1968) found that the SEI correlated at .45 to the California Personality Inventory self-acceptance scale. Coopersmith (1967) found that anxiety was negatively correlated with self-esteem. Subjects reporting high self-esteem on the SEI had fewer psychosomatic complaints. Matteson (1974) found in her study a significant correlation between effective parent-child communication and the child's SEI scores. Parental attitudes towards child rearing have also been found to be significantly related to children's scores on the SEI (Toto, 1973). Simon and Bernstein's (1971) study of 129 sixth grade children demonstrated that children with high SEI scores were more likely to believe that the people they liked reciprocated their positive feelings.

The Self-Concept of Ability Test (SCAT)

Brookover and his associates developed this scale in 1960 as part of a project to determine the extent to which perceived evaluations of significant others influence the academic self-concept of children, (Brookover, 1962).

Brookover's research staff developed a set of 16 multiple-choice questions which were judged to measure

the child's perception of his ability to succeed in school. They administered the questions to 47 seventh grade students. A scalogram analysis of the responses yielded an eight-question, Guttman type scale with a .91 coefficient of reproducibility. This eight-item scale was then administered to 1,050 seventh graders. Another scalogram analysis of their responses indicated coefficients of reproducibility of .95 for males, and .96 for females. Using Hoyt's method, the reliability of the scales was found to be .82 for males and .77 for females.

Validation of the scale was done by measuring its predictive power. Drawing a random sample of students from the 1,050 tested, the predicted GPA correlated with the actual GPA .71 for both males and females.

The most clear validations of the scale were the findings of Brookover's 1965 study in which he demonstrated that parents could be trained to raise their child's SCAA. Further, he found that children who enjoyed increases in SCAA tended to enjoy significant increases in academic achievement. Thus, the scale appears able to measure children's SCAA which Brookover maintains is the intervening variable between the child's perception of his parent's academic evaluation of him, and his actual academic achievement. The specific correlations which Brookover found between SCAA and academic achievement in his 1965 study are as follows:

for males,	.57	7th graders
	.63	8th graders
	.61	9th graders
	.56	10th graders
for females,	.57	7th graders
	.65	8th graders
	.64	9th graders
	.59	10th graders

The Short Form Test of Academic Ability (SFTAA)

Sullivan, Clark, and Tiegs (1970) offer evidence for the reliability and validity of the SFTAA. In a study of the internal consistency of the instrument, correlation coefficients using the Kuder-Richardson formula were computed on a cross-sectional subsample of the total standardization sample of over 197,000 students. Although correlation coefficients were computed for each grade level, only the 5th and 8th grade are presented here because of their relevancy to the present study. The resulting correlations indicative of internal consistency were .93 for 5th grade, and .92 for 8th grade (Sullivan, Clark, and Tiegs, 1970, p. 49).

The authors also present an analysis of interlevel articulation by computing Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for those grades that overlapped levels in the standardization sample. The coefficients for Total I.Q. were determined for students who were tested with one level, then retested six weeks later with the next higher level. For the purposes of this study, the 5th grade results are relevant. The resulting Pearson r was .88 for the 5th graders who were tested and retested in this manner (p. 50).

Finally, the authors offer evidence of the stability of the SFTAA by computing Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for two different test-retest situations. The first involves a relatively short interval of approximately two weeks. The resulting Pearson r 's for this in the 5th and 8th grades are .89 and .92, respectively, for Total I.Q. score. The second situation involves a longer interval of time, 14 months. The Pearson r 's calculated for this longer period are .91 in 5th grade and .81 in 8th grade for the Total I.Q. score.

These data indicate that the SFTAA has good internal as well as test-retest reliability for those grades and test levels that are relevant to this study.

Validation of the SFTAA is presented by Sullivan, Clark, and Tiegs (1970). They calculated the correlation between SFTAA scores and the 1963 California Short-Form Test of Mental Maturity scores. Using the Pearson r formula, correlations of .76 and .66 were found for Total I.Q. scores in grades 5 and 8, respectively.

A second set of correlations were computed between the SFTAA scores and scores on the California Achievement Tests, 1970 Edition (CAT-70). Total Battery scores and Total I.Q. scores were found to correlate at .84 and .85 for 5th and 8th grades, respectively.

Finally, a study by Burket (1974) found that the SFTAA scores functioned as a measure of learning rate, while the CAT-70 scores measured the amount of school material learned. He concluded this on the basis of deriving empirically

testable predictions regarding the regression curves of the two sets of scores. His results offer considerable evidence of the construct validity of the SFTAA.

Collection of Data

Data collection for this investigation consisted of three phases: the selection of the low-achieving population, the pretesting, and the posttesting.

The selection phase involved the defining of the low-achieving population by comparison of their most recent SFTAA Total I.Q. scores with their second quarter GPA. This was done during the months of January and February, 1979.

The pretesting phase involved the administration of the SEI and the SCAT to the selected low-achieving students. This was done in a large group instruction room by two counselors who were not involved in the investigation. Any student absent from the large group was tested individually or in small groups within several days of the first administration. Pretesting was done during the first and second weeks of April, 1979.

The treatment phase of the study took eight weeks. It began in the third week of April, 1979 and continued through the second week of June, 1979.

Posttesting took place immediately following the last training session, during the third week of June, 1979. The data on the students' GPA's became available on June 22, 1979, when the final academic progress reports were distributed.

Counselor Training

The experimental treatment, i.e., parent training, was run by the investigator who has post Master's preparation in counseling and is currently a candidate for the doctoral degree in Counselor Education at St. John's University. The leader has been a school counselor for ten years, a senior drug abuse counselor for Brookhaven Town, and a family therapist for the Long Island Y.M.C.A. Outreach Services Agency. He has also been trained in group therapy and group training techniques at Group Relations Ongoing Workshops in New York City. The leader's experience with parents has been: 1) counseling parents within the school setting, 2) designing and leading evening parent training programs in the school, and 3) practicing family therapy privately and for the Outreach Services Agency.

Design

The design to be used in this study is the Compromise Pre-Test, Posttest, Control Group Design, number 17.7 described by Kerlinger (1966, p. 315). This design can be used when physical, financial or time constraints make it impossible or impractical to use random selection and assignment of subjects. The validity of this design rests upon the careful selection of a control group which is matched to each member of the experimental group on a number of salient variables. Kerlinger states that the design is considered valid internally if the pre-test score

means, variances and frequency distributions are not significantly different between the two groups, (1960, p. 199).

In the present study each of the 24 Experimental group members were matched with a Control group member using the following criteria:

1. Academic Ability - The Control group member had to be in the same SFTAA Total I.Q. category as the Experimental group member, i.e., 100 to 116, 117 to 132, or 133 and above. These categories each delineate the first, second and third standard deviation above the mean. The instrument used to determine I.Q. is the SFTAA (Sullivan, Charles, and Tiegs, 1970). In no case did the I.Q.'s of a matched pair differ by more than five points.
2. Grade Level - presently in the 7th, 8th, or 9th grade.
3. Sex - male or female.
4. Age - no differences greater than six months in the ages of a matched pair of students.
5. Parent Occupational Status - This variable attempts to control for gross socio-economic differences attributable to parent occupation. Four categories of Parent Occupational Status (P.O.S.) were identified from an inspection of the students' permanent records. These categories are as follows:
 - a. Professional - doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc.
 - b. Business - managers, merchandisers, salesmen, etc.

- c. Uniformed - policemen, and city firemen.
- d. Skilled - cabinetmakers, plumbers, electricians, etc.

The pre-test scores were analyzed statistically using the t-test of mean differences, the t-test of variance differences between two dependent samples, and an inspection and comparison of the SEI, SCAT, and GPA score distributions.

Posttest differences were analyzed using one-way analysis of variance to determine if significant differences existed between groups on the SEI, SCAT, and GPA following parent training. The analysis of variance was run on a Univac computer using the One-Way sub-program from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), (Nie, et al., 1975).

A simple comparison of pre-test and posttest score means was done to determine whether any minor or insignificant trends would be observed between the Experimental and Control groups.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter is a presentation of the findings of this investigation pertinent to the research hypotheses set forth in Chapter I.

These hypotheses were designed to help answer the following questions: 1) Can parents of low-achieving, early adolescents be trained to increase self-esteem in their children? 2) Can parents of low-achieving, early adolescents be trained to increase self-concept of academic ability in their children? 3) Will training such parents to increase both self-esteem and self-concept of academic ability in their children have the additional effect of raising their children's academic achievement?

This chapter is organized in the following manner: First, the data which are necessary for analysis of parent attendance are presented; second, the data which are pertinent for analysis of pre-treatment score means for Experimental and Control group students are discussed; and finally, the results for the hypotheses are examined.

Analysis of Parent Attendance

The number of parents actually participating in each of the eight training sessions is presented in Table 3.

Within each week of training there were two treatment sessions, each accommodating half the parents. The data is presented as combined sessions for clarity.

Table 3
Parent Attendance Per Session (Combined)

Participants		Weekly Training Sessions							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mothers	-	20	21	20	18	15	15	16	16
Fathers	-	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
Totals	-	29	31	28	27	24	21	22	24

Note: The original number participating is 24. This figure combines couples into single parenting units. The above table shows the actual number of mothers and fathers attending.

Parents attending five (5) or more sessions are considered to have completed training. Nineteen (19) children had parents who met this attendance criteria.

Parent training investigators differ in their treatment of parent attendance data. Miles (1974) does not present any specific parent attendance data in her study on the efficacy of Gordon's (1971) P.E.T. program. Turrall (1975) accepts for his data the responses of parents who concluded training and who also completed pre- and posttest surveys. He does not indicate the number of sessions each parent attended, but includes in his data analysis the responses of those who attended the final session.

Cox (1976) is most specific regarding parent attendance and data collection. In his study of the Downing Parent Education Program (Downing, 1971), he included in the final analysis of data those parents attending a majority of sessions and completing posttest and follow-up evaluation instruments.

The present investigator utilized the pre- and posttest scores of those adolescents whose parents met the following attendance criteria:

1. They must have attended at least five out of the eight sessions, i.e., nearly two-thirds of the sessions (62.5%).
2. They must have attended at least two sessions on raising self-esteem and two sessions on raising SCAA in their adolescent children (two out of the first four, and two out of the last four sessions).

The development of these criteria rests upon the following rationales: 1) This study involves a new program, i.e., no previous data are available on this program, making clear attendance criteria an important control element; and 2) the program attempts to teach parents to raise both self-esteem and SCAA in their children, thus minimal attendance in each of these areas is essential.

Table 3 demonstrates the continually changing attendance pattern throughout the eight-week period. Indeed, the actual number attending differed each week with the exception of the fifth and eighth sessions which each had 24 attending.

Since some of the parents attended as couples and others as single parents, it is more meaningful to inspect the attendance data in parent units, i.e., couples are treated as single parent units in order to equate 19 parent units to 19 students.

Table 4 presents attendance percentages for the 19 parent units who completed training.

Table 4
Number and Percentages of Parents (In Units)
Who Completed Training

Parents (n=19)			Sessions	
Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
8	42.1 %	attended	8	100 %
3	15.8 %	attended	7	37.5 %
4	21.05 %	attended	6	75 %
4	21.05 %	attended	* 5	* 62.5 %

Note: Couples are counted as single units above.

*Minimal necessary to have completed training.

Table 4 shows that less than half of the parents attended all of the training sessions while over one-fifth of them attended the minimal number to be accepted as having completed training.

Table 5 presents commencement, completion, and treatment mortality rates for the parent training program.

Table 5
Commencement, Completion, and Treatment
Mortality Rates of Parents in Training

Categories	Number	Percentage
Commenced Training	24	100 %
Completed Training	<u>19</u>	<u>79.17%</u>
Training Mortality	5	20.83%

Table 5 indicates that slightly more than one-fifth of those parents originally expressing interest in and actually attending one or more training sessions eventually dropped out or attended so sporadically as not to have completed training.

These attendance rates are comparable to the rates observed by other parent training investigators. Turrall (1975, p. 62) indicates a total parent attendance rate for training at 73% for mothers and 47% for fathers, while Cox (1976, p. 79) reports that 80.48% of the parents who began training actually completed it. Since the Control group for the study was composed of matched subjects, each of these were deleted from the data prior to the quantitative analysis.

Analysis of Pre-Treatment Score Means

In the utilization of a non-random, matched control group, it is essential that the investigator demonstrates that the matched control group does not significantly differ from the experimental group on any of the dependent variables. In this regard, Kerlinger (1966, p. 315) suggests that the pre-treatment score means and variances of the experimental and control groups be compared, as well as the distribution of their scores.

Table 6 offers an analysis of the differences of the pre-test score means for the Experimental (Exp.) and Control (Cont.) groups on the three dependent variables: Self-esteem as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, Self-Concept of Academic Ability as measured by the Brookover Self-Concept of Ability Test, and Grade Point Average (GPA) in the four major academic subjects for the Second Quarter Marking Period.

Table 6
T-Test of Mean Differences on
Pre-Test SEI Scores, SCAT Scores,
and GPA

Variables	Group Means		T-Value	Critical Interval Limits	Probability
	Exp.	Cont.			
SEI	58.63	62.42	.948	(-2.101,+2.101)	N.S. at .05
SCAT	26.52	28.16	1.6028	(-2.101,+2.101)	N.S. at .05
GPA	1.89	1.77	.54913	(-2.101,+2.101)	N.S. at .05

Note: N.S. means Not Significant at the .05 level of probability.

An examination of Table 6 indicates that none of the t -values exceed the critical limits, and thus there are no significant differences in the pre-test means between the Experimental and Control groups on the dependent variables.

Table 7 offers the results of testing for the significance of the difference in variances between two dependent samples.

Table 7
T-Test of the Variance Differences on
Pre-Test SEI Scores, SCAT Scores,
and GPA

Variables	Group Variances		T-Value	Critical Interval Limits	Probability
	Exp.	Cont.			
SEI	222.69	164.70	.619	(-2.101,+2.101)	N.S. at .05
SCAT	25.63	24.92	-.5624	(-2.101,+2.101)	N.S. at .05
GPA	.47	.29	1.9033	(-2.101,+2.101)	N.S. at .05

Note: N.S. means Not Significant at the .05 level of probability.

An inspection of Table 7 demonstrates that there are no significant differences between the variances in the pre-test scores of the Experimental and Control groups on the SEI, SCAT, or Second Quarter GPA.

The final pre-test analysis to be presented is the direct comparison of score distributions between the Experimental and Control groups. Table 8 offers such a comparison as well as the means and standard deviations of each group's scores.

Table 8
Distribution of Pre-Test
SEI, SCAT, and GPA
Scores

SEI Scores		SCAT Scores		Grade Point Averages	
<u>Exper.</u>	<u>Cont.</u>	<u>Exper.</u>	<u>Cont.</u>	<u>Exper.</u>	<u>Cont.</u>
64	72	35	37	2.750	2.250
52	62	32	34	2.750	2.250
56	74	19	29	2.750	1.875
38	66	31	32	2.750	2.625
60	56	24	21	2.250	1.500
48	66	25	29	.875	1.375
56	38	23	19	1.625	1.000
54	64	27	35	1.500	2.125
46	62	27	29	1.375	1.625
66	74	23	25	.500	1.750
74	46	33	26	2.375	1.750
68	74	27	29	1.750	1.375
66	70	21	23	2.375	2.250
66	44	27	24	1.375	1.750
16	48	15	25	2.250	2.000
72	76	29	29	2.250	1.375
44	46	32	36	2.000	2.750
52	62	27	26	1.375	.625
54	66	27	27	1.125	1.375
Means: 58.6316	62.4211	26.5236	28.1579	1.3947	1.7697
S.D.'s: 14.9228	12.8336	5.0262	4.9918	.6837	.5373

Note: S.D.'s = Standard Deviations

An inspection of Table 8 demonstrates that the pre-test scores on the three dependent variables for both groups are rather evenly distributed across similar ranges.

This fact, combined with the comparable means and standard deviations of the two groups, leads to the

conclusion that there are no significant differences in the means, variances, or distribution of scores between the Experimental and Control groups prior to parent training.

One variable which is not a dependent variable in the investigation, but which was used as a part of the initial criteria for being selected as a low-achiever, is the number of negative teacher comments (NTC) received on the 2nd Quarter Report Card. In order to determine whether the two groups were rated significantly different by teachers' negative comments prior to treatment, an analysis of mean and variance differences was performed. Tables 9 and 10 show the results of this analysis.

Table 9

T-Test of the Mean Differences in Number
of Negative Teacher Comments (NTC) Given
On Second Quarter Report

Variable	Group Means		T-Value	Critical Interval Limits	Significance
	Exp.	Cont.			
Negative Teacher Comments:	2.79	3.10	-.632	(-2.101,+2.101)	N.S. at .05

Note: N.S. means Not Significant at .05 level of confidence.

The t-value indicated in Table 9 demonstrates that there are no significant differences in the mean number of negative teacher comments made on the Second Quarter report cards of the Experimental and Control group students.

Table 10 offers the results of the statistical t-test of the variance differences between two dependent groups. This test was performed to determine if there were significant variance differences in the pre-test NTC's between the Experimental and Control groups.

Table 10

T-Test of the Variance Differences in Number
of Negative Teacher Comments (NTC) Given On
Second Quarter Report

Variable	Group Variances		<u>T</u> -Value	Critical Interval Limits	Significance
	Exp.	Cont.			
Negative Teacher Comments:	2.69	3.50	-.546	(-2.101, +2.101)	N.S. at .05

Note: N.S. means Not Significant at the .05 level of confidence.

The resulting t-value of $-.546$ is clearly not significant at the .05 level, indicating that there are no significant differences in the variances of the two groups on the number of negative teacher comments received on the Second Quarter Report, prior to treatment.

In summary, the t-tests of mean and variance differences on the SLI, SCAT, CPA, and NTC variables have all resulted in non-significant t-values. This fact, combined with the comparisons of the score distributions which also yielded no significant differences, enables us to conclude that the

Experimental and Control groups did not differ significantly on any of the main dependent variables prior to the parents participating in training.

Main Hypotheses Testing

The three main hypotheses to be tested have been stated in Chapter I and are designed to answer the three research questions set forth at the beginning of the present chapter. They are each presented here along with the data resulting from the statistical analysis and a discussion of those results.

Hypothesis I: There will be no significant difference between the posttest SEI score means of the Experimental and Control group students following parent training.

To test this hypothesis, means and standard deviations of the pre-test and posttest SEI scores were computed for both the Experimental and Control group students. These data are presented in Table 11.

A one-way analysis of variance was run to determine whether significant posttest differences occurred between the two groups. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 12.

The analysis of variance yielded an F ratio of .050 which is not significant at the .05 level of probability. Thus the null hypothesis fails to be rejected and there is no significant difference between the SEI

score means of the Experimental and Control groups following parent training.

Table 11
Means and Standard Deviations
of
Pre- and Posttest SEI Score Means

	Experimental Group		Control Group		Mean Differences
	Means	S.D.	Means	S.D.	
Pre-	58.63	14.92	62.42	12.83	3.79
Post	62.42	16.99	63.58	14.87	1.16
Mean Change	+3.79		+1.16		

Table 12
One-Way Analysis of Variance
of the Posttest SEI Scores

(n=38)					
Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between	1	12.7344	12.7344	.050	.808
Within	36	9177.2656	254.9240		
Total	37	9190.0000			

Hypothesis II: There will be no significant difference between the posttest SCAT score means for the Experimental and Control group students following parent training.

The testing of this hypothesis, as with the first, involves a comparison of the pre- and posttest SCAT score means and standard deviations, as well as the one-way analysis of variance of the posttest score differences. The SCAT means and standard deviations are presented in Table 13, while Table 14 offers the results of the analysis of variance.

Table 13
Means and Standard Deviations
of
Pre- and Posttest SCAT Score Means

	Experimental Group		Control Group		Mean Differences
	Means	S.D.	Means	S.D.	
Pre-	26.53	5.03	28.16	4.99	1.63
Post	27.32	4.71	28.16	4.74	.84
Mean Change	+.79		0.00		

An inspection of Table 13 shows that the SCAT means for the Experimental group were lower than the Control group means in both the pre- and post treatment assessment. Thus repeating the pattern previously observed with the SEI means.

Table 14
One-Way Analysis of Variance
Of the Posttest SCAT Scores

(n=32)

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between	1	6.7368	6.7368	.301	.593
Within	<u>30</u>	<u>804.6313</u>	22.3509		
Total	37	811.3687			

The results of the analysis of variance presented in Table 14 demonstrate that there are no significant differences in the posttest scores between the Experimental and Control groups. The resulting F ratio of .301 is well below that needed for significance.

Hypothesis III: There will be no significant difference between the Fourth Quarter GIA means of the Experimental and Control group students.

The data used to test this hypothesis consist of the Second and Fourth Quarter GIA means and standard deviations of both groups of students, as well as the results of a one-way analysis of variance to determine the significance of the difference of the final GIA means.

Table 15 offers a comparison of the pre- post GPA means and standard deviations, while the results of the analysis of variance on Fourth Quarter GPA's are presented in Table 16.

Table 15
Means and Standard Deviations
of
Pre- and Posttest GPA Means

	Experimental Group		Control Group		Mean Differences
	Means	S.D.	Means	S.D.	
Pre- 2nd Quarter	1.89	.68	1.77	.54	.12
Post 4th Quarter	2.01	.62	1.95	.82	.06
Change:	+.12		+.18		

Table 16
One-Way Analysis of Variance
of the Students' 4th Quarter
Grade Point Averages

(n=38)					
Source	df	SS	MS	F	F
Between	1	.0333	.0333	.064	.790
Within	36	18.8783	.5244		
Total	37	18.9116			

The results of the one-way analysis of variances computed on the Fourth Quarter JFA's yields an F ratio of .004 (see Table 16), which is well below that needed to attain significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis fails to be rejected and we accept that there are no significant differences in the JFA means of the Experimental and Control group students following parent training.

In summary, the one-way analyses of variance used to test the null hypotheses have yielded F ratios which are not significant at the .05 level of probability. Thus, for the post treatment SEI, SCAT, and JFA means, the null hypotheses fail to be rejected, and we accept that there are no significant differences between any of the Experimental and Control group score means following parent training.

Although the three main hypotheses of the study clearly fail to be rejected, and it has not been the focus of the study to analyze pre- to post assessment changes, the investigator here presents a simple numerical comparison of the pre- and post assessment score means for the purpose of elucidating any trends which may exist.

Table 17
Pre- and Posttest
SEI, SCAT, and GPA
Score Means

	Pre-		Post		Change		Difference
	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp. Minus Cont.
SEI	58.63	62.42	62.42	63.58	+3.79	+1.16	+2.63
SCAT	26.53	28.16	27.32	28.16	+ .79	0.00	+ .79
GPA	1.89	1.77	2.01	1.95	+ .12	+ .18	- .06

An examination of Table 17 demonstrates that on two of the three dependent variables, the Experimental group outpaced the Control group on the total change of pre- to posttest score means.

On the SEI, the Experimental group had a total pre- to posttest score mean increase of 3.79 points while the Control group increased 1.16 points over the same period. This may be indicative of a trend on the part of the Experimental group to outpace the Control group on the SEI variable. This consideration is tempered by the fact that for both the pre- and posttests the Control group SEI means were higher than those of the Experimental group.

As with the SEI means, the SCAT scores for the Experimental group show a mean, pre- post increase of .79 points. No such positive change is observed for the Control group's

SCAT means. They remain unchanged at 28.1579 on both the pre- and post assessments. This small Experimental group gain could tentatively be interpreted as a trend, although it is conjectural whether or not such a trend would continue to increase until significance were reached. SCAT has been shown to be a relatively stable personality variable by Brookover et al., (1962, 1965). Unlike the present program, he was able to effect significant changes in SCAT, but his parent training was run over a ten-month period.

Just the opposite trend can be observed in a comparison of the pre- and post GFA means. In this case, the Control group slightly outpaced the Experimental group in pre-post gains. The Control group gained .18 points while the Experimental group gained .12 points from the Second to the Fourth Quarter marking periods.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

It was the intent of this study to investigate the effect of an eight-week (20-hour) parent training program on: 1) the self-esteem, 2) the self-concept of academic ability, and 3) the academic achievement of low-achieving, early adolescents.

In order to ascertain the effectiveness of this mode of intervention, the following questions and their concomitant null hypotheses were proposed:

Question 1

Can parents of low-achieving, early adolescents be trained to increase self-esteem in their children?

Null Hypothesis 1

There will be no significant difference in the posttest score means on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory between the Experimental and Control groups following parent training.

Question 2

Can parents of low-achieving, early adolescents be trained to increase self-concept of academic ability in their children?

Null Hypothesis 2

There will be no significant difference in the posttest score means on the Brookover Self-Concept of Ability Test between the Experimental and Control groups following parent training.

Question 3

Does training parents of low-achieving, early adolescents to increase their children's self-esteem and self-concept of academic ability have the effect of increasing their academic achievement?

Null Hypothesis 3

There will be no significant difference in the post treatment Grade Point Averages (4th Quarter GPA) between the Experimental and Control group students following parent training.

Methodology

Criteria were developed for the identification of low-achieving, early adolescents. An inspection of the permanent school records of 1,380 early adolescents yielded a low-achieving population of 103 students. Invitations were sent to the parents of these 103 students, inviting them to participate in an eight-week parent training program. Twenty-four (24) of the parents responded favorably to the invitation. The parent training was designed to help parents learn to effectively increase their children's self-confidence as people and as learners

in the hopes that this would positively affect the children's school achievement. The theoretical emphasis of the training was based largely on the works of Coopersmith (1967), Brookover (1965), Matteson (1974), and Gilmore (1974).

Due to the relatively small number of parents available, as well as certain administrative and time constraints, the entire group of responding parents was accepted as the Experimental group. In order to develop a valid Control group, the investigator matched each of the 24 Experimental group students with a corresponding Control group member. Intelligence quotient, sex, grade level, age, and parent occupational status were the factors used in selecting the Control group members from the remaining 84 identified low-achievers. Appropriate t-tests as well as analysis of variance was used to determine whether any significant differences between Experimental and Control group students on the specified dependent variables existed prior to treatment. No significant differences were found. An inspection of the frequency distribution of scores on the pretests all indicated no significant differences in the distribution of scores between the Experimental and Control group.

The statistical tool used to determine posttest differences between groups was the one-way analysis of variance. Of the 24 parent units who began training, 19 successfully completed it. It was for these 19 who completed training that the analysis of variance was computed on the students' posttest score means.

Main Hypotheses Testing

The findings of this investigation have demonstrated that:

1. The eight-week (20-hour) training program for the parents of low-achieving, early adolescents was not effective in helping parents learn to increase their children's self-esteem. The null hypothesis of no significant differences in students' SEI score means following parent training failed to be rejected.

2. The parent training program was not effective in helping parents learn to increase their children's self-concept of academic ability. The null hypothesis of no significant differences in students' SCAT score means following parent training failed to be rejected.

3. The parent training program did not effectively increase students' academic achievement. The null hypothesis of no significant differences in 4th Quarter GPA's failed to be rejected.

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the results of this study regarding the population of low-achieving, early adolescents identified in this particular junior high school:

The eight-week parent training program designed specifically to help parents of low-achieving, early adolescents did not increase the self-esteem, self-concept of

academic ability, nor grade point average of those students.

These completely negative conclusions may be slightly tempered by the fact that the Experimental group scores did indicate a weak positive trend when compared to the Control group scores on the SEI and SCAT. In these two cases it was observed that Experimental group score means slightly outpaced the Control group score means over the pre- to post assessment period. It is conceivable that given enough time the Experimental score means would continue in this positive trend to the point at which they would be significantly greater than the Control group score means. However, this notion ought to be taken as conjecture, since there is no evidence from the data that the trend would continue if there were a follow-up evaluation.

Discussion

In the discussion which follows, the investigator will set forth a series of tentative rationales or answers to the question: Why was this parent training program so ineffectual in producing positive changes in the self-esteem, self-concept of academic ability, and grade point averages of the identified, Experimental group students?

1. Theoretical Rationale -

Self-esteem theory has developed largely out of the work of Stanley Coopersmith (1967). The parent training process utilized in this investigation has been largely derived from Coopersmith's writings. His notions of total

parental acceptance, clearly defined limits, and parental self-esteem formed much of the framework and focus for the present training program. Since Coopersmith's authoritative study (1967) successfully defined four basic antecedents of self-esteem, and these were all emphasized in the training program, we might ask why this program did not produce increases in self-esteem in the children.

One consideration is that Coopersmith worked with 85 pre-adolescents and their mothers to draw the data for his study. Perhaps he would have found a somewhat different set of antecedents had he worked with early adolescents. This is not an unreasonable notion considering the substantial data (Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg, 1973) demonstrating a definite disturbance in the self-image which arises in early adolescence.

Another consideration is the fact that Coopersmith's data were derived largely through interviews with mothers of the pre-adolescent subjects. It is entirely possible that the early adolescent may have some specific fathering needs to maintain or increase self-esteem. Some of the recent data available on the impact of fathering on children are impressive and would tend to support this notion (Lamb, 1976). If such fathering input is important, then the present training program which uses the results of Coopersmith's work with mothers of pre-adolescents in an attempt to train the parents of early adolescents may be at a distinct disadvantage.

The results of the present study tend to support the conclusions of Miles (1974), Turrall (1975), Overman (1974), and Toto (1973) that parent training alone has little effect on the child's self-esteem; and contradicts the conclusions of Kuhlman (1973), Perkins (1970), and Stearn (1970) who found gains in children's self-esteem following parent training. Thus, although Coopersmith's theoretical basis for the antecedents of self-esteem are sound, parent training practitioners are having mixed success in helping parents enhance their children's self-esteem.

The second major theoretician focused upon in this study is Brookover (1962, 1965). Building on Meade's (1934) symbolic interaction theory, Brookover hypothesizes that students have specific ways of perceiving and evaluating themselves in any academic context. He calls this self-evaluation the self-concept of academic ability (SCAA). He further hypothesizes that the SCAA results from the child's perception of significant others' academic evaluation of him. Thus, according to Brookover, if parents were to consistently evaluate their child as academically strong, the child would develop an enhanced SCAA. He further theorizes that the SCAA is a functionally limiting intervening variable between the parents' academic evaluation of the child and the child's actual academic achievement. Thus, a child with a high SCAA would also be likely to achieve well academically, i.e., the SCAA and actual academic achievement would tend to be congruent.

In 1965, Brookover and his associates trained a group of parents for nearly one academic year to raise their children's SCAA. He focused first on raising the parents' perception of their children's capabilities, then teaching them to communicate these higher academic evaluations to their children in the hopes that this would lead to increases in academic achievement. His efforts produced positive results. The children had significantly higher SCAA's and GPA's than the control group children at the end of the year.

The present training program sought to utilize Brookover's findings in a way that would have the same results, not by focusing on changes in the parents, but only upon changes in the children. It is accepted that changes in the children are the result of changes in the parents' perception of, and treatment of, their children. The results of this investigation show that the students' SCAA was not raised by the parents who were in training. Therefore the findings of this study contradict those of Brookover (1962, 1965) and support those of Lirr (1969) and Conway (1971) who found no significant increases in SCAA following parent training.

2. Design of the Study -

This study used the Compromise Pre-test, Posttest, Control Group Design, Design 17.7 (Kerlinger, 1966, p. 315). It is a compromise design because it does not use random sampling and random assignment. Rather, it uses a matched control group wherein each experimental group member is

assigned a control member who is matched to them in intelligence, sex, grade level, age, and parent occupational status. This method is considered weaker than random assignment since its internal validity is more difficult to support.

Kerlinger (1966) contends that a study designed in this manner is still valid if the pre-test score means, variances and frequency distributions are not significantly different between the experimental and matched control groups.

It is the suggestion of the present investigator that if a matched control must be used, every attempt should be made to match on a broad spectrum of variables. It would seem particularly useful to include variables such as the number of disciplinary referrals and the number of days absent from school prior to treatment. Specific behavioral indices such as these will greatly enhance the probability that a valid control group has been assembled.

Another design limitation of this study which was imposed because of a time consideration is the use of a simple posttest immediately following parent training. An improvement on this would be the inclusion of a follow-up testing, perhaps one to two months following the conclusion of training. This would elicit data showing the effects of training on the child over time. Since self-esteem and SCAA are considered fairly stable personality variables, it would appear reasonable to assume that significant changes might not show up immediately following training. But, if training has helped the parents begin to incorporate new response patterns in the home, it is likely that changes in children's

self-esteem and SCAA would become apparent some time after the conclusion of training.

3. Duration of Training -

The parent training program designed for this study consisted of eight weekly sessions of two and one-half hours in length. This provided a total of 20 hours of training for parents. Considering that the goals were to increase children's self-esteem, SCAA, and GPA, this might be judged a relatively brief amount of time for training. However, with the exception of Brookover (1965) and Birr (1969) who both used considerably longer training periods, the great majority of parent trainers spent the same approximate time as this investigator. Borlick (1966), Downing (1971), Miles (1974), Turrall (1975) and Cox (1976) each ran six sessions of training. Stambaugh (1971), Laine (1973), Frazier (1974) and Overman (1974) each ran ten sessions of parent training. While Stearn (1971), Lillibridge (1971), Reisswig (1973) and Hanley (1974) each ran eight sessions of training as did this investigator. Not all of these studies dealt specifically with self-esteem or SCAA, but of those which did, only Brookover (1965) and Stearn (1971) managed to increase children's SCAA and self-esteem respectively through parent training alone.

4. The Training Design -

The parent training design used in this study was developed by the investigator specifically to help low-achieving, early adolescents. The content focus came

directly from the literature on self-esteem and SCAA. Specifically, Brookover (1962, 1965) provided the impetus and content for the sessions on raising SCAA, Coopersmith (1967) and Gilmore (1974) provided the content for the sessions on self-esteem, while the impetus for communication between family members came from Matteson's (1974) findings. Carkhuff's (1969) communication training paradigm was used to help parents become aware of levels of empathy and their own response styles. The eight sessions were divided broadly into two sections, with the focus on raising self-esteem in the first four sessions and raising SCAA in the last four. Communication skills were emphasized and practiced throughout the training.

Each session followed a written outline which was given to each parent. These outlines provided the format for training. It was the intent of the investigator to elicit several levels of responses from the parents: 1) written (didactic and responsive); 2) covert written (private written responses to awareness and insight training); 3) overt cognitive (discussion of content); 4) overt emotional (verbal and emotive sharing of failures and successes with children). The written responses provided the parents a means of seeing their progress each week, while the verbal sharing helped develop group cohesiveness and a mutual support vehicle.

In summary, the present parent training program utilized didactic learning, interactional group process, response practice and goal setting to arrive at the desired esteeming

milieu. These activities are similar to those employed by other parent trainers, notably Gordon (1971), Miller (1975), and McKay (1976). Certainly there are other modes of training which could be employed. New modes of training should be explored to find the most efficient and effective processes.

5. Early Adolescent Subjects -

Although a number of parent training studies have dealt with parents of adolescents, few have specifically trained parents of early adolescents. As discussed in Chapter II of this study, the early adolescent is in a unique developmental stage with its own specific pressures and developmental hurdles to overcome.

Tanner (1971) emphasizes the rapid growth and variations in the growth sequences which accompany early adolescence. Because early adolescents are so aware of their changing bodies and because their peers are especially critical of physical differences during this stage, self-esteem may become more dependent upon physical attributes such as height, strength, weight, and shape during this period (Garrison, 1965). If this is so, then maturation becomes a particularly important threat to the internal validity of the study. Random sampling and assignment would handle this problem, but in such a study as the present one, where a matched control had to be used, serious consideration should be given to the inclusion of some physical variable for matching purposes.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. These are presented as follows:

1. Physical and financial considerations limited the duration of the parent training to eight weekly sessions (20 hours). Longer training periods would likely offer parents the time to digest and integrate the newly-learned responses in a more thorough and congruent manner.
2. The methods used did not allow for comparisons of those students who were high and low in self-esteem or SCAA. Future studies would benefit from first determining whether or not low-achievers were concomitantly low in self-esteem or SCAA before trying to raise these variables.
3. The sampling of low-achievers from a single junior high school limits the generalizability of the results to that school alone. Several schools should be sampled for increased sample size and a greater cross-section of subjects.
4. A single instrument was used to measure self-esteem and another to measure SCAA. Although SCAA has only one extant measuring instrument, the Brookover SCAT, self-esteem may be measured using several instruments. Such use of multiple instruments to gather data on a single variable can only increase the likelihood that the more subtle changes may be detected and also provides a measure of test validity through the comparison of results.

Implications for Future Research

Inherent in the results and conclusions of this study are the implications for future research in this area. Specifically these are as follows:

1. The changes in the early adolescents' self-esteem which are attributable to that developmental stage should be carefully explored, particularly in relation to academic achievement.
2. Similarly, changes in SCAA attributable to the early adolescent stage should be studied as it relates to school performance.
3. The particular parental characteristics which are positively associated with enhanced self-esteem and SCAA in early adolescents should be definitively determined. A study of this nature would be especially salient if it sought to determine specific maternal, paternal and interactional responses which correlated positively with early adolescent self-esteem and SCAA.
4. Future investigators might well seek to determine whether or not the self-esteem - achievement correlation tends to hold up or falter as the child moves from puberty through early adolescence to late adolescence.
5. A comparison study of different methodologies for the training of parents to induce enhanced SCAA would be highly desirable. This parent-to-child transmission process is becoming better understood, but the training methods are lacking.

6. A replication of this study needs to be conducted with an early adolescent population, and if possible, random selection and assignment should be used to control for maturation and contemporary events. This would increase the generalizability of the study and add to the literature on self-esteem, SCAA, and achievement.

7. A comparison study should be conducted with the same type of sample utilizing training in the following:

- a. Self-esteem enhancement, alone.
- b. SCAA enhancement, alone.
- c. Self-esteem and SCAA enhancement, combined.

This could help determine which of these variables is more prone to change, and could additionally determine whether or not there is an interactional effect which may be beneficial.

8. A replication of this study should be performed utilizing teacher- and parent-rated behavioral indices rather than GPA as the functional dependent variable. If GPA is to be used at all, it is recommended that the pre-treatment GPA from the prior year's final grade report be used, and that the post-treatment GPA should come from the present year's final grade report. It is further recommended that the parent training should be completed in the first half of the school year, with the inclusion of one or two follow-up sessions in the second half of the year to consolidate and reinforce the parents' newly-acquired responses.

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APPENDIX I

ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
Oxhead Road
Stony Brook, New York

March 29, 1979

Dear Parents,

We have a new program which we are pleased to present to you, and which may be of real interest to you. It's called Project PRAISE (Parenting to Raise Achievement and Increase Self-Esteem).

Project PRAISE is a series of highly informative and provocative parent discussion groups. Its purpose is to help parents of adolescents learn ways to maximize their children's achievement and to improve their self-confidence as learners. The groups will meet for two and one-half hours each week for eight (8) consecutive weeks, beginning the week after Spring Vacation, that is, April 23rd. Meetings will be held at the Guidance Suite at R. C. Murphy Junior High School, and coffee and tea will be available.

Although this program will be made available to the general public, we thought you might be especially interested, since we noted somewhat of a discrepancy between your child's intelligence and his or her second quarter academic achievement. Project PRAISE has been designed to have its greatest effect upon adolescent students who are achieving below their potential.

In an attempt to schedule the groups at the most convenient time for everyone, a number of different meeting times are presented. Please indicate the best time for you by placing a "1" next to the most convenient time for you, a "2" next to the best alternative time, and a "3" next to the slot that would not work into your schedule.

The program is planned to begin on Monday, April 23, 1979. Please return this form to the Guidance Office no later than Wednesday, April 4th. If you have any questions, you can call us directly at 987-3176 or 987-3177. We would greatly appreciate your speedy response to our invitation, so we can arrange our groups. We will call to inform you of your group meeting time during the week of April 9th.

Sincerely,

Aime Lacoste, Principal

Jay Mince-Ennis, Counselor

Number of Parents planning to attend: one___ two ___

Scheduling preference: Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 P.M. _____

Thursday Evenings at 7:00 P.M. _____

Saturday Mornings at 10:00 A.M. _____

If none of these times are good for you, what day and time
could you attend Project PRAISE meetings?

Day: _____

Time: _____

I (We) would like to participate in Project PRAISE:

Mr. _____

Mrs. _____

APPENDIX II

R.C. MURPHY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
PROJECT PRAISE

April 11, 1979

Dear ,

We are pleased that you have chosen to participate with us in Project PRAISE. The themes, activities and discussions which we have planned will no doubt stimulate all of us to develop new and better ways to increase our children's achievement and self-confidence.

Because of the enthusiastic response to our invitation, we were able to form two groups. Every attempt was made to give parents their 1st choice as to the group's meeting time. When this was not possible, we went to the second choice.

Your group will be meeting on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Our first meeting will be on the first Tuesday evening after Spring Vacation, that's April 24, 1979. The group will then continue to meet weekly on Tuesday evenings right through to June 12, 1979, which will be our last meeting.

I am looking forward to meeting you, hearing your concerns, and sharing with you this program which I've designed to make parenting more pleasurable and productive.

Sincerely,

Jay Mince-Ennis, Counselor

APPENDIX III

Outline of the Parent Training Program

Self-Esteem -

Session I: Acceptance (Coopersmith, 1967)

- a. Introductions
- b. Group warm-up exercise
- c. Cognitive presentation of Acceptance theme
 1. Presentation
 2. Interactional exercises
 3. Written responses
 4. Goal setting - homework

Session II: Communication (Part 1) (Matteson, 1974)

- a. Review of last session, questions, goals, comments
- b. Cognitive presentation of Empathy theme (Gilmore, 1974)
- c. Empathy training derived from Carkhuff (1969)
- d. Cognitive presentation
- e. Role-playing using empathic responses
- f. Guided fantasy, "Floor Plan"
- g. Goal setting - homework

Session III: Communication (Part 2) (Matteson, 1974)

- a. Review of last session, questions, goals, comments
- b. Presentation of new theme
 - 1. Sending messages: Praise, Encouragement, Affection, (Gilmore, 1974)
- c. Cognitive presentation
- d. Interactional processing: brainstorming, self-inquiry
- e. Written responses: listing, ranking, refining
- f. Goal setting - homework

Session IV: Practicing the New Skills

- a. Review of last session, questions, goals, comments
- b. Presentation of role-playing situations
 - 1. Fishbowl design
 - 2. All parents take both roles
- c. Discussion, share feelings
- d. Go-around: Most important learning of today

Session V: Self-Concept of Academic Ability (SCAA)
(Brookover, 1965)

- a. Review of last session, questions, goals, comments
- b. Cognitive presentation on SCAA
 - 1. What it is
 - 2. How it can limit achievement
 - 3. How parents influence it
- c. Guided fantasy: Parents' SCAA
- d. Share and discuss
- e. Brainstorm: destructive responses to SCAA
- f. Goal setting - homework

Session VI: Raising a Child's SCAA (Brookover, 1965;
Birr, 1969; and Conway, 1971)

- a. Review last session, questions, goals, comments
- b. Cognitive presentation
- c. Self-inquiry and interactional exercises on SCAA
- d. Parental "Future Talk," encouraging or discouraging to SCAA
 1. Brainstorming
 2. Listing, prioritizing, refining
- e. Goal setting - homework

Session VII: Clearing Up Confusions

- a. Setting clearly defined limits (Coopersmith, 1967)
- b. Encourage wide variety of behavior within the limits (Coopersmith, 1967)
 1. Present and discuss these concepts
 2. Role-play confrontation over limits
 3. Power: legitimizing it as a parent (Elder, 1963)
- c. The expression of Anger and adolescent self-esteem and SCAA
 1. Cognitive presentation
 2. Constructive and destructive expressions
 3. Directionality: who or what is the focus?
 4. Interactional practice
- d. Goal setting - homework

Session VIII: Summing It All Up

- a. Cognitive overview of entire program
- b. Questions, comments, discussions
- c. Clarification and refinement of new skills
 - 1. Examples from home: successes, failures,
 sticking points
 - 2. Role-playing
- d. Reinforcement and Closure

 - 1. Strength Bombardment (Coopersmith, 1967;
 Canfield and Wells, 1976)
- e. Share feelings as a group
- f. Closure and good-byes

APPENDIX IV

VITA

Name: John A. Mince-Ennis

Date of
Birth: January 27, 1944

Place of
Birth: Suffolk County, New York

Education: ~~St. Bonaventure University, Psychology, 1961-~~
1963

State University of New York at Stony Brook,
B.A., Music, 1967

Long Island University, M.S., Counselor Education,
1970

State University of New York at Stony Brook,
Psychology and Social Welfare, 1970-1971

St. John's University, Ph.D., Counselor Education
in the Division of Human Services and Counseling,
1980

Related Work

Experience: Bay Shore Public Schools, Music Teacher, 1967-
1969

Town of Brookhaven Drug Counseling Centers,
Senior Counselor and Consultant, 1971-1973

Long Island Y.M.C.A. Outreach Services Agency,
Family and Group Therapist, 1975-1978

Three Village Public Schools, School Counselor,
1969-present

Private Practice, Individual and Family Therapist,
1977-present

Related Training:

Group Relations Ongoing Workshops (G.R.O.W.),
New York City, 1972, training in:

Gestalt Therapy

Psychodrama

Reality Therapy

Family Reconstruction in Group Process

Improvisation Techniques in Group Treatment

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