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Fathers' coping strategies and family environment when college freshmen leave home

Callahan, Cheryl Mann, Ph.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1987

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FATHERS' COPING STRATEGIES AND FAMILY ENVIRONMENT WHEN COLLEGE FRESHMEN LEAVE HOME

by

Cheryl Mann Callahan

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

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1987

Approved by

Nancy White
Dissertation Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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March 23, 1987
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March 23, 1987
Date of Final Oral Examination

CALLAHAN, CHERYL MANN, Ph.D. Fathers' Coping Strategies and Family Environment When College Freshmen Leave Home. (1987) Directed by Dr. Nancy White. 136 pp.

The purposes of this study were (a) to study the family environment, as perceived by the father before and after the college freshman leaves home; (b) to explore the extent to which fathers employ coping strategies as they make the transition into a new family phase; (c) to assess whether exposure to a parent orientation program explains changes in family environment and coping strategies; and (d) to assess whether the sex of the child entering college explains changes in family environment and coping strategies.

Questionnaires were mailed to a systematically random sample of fathers of entering freshmen intending to live in the residence halls of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro in the Fall of 1986. The final sample who volunteered to participate consisted of 143 white fathers who were mailed posttest questionnaires 6 to 8 weeks after their child left home. Independent variables were sex of child, distance from UNCG, size of community, birth order of child entering UNCG, father's educational level, and attendance at Step Ahead--a parent orientation program. Dependent variables were difference scores (posttest-pretest) on six subscales of the Family Environment Scale (FES) and the total score on the Family Coping Strategies Scale (F-COPES). Statistical procedures used were *t* tests and multiple regression.

The data indicated that there were significant changes in family environment perceptions on two subscales of the FES (cohesion and expressiveness) but no significant changes in coping strategies from pretest to posttest. When the sample was divided by attendance at Step Ahead and sex of child, there were no significant differences on the FES or F-COPES. Regression analyses also showed that none of the independent variables served as significant predictors of variance.

Lacking support for the research questions as posed in the study, the researcher presented several recommendations for future research. These give recognition to the significance of the father-child separation as a transitional period worthy of further study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my appreciation to many people for the support they have provided me throughout this extensive research study.

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To my parents, Alice and Joseph Mann, I am eternally grateful for their faith in and support of my educational and professional efforts. Their emotional investment in this research was as great as mine and indicative of the strong family bonds that exist in our family as in those families studied here.

Finally, to my husband Mike and to my daughters Megan and Kathleen, I am forever indebted for their support, their patience, and their willingness to forego their own needs on many occasions when I needed to devote time and energy to this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Going to college has become a part of the American dream that transcends all socioeconomic classes and provides countless opportunities for the economic and educational betterment of our citizens. During the last decade, there has been a trend toward more high school seniors entering college. In the state of North Carolina, those intending to go to college have increased from 52.9% of their high school graduating class to 59.5% (North Carolina Association of Institutional Research [NCAIR], 1986). Given the reality of this experience for so many young people, it could be assumed that families prepare for the day when their children actually leave home. These families have accepted the fact that their adolescents are leaving home and are moving in the direction of a life independent of their families.

What may be forgotten is that the family is a unit that exists regardless of the distance separating its members. There may be some difficulties related to the loss of a family member, even if that loss is only temporary and "voluntary." Such difficulties may include emotional adjustment to the absence of that person around

the house or they may involve the assignment of household tasks previously assumed by the adolescent to another family member. Either of these situations (or others unique to a family) could affect family members left behind in ways that are unknown or even misunderstood. The family has a history of shared experiences, a present reality, and future expectations that all come into play during any period of transition. It is this balance that may be upset by an adolescent's departure from home.

What does this passage of an adolescent from home to college mean to the family? What is its real impact on family members still at home, especially the parents, and more specifically, the father? What kinds of problems related to this passage exist and what kinds of coping strategies are adopted to deal with the problems?

All of these questions seem to imply that the adolescent's passage from home to college may create added stress in the family environment. In fact, Jay Haley (1980), director of the Family Therapy Institute in Washington, DC, contended that when a family member either enters or leaves the family, there is a period of change and stress. The significance of adolescent-parent separation has been noted for some 25 years, but studies have not investigated the parents' reaction to that process. The current research literature features the adolescents, their problems, perceptions, and subsequent development. Further, most research

studies focused on clinical populations, many of whom had been forced into separation from their parents due to emotional and psychological reasons (Bloom, 1980; Haley, 1980; Mandelbaum, 1962; Stierlin, 1974; Stierlin, Levi, & Savard, 1971). These include delinquent adolescents as well as emotionally disturbed adolescents who were institutionalized.

A more obvious gap existing in the adolescent-parent separation literature is reference to adolescent-father separation. More attention has been given to the mother due to the cultural expectations that accompany motherhood and its nurturing qualities and to mothers' easier accessibility to researchers. Popular literature such as magazines and newspapers frequently report on mothers' perspectives. The father himself has seldom been considered as a parent feeling the loss of an adolescent. A lack of attention to fathers may also be attributed in part to the cultural expectations of men as nonemotional and less attached to their children. These cultural expectations are certainly changing in contemporary society as research efforts address the changing roles of men and women of today.

Purpose of Research

There is a dearth of information regarding adolescent-parent separation in general under unforced circumstances (i.e., the adolescent's leaving home to attend college). A particular gap is the lack of focus on this separation's

impact on the father remaining at home. The purposes of this research were (a) to investigate the family environment, as perceived by the father before and after the college freshman leaves home, as to whether or not change does occur; (b) to explore the extent to which fathers employ coping strategies as they make the transition into a new family phase; (c) to assess whether exposure to a parent orientation program explains change in family environment and coping strategies; and (d) to assess whether the sex of the child entering college explains change in family environment and coping strategies.

Long-range applications of the research could provide colleges and universities with the opportunity to help fathers (and mothers) prepare more adequately for the adolescent-parent separation through parent orientation programs. A better understanding of this passage by fathers could help minimize other stresses being experienced at that time as well as maximize the capacity to appreciate their adolescents' new horizons. Such understanding could in turn contribute to helping families manage the separation in such a way that it has minimal negative impact on the family as a whole, both emotionally and behaviorally.

In recent years, there has been an increase in participation by parents in Parent Orientation Programs on college campuses across the country (National Orientation Directors' Association [NODA], 1980; NODA, 1982; Staudenmeier &

Marchetti, 1983). Participation in these programs signals a renewed interest on the part of parents in their children's college experience. It also suggests that there may be questions and undefined needs that exist in parents' minds regarding their children's leaving home. To help parents understand the adolescent-parent separation from their own perspective would enable them to know that feeling some anxieties as their children leave home is not unusual and, in fact, is to be expected. Further, to initiate appropriate educational interventions on this subject as a part of parent orientation programs gives recognition to this significant family experience and permits parents to express their anxieties while sharing them with others who are experiencing similar emotions. Many parents would agree with family systems theorists (Broderick & Smith, 1979) that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and when one part leaves, the whole encounters difficulties. Coping with these difficulties then becomes a known factor with which families may be better prepared to contend.

Fathers of college freshmen offer a particularly interesting perspective from which to study adolescent-parent separation. Society has taught men gender roles that encourage them to hide their emotions in the face of stress or change. Societal expectations and roles have also made it difficult to use men in research efforts related to families. They are usually at work or do not have time for

activities related to their families because it is the mother's responsibility to take care of family matters. Therefore, it is the mother's perspective that is seen most frequently in the literature. This phenomenon is particularly true in research related to adolescent-parent separation in which the separation process is frequently linked with the mother's earliest roles as nurturer and protector. Our culture has granted these roles as a priority for the mother (Mandelbaum, 1982) and has chosen to attend to children from the mother's perspective. Though these gender role expectations are changing in our society and men are assuming many more of the traditional female roles (e.g., childrearing, household tasks), there will be a deficiency of research focusing on the father for some time to come given the overwhelming prevalence of mothers in past research studies. Thus, the focus of this research was on the father whose contributions to the adolescent-parent separation process have been overlooked.

Research Questions

There were four primary research questions asked in this research:

1. Will the father's perception of his family environment change after his adolescent leaves home to attend college? Do any differences modify the coping strategies used by the father in dealing with this transitional period?

2. Will fathers who attend a parent orientation program experience less change in their family environment perceptions than those who do not attend? Do any differences modify the coping strategies used by the father to deal with this transitional period?

3. Will fathers of daughters differ from fathers of sons in the degree to which they perceive family environment changes? Do any differences modify the coping strategies used by the father in dealing with this transitional period?

4. How are changes in family environment perceptions and coping strategies explained by sex of child, size of community, distance from college, birth order of child entering college, father's educational level, and whether or not the father attended a parent orientation program?

Definitions

As a basis for understanding the research, the following definitions of terms are important.

Adolescent--a traditional college freshman approximately 18 years of age.

Adolescent-parent separation--an event which occurs when the adolescent leaves home to attend college as a freshman and lives on the campus.

Crisis--a decisive moment or sudden event of limited duration that bring with it stress for those exposed to it.

Family system--

> . . . a unified whole with members interacting and interdependent. The system is open-ended, as its members enter and leave; the family has conscious and unconscious rules which encompass individual needs and regulate the interactions between family members. (Wechter, 1983, p. 97)

Intact family--the natural parents and siblings of those parents.

Step Ahead--an orientation program conducted at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro in June for parents preceding their child's entrance into the University as a freshman.

Transition--an event which occurs when a crisis ends in change.

> . . . the individual's emotional organization and his or her other relational arrangements must also undergo change. In addition to having to cope now with new problems, the individual must find ways of dealing with upset, tension, or fatigue, and find new sources of support for security, for feelings of worth, and for other components of well-being. Some previously maintained relationships may fade because they no longer seem appropriate while others may be modified to respond to the individual's new needs, and relationships not previously existent may now be developed. The individual's concerns and aims may change and with them the individual's sense of self. (Weiss, 1976, p. 214)

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theoretical Foundation

A family is a unit that exists regardless of the distance separating its members. As viewed by this researcher, the family is a system in which family members participate in networks of interactions between themselves and between family members and their environments. It necessarily is an interdependent and open-ended system as family members come and go; yet, it remains a definable, though flexible, entity.

The basic characteristics of the family system fall in two categories: structural and process. Structural characteristics include boundaries, subsystems, and hierarchy. Process characteristics are permeability and adaptability (Wedemeyer & Grotevant, 1982).

Structurally, the family maintains its own boundaries within the context of its environment. When defined, these boundaries can regulate what information flows in and out of the family as well as what activities occur within and outside the defined boundaries. As a family member leaves for whatever reason, the boundaries are extended and family control of activities can be affected.

Within the boundaries, family members may form subsystems or alliances which serve to enhance the achievement of particular goals within the family. These may be challenged as the boundaries are extending. Yet operating around these subsystems is a defined hierarchy which determines the patterns of family behavior (Wedemeyer & Grotevant, 1982). Typically, parents will oversee the behavior of children (hierarchy) who have come together on a given issue (subsystem) in an effort to gain access to some activity beyond the family's defined boundaries. A specific example might be the children's wish to see an R-rated movie at a local theatre which has a questionable reputation and their subsequent request of their parents to allow them to see it. The parents may rule by saying "No."

Once a family structure has evolved, the question of process emerges. Just how permeable are these boundaries? Are they rigid or can they be penetrated given appropriate justification? The second question lends itself well to the process characteristic of adaptability defined as the "ability to make appropriate structural changes in response to developmental growth or situational stress while maintaining system definition and self-regulation" (Wedemeyer & Grotevant, 1982, p. 186). Relating these characteristics to the example given above, the parents may determine that viewing the movie as a family could offer some educational and developmental opportunities of value to the family as

a unit. An appropriate change has been made to allow for a previously unacceptable event.

As individual family members come and go, the family unit undergoes change. This change could signal individual crises in both adolescents and parents. As the adolescents depart for college, they are encountering a new independence with its accompanying responsibilities. While they are experiencing this form of identity crisis, their parents may be realizing that they are entering their middle-aged years which often bring a renewed identity crisis (Wechter, 1983). Kerckhoff (1976) called this period "middlescence" and equated it to adolescence in the sense that during both developmental periods, participants are asking similar questions: Where am I going? Who am I?

Adolescent-Parent Separation

Adolescent-parent separation and the transition or stress often associated with it bring with them challenges to all of the characteristics of a family system previously mentioned: boundaries, subsystems, hierarchy, permeability, adaptability. Separation becomes

> a process whereby parents and child [adolescent] learn to differentiate themselves from each other and to part gradually, a process made possible by the satisfactions experienced by each individual in the family which bring a sense of growth, achievement, and contentment. (Mandelbaum, 1962, p.26)

When the adolescent goes away to college, a series of changes is set off in the family marking a beginning of change for

both adolescents and parents. Boundaries and subsystems change, which may open the door for challenges to the family hierarchy. Permeability and adaptability are perhaps the first to experience change as the college freshman is increasingly becoming aware of a larger world arena in which the family is a very small spectator.

Stages of Adolescent-Parent Separation

The problems of the adolescent in adolescent-parent separation have been studied. Though many of these research efforts have focused on clinical populations, the findings have been carefully related to the adolescent in general, though such correlations are questionable (Bloom, 1980; Blos, 1967; Bowlby, 1977; Haley, 1980; Stierlin, 1974; Stierlin et al., 1981; Wechter, 1983). Some researchers have focused specifically on the college freshman population (Kurash, 1979; Moore, 1984; Moore & Hotch, 1981). All of these findings support the idea that adolescents move through several stages of a separation-individuation process that result in the establishment of personal autonomy for the adolescent (O'Connell, 1972; Stierlin, 1974).

Stierlin (1974) defined five such stages. Stage 1 is "control of the impulse to remain attached." During this stage, adolescents are uncomfortable being children or adults. They may test their limits with their parents, while at the same time they are unconsciously asking for help. This stage

is a time of general ambivalence for both adolescents and parents, but it is a move toward the adolescents' independence.

"Cognitive realization of the adolescent-parent separation" is Stage 2. During this period adolescents accept the inevitability of separation. While still testing their limits at home, they are more involved in activities away from home, such as part-time jobs or spending more time with their peers. They are gradually breaking the tie.

Stage 3 is the "affective response to the separation" when both parents and adolescents have feelings of nostalgia for the past. They realize that the child-parent relationship has changed and may even mourn its loss. In this process they are seeking meaning to their new relationship as they reach Stage 4, "identification." The adolescents have achieved separation and are responsible for themselves. They have begun to demonstrate that their parents' values are, in part, their own and they are their own indivdiuals.

Stage 5 recognizes this individuality and is the "attenuation of the child-parent relationship and the corresponding development of a new relationship." The parent-child interactions are now adult-adult interactions and the young adult now begins to open to other relationships that may involve new meanings: intimacy, commitment, and stability (Stierlin, 1974).

Kurash (1979) described similar stages in her description of the late adolescent's transition to college. She called them subphases, and the first is the anticipatory subphase. Characterized by distancing and anxiety, the ambivalence described by Stierlin (1974) can also be applied in this subphase. The adolescent pulls away from parents and becomes increasingly attached to peers, in the process disengaging from the previous parent-child relationship.

Leavetaking is the second subphase and involves the actual physical separation and distance between freshman and parents. During this subphase, the freshmen realize that college is not as frightening as they may have expected. They become attached to their new "home" and its constituents.

The third subphase, "settling in," brings about a renewed attachment to parents. "The separation has been made and an increased affiliation with those who most threaten psychological separateness, the parents, can be resumed without fear of engulfment" (Kurash, 1979, p. 77). The fact that freshman and parent are still living apart serves as insurance for the established separateness.

The Adolescent's Coping with Separation

Through the entire separation process, the adolescents' perceptions of this separation can be defined in terms of specific behaviors and thoughts that make the process more

realistic and easy to address in anticipation of the changes, crises, and transitions that could occur. Knowing what behaviors to expect can facilitate training in appropriate coping strategies to ease the crisis at hand. Adolescents receive this training in a variety of ways. They learn from their peers what to expect by observing them in this separation process. More specifically, college freshmen participate in orientation programs that address the potential problems accompanying separation.

Research has identified specific behaviors and thoughts that help adolescents recognize their independence. Examples are: "The dorm is the center of my life now"; "My family is not here"; "I must do things for myself now"; "I can make my own decisions"; "I have my own job and money 'now'"; "Everything I own is here with me" (Moore, 1984; Moore & Hotch, 1983). These statements reflect behavioral and thought changes that signal the beginning of the recognition that adolescents have of the separation process and its ultimate completion.

Parental problems in the adolescent-parent separation process have been referenced in the literature in quite a different manner. Because behavioral changes that occur in parents are not as obvious, there are no specific research efforts addressing such changes. Stierlin (1974) began to address behavioral changes in his discussion of the stages of adolescent-parent separation, but since his focus was

on the adolescent, he left the parent wanting more. One example he cited was that a father can learn to go fishing with friends rather than with his children as he sees his children establishing their own independence. He can learn alternative ways of meeting the needs previously filled by a child. Specific strategies for addressing the emotional and behavioral problems of parents resulting from separation from their children need further attention and clarification.

Parental Crisis During Middlescence

Previous mention has been made of the crisis associated with middlescence. This crisis has received considerable attention in the literature (both popular and research-oriented), but it is a crisis that can stand apart from that associated with adolescent-parent separation. Though discussions of adolescence and middlescence can be found together (Bloom, 1980; Douvan & Axelson, 1966; Haley, 1980; Scherz, 1967; Stierlin, 1974; Turner, 1970), middlescence can also occur in childless families and even in unmarried individuals and can only be complicated further by the presence of children and crises that occur associated with the children.

It has been noted that parents experiencing the adolescent-parent separation are frequently left out when discussions center on adjustment to this transition for the adolescent. Adjustment needs also exist for parents and can be identified only after a better understanding of the

changes they are experiencing is accomplished. Achieving this transition successfully can not be equated or generalized to middlescence or the middle-age crisis, for the crisis involves many more precipitating events or stressors than simply an adolescent leaving home. For women, there is the biological stage of menopause which frequently brings with it emotional ups and down. It is a time when parents may die or when jobs are no longer challenging.

Separating the crises of middlescence and a child leaving home is a difficult task because of the reality that parents of adolescents entering college typically are middle aged and in the "caught generation" (Vincent, 1972), caught between the demands of their children and the needs of their elderly parents. Individual stressors are difficult to sort out. Many of them are questioning their own identity, as are their peers (married and unmarried alike). They have reached the "stage of reassessment, doubt, and sometimes despair regarding the goals that have shaped their lives in the two to three decades since they made their own adolescent choices" (Turner, 1970, p. 397). They are struggling with these realities as their own adolescents are making the decisions that will affect their middle-age years. Therefore, limiting this research effort to parents, and more specifically, to fathers of adolescents, will allow for the discovery or rediscovery of coping behaviors that

can be used to achieve successful completion of the adolescent-parent separation.

The Father's Role in the Separation Process

Though parents have clearly been neglected in research efforts related to voluntary adolescent-parent separation, a more protrusive omission is related to the father in particular. When fathers are mentioned specifically (Sullivan & Sullivan, 1980), the results relate to the adolescent's adjustment as opposed to the parents', and especially the father's, adjustment. Other references to the father are difficult to find and generally occur in research findings involving clinical populations or referring to parents in general (as opposed to mother only or father only) (Mandelbaum, 1962; Scherz, 1967; Stierlin et al., 1971). These findings offer little, if any, support for voluntary adolescent-parent separation experiences.

Summary

The literature overwhelmingly comes out on the side of the adolescent when considering adolescent-parent separation. Stages of separation have been identified and programs have been developed to help adolescents adjust to transitional periods such as entry into college. What has not occurred is a similar look at the parents' side of the process. Whether stages of separation exist for parents or support

for this transition is needed is not clear. What is clear is that the process involves two (and more) parties, both of whom have needs worthy of consideration.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This quasi-experimental research effort represents a nonequivalent control group design in which a pretest and posttest were conducted. The dependent variables were family environment and family coping. The major independent variable was attendance at a summer orientation program for parents of freshmen in conjunction with selected demographic variables.

Sample

The sample consisted of 143 white fathers in intact families who had a child entering The University of North Carolina at Greensboro as a residence hall freshman in the fall of 1986. Sample selection is presented later in the procedures section. Table 1 provides demographic data describing the sample. The percentages of sons (26%) and daughters (74%) approximate the enrollment of males (31%) and females (69%) at the University at the undergraduate level.

Representing communities of fewer than 10,000 in population (35%) to those of more than 50,000 (39%), the majority of fathers lived less than 250 miles from the University campus. The fathers themselves had some exposure to the

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Fathers in the Total Sample (N=143)

Characteristic	N	%
Fathers of Sons	37	25.9
Fathers of Daughters	106	74.1
Distance lived from UNCG		
Less than 50 miles	32	22.4
50-100 miles	46	32.2
100-250 miles	30	21.0
More than 250 miles	35	24.5
North Carolina Residents	101	70.6
Non-residents of North Carolina	42	29.4
Size of Community in Which They Live		
Unreported	2	-
Less than 10,000 (rural)	49	34.8
10,000-50,000 (town/small city)	37	26.2
More than 50,000 (urban)	55	39.0
Number of Children in the Family		
One	8	5.6
Two	72	51.0
Three	40	28.0
Four	16	11.2
Five	2	1.4
Six	2	1.4
Seven	1	0.7
Eight	1	0.7
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG		
Only Child in Family	8	5.6
First Child of Several	62	43.4
Middle Child (2nd, 3rd...etc.)	21	14.7
Last Child	52	36.4

Table 1 (continued)

Demographic Characteristics of Fathers in the Total Sample (N=143)

Characteristic	N	%
Father's Educational Level		
Less than High School	3	2.1
High School Graduate	20	14.0
Community College	36	25.2
Some College	41	28.7
College Graduate	9	6.3
Some Graduate School	34	23.8
Financial Support Parents Provide Their College Freshmen		
Unreported	1	-
Less than 25% of their Expenses	11	7.7
25-50%	7	4.9
50-99%	50	35.2
All of their expenses	74	52.1

college experience (30% were college graduates and 54% had some college or community college experience). The majority were providing at least half of the financial support required by their freshmen to meet college expenses.

For 49% of the fathers, this was their first child to enter college and for 36% their last child to enter college. The average number of children per father was 2.6 with 51% of the sample reporting two children.

Instruments

Four instruments were used in the study: two demographic questionnaires developed by the researcher (Appendices A and B), the Family Environment Scale (Moos, 1974), and the F-COPES Family Coping Strategies Scale (McCubbin, Larsen, & Olson, 1982).

The Family Environment Scale

The Family Environment Scale (FES) (Moos, 1974) served as a measure of the father's perception of his family environment. It was used to describe and compare this perception at two times--before and after the child left for college. Six subscales used in the analysis were measured by true-false statements. These are defined as follows:

> Cohesion--the degree of commitment, help and support family members provide for one another. ("Family members really help and support one another." "There is a feeling of togetherness in our family." "There is very little group spirit in our family.")

Expressiveness--the extent to which family members are encouraged to act openly and to express their feelings directly. ("Family members often keep their feelings to themselves." "There are a lot of spontaneous discussions in our family." "We say anything we want to around home.")

Conflict--the amount of openly expressed anger, aggression, and conflict among family members. ("We fight a lot in our family." "Family members hardly ever lose their temper." "Family members often try to one-up or out-do each other.")

Independence--the extent to which family members are assertive, self-sufficient, and make their own decisions. ("We don't do things on our own very often in our family." "We come and go as we want to in our family." "We think things out for ourselves in our family.")

Achievement orientation--the extent to which activities (e.g., school and work) are cast into an achievement-oriented or competitive framework. ("We feel it is important to be the best at whatever you do." "Getting ahead in life is very important in our family." "We always strive to do things just a little better the next time.")

Control--the extent to which set rules and procedures are used to run family life. ("There are very few rules to follow in our family." "There is one family member who makes most of the decisions." "There is a strong emphasis on following rules in our family.") (Moos, 1986, p. 2)

Raw scores ranging from 1 to 72 were converted to standard scores for analytical purposes. Of statistical interest is the fact that the Moos' subscales have acceptable internal consistencies ranging from .64 to .78, show good 8-week, test-retest reliability ranging from .68 to .86, and show low to moderate subscale intercorrelations ranging from .27 to .44 (p. 8). These reflect the reality that, though the subscales are related, they do measure distinct views of family social environment.

The Family Environment Scale has been used frequently in research studies over the last 10 years, primarily to describe and compare families. A typology of family environments was developed for use by clinicians in their work with families. A family incongruence score is often used in clinical settings by comparing within-family perceptual differences.

When the more important applications and findings from the FES as presented by Moos (1986) were reviewed, it became apparent that the scale has been used principally in clinical or therapeutic settings. Examples of research samples were abusive families, families with disturbed adolescents, families with substance abusers, and families with members in therapy. Other efforts focused on childhood adjustment to parental divorce, eating disorders among children, chronic childhood diseases, and mental retardation. More recent efforts have examined the family environment's influence on cognitive and social development and adolescent behavior and on adult stress resistance and depression, and adult nutrition and health.

The use of the FES in this study differs from its previous uses. Though divorce and chronic illness, for example, produce life transitions and crises, the adolescent-parent separation studied here is an expected transition for which adolescents and parents alike can prepare. Such preparation may temper perceptual changes.

A normal family sample, upon which the scores used in this research were based, was drawn from across the country, from single-parent and multi-generational families, from different ethnic groups, and from families of all age groups. The sample used in this research was white fathers from the Southeast who were in intact families. The generalization of these results to the normative data used by Moos must be considered.

The F-COPES Scale

The Family Coping Strategies Scale (F-COPES) (McCubbin, Larsen, & Olson, 1982) was used to identify changes in the fathers' coping strategies that may have been used in response to the adolescent-parent separation. In this context, coping strategies are defined as "effective problem-solving approaches and behaviors used by families in response to problems or difficulties" (McCubbin et al., 1982, p. 101). Using a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree), respondents were asked: "When we face problems or difficulties in our family, we respond by . . . ." Sample responses were: "sharing our difficulties with friends"; "having faith in God"; "facing problems head-on and trying to get solutions right away; "believing if we wait long enough, the problem will go away; and "seeking advice from relatives." The reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the total scale is .86 while test-retest reliability over 4 weeks is .81 (McCubbin et al.,

1982). Scores used in the data analysis were the total raw scores with a range from 0 to 145.

The F-COPES "was created to identify effective problem-solving appraoches and behaviors used by families in response to problems or difficulties" (Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1982, p. 101). Because it was a relatively new instrument, published research did not offer the wealth of applications seen for the FES. Its structure, however, lends itself best to small-group or family interpretations as they explore effective problem-solving behaviors. Its use in this research was not to identify effective problem-solving approaches but rather to assess the extent to which fathers used coping strategies to deal with the changes brought on as the adolescent left home. The total score of the instrument was interpreted to represent a level of strategy use that could be compared over time. Such an interpretation may limit the generalization of the findings to other settings and populations.

A further limitation wass that the sample on which norms were based was not clearly identified in the materials available on the F-COPES. A test-retest reliability study used students of psychology and family studies to administer the questionnaire to friends and family. The derived sample had a mean age of 23, was two-third female, and three-fourths unmarried (McCubbin et al., 1982). The fathers in the current research obviously did not match this profile. However,

norms were given for adults (male and female) and adolescents (male and female) and were those used in this research study. The basis of the adult male norms was not clear. Thus, generalization must be made with caution.

Demographic Data Questionnaires

Two demographic questionnaires were developed for use in the research study. The pretest questionnaire (Appendix A) and the posttest questionnaire (Appendix B) were used in two ways: (a) to eliminate subjects who did not meet the researcher's guidelines, and (b) to determine levels of dependent variables to be used in the analysis of the data.

Eliminated from the pretest sample were fathers who did not live in intact families, fathers whose children had been away from home before for an extended period in a boarding school or the military, and fathers whose children would not be living in a residence hall. Eliminated from the final sample were all fathers who had experienced crises such as death, divorce, or critical illness in the immediate family during the previous six months. These steps were taken in an effort to identify a sample of fathers experiencing adolescent-parent separation for the first time and without interference from other emotional crises in their lives.

Six independent variables were identified as possible predictors of family coping strategies and family environment:

sex of child, birth order of child, population of home community, distance from home to UNCG, father's educational level, and "Step Ahead" program attendance. These are defined and labeled by level in the next section. Levels of each variable were determined and subsequently collapsed into fewer levels for analysis purposes once the size of the total sample was determined. The variables used represented an educated guess as to what might predict changes in family environment and coping strategies. This came, in part, from the researcher's past discussions with parents who shared differing frustrations and concerns related to each of the variables used.

Variables

Independent Variables

Five demographic variables were identified as possible predictors of the dependent variables to be analyzed in this research. These variables and their levels follow:

1. Sex of Child (labeled as SEX)
    a. Male
    b. Female
2. Birth Order of Child Entering College
    a. First and Only Child to Enter College (no other children at home)--COLLEGE
    b. First Child to Enter College (other children still at home)--COLLI

c. Middle Child to Enter College (2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc. child to enter college, but not the last)--COLLII

d. Last Child to Enter College (no other children left at home)--COLLIII

3. Population of Home Community

a. Less than 10,000--POPUL

b. 10,000-50,000--POPULI

c. More than 50,000--POPULII

4. Distance from Home to University--DISTANC

a. Less than 250 miles (collapsed from three categories on the demographic questionnaire: less than 50 miles, 50-100 miles, 100-250 miles)

b. More than 250 miles

5. Father's Educational Level

a. High School Graduate or Less--SES

b. Some college or communitiy college--SESI

c. College Graduate or more--SESII

A sixth predictor used was the father's attendance at the University's summer orientation program for parents called "Step Ahead"--ATTEND. The Step Ahead Program is described below in the procedures section.

Dependent Variables

The scores for the dependent variables were the difference scores (posttest minus pretest) on the six subscales

of the Family Environment Scale (FES) and the total score on the F-COPES. These scores represented the amount of change that occurred on each scale from Time 1 to Time 2, i.e., before and after the child left home for college. These variables were labeled as follows:

1. DIFFC--difference between posttest and pretest scores on the Cohesion subscale of the FES
2. DIFFEX--difference between posttest and pretest scores on the Expressiveness subscale of the FES
3. DIFFCON--difference between posttest and pretest scores on the Conflict subscale of the FES
4. DIFFIND--difference between posttest and pretest scores on the Independence subscale of the FES
5. DIFFAO--difference between posttest and pretest scores on the Achievement Orientation subscale of the FES
6. DIFFCTL--difference between posttest and pretest scores on the Control subscale of the FES
7. DIFFT--difference between posttest and pretest scores on the Total score of the F-COPES

Procedures

Sample Selection and Pretest Phase

In order to identify the sample, the researcher acquired from the University's Office of Admissions a computer listing of all entering freshmen who indicated an intention to live

in University residence halls. Since the admissions data file could not provide information specific enough to identify only those freshmen who live in intact families, the listing included freshmen living in single-parent and reconstituted families as well. This list totaled 1,581 students.

Given the availability of only 1400 Family Environment Scales, a systematic random sample was created by eliminating every eighth name on the list and students living outside the United States. This created a list of 1,386 students who were mailed an introductory letter (Appendix C) and research instruments, Questionnaire #1 (Appendix A), FES and F-COPES in early May 1986. Also included in the packet were an "Informed Consent" form (Appendix D) and a stamped, return envelope. The packets were addressed "To the parents of . . ." each student, and the introductory letter was addressed to the father. The letter described briefly the purpose of the research and encouraged the father's participation. Readers were also asked to return the contents of the packet if there was no father in the home or if they chose not to participate in the research.

All respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their results in both the cover letter and the "Informed Consent" form. This confidentiality was maintained as the Administrative Assistant in the Office of Student Affairs coded all outgoing packets and received all incoming packets. The researcher received the questionnaires and instruments

only after the consent forms were separated and stored. These were then coded for data entry.

Of the 1,386 packets mailed, 750 were returned, a return rate of 54.1%. A postcard reminder (Appendix E) was also sent to all from whom a packet was not returned after 10 days. Of the 750 returned, 427 declined to participate or were not qualified for participation; 137 did not qualify because they were either single parents or part of a reconstituted family. Others did not have a father in the home. A few fathers were eliminated because their child was not going to live on campus or because their child had previously been away from home for an extended period at a boarding school. The age of the child did not become a factor, because it is typically the traditionally aged adolescent (18 years of age) who lives in the University's undergraduate residence halls.

The final pretest sample was 323 fathers who returned all fully completed materials in a timely manner. Because a comparison was to be made between those fathers who attended the university's Step Ahead program and those who did not, no questionnaires received after the beginning of that program in mid-June were included in the sample. This allowed a period of approximately 6 weeks for the return of the packets.

Step Ahead Program

The Step Ahead program and its Parent Orientation component provided a day and a half orientation program in late

June. Designed to familiarize parents with the University, its programs, and its services, the program included a 1½ hour session called "Expecting the Unexpected."

Led by the researcher, this sensitizing session was designed to share with the parents changes that may occur in the family during the transition that occurs as their freshman departs for college. Topics ranging from sibling rivalry to increased independence of the freshman on returning home, to parent nostalgia for the "old days" were discussed among the parents in small-group settings. The researcher encouraged the parents to nurture open communication lines in the family and to talk about how their child's departure from home was going to affect the family as a whole.

Sharing among and between parents during this session was productive and thought-provoking. Program evaluation forms gave the session the highest possible rating with written comments noting their "thanks" for this type of discussion. A primary message sent by the university in Step Ahead's parent component was that the entire family has a stake in the freshman's experience and that the university cares about the whole family, not just the student.

Because parents chose to come or not to come to the Step Ahead program, the researcher had two groups of fathers participating in the research study: those who came to Step Ahead and those who did not. These groups were obviously self-determined by the fathers themselves as they made their

choice to attend or not to attend. There were 69 fathers who attended the Step Ahead program.

Posttest Phase

In mid-October 1986 (6 to 8 weeks into the fall semester), the posttest phase of the research was conducted. Mid-October also paralleled the second of three phases encountered by college freshmen: anticipation, leavetaking, and settling in (Kurash, 1979).

Each subject in the pretest sample of 323 fathers was mailed a packet that included a follow-up letter (Appendix F), a demographic questionnaire (Appendix B), the Family Environment Scale, and the F-COPES. The fathers were also asked if they would be willing for an interviewer to talk with them generally about their separation experiences. If willing, they were to return a form indicating times and telephone numbers at which they could be reached. Ninety-six of the subjects did return these forms.

As during the pretest phase, a postcard reminder was mailed to fathers who had not responded after 10 days. Packets were accepted for a period of approximately 6 weeks after the initial mailing. To insure continued confidentiality, the packets were received by an administrative assistant who separated the questionnaires from the forms of those fathers who indicated their willingness to be interviewed.

The questionnaires were then given to the researcher for coding and data entry.

Of the 323 fathers in the pretest sample, 213 returned their packets for a return rate of 65.9%. Of these, 11 were incomplete and 10 were eliminated either because their child did not move into the residence halls or their child decided not to attend UNCG. This left 190 completed questionnaires.

Because the research questions focused on changes in the family environment that occurred as the result of the adolescent-parent separation, it was necessary to eliminate those fathers whose families had experienced other types of stresses during the time period covered by this research, such as a death in the immediate family or divorce. Black fathers were also eliminated because of a low number (14) which did not distribute well over the predictor variables. This brought the final research sample down to 143 fathers, 69 of whom had attended the Step Ahead program (see Table 2). Of the 74 who did not attend, about half of them said they could not get off from work; however, 57 said they would have attended if they could have. The description of the final sample of 143 is similar to the description of parents of all freshmen and was, therefore, assumed to be representative.

The final step in the data collection phase was the telephone interviews that were conducted with 12 fathers randomly selected from the returned forms and who volunteered

Table 2

Characteristics of Fathers by Step Ahead Attendance (N=143)

Characteristic	N	%
Attendance at Step Ahead		
Yes	69	48.3
No	74	51.7
If you did not attend Step Ahead, what were the reasons?		
Unreported	1	-
Could not take off work	36	49.3
Knew enough about UNCG	10	13.7
My child could not attend	5	6.8
Attended another Parent Program	5	6.8
Other	17	23.3
Would you have attended Step Ahead if you could have?		
Unreported	1	-
Yes	57	78.1
No	16	21.9

their time. These qualitative data were gathered by two student service professionals who themselves were involved in the Step Ahead Orientation program. The purpose of these telephone interviews was simply to provide fathers the opportunity to say anything about the adolescent-parent separation that they wished. The interviewers used a very simple interview form in the collection of these data (Appendix G) which were gathered in mid-December 1986 to early January 1987.

Statistical Analysis Procedures

Using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) and the SAS User's Guide: Statistics (SAS Institute, Inc., 1985), *t* tests and stepwise multiple regression procedures were used to test each of the hypotheses, using the variables described earlier in this chapter. Reported statistics include mean scores, difference scores, regression coefficients (b), and coefficients of determination (R2). The *F* statistic was the test of significance for the procedures. A Pearson correlation was run and confirmed the independence of the dependent variables (see Appendix H).

Hypotheses

H1. Fathers' scores on selected subscales of the Family Environment Scale (FES) will change from pretest to posttest.

H2. Fathers' scores on the F-COPES will change from pretest to posttest.

H3. Fathers who attended the Parent Orientation Program Step Ahead will change on the FES scores from pretest to posttest more than fathers who did not attend.

H4. Fathers who attended Step Ahead will change on the F-COPES scores from pretest to posttest more than fathers who did not attend.

H5. Fathers of daughters will change on the FES scores from pretest to posttest more than fathers of sons.

H6. Fathers of daughters will change on the F-COPES score from pretest to posttest more than fathers of sons.

H7. The FES difference scores (posttest-pretest) on each subscale for all fathers can be explained by sex of child, distance lived from UNCG, size of community, birth order of child entering UNCG, father's educational level, and whether or not the father attended Step Ahead.

H8. The F-COPES difference score for all fathers can be explained by sex of child, distance lived from UNCG, size of community, birth order of child entering UNCG, father's educational level, and whether or not the father attended Step Ahead.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Data for the final sample of 143 fathers are reported in this chapter. Using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS), the researcher ran (a) *t* tests to determine whether the changes occurring in difference scores were significant and (b) a stepwise multiple regression to determine the best predictors of family environment and coping strategies difference scores among the independent variables. The difference scores came from the pretest and posttest scores on the Family Environment Scale (FES) and the Family Coping Strategies Scale (F-COPES). A significance level of .05 (*F* statistic) was required to accept the hypotheses related to the F-COPES total scores. A significance level of .01 was required to accept the hypotheses related to the scores of the six subscales of the FES because of the large number of *t* tests being computed.

Family Environment

Family environment was measured using six of the ten subscales of the FES. These were cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, and control. When considering the total sample of 143 fathers, two of the six FES subscales--cohesion and expressiveness--

produced significant ($p < .01$) changes from pretest to post-test (see Table 3). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Fathers indicated that their families were (a) more cohesive, providing more support for family members; and (b) more expressive, expressing their feelings more openly after the child left home.

While considering the statistical significance of changes that occurred on the cohesion and expressiveness subscales for the total sample, one must note that the difference scores were only 2.99 and 2.46, respectively. Recognizing that these subscales have possible scores of 67 and 58 points, respectively, the researcher noted that these difference scores were not as important as was implied in the *t* test results.

When fathers who attended Step Ahead were compared to those who did not attend, there were no significant changes (see Table 4). When fathers of daughters were compared to fathers of sons, there were no significant changes (see Table 5). Thus, Hypotheses 3 and 5 which predicted change on the FES were not supported.

Birth Order of Child

Further analysis of the mean scores data by independent variable for the total sample (see Appendix J-1) provided findings of interest regarding fathers of only children. These fathers ($n=8$) had difference scores at least 3 points

Table 3

Mean Scores of Fathers on Selected Subscales of Family Environment Scale

Subscales	Pretest Means	Posttest Means	Difference Score
Cohesion	56.19	59.18	2.99 *
Expressiveness	49.64	52.10	2.46 *
Conflict	43.80	42.18	-1.62 **
Independence	53.29	54.52	1.23
Achievement Orientation	52.94	54.08	1.14
Control	52.01	51.69	-0.32

*p < .01 **p < .05

Table 4

Mean Scores of Fathers on Selected Subscales of Family Environment Scale: Attended vs. Not Attended Step Ahead

Subscales	Pretest Means		Posttest Means		Difference Scores	
	Attended (N=69)	Did Not Attend (N=74)	Attended	Did Not Attend	Attended	Did Not Attend
Cohesion	55.80	56.55	59.65	58.74	3.85	2.19
Expressiveness	50.78	48.57	51.51	52.65	0.73	4.08
Conflict	44.30	43.34	42.65	41.74	-1.65	-1.60
Independence	53.94	52.68	55.12	53.96	1.18	1.28
Achievement Orientation	54.39	51.58	54.16	54.01	-0.23	2.43
Control	50.77	53.18	51.25	52.11	0.48	-1.07

*p < .01 **p < .05

Table 5

Mean Scores of Fathers on Selected Subscales of Family Environment: Fathers of Sons vs. Fathers of Daughters

Subscales	Pretest Means		Posttest Means		Difference Scores	
	Sons (N=37)	Daughters (N=106)	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters
Cohesion	57.78	55.63	60.49	58.73	2.71	3.10
Expressiveness	51.51	48.98	54.41	51.29	2.90	2.31
Conflict	44.70	43.49	43.73	41.64	-0.97	-1.85
Independence	54.46	52.88	57.35	53.53	2.89	0.65
Achievement Orientation	53.84	52.62	53.78	54.19	-0.06	1.57
Control	49.92	52.75	50.24	52.20	0.32	-0.55

*$p < .01$ **$p < .05$

higher on both the expressiveness and independence subscales than did fathers of first, middle, or last children to enter college. These findings could indicate that the parents left at home as their only child entered college expressed themselves and their feelings more openly and more directly than did fathers in other categories. They also might be self-sufficient and might think things out for themselves rather than depending on others for support.

Step Ahead Program

When the mean scores of fathers who attended Step Ahead in comparison to those who did not attend were examined (see Appendices J-2 and J-3), the researcher found that only two of the subscales produced greater changes for fathers who attended. These were cohesion and conflict. Differences were too small, however, to be statistically significant.

Upon a closer review of the mean score comparisons by independent variables of fathers who attended Step Ahead as opposed to those who did not attend, two observations were made about the subscales of Achievement Orientation and Control. Fathers of middle children who attended Step Ahead (n=6) lost 4.17 points on Achievement Orientation (see Appendix J-2). Fathers of middle children who did not attend Step Ahead (n=15)gained 8.07 points on Achievement Orientation (see Appendix J-3). Since Achievement Orientation was a measure of competition within the family, the lower score

of fathers who attended Step Ahead may indicate a better understanding of the college experience and a lesser threat to the competitive flow of the family environment.

Father's Educational Level

The second observation was derived from the Control subscale and concerned those fathers who had a high school degree or less. Those who attended Step Ahead (n=7) gained 5.29 points on this subscale, while those who did not attend (n=16) lost 1.87 points (a difference of 7.16 points). This difference reflected "the extent to which set rules and procedures are used to run family life" (Moos, 1986, p. 2). Fathers who attended Step Ahead were operating in a more structured manner since the adolescent-parent separation had occurred. Though small numbers of fathers account for these differences, the two groups were so similar demographically that the results were worthy of notation (see Appendix I).

Sex of Child

When the family environment perceived by fathers of daughters in comparison to fathers of sons was examined, three subscales showed greater differences in scores for fathers of daughters and three for fathers of sons (see Appendices J-4 and J-5). Fathers of daughters showed greater differences on cohesion, conflict, and achievement orientation. Fathers of sons showed greater differences on

expressiveness, independence, and control. None of these differences was, however, statistically significant. Though it appeared that fathers of sons who are only children show major changes in their scores on the expressiveness and independence subscales, interpretation of these differences was not practical since there were only two fathers in this group.

When family environment perceptions by the fathers as a total sample or as divided by attendance at Step Ahead or sex of child were considered, no significant change occurred from pretest to posttest. When Appendices J-2 and J-3 were compared to J-4 and J-5, when change did occur (little as it may have been), it was noted that change generally occurred in the same direction on all mean score comparisons by independent variables. A lack of change confirmed the existence of a homogeneous sample as was realized in the sample selection procedures.

Coping Strategies

Coping strategies were measured using the total score of the F-COPES scale. Higher difference scores (posttest minus pretest) indicated the use of a greater variety of coping strategies or the increased use of the same coping strategies. The differences that did occur were not found to be statistically significant when a t test was used. There was a range of 0 to 145; therefore, it was apparent

without conducting the t tests that with a maximum change in score of 2.19 points (Fathers of sons--see Table 6) among all groups studied, there was no support for Hypotheses 2, 4, and 6 which predicted that change would occur.

Of interest, however, was a mean scores comparison by independent variables between fathers who attended Step Ahead and those who did not (see Appendix K). Though the differences between posttest and pretest scores were small, the directions in which they moved were, for the most part, in opposite directions. For example, fathers who attended Step Ahead and who had daughters showed an increase in score. Fathers who did not attend and who had daughters showed a decrease. Fathers from rural areas who attended showed a decrease while those who did not attend showed an increase. Fathers from urban areas who attended showed an increase while those who did not attend showed a decrease. Regardless of the birth order of the UNCG freshman, fathers who attended showed an increase. Those who did not attend showed a decrease. Fathers with some college experience or more who attended showed an increase, while fathers of comparable educational experience who did not attend showed a decrease.

Similar findings were realized when mean scores by independent variables of fathers of daughters and fathers of sons were compared. Changes in scores moved in opposite directions (see Tables 7 and 8). This method of comparing data

Table 6

Mean Scores on F-COPES for Selected Groups

Sample	Pretest Means	Posttest Means	Difference Score
All Fathers (N=143)	93.15	92.67	-0.48
Fathers who attended Step Ahead (N=74)	91.77	92.84	1.07
Fathers who did not attend Step Ahead (N=69)	94.45	92.51	-1.94
Fathers of Daughters (N=106)	92.39	92.50	0.11
Fathers of Sons (N=37)	95.35	93.16	-2.19

Table 7

Mean Scores on F-COPES By Independent Variables for Fathers of Daughters (N=106)

Independent Variables	Pretest	Posttest
Distance from UNCG		
Less than 250 miles (N=84)	94.50	94.02
More than 250 miles (N=22)	84.32	86.68
Size of Community		
Less than 10000 (N=37)	92.76	93.62
10000-50000 (N=26)	93.00	89.31
More than 50000 (N=41)	92.00	93.12
Unreported (N=0)	--	--
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG		
Only Child in Family (N=6)	88.33	91.50
First Child of Several (N=47)	91.06	91.70
Middle Child (N=14)	94.21	91.14
Last Child (N=39)	93.95	94.10
Father's Educational Level		
High School or less (N=18)	98.89	98.11
Some College (N=61)	92.44	92.28
College Graduates (N=27)	87.93	89.26
Attendance at Step Ahead		
Yes (N=55)	91.51	93.84
No (N=51)	93.33	91.06

Table 8

Mean Scores on F-COPES By Independent Variables for Fathers of Sons (N=37)

Independent Variables	Pretest	Posttest
Distance from UNCG		
Less than 250 miles (N=24)	100.17	95.79
More than 250 miles (N=13)	86.46	88.31
Size of Community		
Less than 10000 (N=12)	98.83	95.58
10000-50000 (N=11)	91.00	91.00
More than 50000 (N=14)	95.79	92.79
Unreported (N=0)	--	--
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG		
Only Child in Family (N=2)	90.00	85.50
First Child of Several (N=15)	98.13	92.93
Middle Child (N=7)	93.86	95.14
Last Child (N=13)	93.77	93.54
Father's Educational Level		
High School or less (N=5)	100.00	108.60
Some College (N=16)	98.13	92.25
College Graduates (N=16)	91.13	89.25
Attendance at Step Ahead		
Yes (N=14)	92.79	88.93
No (N=23)	96.91	95.74

results demonstrated a nonsignificant difference in coping strategies between subgroups that was a step beyond the hypotheses presented. While one group was showing an increase in the use of coping strategies, its comparison group was showing a decrease.

Coping strategies used by the fathers in all five groupings of the data proved to be similar. No significant changes were realized.

Predictors of FES and F-COPES Using Total Sample

When the total sample of fathers was examined, none of the independent variables proved to be significant (at the .01 level) as predictors for any of the FES subscales or the F-COPES (see Tables 9 and 10). These predictor variables were sex of child, distance from home, size of community, birth order of child entering UNCG, father's educational level, and attendance at Step Ahead. While three of the FES subscales showed predictors with significance, less than .05, these were not acceptable with the previously determined $p < .01$. Thus, Hypotheses 7 and 8 were not supported as none of the predictors was significant.

In an effort to understand the sample better, the researcher conducted separate multiple regressions on the pretest and posttest data as well as on the two comparison groups under study, i.e., fathers who attended Step Ahead as opposed to those who did not attend, and fathers of daughters

Table 9

Regression for the Total Sample on Subscales of the Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables (N=143)

Subscales	Predictor	Unstandardized b	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
Cohesion	POPULIa	-4.04 *	0.03	0.03
Expressiveness	ATTENDb	-3.36 *	0.03	0.03
	COLLIIc	-3.82	0.04	0.01
Independence	SESIId	4.39 *	0.03	0.03
Achievement Orientation	COLLI	-4.02 *	0.04	0.04
	POPULII	3.03	0.06	0.01
	ATTEND	-2.49	0.07	0.02
Control	POPULII	-2.26	0.02	0.02

Note: $p<.01$ was set as the level necessary for supporting the hypothesis.

*$p<.05$

[a] Size of Community.

[b] Attendance at Step Ahead.

[c] Birth order of Child Attending UNCG.

[d] Father's Educational Level.

Table 10

Regression for Total Sample on F-COPES for Predictor Variables (N=143)

Predictors	Unstandardized Beta	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
DISTANCa	-3.51	0.02	0.02
ATTENDb	3.10	0.05	0.02
POPULIc	-3.14	0.06	0.02

[a] Distance from UNCG.
[b] Attendance at Step Ahead.
[c] Size of the Community.

as opposed to fathers of sons. These results will be discussed briefly with reference made to tables in Appendices K-N.

Predictors of FES for Selected Groups

Size of Community

Size of community became significant for fathers who did not attend Step Ahead on the pretest of the Cohesion subscale and accounted for 9% of the variance (see Table N-3). Fathers from urban communities (>50,000) scored 9.03 points lower than fathers from rural areas and 6.85 points lower than did fathers from communities of 10,000 to 50,000. This indicated that fathers from urban communities perceived their family environment as less cohesive and family members as less supportive of each other than the other groups.

When fathers of daughters were considered, size of community was also significant on two occasions (see Tables N-4 and O-4). Accounting for 6% of the variance, fathers of daughters who lived in communities of 10,000 to 50,000 had F-COPES difference scores of -3.69, whereas fathers from rural and urban areas showed differences of .86 and 1.12, respectively. When predicting posttest scores on the Cohesion subscale of the FES, the researcher found that these same fathers from communities of 10,000 to 50,000 scored 9.61 and 5.22 points lower than did fathers in rural and urban areas.

Birth Order of Child

Birth order of the child entering UNCG became a significant predictor for sveral subscales of the FES when pretest and posttest groups were examined. Fathers of last children to enter college scored 2.88 to 6.40 points lower on the pretest of the Conflict subscale of the FES than did other fathers (see Appendix J-1), accounting for 7% of the variance (see Table O-1). This lower score demonstrated that when the last child left home, there seemed to be less anger and conflict expressed in the family as only the mother and father were left. Fathers of first children to enter college scored as much as 5.07 points lower on the pretest of the Independence subscale (extent to which family members make own decisions) and fathers of middle children scored as much as 9.12 points lower on the pretest of the Achievement Orientation subscale (extent to which competition enter family activities).

When fathers who attended Step Ahead were considered, those of first children to enter college scored as much as 11.23 points higher on the pretest of the Achievement Orientation subscale (see Appendix J-2), accounting for 11% of the variance (see Table O-2). Fathers of middle children scored as much as 13.71 points lower on the posttest of the Achievement Orientation subscale.

Fathers who did not attend Step Ahead and whose last child was entering UNCG scored lower on the pretest of the

Conflict subscale (see Appendix J-3). The differences ranged from 8.49 points when compared to fathers of first children to 2.85 points when compared to fathers of only children (R2=.11) (see Table O-3).

Finally, two predictors were significant for fathers of daughters on the pretest of subscales of the FES (see Table N-4). Fathers of daughters who were first children to enter college scored as much as 7.73 points higher on the Conflict subscale (R2=.01). Fathers of daughters who were middle children entering college scored from 4.81 to 9.26 points lower on the Achievement Orientation subscale (R2=.08).

Father's Educational Level

Father's educational level was not significant when difference scores of any group studied were considered. When pretest and posttest regressions were examined, there were several significant findings.

The first finding was on the posttest of the Conflict subscale of the FES for the total sample (n=143). Fathers who were college graduates scored 7.47 points higher than high school graduates or less and 4.04 points higher than fathers with some college experience (R2=.05) (see Appendix J-1 and O-1). Similarly, college graduates who attended Step Ahead scored as much as 8.24 points higher on the Conflict subscale than other fathers (R2=.09).

On the posttest of the Control subscale of the FES, college graduates who did not attend Step Ahead scored 10.33

points higher than fathers with high school or less and 5.25 points higher than fathers with some college experience (see Appendix J-3), accounting for 3% of the variance (see Table O-1). As measured by the Control subscale, rules and procedures seemed to be more important in the homes of college graduates after their children departed.

College graduates who had sons (n=37) had a higher score (by 10 points) on the posttest of the Control subscale of the FES than fathers with high school or less. They also had higher scores by 8 points than fathers with some college experience (see Appendix J-5). If the college graduate had a daughter entering UNCG, he scored as much as 9.1 points higher on the posttest of the Conflict subscale (R2=.11) (see Table O-4).

The subscales of Conflict and Control presented an interesting picture of fathers who themselves had graduated from college. Significant increases in these scores indicating more conflict and increased significance of rules and procedures have posed an opportunity for future research to explore why this happened. However, when only 5% to 11% of the variance is explained, the remaining variance is due to other variables.

Significant differences were also noted on the F-COPES scale. College graduates (n=143) scored as much as 10.01 points lower on the F-COPES pretest than did the other

fathers (R2=.03) (see Table N-1). Fathers with high school or less scored as much as 11.13 points higher on the posttest than other fathers but only 4% of the variance was explained. These low percentages explained little variance being accounted for by using father's educational level as a predictor for levels of usage of coping strategies.

As realized by regressions of FES subscales on predictor variables (pretest vs. posttest), family environment perceptions could be predicted by size of community, birth order of child entering college, and father's educational level for certain groups. These were not predictors of F-COPES.

Predictors of F-COPES for Selected Groups

Sex of Child

Sex of child became a significant predictor (at .05 level) of F-COPES for fathers who attended Step Ahead (see Table M-1). Fathers of daughters who attended had a difference score of 2.33 as opposed to -3.86 for fathers of sons. This means that fathers of daughters showed an increase in the use of coping strategies while fathers of sons showed a decrease. Still, only 6% of the variance in F-COPES scores could be attributed to sex of child.

When considering the total sample, sex of child was significant (at .05 level) when predicting pretest scores on the F-COPES (see Table N-1). Two percent of the

variance on the pretest scores of the F-COPES were attributed to this variable.

Distance from UNCG

For the total sample, distance from UNCG was a significant predictor for both the pretest and posttest of the F-COPES (see Table N-1). It was not a significant predictor of the difference score. In the pretest, distance accounted for 13% of the variance and in the posttest, 6%. Fathers who lived more than 250 miles from UNCG had lower scores on F-COPES than did those who lived closer.

When regressions of separate pretest and posttest F-COPES scores were examined (see Appendix N), distance was also significant accounting for as much as 24% of the variance in the pretest scores for fathers of sons (see Table N-5). It was significant for both pretest and posttest scores for fathers of daughters (see Table N-4) and for fathers who did not attend Step Ahead (see Table N-3) and for the pretest scores of those fathers who attended Step Ahead (R2=.13) (see Table N-2).

Attendance at Step Ahead

Whether or not the father attended Step Ahead was a significant predictor only for fathers of daughters on the F-COPES scale. That is, fathers who attended Step Ahead and who had a daughter entering UNCG had a mean score on the posttest that was a 2.33 difference from the pretest

score (see Table K-2) indicating their increased use of coping strategies. Fathers who did not attend Step Ahead and who had daughters had -2.27 as a difference score indicating a decrease in their use of coping strategies. Attendance accounted for 6% of the variance (see Table K-2) in coping strategies for fathers of daughters. No other significant results were found.

Given these findings, the researcher noted that sex of child, distance from UNCG, and attendance at Step Ahead were significant predictors for the level of use of coping strategies.

Interview Findings

Telephone interviews were conducted with 12 fathers who volunteered their time for an interview by returning a form enclosed with the posttest mailing (see Appendix E). These forms were randomly filed in a folder from which two interviewers received the names of those fathers whom they would call. Calls were made according to the specified availability of the fathers and were completed when 12 fathers had been successfully reached. Using a brief interview form (Appendix G), the interviewers asked several questions. The main question asked was whether the separation between father and child had been easier or more difficult than expected. They were also asked how frequently they were in contact with their child during this period of separation and how often their child came home.

These interviews were conducted in order to allow fathers the opportunity to verbalize their feelings about their separation from their children. Pen-and-paper measures often do not allow research participants to say what they may really want to say. These interviews provided that opportunity for the fathers contacted.

The results of the telephone interviews confirmed the lack of support for the hypotheses presented in this research. Regardless of whether or not the father attended Step Ahead, the general experience was that the separation was easier than was expected.

Fathers who attended the Step Ahead program responded with comments such as:

> It [the separation] is what I expected. . . . I feel better prepared than my parents were.
> (Child came home twice a month. Telephone contact--three times per week)

> [It was] easier [than I expected]. Everything went nicely. She was ready to go to school and we were ready to have her leave. Everybody had a good attitude.
> (Child came home once a month. Telephone contact--every other week)

> [It was as I] expected. The first few months were expected to be and resulted in an adjustment period.
> (Child came home weekly. Telephone contact--three times per week)

Fathers who did not attend the Step Ahead program reported similar results:

> [The separation was] easier. My daughter was happy about school, so I didn't worry about her as much.
> (Child came home twice a month. Telephone contact--weekly)

[The separation] was what we expected.
(Child came home every week. Telephone contact--daily)

[It was] easier. I feel no anxiety and feel she is secure here [at UNCG].
(Child came home once a month. Telephone contact--twice a week. Wife attended Step Ahead)

[It was] a little easier than expected. A good adjustment on my daughter's part helped us.
(Child came home twice during the fall semester. Telephone contact--weekly)

[It was] easier. I expected it to be real bad. My daughter adjusted real well which helped me.
(Child came home weekly. Telephone contact--every other week in addition to weekly visits home)

Summary of Findings

The researcher found no support for seven of the eight hypotheses as posed in Chapter III. The interview findings corroborated the statistical findings. There was significant change from pretest to posttest on the cohesion and expressiveness subscales of the FES (when considering the total sample) providing some support for Hypothesis 1. There was no significant change from pretest to posttest on the F-COPES. When the sample was divided by attendance at Step Ahead and sex of child, there were no significant findings on either FES subscales or the F-COPES. Since no significant changes in scores were found, it would follow that these particular independent variables would not serve as significant predictors of variance. This was supported in the regression analyses conducted on the difference scores.

Of some importance or interest were the findings stemming from regression analyses conducted within certain groups on the pretest scores and on the posttest scores. This step was taken when procedures related to the stated hypotheses yielded no significance. Essentially, sex of child, distance from home, size of community, birth order of child entering college, and father's educational level are variables to consider when studying the effect of a child's entering college.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous research efforts have focused on the adolescent-parent separation and its effect on the adolescent (Bloom, 1980; Blos, 1967; Bowlby, 1977; Haley, 1980; Kurash, 1979; Moore, 1984; Moore & Hotch, 1981; Stierlin, 1974; Stierlin et al., 1971; Wechter, 1983). In many cases, the research noted above involved a forced adolescent-parent separation, such as the institutionalization of adolescents who have emotional problems. These results can not easily be generalized to voluntary adolescent-parent separation situations, such as an adolescent entering college or the armed services. Those studies involving voluntary adolescent-parent separation have focused only on the adolescents' adjustment. Overall, however, the findings from the present research do support the idea that adolescents move through a separation-individuation process that results in the establishment of their own personal autonomy.

What the literature did not offer was a description of what happens to the parents during this process. Increasing attention has been given to the period of middlescence in adulthood (Kerckhoff, 1976). Adults in this period are asking questions similar to those of adolescents: Where am I going? Who am I? Given the popular notion of and

attention to menopause as a stimulus of both physical and emotional change in women during this middlescence period, the researcher was most interested in how fathers adapt to change, and more specifically, to the adolescent-parent separation as the adolescent enters college.

The purposes of this research were (a) to investigate the family environment, as perceived by the father before and after the college freshman left; (b) to explore the extent to which fathers employ coping strategies to deal with any changes as they make the transition into a new family phase; (c) to assess whether exposure to a Parent Orientation program explains changes in family environment and coping strategies; and (d) to assess whether the sex of the child entering college explains changes in family environment and coping strategies.

Discussion of Results

Hypotheses 1 and 2 predicted that fathers' scores on selected subscales of the Family Environment Scale (FES) and on the F-COPES would change from pretest to posttest. Statistically significant change occurred on only two subscales of the FES, but not for the F-COPES. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was partially supported and Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 predicted that fathers who attended Step Ahead (a Parent Orientation Program at UNCG) would

change more on their FES and F-COPES scores from pretest to posttest than would fathers who did not attend Step Ahead. Once again, significant change did not occur. Thus, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were not supported.

Hypotheses 5 and 6 predicted that fathers of daughters would change more on the FES and F-COPES scores from pretest to posttest than would fathers of sons, yet again significant change did not occur. Hypotheses 5 and 6 were not supported.

With no significant change occurring in any of these comparisons, it followed that Hypotheses 7 and 8, which offer explanations or predictors for change, were not supported. Expected changes in family environment perceptions and in the use of coping strategies were simply not found. What may account for this lack of change? What can explain the variation in FES and F-COPES scores within the groups of interest, fathers of daughters or sons, and fathers who attended or did not attend Step Ahead?

The adolescent-parent separation under study had two dimensions. The first of these was the physical separation that occurred as the adolescent actually moved out of the house into a university residence hall. The second was the emotional separation that occurred as the parent-child relationship attenuated. As this occurred, the adolescent came into contact with other possible relationships involving intimacy and commitment that could be sources of emotional support, especially from friends.

The physical separation had occurred. The adolescent was now living in a residence hall on campus. Some might argue that the emotional separation between parent and adolescent had occurred before the adolescent left for college. Societal pressures exerted on high school youth today may have accelerated the separation-individuation process so that it is complete before the adolescent enters college. Thus, father-child interactions may have become adult-adult interactions, and the "new" adult's departure from home was not experienced as stress-producing.

On the other hand, some might argue that the emotional separation between adolescent and father had not occurred after only 6 to 8 weeks apart. Time together had not been long enough or frequent enough to realize new differences or conflict which might trigger changes in the family environment. At the same time, the freshman may not have fully established that social network which eventually competes for family time. This would allow the family routine to continue as it did before the freshman left home.

The interview findings offered further support for the possibility that an emotional separation between adolescent and parent had not yet occurred. There appears to be very frequent contact between freshmen and their families. Ranging from telephone conversations every night to every other week to return home visits every weekend to every other month, contacts are frequent enough to argue that

separation may not be complete. Levels of dependence are not understood, however, given the limitations of these interview data.

This question then is raised: when does the emotional separaton between adolescent and father actually occur? This was not determined in this research.

Family systems theory argues that adapting to change (in this case, separation) is an integral part of family process. Adaptability is defined as the "ability to make appropriate structural changes in response to developmental growth or situational stress while maintaining system definition and self-regulation" (Wedemeyer & Grotevant, 1982, p. 186). However, this research showed another way to look at the maintenance of the family system.

The researcher made an early decision to study 6 of the 10 subscales of the Family Environment Scale. These were Cohesion, Expressiveness, Conflict, Independence, Achievement Orientation, and Control. The FES subscales made up three dimenisons: relationship dimension, personal growth dimension, and system maintenance dimension. All three subscales of the relationship dimension (Cohesion, Expressiveness, Conflict) were used in the analysis. Only two of five subscales for the personal growth dimension were analyzed. These were Independence and Achievement Orientation; the remaining three on this dimension were Intellectual-cultural orientation, Active-recreational

orientation, and Moral-religious emphasis. Control was the subscale analyzed from the system maintenance dimension, while the other subscale Organization was not used.

When the researcher looked at the mean scores comparison of the total sample of fathers on the six subscales analyzed (see Appendix J-2), it was obvious to her that the greater change occurred on those subscales that comprised the relationship dimension. The other subscales revealed no statistically significant differences. Since there were changes occurring on two of the subscales of the relationship dimension, it became clear that this dimension was that most affected by the adolescent-parent separation.

Adaptation to this separation was occurring while the family was maintaining the system already established. This was supported by the finding that there were no significant changes on the Control subscale (the extent to which rules are used to run family life) which was a measure of system maintenance. The interview data supported the ease of this transition. All fathers interviewed found the separation to be what they expected or easier than they expected. This indicated that these families prepared well for the transition and adapted to the separation smoothly.

There is yet another view that may have affected the results. Though not supported by research, there is a perception that The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is a "safe place" to send one's child. This may be

interpreted by many parents as a place where their children can get a good education without being exposed to extreme ideas and events. This might indicate that families who send their children to UNCG place greater value on the traditional side of family life and maintain closer contact with their children. They seem to be secure in their thoughts that the University supports these traditional values and will transmit these to its students. Emotional separation between father and child is not likely to have occurred if such is the case. Though speculative in nature, this perception may warrant additional study.

Finally, consideration must be given to the nature of the sample. As volunteers for this research, the fathers demonstrated a real interest and commitment to their families. The time involved in completing the research instruments was time they were willing to take from their family and other obligations. Obviously, the separation between them and their adolescents was a significant life experience and they wanted to be a part of understanding it better. Their participation made them a unique group of men with similar interests in their families. These similarities created in part a homogeneous sample.

The homogeneity of the sample was a true advantage when these fathers were compared by attendance at Step Ahead or by sex of child. The comparison was real and not being made between two very different types of fathers.

There were no significant differences between these groups either before or after data were analyzed. Their ability to cope as well before as after with the adolescent-parent separation was likely a function of their family structure and communication patterns coupled with their previous family experiences. They knew how to cope with change.

The results proffered in this research indicate that for many fathers, an adolescent's departure from home to college is not as traumatic for fathers as it may be for the adolescent. The support provided by these fathers to their adolescents (as evidenced by their willingness to participate in this research study and by their interest in the Step Ahead program) should mean that their adolescents may not have as difficult a transition to the college experience as may others who lack support from home. Such a deduction warrants further research and offers an opportunity to understand better the transitional difficulties experienced by so many college freshmen.

Limitations of the Research

The first limitation of the study was the nature of the sample. Because it was voluntary and self-selected, heterogeneity similar to the population could not be assumed. Therefore, results could not be generalized to a larger population. To participate in such a research effort, a father was most likely interested in the family and the

changes that can take place within the family. He was most likely supportive of his children and secure in his relationship with them. In reality, this limitation probably was an advantage in that the control and treatment groups were very similar. This made the comparisons between groups more meaningful. The fact that 78% of the fathers in the control group would have attended Step Ahead if it had been possible supported this similarity. It also addressed the possibility that it may be the family type rather than the Step Ahead program (treatment effect) that accounts for a smooth adjustment to the adolescent-parent separation.

A second limitation to the study may be the choice of research instruments. Beyond the limitations of the instruments, there are other points to consider. The Family Environment Scale (FES) measures perceptions of the family environment, but it does not preclude the possibility that respondents will answer as they wish things were as opposed to the way things are. Given this inventory by mail, respondents were not reminded of the need to be realistic and honest in their responses. Though there are not reasons to believe respondents were less than honest, there is no way to insure complete accuracy.

The choice of the F-COPES also presented some interpretive dilemmas. Like the FES, the F-COPES asks for personal assessment. Respondents may have responded as they wish things were as opposed to the way things were.

Both the FES and F-COPES are probably most useful in small-group or family discussions as opposed to large-group comparisons. If there were some standardized scores for well functioning families, maybe the mean scores could have been interpreted better.

The timing of the posttest assessment offered yet another limitation. Questions remain as to when the actual emotional separation occurs. It is this transitional period that would show actual family environment changes. A longitudinal research design could address this limitation.

A fourth limitation of this research was the failure to consider the mothers' participation in the Step Ahead program. Her participation in this program without her husband's participation could still have triggered the type of family discussions that were encouraged by the program leader. These discussions would have focused on how the family would adjust to the separation and could have eased the transitional pangs for everyone. The telephone interviews revealing easier than expected transitions from fathers who did not attend Step Ahead also revealed that their wives did attend. This could account for the smaller differences than were expected between those who attended the Step Ahead program and those who did not.

Failure to measure "contacts" between fathers and their children during the first 6 to 8 weeks of the fall semester

was yet another limitation. As mentioned earlier, frequent telephone calls or home visits could impede the separation process and account for the smaller differences realized in the research. Timing of the measurement becomes a factor in this respect also.

The total research design itself became a possible limitation. When addressing emotion-laden concerns, a researcher may question whether these can accurately be measured by a paper-and-pencil approach alone. Is an interview or case study approach going to be more revealing? There are arguments on both sides of this issue, and it remains a dilemma for many researchers.

Recommendations for Future Research

While this research study has addressed eight major hypotheses, there are many more dimensions of the adolescent-parent separation that could be addressed. The data collected and analyzed by way of the statistical procedures used could be put to further use to study many of these dimensions.

The regressions conducted on the pretest and posttest data provide many opportunities for future research. There were some significant findings that warrant further study. One that was most noticeable was the higher posttest scores of fathers who were college graduates on the Conflict and Control subscales of the FES. Why could college graduates

experience these changes so much more than fathers with less education? Further exploration is needed to understand this.

Further comparisons between fathers of first and only, first, middle, and last child to enter college would provide valuable information that could be used to prepare differential orientation programming for parents. Such programming could be tailored to address issues related to a particular life stage or transitional period.

Of additional interest would be further comparisons of pretest and posttest scores among groups of fathers. One might find, for example, that fathers with no college experience who live in rural areas perceive their family environment quite differently from fathers with a college degree who live in urban areas. Moreover, fathers who live a great distance from the campus and who themselves have no college experience may not understand the changes occurring in their adolescent to the point where a visit home could create total chaos. Their needs may be very different when dealing with the separation process. Again, differential programming may become important.

A closer look at the subscales of the F-COPES, as opposed to the total score, may reveal shifts in coping strategies of significance. These shifts can not be recognized by looking only at the total score. These subscales are acquiring social support (seeking advice or

support from others), reframing (knowing the family can solve the problem somehow), spiritual support (receiving support from church and God), molbilizing family to acquire and accept help (seeking community help, such as counseling), and passive appraisal (escaping by watching television or waiting the problem out). A shift in emphasis from one to the other would be most revealing.

Similarly, consideration of the four remaining subscales of the FES could become significant. What may be even more valuable would be to study the three dimensions defined by the subscales and to compare these as opposed to comparing the individual subscales. There was some evidence that the relationship dimension was experiencing change during the separation process. However, without using all the subscales of the personal growth and system maintenance dimensions, it is not posible to say that this is the only dimension experiencing change.

Of obvious importance is the need to conduct research related to this separation process on a longitudinal basis. While the research study conducted here showed little change in family environment perceptions at this time, this does not mean that change does not occur. It becomes a question of when it occurs, and whether it is more dramatic for some groups than others. A most important need is to determine when the emotional separation actually occurs between father and child. This separation may occur at one

of many different times in a family's existence, and it is this separation that may produce the environmental changes predicted in this research. Identification of this transition period will involve extensive research.

Fathers, while participating in parent orientation programs, have said that the separation from their child is difficult for them. Perhaps there is no instrument currently available to assess the problem adequately. Perhaps the case study or interview approach would provide data more revealing of the problems and how fathers cope with them. From these pursuits, adidtional instruments could be designed.

Then, there is a real need to examine what happens in the families of those students whose fathers and/or mothers do not take an interest in their departing adolescent and who do not support their freshman by attending orientation programs. It may be this group of college freshmen who are experiencing a more difficult transition to college. A comparison of freshmen from seemingly supportive families and from seemingly uninterested families may offer a greater understanding of why some freshmen encounter little, if any, difficulty in the transition to college and others experience great distress and trauma in the same transitional period.

Finally, there are the single-parent families and the reconstituted families. How does this separation affect them? How does it affect a father? How does it affect a

mother? How does it affect the freshman? The questions could go on and on.

Conclusion

New basic questions are now clear. How do families (of all types) deal with the separation of a family member from the whole? How do they change and how do they cope? Research has been conducted and continues to be done on how families deal with the final separation--death. Research is also growing on how families deal with separation caused by divorce. What is lacking is how the family as a whole, and especially the father, deals with a separation that occurs as regularly as a child grows up.

It is significant to note that there is a certain level of comfort that students and parents alike express about their experiences at UNCG. Those fathers who chose to participate in this research represented a group committed to families and especially to their freshmen at UNCG. The support of Step Ahead was indicative of their appreciation for what the University offered them and their families. A primary program goal remains to help students and their families through this transitional period as easily as possible.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE #1

QUESTIONNAIRE #1 (FOR FATHERS ONLY)

Please answer the following questions by placing an "X" in the blank corresponding to your answer. Thank you for your time.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

1. Which phrase best describes your current family?
   _____ two parents (biological)
   _____ two parents (remarried)
   _____ single parent (father)
   _____ other (Please specify:_____)

2. Sex of your child who will enter UNCG this fall:
   _____ Male
   _____ Female

3. Age of your child who will enter UNCG this fall:
   _____ 17 or younger
   _____ 18
   _____ 19
   _____ 20 or older

4. Race
   _____ White
   _____ Black
   _____ Other

5. Distance from your home to the UNCG campus:
   _____ Less than 50 miles
   _____ 50-100 miles
   _____ 100-250 miles
   _____ More than 250 miles

6. Are you from North Carolina or from out-of-state?
   _____ In-state
   _____ Out-of-state

7. List the ages of all children in your family from oldest to youngest:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   ** If you have more than five children, continue here: _____
   _____
   _____

8. Is the child entering UNCG this fall your _____ (Check only one):
   _____ first and only child to enter college
   _____ first of several children to enter college
   _____ second child to enter college
   _____ second and last child to enter college
   _____ third child to enter college
   _____ third and last child to enter college
   _____ Other (Please specify) _____

9. Your highest educational degree:
   _____ Less than high school
   _____ High school graduate
   _____ Some community college
   _____ Community college graduate
   _____ Some college
   _____ College graduate
   _____ Some graduate school
   _____ Masters degree
   _____ Doctoral degree

ercentage of financial support that you will provide your child this fall:
   _____ Less than 25%
   _____ 25-50%
   _____ 50-99%
   _____ 100%

11. Did your child attend a boarding high school for at least six months?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

12. Has your child lived away from home while working or in the armed services or in another college for at least six months?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

13. Will your child live in a dormitory this fall?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

14. Has your family experienced an emotional crisis such as death or critical illness in the family or divorce in the last six months?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE #4 (POSTTEST)

QUESTIONNAIRE # 4

Please answer the following questions by placing an "X" in the blank corresponding to your answer. Please answer every question. Thank you for your time.

1. Is your child currently enrolled at UNCG?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

2. Does he/she live in a residence hall?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

3. Did you attend the Step Ahead Orientation Program for Parents in June 1986?
   _____ Yes (If yes, skip to question #6)
   _____ No

4. For what primary reason were you unable to attend the Step Ahead Program?
   ___ I could not take off from work.
   ___ I felt that I knew enough about UNCG.
   ___ My child was not able to attend, so I did not come either.
   ___ I attended a Parent Orientation Program at another institution with another child.
   ___ Other _____

5. Would you have attended Step Ahead if you could have?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

6. What is the population of the community in which you lived when your child was in high school?
   _____ rural, unincorporated
   _____ under 2500
   _____ 2500 - 4999
   _____ 5000 - 9999
   _____ 10,000 - 49,999
   _____ 50,000 - 249,999
   _____ More than 250,000

7. Did your family experience an emotional crisis such as death, critical illness or divorce in July, August, September or October?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO FATHERS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO

Office of the Vice Chancellor
for Student Affairs

May 15, 1986

Dear Fathers,

Whether this is your first, second, third, only, or last child to go away to college, that child's absence will be felt at home. This experience may differ from family to family, and there may be some changes that will occur at home after your child leaves for college. We are interested in knowing what these changes are in your family and how you deal with them. In turn, we are offering an exciting, unique Parent Orientation Program (about which you have already received information from our Office of Orientation). We are particularly interested in how fathers perceive these changes and how they deal with them. Men's roles in our society are changing, and many more men are wanting to be heard. Therefore, we want fathers to participate in a research project about how they deal with sending their sons and daughters to the University.

We have observed that parents need to be heard as much as their sons and daughters do. Would you fathers tell us how you are feeling now that your child will be leaving soon? Then, in the late fall, after he or she has left for UNCG, we will ask you how you feel then and how you have dealt with having a first, last, or even a middle child in college.

I have enclosed an "Informed Consent Form" and three brief questionnaires which should take only a few minutes to complete. Please be sure to answer every question. When you have completed all questionnaires, please return all materials (except this letter) to me in the enclosed envelope. You will notice a code number on your questionnaires. At no time will the researcher see a name with a code number. This number will be used only to keep an accurate record of the responses we receive. Your responses will be completely confidential.

If you choose not to participate, please return the materials in the enclosed envelope. However, I hope this will not be the case. By participating in this effort, you will be helping us plan more effectively for future programs designed specifically for you.

Should you have any remaining questions, please do not hesitate to call me here at the University. The office telephone number is (919)379-5586. Thank you for your time and interest in this effort and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Cheryl M. Callahan

Cheryl M. Callahan
Assistant Vice Chancellor for
Student Affairs

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

I freely agree to participate in the research effort being conducted by Cheryl M. Callahan on behalf of UNCG. The purpose of the research has been explained to me and I understand that my responses will remain confidential. All questionnaires will remain in a locked filing cabinet until the research has been completed, at which time they will be destroyed.

_____

Signature

APPENDIX E

POSTCARD REMINDER

Office of Student Affairs
UNC Greensboro

Approximately two weeks ago, we mailed you a questionnaire regarding your child's departure from home for college and the impact that event would have on your perception of your family environment. According to our records, we have not received your completed questionnaire. I really need to hear from you and would appreciate your returning it in the next couple of days. If you have decided not to participate in the study or if there is no father in the home, I would still like for you to return the materials in the self-addressed envelope provided. It is possible that you have already returned the questionnaire and I have mailed this reminder before I received it. If that is the case, thank you for your help and please accept my apology for the unnecessary reminder.

Cheryl M. Callahan

APPENDIX F

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO FATHERS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO

Office of the Vice Chancellor
for Student Affairs

October 18, 1986

Dear Father,

The time has come for our follow-up to the research effort in which you participated in late spring. You will recall that this effort relates to changes that occur in your family as a child leaves for college and how you, as a father, deal with those changes.

Your participation in this research effort is greatly appreciated and your prompt return of the enclosed questionnaires by November 7th will enable us to complete the study in a timely manner. It is important that I have these follow-up materials from each of you to complete the research.

Additionally, I would like to talk with some fathers about their separation from their child. Questionnaires unfortunately do not always tell the whole story. If you would be willing to talk for a few minutes by phone about your experience, please return the bottom part of this letter with your questionnaires. I will then randomly select several fathers from these returned forms for telephone interviews. If you are not among those selected, please know that your interest is not going unnoticed. There simply will not be time to talk to everyone.

Two of the questionnaires you are to complete are the same you received in May. The other is slightly different. Please be sure to answer every question, and return all materials (except this letter unless you choose to complete the form below) to me in the enclosed envelope.

Once again, thank you for your interest and participation in this effort and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Cheryl M. Callahan

Cheryl M. Callahan
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

I would be willing to talk with you further about the separation experience between me and my child.

Name:_____

Telephone Number:( )_____

Time and Days You Would Prefer to be Called: _____

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA/27412

APPENDIX G

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW FORM

IDENTIFY YOURSELF AND WHY YOU ARE CALLING. REMIND HIM THAT WE WERE LOOKING AT THE SEPARATION OF FATHER AND CHILD AS CHILD WENT AWAY TO COLLEGE. SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW TO WHOM WE ARE SPEAKING, WE MUST GATHER A FEW DEMOGRAPHICS ONCE AGAIN. HOPE THEY DO NOT MIND.

Is child a son or daughter? SON____ DAUGHTER_____

Is this lst____, middle____, last____, or only (lst and only)_____ child to go away to college?

How often did your child come home during the fall semester?

Weekly_____
Twice a month_____
Once a month_____
Once_____ Twice_____
Not at all_____
Other_____

How often did you talk with your child during the semester?

Weekly_____
Twice a month_____
Once a month_____
Other_____

Did you attend the Step Ahead Program for Parents? Yes_____ No_____

HAS THE SEPARATION BEEN MORE DIFFICULT OR EASIER THAN YOU EXPECTED? IN WHAT WAY? CAN YOU GIVE ME A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF HOW IT HAS BEEN EASIER OR MORE DIFFICULT? (Or perhaps it was just as expected.)

APPENDIX H

CORRELATION TABLE FOR DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table H

Pearson Correlations Coefficients for Dependent Variables

Variables	DIFFT	DIFFC	DIFFEX	DIFFCON	DIFFAO	DIFFCTL	DIFFIND
DIFFT	1.00	0.22	-0.02	-0.10	-0.03	0.05	-0.01
DIFFC	--	1.00	0.29	-0.23	0.05	-0.16	0.08
DIFFEX	--	--	1.00	-0.11	0.07	-0.18	0.17
DIFFCON	--	--	--	1.00	0.06	0.16	-0.09
DIFFAO	--	--	--	--	1.00	0.11	-0.01
DIFFCTL	--	--	--	--	--	1.00	-0.05
DIFFIND	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.00

APPENDIX I

DEMOGRAPHIC TABLES BY STEP AHEAD ATTENDANCE AND SEX OF CHILD

Table I-1

Demographic Characteristics of Fathers by Step Ahead Attendance

	Attended (N=69)		Did Not Attend (N=74)	
Characteristics	N	%	N	%
Fathers of Sons	14	20	23	31
Fathers of Daughters	55	80	51	69
Distance lived from UNCG				
Less than 50 miles	18	26	14	19
50-100 miles	21	30	25	34
100-250 miles	14	20	16	22
More than 250 miles	16	23	19	26
North Carolina Residents	51	74	50	68
Non-residents of North Carolina	18	26	24	32
Size of Community				
Unreported	2	-	-	-
Less than 10,000 (rural)	23	34	26	35
10,000-50,000 (town/small city)	18	27	19	26
More than 50,000 (urban)	26	39	29	39
Number of Children in the Family				
One	5	7	3	4
Two	36	52	37	50
Three	20	29	20	27
Four	6	9	10	14
Five	1	1	1	1
Six	1	1	1	1
Seven	-	-	1	1
Eight	-	-	1	1
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG				
Only Child in Family	5	7	3	4
First Child of Several	31	45	31	42
Middle Child (2nd, 3rd...etc.)	6	9	15	20
Last Child	27	39	25	34

Table I-1 (continued)

Demographic Characteristics of Fathers by Step Ahead Attendance

	Attended (N=69)		Did Not Attend (N=74)	
Characteristics	N	%	N	%
Father's Educational Level				
Less than High School	-	-	3	4
High School Graduate	7	10	13	18
Community College	18	26	18	24
Some College	20	29	21	28
College Graduate	6	9	3	4
Some Graduate School	18	26	16	22
Financial Support Parents Provide Their College Freshmen				
Unreported	1	-	-	-
Less than 25% of their Expenses	3	4	8	11
25-50%	5	7	2	3
50-99%	25	37	25	34
All of their expenses	35	52	39	53
What were your reasons for not attending Step Ahead				
Unreported			1	-
Could not take off work			36	49
Knew enough about UNCG			10	14
My child could not attend			5	7
Attended another Parent Program			5	7
Other			17	23
Would you have attended Step Ahead if you could have?				
Unreported			1	-
Yes			57	78
No			16	22

Table I-2

Demographic Characteristics of Fathers by Sex of Child

Characteristic	Fathers of Sons (N=39) N	%	Fathers of Daughters (N=106) N	%
Distance lived from UNCG				
Less than 50 miles	9	24	23	22
50-100 miles	7	19	29	37
100-250 miles	8	22	22	21
More than 250 miles	13	35	22	21
North Carolina Residents	22	60	79	75
Non-residents of North Carolina	15	41	27	26
Size of Community in Which They Live				
Unreported	-	-	2	-
Less than 10,000 (rural)	12	32	37	36
10,000-50,000 (town/small city)	11	30	26	25
More than 50,000 (urban)	14	38	41	39
Number of Children in the Family				
One	2	5	6	6
Two	15	41	58	55
Three	10	27	30	28
Four	7	19	9	9
Five	1	3	1	1
Six	1	3	1	1
Seven	-	-	1	1
Eight	1	3	-	-
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG				
Only Child in Family	2	5	6	6
First Child of Several	15	41	47	44
Middle Child (2nd, 3rd...etc.)	7	19	14	13
Last Child	13	35	39	37

Table I-2 (continued)

Demographic Characteristics of Fathers by Sex of Child	Fathers of Sons		Fathers of Daughters	
Characteristics	N	%	N	%
Father's Educational Level				
Less than High School	-	-	3	3
High School Graduate	5	14	15	14
Community College	6	16	30	28
Some College	10	27	31	29
College Graduate	-	-	9	9
Some Graduate School	16	43	18	17
Financial Support Parents Provide Their College Freshmen				
Unreported	-	-	1	-
Less than 25% of their Expenses	4	11	7	7
25-50%	1	3	6	6
50-99%	11	30	39	37
All of their expenses	21	57	53	51
Attendance at Step Ahead				
Yes	14	38	55	52
No	23	62	31	48
If you did not attend Step Ahead, what were the reasons?				
Unreported	1	-	-	-
Could not take off work	10	46	26	51
Knew enough about UNCG	2	9	8	16
My child could not attend	3	14	2	4
Attended another Parent Program	-	-	5	10
Other	7	32	10	20
Would you have attended Step Ahead if you could have?				
Unreported	1	-	-	-
Yes	18	82	39	77
No	4	18	12	24

APPENDIX J

TABLES--MEAN SCORES OF SELECTED SUBSCALES OF FES BY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table J-1

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables (N=143)

Subscales of FES

Independent Variables	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Gender of Child												
Sons (N=37)	57.78	60.48	51.51	54.41	44.70	43.73	54.46	57.35	53.84	53.78	49.92	50.24
Daughters (N=106)	55.63	58.73	48.98	51.29	43.49	41.64	52.88	53.53	52.62	54.19	52.75	52.20
Distance from UNCG												
Less than 250 miles (N=108)	56.74	59.19	50.50	52.40	43.22	41.44	54.08	54.77	52.44	54.18	52.14	51.60
More than 250 miles (N=35)	54.49	59.17	46.97	51.17	45.60	44.46	50.83	53.71	54.46	53.80	51.63	51.97
Size of Community												
Less than 10000 (N=49)	58.59	61.63	50.88	53.86	42.00	40.14	55.39	54.51	52.59	51.92	51.55	51.45
10000-50000 (N=37)	57.03	57.03	51.14	51.68	45.65	43.59	51.00	52.86	53.19	54.59	51.19	52.62
More than 50000 (N=55)	53.20	58.13	47.25	50.87	44.20	42.91	52.80	55.84	53.05	55.82	52.82	51.11
Unreported (N=2)												
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG												
Only Child in Family (N=8)	63.25	64.00	52.88	59.13	43.00	42.38	51.15	57.63	52.63	54.13	51.00	52.38
First Child of Several (N=62)	54.98	58.27	49.52	52.44	46.52	44.18	50.68	53.40	55.31	54.18	51.76	52.37
Middle Child (N=21)	54.33	56.81	52.95	52.90	45.24	43.43	55.71	55.67	46.19	50.76	51.76	50.62
Last Child (N=52)	57.29	60.48	47.94	50.29	40.12	39.27	55.75	54.90	52.88	55.31	52.58	51.21

Table J-1 (continued)

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables (N=143)

Independent Variables	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Pos	Pre	Pos	Pre	Post
Father's Educational Level												
High School or less (N=23)	60.39	63.35	48.30	53.09	40.48	38.09	54.04	52.91	54.26	55.00	55.74	56.04
Some College (N=77)	54.42	57.38	49.43	50.83	43.60	41.52	53.38	54.36	53.38	54.38	51.58	51.79
College Graduates (N=43)	57.12	60.19	50.72	53.84	45.95	45.56	51.44	53.09	51.44	53.09	50.79	49.19
Attendance at Step Ahead												
Yes (N=69)	55.80	59.65	50.78	51.51	44.30	42.65	53.94	55.12	54.39	54.16	50.77	51.25
No (N=74)	56.55	58.74	48.57	52.65	43.34	41.74	52.68	53.96	51.58	54.01	53.18	52.11

Table J-2

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables for Fathers who Attended Step Ahead (N=69)

Independent Variables	Subscales of FES											
	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Gender of Child												
Sons (N=14)	55.14	58.93	52.29	52.57	45.21	44.57	55.86	58.64	57.36	57.14	47.86	47.43
Daughters (N=55)	55.96	59.84	50.40	51.24	44.07	42.16	53.45	54.22	53.64	53.40	51.51	52.22
Distance from UNCG												
Less than 250 miles (N=53)	57.32	60.53	52.49	52.60	43.47	41.79	54.62	54.74	53.51	53.42	50.85	51.13
More than 250 miles (N=16)	50.75	56.75	45.13	47.88	47.06	45.50	51.69	56.38	57.31	56.63	50.50	51.63
Size of Community												
Less than 10000 (N=23)	56.26	61.35	52.17	52.74	43.00	39.52	51.65	54.10	58.23	56.71	50.48	51.90
10000-50000 (N=18)	55.50	57.50	49.28	51.78	45.06	43.89	56.17	57.50	47.17	43.00	51.17	51.00
More than 50000 (N=26)	54.96	59.00	50.12	50.31	45.04	44.31	56.85	55.44	52.96	54.59	51.48	50.30
Unreported (N=2)	64.00	68.00	57.00	50.50	43.00	46.00	49.80	56.80	47.00	49.40	48.20	52.60
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG												
Only Child in Family (N=5)	62.00	63.20	58.80	59.80	44.00	42.00	49.80	56.80	47.00	49.40	48.20	52.60
First Child of Several (N=31)	53.45	57.06	49.39	51.03	46.06	44.26	51.65	54.10	58.23	56.71	50.48	51.90
Middle Child (N=6)	52.83	56.50	54.67	48.17	47.50	44.00	56.17	57.50	47.17	43.00	51.17	51.00
Last Child (N=27)	58.00	62.67	50.04	51.26	41.63	40.63	56.85	55.44	52.96	54.59	51.48	50.30

Table J-2 (continued)

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables for Fathers Who Attended Step Ahead (N=69)

Independent Variables	Subscales of FES											
	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Father's Educational Level												
High School or less (N=7)	59.29	62.43	48.86	50.86	38.43	38.43	54.57	53.29	50.71	54.29	47.57	52.86
Some College (N=38)	55.55	59.05	50.03	49.87	43.66	40.89	54.66	53.95	55.74	54.47	50.39	51.21
College Graduates (N=24)	55.17	59.79	52.54	54.29	47.04	46.67	52.63	57.50	53.33	53.63	52.29	50.83

Table J-3

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables for Fathers who did not Attend Step Ahead (N=74)

Subscales of FES

Independent Variables	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Gender of Child												
Sons (N=23)	59.39	61.43	51.04	55.52	44.39	43.22	53.61	56.57	51.70	51.74	51.17	51.96
Daughters (N=51)	55.27	57.53	47.45	51.35	42.86	41.08	52.25	52.78	51.53	55.04	54.08	52.18
Distance from UNCG												
Less than 250 miles (N=55)	56.18	57.89	48.58	52.20	42.98	41.11	53.56	54.82	51.42	54.91	53.38	52.05
More than 250 miles (N=19)	57.63	61.21	48.53	53.95	44.37	43.58	50.11	51.47	52.05	51.42	52.58	52.26
Size of Community												
Less than 10000 (N=26)	60.65	61.88	49.73	54.85	41.12	40.69	55.27	53.27	50.88	52.23	52.96	52.85
10000-50000 (N=19)	58.47	56.58	52.89	51.58	46.21	43.32	49.63	54.05	55.32	56.05	52.32	53.74
More than 50000 (N=29)	51.62	57.34	44.69	51.38	43.45	41.66	49.76	54.28	49.76	54.28	53.93	50.38
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG												
Only Child in Family (N=3)	65.33	65.33	43.00	58.00	41.33	43.00	53.33	59.00	62.00	62.00	55.67	52.00
First Child of Several (N=31)	56.52	59.48	49.65	53.84	46.97	44.10	49.71	52.71	52.39	54.65	53.02	52.84
Middle Child (N=15)	54.93	56.93	52.27	54.80	44.33	43.20	55.53	54.93	45.80	53.87	52.00	50.47
Last Child (N=25)	56.52	58.12	45.68	49.24	38.48	37.80	54.56	54.32	52.80	56.08	53.76	52.20

Table J-3 (continued)

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables For Fathers who did not Attend Step Ahead (N=74)

Subscales of FES

Independent Variables	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Father's Educational Level												
High School or less (N=16)	60.88	63.75	48.06	54.06	41.38	37.94	53.81	52.75	55.81	55.31	59.31	57.44
Some College (N=39)	53.31	55.74	48.85	51.77	43.54	42.13	52.77	53.90	51.08	54.26	52.74	52.36
College Graduates (N=19)	59.58	60.68	48.42	53.26	44.58	44.16	51.53	55.11	49.05	52.42	48.89	47.11

Table J-4

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables for Fathers of Daughters (N=106)

Independent Variable	Subscales of FES											
	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Distance from UNCG												
Less than 250 miles (N=84)	56.48	58.81	50.07	51.46	42.83	40.82	53.58	53.79	52.27	54.54	52.89	51.99
More than 250 miles (N=22)	52.41	58.41	44.82	50.64	46.00	44.77	50.18	52.55	53.96	52.86	52.18	53.00
Size of Community												
Less than 10000 (N=37)	59.59	62.81	49.97	52.38	40.95	39.24	54.43	53.76	52.86	52.08	52.57	52.65
10000-50000 (N=26)	54.15	53.00	50.38	51.38	46.77	44.46	51.69	51.69	51.92	53.88	51.15	52.42
More than 50000 (N=41)	52.59	58.22	46.80	50.29	43.73	41.80	52.00	54.71	52.80	56.49	53.73	51.44
Unreported (N=2)												
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG												
Only Child in Family (N=6)	63.00	64.00	56.83	57.67	43.00	42.17	51.83	54.83	50.17	51.17	51.00	52.83
First Child of Several (N=47)	55.17	58.66	50.43	53.62	47.17	44.30	50.36	52.74	54.62	54.53	52.43	53.23
Middle Child (N=14)	52.43	57.14	49.43	48.07	42.64	40.57	55.71	53.86	45.36	51.64	53.07	51.86
Last Child (N=39)	56.21	58.56	45.87	48.67	39.44	38.74	55.05	54.15	53.21	55.15	53.28	50.97

Table J-4 (continued)

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables for Fathers of Daughters (N=106)

Independent Variable	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Father's Educational Level												
High School or less (N=18)	58.72	62.06	48.61	51.83	41.22	37.94	53.33	51.39	53.78	54.06	55.39	56.11
Some College (N=61)	54.79	57.87	49.18	50.66	42.62	40.34	53.93	53.97	52.89	53.87	52.08	51.31
College Graduates (N=27)	55.48	58.44	48.78	52.37	46.96	47.04	50.19	53.96	51.26	55.00	52.48	51.59
Attendance at Step Ahead												
Yes (N=55)	55.96	59.84	50.40	51.24	44.07	42.26	53.45	54.22	53.64	53.64	51.51	52.22
No (N=51)	55.27	57.53	47.45	51.35	42.86	41.08	52.25	52.78	51.53	55.04	54.08	52.18

Table J-5

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables for Fathers of Sons (N=37)

Independent Variables	Subscales of FES											
	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Distance from UNCG												
Less than 250 miles (N=24)	57.67	60.50	52.00	55.67	44.58	43.63	55.83	58.25	53.04	52.92	49.50	50.25
More than 250 miles (N=13)	58.00	60.46	50.62	52.08	44.92	43.92	51.92	55.69	55.31	55.38	50.69	50.23
Size of Community												
Less than 10000 (N=12)	55.50	58.00	53.67	58.42	45.25	42.92	58.33	56.33	51.75	51.42	48.42	47.75
10000-50000 (N=11)	63.82	66.55	52.91	52.36	43.00	41.55	49.36	55.64	56.18	56.27	51.27	53.09
More than 50000 (N=14)	55.00	57.86	48.57	52.57	45.57	46.15	55.14	59.14	53.79	53.86	50.14	50.14
Unreported (N=0)												
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG												
Only Child in Family (N=2)	64.00	64.00	41.00	63.50	43.00	43.00	49.00	66.00	60.00	63.00	51.00	51.00
First Child of Several (N=15)	54.40	57.07	46.67	48.73	44.47	43.80	51.67	55.47	57.47	53.07	49.67	49.67
Middle Child (N=7)	58.14	56.14	60.00	62.57	50.43	49.14	55.71	59.29	47.86	49.00	49.14	48.14
Last Child (N=13)	60.54	66.23	54.15	55.15	42.15	40.85	57.85	57.15	51.92	55.77	50.46	51.92

Table J-5 (continued)

Mean Scores of Selected Subscales of FES by Independent Variables for Fathers of Sons (N=37)

Independent Variables	Cohesion		Expressiveness		Conflict		Independence		Achievement		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Father's Educational Level												
High School or less (N=5)	66.40	68.00	47.20	57.60	37.80	38.60	56.60	58.40	56.00	58.40	57.00	55.80
Some College (N=16)	53.00	55.50	50.38	51.50	47.31	46.00	52.81	53.75	55.25	56.25	49.69	53.63
College Graduates (N=16)	59.88	63.13	54.00	56.31	44.25	43.06	55.44	60.63	51.75	49.88	47.94	45.13
Attendance at Step Ahead												
Yes (N=14)	55.14	58.93	52.29	52.57	45.21	44.57	55.86	58.64	57.36	57.14	47.86	47.43
No (N=23)	59.39	61.43	51.04	55.52	44.39	43.22	53.61	56.57	51.70	51.74	51.17	51.96

APPENDIX K

TABLES--MEAN SCORES ON F-COPES BY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table K-1

Mean Scores on F-COPES By Independent Variables (N=143)

Independent Variables	Pretest	Posttest
Gender of Child		
Sons (N=37)	95.35	93.16
Daughters (N=106)	92.39	92.50
Distance from UNCG		
Less than 250 miles (N=108)	95.76	94.42
More than 250 miles (N=35)	85.11	87.29
Size of Community		
Less than 10000 (N=49)	94.24	94.10
10000-50000 (N=37)	92.41	89.81
More than 50000 (N=55)	92.96	93.04
Unreported (N=0)	--	--
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG		
Only Child in Family (N=8)	88.75	90.00
First Child of Several (N=62)	92.77	92.00
Middle Child (N=21)	94.10	92.48
Last Child (N=52)	93.90	93.96
Father's Educational Level		
High School or less (N=23)	99.13	100.39
Some College (N=77)	93.62	92.27
College Graduates (N=43)	89.12	89.26
Attendance at Step Ahead		
Yes (N=69)	91.77	92.84
No (N=74)	94.45	92.51

Table K-2

Mean Scores on F-COPES By Independent Variables for Fathers who Attended Step Ahead (N=74)

Independent Variables	Pretest	Posttest
Gender of Child		
Sons (N=14)	92.79	88.93
Daughters (N=55)	91.51	93.84
Distance from UNCG		
Less than 250 miles (N=53)	94.17	94.06
More than 250 miles (N=16)	83.81	83.81
Size of Community		
Less than 10000 (N=23)	94.78	93.39
10000-50000 (N=18)	93.67	90.88
More than 50000 (N=26)	88.27	93.39
Unreported (N=2)	85.50	100.50
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG		
Only Child in Family (N=5)	88.40	91.80
First Child of Several (N=31)	90.84	91.42
Middle Child (N=6)	91.33	93.17
Last Child (N=27)	93.55	94.59
Father's Educational Level		
High School or less (N=7)	99.14	99.14
Some College (N=38)	93.03	93.29
College Graduates (N=24)	87.63	90.29

Table K-3

Mean Scores on F-COPES By Independent Variables for Fathers who did not Attend Step Ahead (N=74)

Independent Variables	Pretest	Posttest
Gender of Child		
Sons (N=23)	96.91	95.74
Daughters (N=51)	93.33	91.74
Distance from UNCG		
Less than 250 miles (N=55)	97.29	94.76
More than 250 miles (N=19)	86.21	86.00
Size of Community		
Less than 10000 (N=26)	93.77	94.23
10000-50000 (N=19)	91.21	86.42
More than 50000 (N=29)	97.17	94.97
Unreported (N=0)	--	--
Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG		
Only Child in Family (N=3)	89.33	87.00
First Child of Several (N=15)	94.71	92.58
Middle Child (N=15)	95.20	95.20
Last Child (N=25)	94.28	93.28
Father's Educational Level		
High School or less (N=16)	99.13	100.94
Some College (N=39)	94.21	91.28
College Graduates (N=19)	91.00	87.95

APPENDIX L

TABLES--REGRESSION OF SUBSCALES FROM THE FES BY PREDICTOR VARIABLES STEP AHEAD ATTENDANCE AND SEX OF CHILD

Table L-1

Regression of Subscales from the Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers who Attended Step Ahead (N=69)

Subscales	Predictor	Unstandardized b	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
Expressiveness	COLLIIa	-7.91	0.06	0.06
Independence	SESIIb	5.68	0.05	0.05

Note: p<.01 was set as the level necessary for supporting the hypothesis.

*p<.05
[a] Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG.
[b] Father's Educational Level.

Table L-2

Regression of Subscales from the Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers who did Not Attend Step Ahead (N=74)

Subscales	Predictor	Unstandardized b	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
Cohesion	POPULa	5.81 *	0.09	0.09
Expressiveness	POPULI	-7.26	0.09	0.09
Achievement Orientation	COLLIIb	7.07	0.07	0.07
	DISTANCc	4.73	0.11	0.04
	COLLIII	3.98	0.14	0.03
Control	POPULII	-4.09	0.06	0.06

Note: p<.01 was set as the level necessary for supporting the hypothesis.

*p<.05
[a]Size of Community.
[b]Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG.
[c]Distance from UNCG.

Table L-3

Regression of Subscales on Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers of Daughters (N=106)

Subscales	Predictor	Unstandardized b	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
Cohesion	POPULIa	-5.63 *	0.06	0.06
	DISTANCb	-3.54	0.08	0.02
Expressiveness	DISTANC	-4.43	0.03	0.03
	ATTENDc	-3.1	0.05	0.02
	COLLIId	-5.24	0.08	0.03
Conflict	SESIIe	2.58	0.02	0.02
	COLLI	-2.18	0.04	0.02
Independence	SESII	4.2	0.02	0.02
Achievement Orientation	ATTEND	-3.75	0.03	0.03
	POPULII	3.41	0.06	0.03
	COLLI	-2.99	0.08	0.02
	SESII	3.73	0.1	0.02
	DISTANC	4.71	0.13	0.03
Control	POPULII	-2.85	0.03	0.03
	COLLIII	-2.68	0.05	0.02
	ATTEND	2.66	0.08	0.03

Note: $p < .01$ was set as the level necessary for supporting the hypothesis.

*$p < .01$

[a] Size of Community
[b] Distance from UNCG
[c] Attendance at Step Ahead
[d] Birth Order of Child entering UNCG
[e] Father's Educational Level

Table L-4

Regression of Subscales from the Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers of Sons (N=37)

Subscales	Predictor	Unstandardized b	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
Cohesion	COLLIIa	-5.80	0.07	0.07
Independence	COLLIIi	-5.53	0.06	0.06
	POPULb	5.74	0.12	0.06
Achievement Orientation	COLLI	-7.31 *	0.15	0.15
Control	SESIc	6.37 *	0.14	0.14

Note: p<.01 was set as the level necessary for supporting the hypothesis.

*p<.05
[a]Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG.
[b]Size of Community.
[c]Father's Educational Level.

APPENDIX M

TABLES--REGRESSION OF F-COPES ON PREDICTOR VARIABLES STEP AHEAD ATTENDANCE AND SEX OF CHILD

Table M-1

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Fathers who Attended Step Ahead (N=69)

Predictors	Unstandardized Beta	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
SEX[a]	-6.18 *	0.06	0.06
DISTANC[b]	-6.13 *	0.13	0.07

*p<.05

[a] Sex of Child Entering UNCG.
[b] Distance from UNCG.

Table M-2

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Father's of Daughters (N=106)

Predictors	Unstandardized b	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
ATTEND[a]	4.6 *	0.06	0.06
POPUL[b]	-5.7 *	0.12	0.06

*p<.05
[a] Attendance at Step Ahead.
[b] Size of Community.

Table M-3

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Father's of Sons (N=37)

Predictors	Unstandardized b	R-Squared Cumulative	R-Squared Change
SESIa	-6.49	0.08	0.08
SESII	-10.48	0.17	0.09
DISTANCb	-5.65	0.23	0.06

a-Father's Educational Level.
b-Distance from UNCG.

APPENDIX N

TABLES--REGRESSION OF F-COPES ON PREDICTOR VARIABLES: PRETEST VS. POSTTEST

Table N-1

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Total Sample (N=143): Pretest vs. Posttest (N=143)

	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Predictors	b	R-Squared Cumulative	b	R-Squared Cumulative
DISTANCa	10.64 *	0.13	7.13 *	0.06
SEXb	4.59 **	0.15	----------	----------
SESIIc	-4.73 **	0.18	-3.73	0.07
SESI	-4.67	0.19	-7.66 **	0.11

*p<.01 **p<.05

[a] Distance from UNCG.
[b] Sex of Child Entering UNCG.
[c] Father's Educational Level.

Table N-2

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Fathers who Attended Step Ahead (N=69): Pretest vs. Posttest

	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Predictors	b	R-Squared Cumulative	b	R-Squared Cumulative
DISTANC [a]	10.36 *	0.13	5.24	0.03

*p<.01

[a] Distance from UNCG

Table N-3

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Fathers who did not Attend Step Ahead (N=74): Pretest vs. Posttest

	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Predictors	b	R-Squared Cumulative	b	R-Squared Cumulative
DISTANCa	11.08 *	0.13	8.76 **	0.08
SEXb	5.14	0.17	---	---
SESIIc	-5.62	0.20	---	---
POPULId	---	---	-6.58	0.12
SEX	---	---	7.31	0.17
SESII	---	---	-7.01	0.22
SESI	---	---	-8.09	0.27

*p<.01 **p<.05

[a] Distance from UNCG
[b] Sex of Child Entering UNCG
[c] Father's Educational Level
[d] Size of Community

Table H-4

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Fathers of Daughters (N=106): Pretest vs. Posttest

	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Predictors	b	R-Squared Cumulative	b	R-Squared Cumulative
DISTANCa	10.18 *	0.11	7.34 **	0.06
SESIb	-3.98	0.13	---------	----------
SESI	-5.37	0.15	---------	----------
POPULIc	---------	----------	-4.38	0.08

*p< .01 **p <.05

[a] Distance from UNCG.
[b] Father's Educational Level.
[c] Sex of Child Entering UNCG.

Table H-5

Regression of F-COPES on Predictor Variables for Fathers of Sons (N=37): Pretest vs. Posttest

	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Predictors	b	R-Squared Cumulative	b	R-Squared Cumulative
DISTANCa	13.71 *	0.24	---------	----------
SESIb	-6.89	0.31	---------	----------

*p<.01

[a] Distance from UNCG.
[b] Father's Educational Level.

APPENDIX O

TABLES--REGRESSION OF SELECTED SUBSCALES FROM THE FES ON PREDICTOR VARIABLES: PRETEST VS. POSTTEST

Table 0-1

Regression of Selected Subscales from Family Environment on Predictor Variables for the Total Sample (N=143) Pretest vs. Posttest

		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Subscale	Predictor	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative
Cohesion	POPULIIa	-4.86 **	0.03	---------	----------
	SESIb	-4.07	0.06	-3.91	0.03
Expressiveness	POPULII	-3.87	0.02	---------	----------
Conflict	SESII	--------	----------	4.83 *	0.05
	COLLIIIc	-5.80 *	0.07	-4.10 **	0.09
	SESI	--------	----------	3.48	0.11
Independence	COLLI	-4.61 *	0.05	---------	----------
	DISTANCd	3.11	0.06	---------	----------
	SEXe	--------	----------	3.82 **	0.03
Achievement Orientation	COLLII	-2.83 *	0.07	-3.89	0.02
	POPULII		----------	2.70	0.04
Control	SEX	-2.83	0.02	---------	----------
	SESII	--------	----------	-3.58 **	0.03
	SESI	--------	----------	-4.25	0.05

*p < .01 **p < .05

[a] Size of Community.
[b] Father's Educational Level.
[c] Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG.
[d] Distance from UNCG.
[e] Sex of Child Entering UNCG.

Table 0-2

Regression of Selected Subscales from Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers who Attended Step Ahead (N=69): Pretest vs Posttest

		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Subscales	Predictor	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative
Cohesion	DISTANCa	6.57	0.04	---------	----------
	COLLIIIb	--------	----------	4.95	0.05
Expressiveness	DISTANC	7.37	0.06	---------	----------
	SESIIc	5.33	0.09	---------	----------
Conflict	COLLIII	-4.39	0.05	---------	----------
	SESII	--------	----------	6.16 *	0.09
Independence	COLLIII	4.78	0.05	---------	----------
	POPULId	--------	----------	-5.04	0.05
Achievement Orientation	COLLI	6.96 *	0.11	---------	----------
	POPULI	-5.16	0.16	---------	----------
	COLLIII	5.62	0.19	---------	----------
	COLLII	--------	----------	-12.22 *	0.10
	POPULII	--------	----------	5.23 **	0.16
	SEXe	--------	----------	4.76	0.19
Control	SEX	--------	----------	-4.79	0.04

*p < .01 **p < .05

[a] Distance from UNCG
[b] Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG
[c] Father's Educational Level
[d] Size of Community
[e] Sex of Child Entering UNCG

Table 0-3

Regression of Selected Subscales from Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers who did Not Attend Step Ahead (N=74): Pretest vs. Posttest

		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Subscales	Predictor	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative
Cohesion	POPULIIa	-8.11 *	0.09	---------	----------
	SESb	-6.56 **	0.16	-6.34 **	0.06
Expressiveness	POPULII	-6.38 **	0.06	---------	----------
	COLLIIIc	--------	----------	-5.15	0.04
Conflict	COLLIII	-7.34 *	0.11	-5.96 **	0.08
	POPULI	4.17	0.14	---------	----------
Independence	COLLI	-5.10 **	0.06	---------	----------
	SEXd	--------	----------	3.78	0.03
	DISTANCe	--------	----------	3.98	0.07
Achievement Orientation	COLLII	-7.25 **	0.09	---------	----------
	POPULI	4.61	0.13	---------	----------
	SESII	-4.12	0.16	---------	----------
	COLLI	--------	----------	-4.08	0.05
	SEX	--------	----------	-3.47	0.08
	POPULI	--------	----------	4.01	0.12
	DISTANC	--------	----------	3.96	0.15
Control	SEXII	-5.76 **	0.07	-6.73 *	0.09
	SESI	-6.57 **	0.15	-5.08	0.14

*p <.01 **p <.05

[a] Size of Community
[b] Father's Educational Level
[c] Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG
[d] Sex of Child Entering UNCG
[e] Distance from UNCG

Table 0-4

Regression of Selected Subscales from Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers of Daughters (N=106): Pretest vs. Posttest

		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Subscales	Predictor	b	R-Squared Cumulative	b	R-Squared Cumulative
Cohesion	POPULIIa	-4.97	0.03	---------	----------
	POPULI	-5.67	0.06	-7.59 *	0.08
	POPULII	---------	----------	-4.86	0.11
	ATTENDb	---------	----------	3.26	0.13
Expressiveness	COLLIIIc	-4.92	0.03	---------	----------
	DISTANCd	5.58	0.06	---------	----------
	COLLI	---------	----------	4.18	0.02
Conflict	COLLI	6.61 *	0.10	---------	----------
	POPULI	3.86	0.12	---------	----------
	SESIIe	3.69	0.15	7.24 *	0.11
	COLLI	---------	----------	6.64 **	0.15
	POPULI	---------	----------	3.32	0.17
Independance	COLLI	-4.52 **	0.05	---------	----------
Achievement Orientation	COLLII	-8.37 *	0.08	---------	----------
	POPULII	---------	----------	3.75	0.04

*p <.01 **p <.05

[a] -Size of Community
[b] -Attendance at Step Ahead
[c] -Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG
[d] -Distance from UNCG
[e] -Father's Educational Level

Table 0-5

Regression of Selected Subscales from Family Environment Scale on Predictor Variables for Fathers of Sons (N=37) Pretest vs. Posttest

		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Subscales	Predictor	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative	Beta	R-Squared Cumulative
Cohesion	SESIa	-8.43 **	0.14	-8.79 **	0.13
	POPULIb	6.98	0.22	---------	----------
	COLLIIIc	--------	----------	8.25 **	0.23
Expressiveness	COLLI	--------	----------	-9.54 **	0.15
	COLLII	10.47 **	0.12	---------	----------
	COLLIII	8.15	0.21	-7.62	0.21
Conflict	COLLII	7.06	0.08	6.68	0.07
	POPULII	--------	----------	5.45	0.14
Independence	SESI	--------	----------	-6.35 **	0.16
	POPULI	-7.25	0.09	-4.06	0.22
	COLLIII	6.32	0.16	---------	----------
Achievement Orientation	COLLI	6.10	0.09	---------	----------
	SESII	--------	----------	-6.89	0.10
	ATTENDd	--------	----------	5.36	0.17
	POPULI	--------	----------	5.65	0.22
Control	SESII	--------	----------	-9.02 *	0.19

*p<.01 **p <.05

[a] Father's Educational Level
[b] Size of Community
[c] Birth Order of Child Entering UNCG
[d] Attendance at Step Ahead