

## Perceived adjustment of parents and children: Variations by family structure, race, and gender.

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### **Abstract:**

The article presents a study examining family structure, race, and gender differences in parent and child adjustment to address the absence of empirical information about the experiences of African-American step-family members. Parental percept of child adjustment were investigated because studies of primarily white families have suggested that children in stepfamilies may experience more distress. Consequently, given the pattern of generally small differences and similarity across groups, the empirical literature that has assessed parent and child adjustment in white stepfather families and African-American intact families may be generalize to the reports of parents in African-American stepfather families.

**Keywords:** parent-child relationships | African-American families | stepfamilies | child development | interpersonal relations

### **Article:**

This study examined family structure, race, and gender differences in parent and child adjustment to address the absence of empirical information about the experiences of African-American step-family members. Subjects were 497 primary respondents (82 African-American, 415 white) living in stepfather families and 2,706 (394 African-American, 2,312 white) respondents living in intact families who participated in the National Survey of Families and Households. Results indicated that African-American stepfather families were generally similar in parent and child adjustment to relevant comparison groups--white stepfather families and African-American intact families. As a result, the empirical literature that has examined adjustment in these comparison groups may be generalizable to African-American stepfather families.

Despite the growing body of literature that has examined the experience of living in stepfamilies, there is a notable absence of empirical information about African-American stepfamilies (Clingempeel, Brand, & Segal, 1987; Coleman & Ganong, 1990). However, there is evidence from three related lines of research that suggests that the experience of stepfamily living may be different for African-Americans than it is for whites. These include racial differences in demographic context, adjustment to divorce, and extended family support.

### Demographic Context

There are several differences between African-Americans and whites regarding the demographics of divorce and remarriage. African-Americans are more likely to experience marital disruption in first and second marriages than are whites (Martin & Bumpass, 1989)-- differences that persist independently of such compositional variables as education, religiosity, region of residence, and parental marital stability (Teachman, 1986). In addition, African-Americans, particularly women, are less likely than whites to remarry following marital disruption (Glick, 1984; Sweet & Bumpass, 1988). Tucker and Taylor (1989) contend that marriage and remarriage rates for African-Americans are lower than for whites because there are fewer African-American men than women of comparable socioeconomic status. Finally, although there is some controversy on this point (Martin & Bumpass, 1989), remarriages are somewhat more stable than first marriages for African-Americans, whereas the reverse pattern is evident for whites (Glick, 1984; Teachman, 1986).

As a result of these demographic differences, the percentage of all families that are stepfamilies is higher among whites than among African-Americans, suggesting that African-American parents who remarry are a more select group than are remarried white parents. Possible explanations for this racial difference are that single-parent status may be more normative among African-Americans than it is among whites (Kitson with Holmes, in press; Peters & Deford, 1978), that marriage may be less central to the well-being of African-Americans than it is for Whites (Bail & Robins, 1986; Staples, 1985), and that African-American women, in contrast to white women, are less constrained to marriage because of their relative economic independence from men (Hampton, 1980). To the extent that these explanations are valid, African-Americans may have less incentive than whites to remarry following divorce.

### Adjustment to Divorce

A second reason why African-Americans and whites may have different experiences in stepfamilies is that their adjustment following divorce may differ. In a longitudinal study, Kitson with Holmes (in press) found that adjustment for African-Americans initially and after 4 years of separation was better than it was for whites. In probability samples, Menaghan and Lieberman (1986) and Gove and Shin (1989) found that divorced African-American females had less depression and fewer adjustment difficulties than did divorced white females; however, these studies did not find racial differences in male adjustment to divorce. Thoits (1984), in a

secondary analysis of panel data, found that divorced whites reported higher levels of anxiety and depression than did divorced African-Americans.

Fine, McKenry, and Chung (in press), analyzing data from the National Survey of Households and Families, found that African-American divorced parents, when compared to white divorced respondents, were more satisfied with being parents and were less likely to indicate that someone in the home had a substance abuse problem. There were no significant racial differences on measures assessing depression, health, life satisfaction, and quality of life since separation. The authors suggested that race plays a significant, although minor, role in some aspects of adjustment following divorce.

### Extended Family Support

A third way that African-American stepfamilies may differ from their white counterparts is the presence of an extensive kinship support network. Research has consistently documented that African-Americans in both two-parent and single-parent families are more likely than whites to reside in extended-family households (Taylor, Chatters, Tucker, & Lewis, 1990; Wilson, 1989), regardless of socioeconomic status (Farley & Allen, 1987). Beck and Beck (1989) found that 60% of African-American women experienced some variation of household extension between 1969 and 1984.

The presence of extended family members can be helpful to parents because they can perform functions and fulfill roles that might otherwise go unprovided. Further, by relieving mothers of household tasks, extended family members may allow them the opportunity to improve their economic situations, primarily through additional education and employment (Wilson, 1989). On the other hand, although kin network members may assist with material needs, they may add to the difficulties inherent in adjusting to living in stepfamilies. In single-parent families, McLanahan and Booth (1989) noted that extended family members may interfere with mothers' parenting styles. Such interference may also lead to adjustment problems in stepfamilies because the process of negotiating new rules and relationships may be particularly difficult with the presence of additional family members. However, no studies to date have examined the prevalence or effects of extended family networks in stepfamilies.

The purpose of this study was to assess the extent to which family structure (stepfather, intact family) and race interact on several adjustment dimensions. Following Kitson and Raschke (1981), adjustment is defined broadly in this investigation to include both the presence of adaptive (e.g., satisfaction with life) and the absence of maladaptive characteristics (e.g., psychological distress, depression). Whereas family structure and race effects in subjective well-being have been examined independently in previous investigations, few studies have simultaneously used family structure and race as independent variables. Intact families were used as a comparison group because they serve as a commonly used baseline against which stepfamilies are compared and not because they represent the "ideal" family structure (Coleman

& Ganong, 1990). Further, because men and women may have differing experiences and perceptions, gender was included as an independent variable.

Two adjustment dimensions were chosen. Respondent adjustment was of interest given findings that adults in white stepfamilies do not differ in their well-being from white individuals in intact families (Coleman & Ganong, 1990). Few studies have made racial comparisons in adjustment among married parents (living either in stepfather or intact families). However, because remarriages may be more stable than first marriages for African-Americans and the opposite pattern may be evident for whites (Teachman, 1986), there is the possibility of a family structure by race interaction in adjustment. Further, women have higher levels of depression than men (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991; Weissman & Klerman, 1977). Given these findings, it was hypothesized that there would be no main effects for family structure or race in respondent adjustment, there would be a family structure by race interaction, and there would be a main effect for gender in depression.

Parental perceptions of child adjustment were investigated because studies of primarily white families have suggested that children in stepfamilies may experience more distress (Coleman & Ganong, 1990) and may have poorer relationships with their parents (particularly their stepparents) (Furstenberg, 1987; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1985) than children in intact families. Further, using the NSFH data set, McKenry and Fine (1990) found that divorced single-parent African-American respondents, in comparison with their white counterparts, reported that the quality of their children's lives was more positive and that their children were less distressed. Finally, Voydanoff and Donnelly (1986) found that mothers more than fathers identified problems with their children, possibly because mothers spend more time with them. Consequently, it was hypothesized that there would be main effects for family structure, race, and gender in parental perceptions of child adjustment. Given the absence of previous research, no hypotheses were posed regarding the possible presence of interactions between and among these independent variables.

## METHODOLOGY

Data were taken from the National Survey of Families and Households (Sweet, Bumpass, & Call, 1988), which consists of interviews with a national probability sample of 13,017 respondents in 1987 and 1988. The survey contains a main sample of 9,643 respondents who represent the noninstitutional U.S. population aged 19 and older. In addition, several population groups were double-sampled, including African-American and stepparent families.

One adult per household was randomly selected to be the primary respondent. Several portions of the main interview were self-administered to facilitate the collection of sensitive information and to ease the flow of data collection. The mean interview lasted 1 hour and 40 minutes.

For purposes of this study, African-American and white primary respondents in stepfather and intact families with children under the age of 19 were included. Because the experiences of those

in stepfather families formed following parental divorce may be different than those in stepfamilies formed following parental death (Clingempeel et al., 1987) and because there were few respondents in the latter group in the present sample, only those in stepfamilies formed after a parental divorce were studied.

Within this subsample, there were 497 respondents (37 African-American males, 170 white males, 45 African-American females, 245 white females) in stepfather families (custodial mother married to a husband with no previous children of his own), and 2,706 (198 African-American males, 1,023 white males, 196 African-American females, 1,289 white females) in intact families. Other family structures (e.g., stepmother families, complex stepfamilies) were not included because of insufficient sample sizes among African-Americans. The comparability of these subgroups on demographic variables is presented in a later section.

## Measures

**Respondent adjustment.** This construct was assessed with two measures.

Life satisfaction was measured by one item that asked respondents, "Taking things all together, how would you say things are these days?" Response options ranged from 1 (very unhappy) to 7 (very happy).

Depression was measured by 12 of the 20 items on the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression (CES-D) Scale (Radloff, 1977). Subjects indicated the number of days during the past week that they experienced each of 12 symptoms. Thus, total scores could range from 0 through 84, with higher scores indicating greater reported depression. Cronbach's alpha was .84 in the present sample, indicating excellent internal consistency.

**Perceptions of child adjustment.** Parental perceptions of child adjustment were assessed with three measures.

Quality of child's life consisted of one item that assessed parental perceptions of how well the child's life is going. Responses ranged from 1 (not well at all) to 5 (very well).

Psychological distress included nine items that assess parental perceptions of how often the child "is willing to try new things," "is unhappy, sad, or depressed," "keeps self busy," "loses temper easily," "is cheerful and happy," "is fearful or anxious," "bullies or is cruel or mean to others," "does what you ask," and "gets along well with other kids." Responses ranged from 1 (often true) to 3 (not true). Items were coded so that higher scores indicate that the child is perceived as experiencing greater psychological distress. Cronbach's alpha was .56.

Parent-child relationship quality was assessed by one item that asked respondents, "How would you describe your relationship with each child?" Response options ranged from 1 (very poor) to 7 (excellent).

## RESULTS Comparability of Groups on Demographic Variables

To determine the demographic comparability of the groups, a 2 (family structure: intact, stepfather family) x 2 (race: African-American, white) x 2 (gender of respondent) MANOVA was computed. Dependent variables were total family income, years of completed education, number of people living in the household, age of the respondent, and the length of the respondent's current marriage. These variables were included because research has suggested that they may be related to adjustment in stepfather families (Clingempeel et al., 1987).

Results revealed significant multivariate main effects (based on Wilks's lambda) for family structure [ $F(5,3159) = 99.79, p < .001$ ], race [ $F(5,3159) = 10.94, p < .001$ ], and gender of respondent [ $F(5,3159) = 21.55, p < .001$ ]. There was also a significant family structure x race interaction [ $F(5,3159) = 6.34, p < .001$ ].

Subsequent 2 (family structure) x 2 (race) x 2 (gender of respondent) univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to identify the source of the multivariate effects. Means on the demographic variables are presented in Table 1. There were significant ( $p < .05$ ) family structure effects on years of completed education, number of people living in the household, length of current marriage, and age of respondent. Respondents in stepfather families had less education, had more people living in the household, had been married for shorter periods of time, and were younger than those in intact families.

Significant effects for race revealed that African-American respondents reported having less total family income, less education, and more people living in the household than did their white counterparts. The only significant gender of respondent main effect indicated that females were younger than males.

There was a significant family structure x race interaction on respondent's age. Subsequent tests of simple main effects at each level of family structure revealed that, in stepfather families, African-American respondents were significantly younger than their white counterparts, whereas, in intact families, the reverse pattern was evident.

The family structure, race, and gender effects are consistent with actual differences in the general population (Hernandez, 1988). As a result, because this sample was not demographically biased in comparison to the population, the primary analyses reported below were conducted without these demographic variables used as covariates (Coleman & Ganong, 1990). However, analyses were also conducted with covariates to assist in the interpretation of the primary findings.

### Family Structure, Race, and Gender Effects on Respondent Adjustment

The analysis strategy for the respondent adjustment and perceptions of child adjustment variables was to conduct separate ANOVAs on each dependent variable. ANOVAs were chosen rather than MANOVAs because: (a) there were relatively few dependent measures relative to the

sample size; (b) the adjustment dimensions were conceptually heterogeneous (i.e., including both the presence of adaptive and the absence of maladaptive characteristics); and (c) the measures assessing these dimensions were empirically distinct. The Pearson correlation between the two respondent adjustment measures (life satisfaction, depression) was  $-.17$ , and the Pearson correlations among the three perceptions of child adjustment measures (quality of child's life, psychological distress, quality of parent-child relationships) ranged from  $-.14$  to  $-.36$ , with a mean absolute value of  $.23$ . As noted by Haase and Ellis (1987), when the dependent variables are conceptually and empirically distinct from one another, MAN-OVA results may mask effects that multiple ANOVAs are able to detect.

To determine the effects of family structure, race, and gender on respondent adjustment, two 2 (family structure)  $\times$  2 (race)  $\times$  2 (gender) ANOVAs were computed. Dependent variables were life satisfaction and depression. The results of the ANOVAs are summarized in Table 2 and the means and standard deviations on the dependent variables are presented in Table 3. On life satisfaction, a significant main effect for family structure was found. Respondents in stepfather families reported being less satisfied with their lives than did those in intact families. There was also a significant race  $\times$  gender of respondent interaction. Subsequent tests of simple main effects at each level of gender indicated that African-American males reported being significantly less satisfied with their lives than did white males. There were no racial differences in life satisfaction among women.

Similar analyses (ANCOVAs) were conducted with family income, education, household size, marriage length, and respondent's age serving as covariates. Differences were in the same direction as those found in analyses without the covariates. However, the family structure and race  $\times$  gender effects were smaller in magnitude and, partly because of fewer subjects due to missing data, no longer statistically significant. With the covariates included, the main effect for race was significant ( $p < .05$ ), as African-American respondents reported being less satisfied with their lives than their white counterparts.

On depression, there was a significant main effect for race. There was also a significant family structure  $\times$  race interaction, which indicated that this effect for race differed for respondents in intact and stepfather families. As a result, tests of simple main effects at each level of family structure were conducted. These revealed that, in step-father families, African-Americans were more depressed than whites. There were no racial differences in depression among respondents in intact families. A gender effect in level of depression indicated that females reported being more depressed than males.

With demographic variables included as covariates (ANCOVAs), obtained differences were in the same direction as those in the primary analyses, but there were no significant main or interaction effects.

In sum, parents in stepfather families were less satisfied with their lives than those in intact families, African-American males were less satisfied with their lives than white males, African-Americans in stepfather families were more depressed than white respondents in stepfather families, and females were more depressed than males. When controls for demographic variables were included in the analyses, the strength of these effects was reduced and they were generally no longer statistically significant.

#### Family Structure, Race, and Gender Effects on Perceptions of Child Adjustment

To determine the effects of family structure, race, and gender of respondent on perceptions of child adjustment, three 2 (family structure) x 2 (race) x 2 (gender of respondent) ANOVAs were computed. Dependent variables were the quality of the child's life, psychological distress, and parent-child relationship quality. Table 2 summarizes the results of the ANOVAs and Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations on the dependent variables.

As shown in the tables, there were significant family structure main effects on all three dependent variables. Respondents in stepfather families, compared with those in intact families, reported that their children's lives were not going as well, that they were experiencing more psychological distress, and that they had poorer-quality (step)parent-child relationships. There was also a significant main effect for race on psychological distress. African-American parents reported that their children were less psychologically distressed than did white parents. Analyses conducted with the demographic variables used as covariates yielded identical results.

In sum, with and without demographic controls, parents in stepfather families perceived their children as less positively adjusted than did parents in intact families, and African-American parents perceived their children as less psychologically distressed than did white parents.

#### DISCUSSION

This investigation is one of the few that have examined the joint effects of family structure, race, and gender on perceptions of parent and child adjustment. The results suggest that adults in African-American stepfather families are generally similar to respondents in relevant comparison groups--white stepfather families and African-American intact families--on the dimensions assessed in this study. It should be noted that even when significant differences were found, they were small in magnitude. Further, in analyses performed on the respondent adjustment variables, inclusion of controls for demographic variables yielded even smaller and nonsignificant effect sizes.

Consequently, given the pattern of generally small differences and similarity across groups, the empirical literature that has assessed parent and child adjustment in white stepfather families and African-American intact families may be generalizable to the reports of parents in African-American stepfather families. Further, the nationally representative nature of the NSFH data set



permits a wider range of generalizability than was characteristic of previous, smaller-scale studies.

### Respondent Adjustment

A significant family structure by race interaction (and subsequent tests of simple main effects) on depression indicated that, contrary to expectations, African-American respondents in stepfather families were more depressed than white participants in stepfather families. Further, findings related to life satisfaction were partially consistent with this result. The race by gender of respondent interaction on life satisfaction indicated that African-American males reported less satisfaction with their lives than white males. This small but significant effect, which was present for male respondents in both stepfather and intact families, is consistent with previous research (Gibbs, 1988).

It is possible that these racial differences may be partly explained by demographic differences between African-American and white respondents. When controls for these variables were instituted, the only significant racial difference in respondent adjustment was on life satisfaction, as African-Americans reported being less satisfied with their lives than whites. Thus, in contrast to whites, the lower family incomes, less education, and more people living in the household characteristic of African-American respondents may partially explain the racial differences in respondent adjustment. However, given that these racial demographic differences are also present in the general population, analyses that use demographic controls mask actual racial differences and should be interpreted with caution.

In addition to these demographic factors, there are several other possible explanations for why the stepfather family experience may be slightly more distressing for African-Americans than it is for whites. First, stepfamilies formed after divorce are rarer among African-Americans than they are among whites. Thus the negotiation and resolution of new family roles may be particularly difficult for African-Americans because of the lack of institutionalized norms (Cherlin, 1978). Second, it is plausible that the presence of extended kin and friendship networks in African-American single-parent families makes the process of integrating a new adult into the home more difficult and complex than it is for whites. Third, with respect to racial differences among males, Gibbs (1988) and Staples (1988) have argued that African-American men are not given the same status as heads of households as are their white counterparts. This makes it more difficult for them to fulfill their roles of husband and father.

A significant family structure effect revealed that respondents in stepfather families, when compared with those in intact families, reported being less satisfied with their lives. This was unexpected, given that reviews of existing literature (Coleman & Ganong, 1990) have concluded that there are no consistent family structure differences in adult well-being. Previous studies may not have detected this small respondent adjustment effect because of the low power that results from having relatively small sample sizes. This small family structure effect is consistent with

claims in the clinical literature that living in stepfather families is more stressful than living in intact families (Visher & Visher, 1988).

However, the small family structure effect was further reduced in magnitude when controls for demographic variables were included. This suggests that the family structure difference in life satisfaction is partly explained by the findings that those in stepfather families had lower socioeconomic status, current marriages of shorter duration, younger ages, and more people living in the household than did those in intact families.

A gender difference was also found in depression. Consistent with previous research (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991; Weissman & Klerman, 1977), women reported higher levels of depression than men. Given the absence of a significant family structure by gender interaction, this gender effect was present in both intact and stepfather families. Interestingly, this effect was no longer present when demographic controls were included, suggesting that these variables, particularly women's younger ages, partly account for the depression gender difference.

### Perceptions of Child Adjustment

Respondents in stepfather families, when compared with those in intact families, reported that their children's lives were not going as well, that their children were experiencing more distress, and that they had poorer quality (step)parent-child relationships. Given the absence of a significant family structure by race interaction, these differences were present in both white and African-American families. Further, the effects were quite robust, as they remained statistically significant even after controls for demographic variables were employed in the analyses. These findings are consistent with results from previous studies of mostly white families (Coleman & Ganong, 1990; Furstenberg, 1987; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1985) and indicate that these family structure differences are generalizable to African-American families.

A main effect for race revealed that African-American respondents perceived their children as less psychologically distressed than did white participants. Given the lack of a significant family structure by race interaction, these results suggest that African-American respondents in both intact and stepfather families had more positive perceptions of their children's adjustment than did white respondents. This finding is consistent with that of McKenry and Fine (in press), who found a similar effect among divorced, single parents in the NSFH data set, and extends it by showing that this racial difference is also present in stepfather families. It is possible that these more positive perceptions of child adjustment are due to divorce being more normative and supported in the African-American community than it is among white families, perhaps due to the high prevalence of single-parent families among African-Americans (Staples, 1988). Alternatively, a racial difference in response style could partially explain this effect, as white parents may be more likely to report that their children are distressed than are African-American parents even if there are no differences in the actual level of distress experienced by their children.

## Recommendations for Future Research

Future research directions are suggested by several limitations of this study. First, because only parental self-report was employed, future studies could use self-report and behavioral measures of adjustment gathered from multiple family members, including children (Clingempeel et al., 1987). Multiple sources of data would allow researchers to more accurately determine whether the effects observed in this study reflect actual group differences or response style artifacts. Second, as sample sizes were small in some groups, particularly African-American males in stepfather families, larger samples should be used. Possible ways to accomplish this difficult task might be to assess individuals identified from marriage license records and/or settings likely to have relatively large numbers of African-Americans (e.g., certain churches).

Third, the measures used (other than the CES-Depression Scale that was modified for use in the NSFH survey) have no established psychometric properties, other than having adequate internal consistency among respondents in the subsample used in this study. Thus, standardized measures appropriate for use with stepfather family members and African-Americans should be used in future investigations. As few such measures are available, instrument development may be a necessary preliminary step before this area of research can advance substantially (Coleman & Ganong, 1990). Finally, a wider range of adjustment dimensions should be assessed in future studies. Because of extensive missing data in the NSFH, other relevant aspects of adjustment, such as marital satisfaction, could not be used as dependent variables in the present study.

### NOTE

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TABLE 1. MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON DEMOGRAPHIC  
VARIABLES BY FAMILY STRUCTURE) RACE,  
AND GENDER OF RESPONDENT

Legend for Chart:

A - Family Structure, Intact, African-American, M

B - Family Structure, Intact, African-American, F

C - Family Structure, Intact, White, M

D - Family Structure, Intact, White, F

E - Family Structure, Stepfather, African-American, M

F - Family Structure, Stepfather, African-American, F

G - Family Structure, Stepfather, White, M

H - Family Structure, Stepfather, White, F

A    B    C    D    E    F

G    H

Family income M

34,747 39,481 43,265 46,333 26,356 27,376

38,090 45,499

SD

28,560 41,699 42,392 53,708 17,814 15,496

28,188 49,664

Education M

12.19 12.86 13.65 13.18 12.46 12.18

12.88 12.49

SD

2.82 2.27 2.62 2.23 1.56 1.33

2.48 1.60

Household size M

4.30 4.09 3.99 4.00 4.50 4.58

4.04 4.16

SD

1.08 1.15 1.00 1.10 1.34 1.80

1.04 1.05

Marriage length M

12.46 11.77 12.02 11.73 4.01 4.96

4.61 4.93

SD

7.36 7.34 7.66 7.54 3.92 3.86

3.70 3.77

Respondent age M

37.16 34.46 36.28 33.59 32.00 31.76

36.22 34.03

SD

8.76 8.00 8.08 7.84 6.43 4.75

8.76 6.26

n

166 153 890 1099 22 33  
 139 205

Notes: M = male, F = female. Education, marriage length, and respondent's age are coded in years.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF ANALYSES OF VARIANCE ON RESPONDENT  
 ADJUSTMENT AND PERCEPTIONS OF CHILD ADJUSTMENT

Legend for Chart:

A - F Values: Family Structure (FS)

B - F Values: Race(R)

C - F Values: Gender (G)

D - F Values: FS x R

E - F Values: FS x G

F - F Values: R x G

G - F Values: FS x R x G

A	B	C	D			
		E	F	G		

Respondent adjustment[a]

Life satisfaction		5.24[1]	3.54	.59	.00	
		1.84	4.96[a]	.00		

Depression		1.38	6.62[2]	5.25[1]	4.85[1]	
		1.98	.26	1.70		

Perceptions of child

adjustment[b]

Quality of child's life	34.29[3]	2.47	1.20	.18
	.37	.00	.26	

Psychological distress	26.37[3]	9.44[2]	.53	2.11
	1.52	.36	.19	

Parent-child

relationship quality	4.52[1]	.47	2.60	.01
	1.79	.62	.14	

a df's = 1, 1158, b df's = 1, 2794.

1 p < .05. 2 p < .01. 3 p < .001.

TABLE 3. MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON RESPONDENT  
ADJUSTMENT AND PERCEPTIONS OF CHILD ADJUSTMENT  
VARIABLES BY FAMILY STRUCTURE, RACE,  
AND GENDER OF RESPONDENT

Legend for Chart:

A - Family Structure: Intact: African-American: M

B - Family Structure: Intact: African-American: F

C - Family Structure: Intact: White: M

D - Family Structure: Intact: White: F

E - Family Structure: Stepfather: African-American: M

F - Family Structure: Stepfather: African-American: F

G - Family Structure: Stepfather: White: M

H - Family Structure: Stepfather: White: F

A B C D

E F G H

### Respondent adjustment

Life satisfaction M 4.02 4.44 4.42 4.40

3.93 4.08 4.32 4.05

SD 1.26 .79 .89 .88

.92 1.06 .90 1.16

Depression M 12.31 11.41 10.27 12.79

12.93 17.12 9.21 11.93

SD 9.32 9.27 8.50 9.13

7.53 12.41 8.82 9.38

### Perceptions of child

#### adjustment

Quality of child's life M 4.71 4.75 4.69 4.69

4.50 4.55 4.41 4.49



SD	.50	.47	.53	.52
	.57	.63	.64	.65

Psychological distress	M	1.38	1.39	1.47	1.48
		1.53	1.51	1.58	1.52

SD	.26	.27	.28	.28
	.24	.28	.34	.29

Parent-child

relationship quality	M	6.13	6.11	6.00	6.09
		5.75	5.98	5.51	6.02

SD	1.94	1.77	1.76	1.76
	2.16	2.02	1.99	1.73

Note: M = male, F = female.

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