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Helicopter Parenting of College Students

(TITLE)

BY

Lindsey R. Pautler

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Helicopter Parenting of College Students

Lindsey R. Pautler

Eastern Illinois University

Abstract

Popular media often features stories about 'helicopter parenting' and asserts that this style is detrimental to youngsters (c.f., Fingerman, Cheng, Wesselmann, Zarit, Furstenberg, & Birditt, 2012; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011). However, few studies have examined the phenomenon empirically (Fingerman et al., 2012), particularly in a college population. The few existing studies of 'helicopter parenting' have evaluated different facets of this parenting style (e.g., intrusive parenting, inappropriate contact with school personnel), which makes comparing research results difficult. This paper discusses the literature on 'helicopter parenting' and discusses the initial steps in the development of a new comprehensive assessment of 'helicopter parenting' behaviors identified in the literature. In addition, the study examines correlates of 'helicopter parenting' in college students: worry, depressive symptoms, and academic self-efficacy. 'Helicopter parenting' was correlated positively with depression and worry symptoms but not with self-efficacy.

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Helicopter Parenting of College Students

Since the 1990's, the term 'helicopter parenting' has been used in the popular media to describe parents who are overly involved in developmentally inappropriate ways in their children's lives (Segrin, Woszidlo, Givertz, Bauer, & Murphy, 2012). These "landing pad kids," as Fingerman and colleagues (2012) calls them, are physically capable of independent behaviors (e.g., talking to professors about grades) but may not attempt to do so because their parents intervene for them. The popular media is rife with stories of this type (c.f., Gibbs, 2009; Kanowski, 2009; Loop, 2015; & Manos, 2009), suggesting that 'helicopter parenting' may constitute an epidemic.

Unfortunately, these media stories tend to be inconsistent in how they define and measure 'helicopter parenting.' Likewise, little scientific evidence exists that documents the prevalence of or possible effects of 'helicopter parenting' for college students (Segrin et al., 2012). Stories from the popular media seem to assume that 'helicopter parenting' directed toward college students is detrimental (c.f., Fingerman et al, 2012; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011). For example, a Washington Post article tells of a college student who has "anxiety attacks anytime someone asks her to do something challenging" (Joyce, 2014; p.3). The author of that piece attributes this situation to her not learning how to handle problems on her own.

The assumption that 'helicopter parenting' is detrimental intensifies the need to empirically examine its actual correlates (Insch, Heames, & McIntyre, 2010). Thus, this paper discusses the literature on 'helicopter parenting' of college students focusing on a conceptualization of this phenomenon. This study focuses on college-aged students

because it represents a developmental period where parents typically exert less control over their offspring's life and allow them greater independence and autonomy. We will then discus 'helicopter parenting' of college students and its correlates.

It should be noted that the literature in this area addresses parenting across many different age spans. Thus, some studies have examined children; whereas others have focused on college students. Although the current study uses college-aged students, we will review the child literature where appropriate in order to fully discuss this topic. To reference this wide age span, we will try to use the most appropriate term in each situation.

What is 'Helicopter Parenting?'

The problem of a vague definition of 'helicopter parenting' has lead to a variety of studies using different parental variables and scales, making it difficult to compare results across studies. For example Fingerman and colleagues (2012) included behaviors such as providing practical, financial, and emotional support; socializing; and giving advice. In contrast, Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012) used emotional support (e.g., acceptance, affection, involvement, nurturance), behavioral control (e.g., limit setting, supervision, reasoning about consequences), and autonomy granting (e.g., providing choices, allowing offspring input into rule making, free expression of ideas, avoiding intrusive behavior). Shoup and colleges (2009) operationalized 'helicopter parenting' by using two different categories of behaviors - frequency of communication and frequency of parental interventions. Participants (i.e., first year college students and seniors) who described the frequency of their communication with parents as "very often" and the frequency of their parents interventions as "very often" or "often" were considered to have 'helicopter

parents.' This study found an overall prevalence rate of 10% in first-year college students

and 7% in seniors for 'helicopter parenting.' Segrin and colleagues (2012) defined

'helicopter parenting' as providing tangible assistance (e.g., financial support,

transportation, food and clothing), protecting the child from risks, removing obstacles,

and managing the child's emotions and mood. Segrin and colleagues (2012) evaluated

538 parent and offspring dyads but did not provide prevalence rate for any behavior.

Bradley-Geist and Olson-Buchanan's definition of 'helicopter parenting' concerned

youngsters' beliefs that their parents were too involved in their lives (e.g. "My

parents/guardians are too controlling of me and my life" or "My parents/guardians have

interfered in my life when I wish they wouldn't have"). Bradley-Geist and Olson-

Buchanan sampled 482 undergraduate college students but they did not include a

prevalence rate for any behavior in their study. Other authors have focused on controlling

behaviors (e.g., a mother making the offspring's decisions for her/him; c.f., LeMoyne &

Buchanan, 2011; Schiffrin et al., 2013).

Somers (2010) developed a comprehensive model of 'helicopter parenting' by

grouping parental behaviors into five different categories or types: consumer advocates,

quality or fairness advocates, vicarious college students, toxic parents, and safety patrol

parents. These typologies were derived from interviews with admissions staff, financial

aid staff, academic counselors, deans, directors of student activities, placement directors,

the vice president of student affairs, and comparable positions from public 4-year

universities. Consumer advocate parents consider their child's college experience as a

"service oriented transaction" (Somers, 2010; p.6) in which the parent and child are the

consumers. Consumer advocate parents will request/demand anything that they think

could benefit them or their offspring. If these parents do not obtain what they think their child is entitled to, then they will seek 'consumer justice' by making threats. 'Quality or fairness advocates' ask for equal treatment of their child but imply the desire for better than equal treatment. This type of 'helicopter parent' expects the best for their child. Quality or fairness advocates view any difficulties their offspring encounters (e.g., bad grades) as the university's fault. 'Vicarious college students' are parents who may have missed out on college experiences and want to experience them vicariously through their children's experiences (e.g., attending every sports activity). 'Toxic parents' are described as having multiple psychological issues and are controlling, are negative, try to live their offsprings' lives for them, and attempt to 'outdo' them. Although Somer's (2010) typology represents one of the more complete models of 'helicopter parenting,' it has not been tested empirically.

Parenting Styles vs. 'Helicopter Parenting'

The developmental literature essentially has examined 'helicopter parenting' for decades in studies focusing on controlling parental behaviors. Different parenting styles are correlated with different emotional and behavioral outcomes. The different outcomes associated with different parenting styles are presumably due to differences in levels of warmth and control associated with specific parenting styles. Because different parenting styles are associated with different outcomes, several studies that have evaluated 'helicopter parenting' have also examined the overlap between the amount of control associated with the different styles and 'helicopter parenting' (c.f., Givertz & Segrin, 2014; Segrin et al., 2012). Children whose parents have a parenting style that incorporates high levels of parental control (e.g., authoritarian parenting style) are more

likely to be discontent, withdrawn, and distrustful (Ballash et al., 2006). Parenting styles that are low in affection, warmth, and care and are high in over-protectiveness and controlling behaviors have been linked to depression in children (Manfredi et al., 2010). Despite the similarities between 'helicopter parenting' and the different parenting styles, Segrin and colleges (2012) found that 'helicopter parenting' has unique qualities that are not representative of a specific parenting style (e.g., risk aversion, a preoccupation with the child's happiness, and the drive to problem solve for the offspring).

Parental control is often considered as a component of 'helicopter parenting.' There are two different types of control: behavioral control and psychological control (Ballish, 2006). Behavioral control typically includes issues pertaining to discipline and monitoring (c.f., Ballish, 2006; Barber, Olsen, & Shagle, 1994); psychological control, in contrast, varies significantly between studies. Ballish (2006) defines psychological control as parents' attempts to prevent their children from developing autonomy and independence. Barber and colleagues (1994) define psychological control as patterns of family interaction that impede the offspring's individuation process (i.e., the degree of psychological distance an offspring experiences from his or her family and parents). Schiffrin and colleges (2013) defines psychological control as inducing guilt and withholding love to control the child.

Despite differences in how it is defined and assessed, psychological control is consistently correlated with negative outcomes in the developmental literature (c.f., Ballash et al., 2006; Barber et al., 1994; Schiffrin et al., 2013; Wijsbroek, 2011). Moderate levels of behavioral control in children are usually associated with more positive outcomes (Schiffrin et al., 2013), as this pattern suggests that the parent is

actively involved in the youngster's life. However, the negative effects linked to psychological control are found when levels of behavioral control (i.e., a component of 'helicopter parenting') are developmentally inappropriate (Schiffrin et al., 2013). For example, according to Schiffrin and colleges (2013), some types of behavioral control (e.g., rules that are too stringent for a child's age) can be experienced as psychologically controlling (e.g., a child could feel guilty for disappointing her/his parents).

Over-involvement versus 'Helicopter Parenting'

The adult and developmental literatures have both studied parental over-involvement. However, the parental behaviors considered developmentally appropriate and the terms used to describe these behaviors differ. With adult offspring (e.g., college students), the term 'helicopter parenting' often is used to denote parental over-involvement (LeMoyne and Buchanan, 2011). In the developmental literature, authors typically refer to parental 'over-involvement' or 'over-parenting,' such as making play dates, warding off bullies, and over-scheduling extra-curricular activities for a teenager. These behaviors could be developmentally appropriate for one age group and inappropriate for another. For example cleaning a child's room, making all their meals, or paying all their bills would be appropriate for a ten year old but not for a 25 year old.

It should be noted that, after the use of the term 'helicopter parenting' became relatively common, several authors developed other colloquial terms, such as 'Lawn Mower Parents' and 'Kong Kids.' Regardless of whether they use the term 'helicopter parent' or some other term to convey the intrusiveness of the parenting, the main theme seems to be that this type of parenting provides more guidance than is expected and sometimes more than is wanted by the offspring. Thus, for the current study, 'helicopter

parenting' is conceptualized as behaviors that are developmentally inappropriate for college-aged students, such as scheduling advising appointments for students (Peluchette et al., 2013), complaining to professors about grades (Schiffrin et al., 2013), and making the offsprings' decisions for them (Lemoyne and Buchanan, 2011).

Correlates of 'Helicopter Parenting'

Researchers have speculated about the correlates of 'helicopter parenting' and whether this type of assistance is beneficial or detrimental to college students. 'Helicopter parents' tend to think that they are doing what is best for their college-aged offspring by ensuring their success and happiness (c.f., Locke et al., 2012; Segrin et al., 2012; Walker & Nelson, 2012). However, the best intentions may not always produce the desired effect (Somers, 2010). So what are the possible implications?

Mixed results have been found concerning whether 'helicopter parenting' behaviors are associated with favorable or unfavorable student outcomes. The different appraisals of 'helicopter parenting' are likely due to the varying behaviors used to define this type of parenting across studies as well as the use of different severity levels of those behaviors. For example, being over-controlling (e.g., a mother making all her offspring's decision), engaging in monitoring (e.g., a mother accompanies her offspring to every appointment), and exhibiting elevated levels of emotional support (e.g., a mother helps her offspring regulate emotions) are fundamentally different behaviors; thus, the correlates of those behaviors would be expected to vary as well.

For example Fingerman and colleagues (2012) focused their conceptualization of 'helicopter parenting' on support rather than control. Specifically, they examined: practical support (e.g., hands-on tasks and running errands), financial support, emotional

support (e.g., being loved and cared for), socializing (e.g., contact with the offspring), and advice-giving. They found that the extra support provided by 'helicopter parenting' is related positively to young adults' sense of goals and life satisfaction. It should be noted that this study focused primarily on positive behaviors (e.g., emotional support), which arguably may not be detrimental even at extreme levels. Fingerman and colleagues (2012) also found a negative correlation between parents' self-reported levels of life satisfaction and the amount of excessive support they thought their children required. It is not surprising that emotional support and socializing are conducive to wellbeing. After all, emotional support and socializing are considered protective factors from developing mental health problems (Cobb, 1976). In contrast, LeMoyne and Buchanan (2011) examined the arguably more negative aspects of 'helicopter parenting,' such as being controlling (i.e., decision making and problem solving) and engaging in monitoring (e.g., "My parents supervised my every move growing up"); they found that these forms of 'helicopter parenting' are correlated negatively with college student's 'wellbeing.'

Another possible explanation for the mixed outcomes is that studies include varying severity levels of the same 'helicopter parenting' behaviors. For example, Odenweller, Booth-Butterfield, & Weber (2014) and Schiffrin and colleagues (2013) evaluated the correlates of the same 'helicopter parenting' behavior (i.e., decision making), but their scale items defined developmentally inappropriate decision-making using different severity levels. Odenweller and colleagues (2014) used the item "My parent tries to make all of my major decisions;" whereas, Schiffrin and colleagues used the scale item "My mother had/ will have a say in what major I choose." Both items examine decision-making, but Odenweller and colleagues' (2014) item appears more severe because the

offspring's parent would make all important decisions; whereas, with the Schiffrin and colleagues' (2013) item the parent just made one important decision (i.e., what the offspring's major would be).

Segrin and colleagues (2012) examined 'over-parenting' or providing advice, problem solving, 'tangible assistance' (e.g., cooking, cleaning, laundry), protection from risk, financial assistance, monitoring, attention, removing obstacles, managing their emotions; they found that it is associated with lower quality of parent-child communication and can indirectly decrease family satisfaction. The authors theorized that adult children could come to expect that all of their problems will be solved for them and that they should not have to endure going without what they desire. Researchers further asserted that these adult children are more likely to develop a sense of entitlement. Locke and colleges (2012) surveyed college personnel and found an association between 'over parenting' behaviors and the college students' sense of entitlement. Manfredi and colleagues (2010) found that 'over-protective parenting' practices are associated with ruminative brooding and worry in college students.

Little empirical research has been conducted on the association between the 'helicopter parenting' of college students and depression. Schiffrin and colleges (2013) found a positive correlation between the over-controlling elements of 'helicopter parenting' and depression among college students. They also noted a negative association between student's life satisfaction and 'helicopter parenting.' The negative effects of 'helicopter parenting' on college students' well-being was attributed to the perceived infringement on the offspring's' psychological needs for autonomy and competence.

'Over-involved parenting' also has been linked to increased anxiety during

childhood. For example, Hudson and Dodd (2012) found that parental over-involvement during childhood is a risk factor for anxiety disorders. 'Over-parenting' has been linked to insecure and anxious tendencies in young children (Sergrin et al., 2012). A parental style characterized by high control and protectiveness also is a risk factor for the development of recurrent worry and rumination (Manfredi et al., 2010). Amato & Booth (1999) found that having extremely lenient or controlling parents were risk factors for future psychological problems. However, few studies have examined the relationship between anxiety and 'helicopter parenting' with adults. Nevertheless, some support exists for a relationship between 'helicopter parenting' and anxiety in the adult literature. For example Segrin and colleges (2013) found that 'helicopter parenting' was correlated with elevated levels of narcissism and maladaptive coping strategies (e.g., internalizing, distancing) in young adults. These ineffective coping skills were associated with increased levels of anxiety and stress. Manfredi and colleagues (2010) found that worry symptoms also were positively correlated with 'parental overprotection.' As over-controlling parenting is a 'helicopter parenting' variable and over-controlling parental styles are correlated with increased anxiety in children, 'helicopter parenting' also could be associated with anxiety symptoms in adults.

Self-efficacy is a person's belief that he or she can perform a specific behavior effectively (Owen & Froman, 1988). To get a sense of whether or not someone can perform a behavior effectively the person needs to have some autonomy. Autonomy is also considered one of the basic psychological needs according to Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory. Little research has examined the implications of 'helicopter parenting' on the development of self-efficacy in young adults. However,

some support exists for a negative association between self-efficacy and 'helicopter parenting.' For example, Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, (2014) found that "over-parenting" is associated negatively with self-efficacy in young adults, and Givertz and Segrin, (2014) found that parental control is correlated negatively with self-efficacy in college students. Schiffrin and colleagues (2013) have suggested that children with over-involved or over-controlling parents tend to feel less competent coping with life and its stressors. If 'helicopter parenting' decreases young adults' self-efficacy, then parents could be unknowingly building barriers to their children's success instead of removing them. Why would 'helicopter parenting' potentially lead to negative outcomes?

Three different theories that explain how 'helicopter parenting' could be detrimental to offspring are Self-Determination Theory, the Circumplex Model of Family Systems, and Family Differentiation Theory. According to Self-Determination Theory, people have three inherent psychological needs that are necessary for healthy development and functioning: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When these psychological needs are fulfilled, people tend to be more satisfied with their lives and exhibit lower levels of depression (Wei, Shaffer, Young, & Zakalik, 2005). According to this theory, 'helicopter parenting' behaviors may impinge on the offspring's autonomy and competence. The decrease in autonomy and competence could be detrimental to the offspring because two of her/his basic psychological needs are not being met.

The Circumplex Model of Family Systems uses three dimensions to describe family dynamics: cohesion, flexibility and communication (Olson, 2000). Family cohesion classifies families based on the level of emotional bonding between family

members. There are four levels of cohesion used to describe the level of bonding between

family members: disengaged, separated, connected, and enmeshed. Problems may

emerge when family member's boundaries (i.e., cohesion) are at either extreme end of the

spectrum or when they are extremely close (i.e., enmeshed) or detached (i.e.,

disengaged). In the case of 'helicopter parenting,' family cohesion likely would be at the

enmeshed level (extremely high cohesion) because the boundaries between mother and

child are thin and little independence is granted. 'Helicopter parenting' is thought to be

detrimental because the boundaries/ cohesion between the parent and child are at an

extreme level (i.e., enmeshed).

There are also four levels of flexibility with in the Circumplex Model of Family

Systems: flexible, rigid, structured and chaotic. Families with extreme levels of flexibility

(i.e., extremely high or extremely low) usually have problems. Families that have a

'helicopter parent' who is over-controlling likely would score at the 'rigid level' of

flexibility (i.e., extremely inflexible). Too little or too much cohesion or flexibility is

correlated with difficulties in functioning (Givertz & Segrin, 2014). According to Givertz

and Segrin (2014) 'helicopter parenting' is a reflection of an unbalanced family system

and the dysfunction linked to this imbalance hampers individuation.

Family Differentiation Theory is used by Bradley-Geist and Olson-Buchanan

(2014) to explain how family interactions lead to age-appropriate balance between

intimacy and individuality. According to the theory, in families where interpersonal

boundaries are blurred (e.g., 'helicopter parenting') the child loses her/his sense of

autonomy and individuality (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014). This pattern of

family differentiation is associated with cognitive, behavioral and emotional problems

during adolescence (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014). If loss of autonomy is associated with emotional problems during adolescence, then the same could be true with young adults.

Current Study and Hypotheses

This study aims to answer two primary questions: (1) what is 'helicopter parenting' in college students and how common is it? and (2) is 'helicopter parenting' related to student depression, worry, and self-efficacy? Although a few studies have examined 'helicopter parenting' across various ages, a number of questions remain unanswered. Specifically, the use of differing, limited definitions of 'helicopter parenting' in previous research has prevented cross study result comparisons. Likewise, different studies have included various parental behaviors as indicative of 'helicopter parenting,' which has lead to inconsistent findings regarding whether it is beneficial or detrimental. Thus, this study has drawn from the extant literature to develop a compressive assessment of 'helicopter parenting.' To this end, our lab developed a measure of 'helicopter parenting' and previously has collected pilot data to norm the scale (note: this pilot data is not presented in this study). This measure was used in this study to examine 'helicopter parenting' and its correlates.

Specifically, we defined 'helicopter parenting' as including behaviors indicating that the parent provides developmentally inappropriate levels of support (e.g., problem solving and control) to their offspring; essentially, the offspring could function without this level of support. Little data exist regarding the prevalence of 'helicopter parenting.' However, one study (Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, 2009) surveyed students across 24 universities (4,532 freshmen and 4,652 seniors) and found that 13% of college freshmen

and 8% of seniors reported that their parents frequently intervened to help them solve problems (i.e., one component of their definition of 'helicopter parenting).' The overall prevalence rate that they found for helicopter parenting was 10% in freshmen and 7% in seniors for 'helicopter parenting.'

Some studies have found a relationship between depression and 'helicopter parenting' (c.f., Schiffrin et al., 2013; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011). Studies in the developmental (Locke et al, 2012; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012) and adult literature (c.f., LeMoyne and Buchanan 2011; Segrin, et al., 2013) have also found a positive correlation between anxiety and over-parenting/ 'helicopter parenting.' Some support also exists for a negative association between self-efficacy and 'helicopter parenting' (c.f., Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014; Givertz & Segrin, 2014). Thus, this study addresses these gaps in the literature by testing the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 examines the relationship of 'helicopter parenting' to the main study variables: depression, worry, and self-efficacy. We predicted that 'helicopter parenting' would be correlated positively with worry and depression, and 'helicopter parenting' would be correlated negatively with self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 2 attempted to examine the rates of 'helicopter parenting' in college students. Based on prior research, rates of approximately 7% to 13% were expected.

Method

Participants

Participants were enlisted from introductory psychology courses at Eastern Illinois University. The questionnaires were administered using SONA; there is a plethora of literature that has deemed web-based surveys comparable to other survey

methods addressing a broad range of psychological topics (Fingerman et al., 2012).

Initially, 92 participants completed the study; however, five subjects were deleted from

the dataset (3 participants responded randomly and 2 participants completed less than

10% of the questions). Thus, the final sample consisted of 87 participants.

Approximately 63.2% of participants reported that they were White/Caucasian, 24.1%

were African-American/Black, and 6.9% were Hispanic-American/ Latino-American,

2.3% self-identified as 'other,' and 3 skipped the question (3.4%). The majority of our

sample was female (i.e., 63%).

Measures

  Demographics questionnaire. Participants were asked to complete a

demographics questionnaire (see Appendix B for the full scale). The questionnaire

solicited the participant's date of birth, sex, year at EIU (e.g., freshman), major, ethnicity,

and GPA. Participants were also asked the following questions: the location of their

residence, how many siblings they had, their mother's level of education, how long it

took to travel to their parents' house, and their employment status during the semester.

Participants answered these questions by filling in a blank or selecting one of the

multiple-choice answers.

  'Helicopter parenting.' The Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire (HPQ) initially

consisted of 122 items (see Appendix A for full scale); this study forwarded the

development of this scale (see Results section for preliminary psychometric properties).

Participants rated how often their mothers engaged in specific, putative 'helicopter

parenting' behaviors for their college-aged offspring, such as finding housing for them,

paying their credit card bills, and cleaning their living space. Items were rated on a scale

from 0 to 4 (0 = "she never does this" to 4 = "she always does this for me"). Participants were asked only to report their mothers 'helicopter parenting' behaviors because they are the parent "most likely to be overly involved in their child's adult life" (Schiffrin, 2013; p. 4) and have more frequent contact with mothers than fathers (Somers, 2010).

Depression. The Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) was used to assess the degree of depressive symptoms. The CES-D consists of 20 items (Carleton, Thibodeau, Teale, Welch, Abrams, Robinson, & Asmundson, 2013). The scale's items are phrased as self-statements, such as "I feel hopeful about the future." Participants were asked to rate how often in the past week each item applied to them. Items were rated using a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 ("none of the time or rarely") to 3 ("most or all of the time;" Carleton et al, 2013). On the CES-D, higher scores indicate that the participant has more symptoms of depression (Internet Solutions for Kids, Inc., 2015). The CES-D also has high internal consistency (α's ranging from 0.85 to 0.94; c.f., Carleton et al, 2013; Mulraney, Melvin, & Tonge, 2014; Schiffrin et al., 2013).

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy was assessed using the College Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (CASES; Owen & Froman, 1988). Self-efficacy is an individual's belief that they can carry out or do a specific behavior. The CASES consists of 33 items, each rated on a five-point Likert scale from A ("very little confidence") to E ("quite a lot"). A sample item from the scale is, "How confident do you feel taking well organized notes during a lecture?" Internal consistency ranges from .90 to .92 (c.f., Carifio et al., 2002; Owen & Froman, 1988), with test-retest reliability at 0.85 (Carifio et al., 2002).

Worry. The Penn State Worry Questionnaire (PSWQ; Meyer, Miller, Metzger, & Borkovec) is considered "the gold standard" assessment tool for the frequency and intensity of worry (Kertz, Lee & Björgvinsson, 2014). The PSWQ is a 16-item self-report measure. Participants rated how accurately each item described them using a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("not at all") to 5 ("very") (Kertz et al., 2014). Possible scores range from 16 to 80 (Kertz et al., 2014). A sample item from the scale is "My worries overwhelm me" (Molina & Borkovec, 1994). The PSWQ has good internal consistency (α's ranging from 0.83–0.95; c.f., Molina & Borkovec, 1994; Kertz et al., 2014; Novy, Stanley, Daza, & Averill, 2001; Joos, Vansteenwegen, Brunfaut, Bastiaens, Demyttenaere, Pieters & Hermans, 2012). The PSWQ also has good test-retest reliability (r's ranging from 0.74 to 0.92; Molina & Borkovec, 1994; Joos, 2012).

Procedure

Participants read the consent form online. If they agreed to participate, then they were asked to complete the questionnaire packet online; all measures were counter-balanced to help control for order effects. At the end of the study, participants were instructed to read the debriefing form.

Results

Analyses were conducted examining means, ranges, and internal consistencies. Zero-order correlations were used to evaluate the study hypotheses. In addition, the tentative prevalence rate of 'helicopter parenting' in this sample was examined. The current study's means and ranges (see Table 1) for the PSWQ (worry), CES-D (depression), and CASES (self-efficacy) were consistent with other studies using similar populations (Behar, Alcaine, Zuellig, and Borkovec, 2003; David, Okazaki, and Saw,

2009; Fang, Gabriel, Egleston, Stevens, Kwiterovich, Snetselaar, Longacre , and Dorgan, 2013; Gillis, Haaga and Ford, 1995; Novy, Stanley, Averill, and Daza, 2001;Roddenberry and Renk, 2010). The internal consistencies for the subscales of the Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire (see Table 1) were examined. All scales had an alpha of .63 or higher. Cronbach's alphas greater than 0.6, can be interpreted as having an acceptable internal consistency (Ji, Hong, & Lee, 2016). Only one subscale had an alpha that was less than .6, the Perceived Self-Confidence subscale ($\alpha = .43$).

Hypothesis 1 examined the correlates of the Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire with the three main outcome variables: worry, depression, and self-efficacy. We predicted that the 'helicopter parenting' subscales would be correlated positively with worry and depression and correlated negatively with self-efficacy. Hypothesized relationships were analyzed using zero-order correlations (see Table 2). Total scores on the Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire were correlated positively with participant's total depression scores ($r = .33$, $p = .001$, one-tailed) and worry scores ($r = .22$, $p = .024$, one-tailed) but not self-efficacy ($r = .15$, $p = .078$, one-tailed).

Additional correlations were conducted to determine which HPQ subscales and individual items correlated with our outcome variables. Because the number of variables for the follow-up analyses was high ($n = 57$), a Bonferroni correction was applied requiring a p-value of <.001. Total worry scores correlated positively with one subscale, Parental Attitude ($r = .38$, $p < .001$, one-tailed). Depression scores correlated positively with three subscales: Parental Control ($r = .38$, $p < .001$, one-tailed), Parental Attitude ($r = .53$, $p < .001$, one-tailed), and Perceived Self- Confidence ($r = .41$, $p < .001$, one-tailed). Self-efficacy was not correlated significantly with any HPQ subscales: Parental

Control ($r = .07$, $p = .254$, one-tailed), Parental Attitude ($r = .23$, $p = .374$, one-tailed), or Perceived Self- Confidence ($r = .01$, $p = .476$, one-tailed).

To further delineate potentially problematic 'helicopter parenting' behaviors, additional zero-order correlations ($n = 93$, p = .05) were conducted at the item/behavioral level for subscales that were correlated with the outcome variables. Specifically, items on the Parent Control and Parental Attitude subscales were correlated with depression, worry, and self-efficacy scores (see Table 3). Depression was correlated with several items on the Parent Control subscale (e.g., "If you're going to be out late do you have to contact your mother to let her know that you have gotten back home?"). In contrast, worry was correlated with only one Parent Control subscale item, "Does your mother tell you not to drink alcohol?" All but one item on the Parental Attitude subscale was correlated with depression: "How willing is your mother to help you solve a problem that happens at college?" Several items on the Parental Attitude subscale were correlated with worry (e.g., "Does your mother express worry to you about how you're doing academically at college?"). Self-efficacy was correlated with only one item on one subscale: the Parental Attitude subscale item: "How willing is your mother to help you solve a problem that happens at college?"

Prevalence Rate

Hypothesis 2 examined the putative rate of 'helicopter parenting' in college students in the current sample. Based on prior research, rates of approximately 7 to 13% were expected. The first step in examining the prevalence rate of 'helicopter parenting' was to examine which elements of the HPQ accurately assessed the construct. The 'Helicopter Parenting' Questionnaire was developed to be a comprehensive measure,

with the intent of narrowing down the items that best represented 'helicopter parenting.' Many items were rarely endorsed, and many of the subscales were not related to student well-being (worry, depression, self-efficacy). Although not all 'helicopter parenting' behaviors would be expected to relate to the student well-being, correlates of well-being arguably are the most important in helping to decide what constitutes 'helicopter parenting.' Specifically, after doing the first set of correlations, we decided to narrow down the questionnaire to subscales that correlated with negative outcomes. We made this decision because of the clinical nature of this measure. That is, we wanted it to be of possible use in clinical settings and to Universities when trying to ascertain whether a student was having problems with 'helicopter parenting.'

Therefore, our final conceptualization of 'helicopter parenting' is based on the subscales that correlated with negative outcomes (worry and depression). Out of the 18 original subscales of the HPQ, only two subscales were retained because of their relations to student well-being: Parental Attitude and Parental Control. Although the Perceived Self-Confidence subscale correlated with unfavorable outcomes its internal consistency was unsatisfactory, so it was not retained. Likewise, not all of the items on these two subscales correlated with the outcome. The items that did not correlate with worry or depression were removed from the scale to help further refine the HPQ scale (see Table 3); these subscale scores were then recalculated using only the remaining items to constitute our HPQ scale. The internal consistencies for the revised total scores and the two retained, revised subscales were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The total HPQ score (.80), Parental Control (.74), and Parental Attitude (.68) subscales had an acceptable internal consistency. The HPQ total score and the scores for the two retained

HPQ subscales were recalculated based on these deletions. The prevalence rates of 'helicopter parenting' was examined by using the mean, standard deviation and frequency of total 'helicopter parenting' scores as well as using the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of the individual subscale scores. Concerning total 'helicopter parenting' scores (M = 24.36; SD = 8.91), 16 participants (18.4%) scored one standard deviation (SD) above the mean and 5 participants (5.7%) scored two standard deviations above the mean. On the Parental Control subscale (M=10; SD=4), 17 participants (19.5%) scored one SD above the mean and 5 participants (5.7%) scored two standard deviations above the mean. On the Parental Attitude subscale (M = 15; SD = 5), 11 participants (12.6%) scored one standard deviation above the mean and 4 participants (4.6%) scored two standard deviations above the mean.

The second method used to examine the potential prevalence rate of helicopter parenting used the frequencies of the total scores on the HPQ. The frequencies of the total scores on the HPQ were examined using the eyeball method, which involved looking for a natural "break" in the data. High scores seemed to cluster around a score of 35, which was slightly more than one standard deviation above the mean (i.e., the frequency table method). This cutoff of 35 for the scale yielded a rate of a rate of 12.6% (N = 11) in this sample.

So what is the "best" estimate of 'helicopter parenting' prevalence in this sample? The prevalence rate based on the percent of those 1 SD above the mean for the Total score on the HPQ was 18.4%; whereas, using the frequency table method yielded a rate of 12.6%, suggesting a rate between 12.6% and 18.4%.

Finally, an independent sample t-test was done to determine whether there was a sex difference for HPQ scores. Male participants ($N = 29$; $M = 275.50$; $SD = 62.48$) did not differ from female participants ($N = 55$; $M = 295.89$; $SD = 59.66$) on HPQ scores (t (82) = -1.47, $p = .147$ two tailed), suggesting that mothers may not engage in more helicopter parenting behaviors for sons versus daughters, although the scores trended toward higher rates for daughters.

Discussion

This study is the first attempt at using a behaviorally based measure of 'helicopter parenting' in college students. In addition, the study evaluated the relationship of 'helicopter parenting' to well-being (i.e., depression, worry, and self-efficacy) and determined a tentative prevalence rate for 'helicopter parenting.'

'Helicopter Parenting' Definition

This study represents the first effort to validate and standardize a new measure – the Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire (HPQ). In the literature, 'helicopter parenting' is described as parental involvement that is beyond what is expected or necessary developmentally for college-aged offspring. Previous studies have used measures that assess a variety of different parenting behaviors (e.g., monitoring, problem solving, financial support, emotional support, psychological control and behavioral control etc.) to study the phenomenon and have found a variety of different outcomes in relation to well-being (i.e., detrimental, or beneficial), presumably because of the differing conceptualizations of 'helicopter parenting.' The Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire was thus developed to serve as a comprehensive, behaviorally based measure of 'helicopter parenting' in college students.

The initial version of the HPQ included a wide variety of parental behaviors identified in the relevant literature, with the intent of narrowing the behaviors to those that may best represent 'helicopter parenting.' Only the parental behaviors that were correlated with well-being and that had satisfactory statistical properties were considered 'helicopter parenting' behaviors (Parental Attitude and Parental Control) and were retained for the Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire.

What does it mean to have a High Parental Attitude score? High Parental Attitude scores suggest that the mother expresses more worry about her offspring and/or is more actively involved in her child's life than most students. High Control scores mean that the parent controls with whom her offspring interacts, when they can leave their residence during leisure time, and whether they can consume alcohol.

It should be noted that developing the 'Helicopter Parenting' Questionnaire is an on-going process, and this study represents only the first tentative step in that direction. As new behaviors are identified in future research, these behaviors will be added to the HPQ, and their relationship to 'helicopter parenting' will be evaluated. Based on this first study, the Parental Attitude and Parental Control subscales are the only behavioral groups within our questionnaire that appear to be indicative of 'helicopter parenting.' However, we focused on parental behaviors related to college student well-being, which is just one such method. Specifically, scores on the Parental Attitude and Parental Control subscale scores were combined to form the HPQ and thus our conceptualization of 'helicopter parenting.'

Surprising Results

Even though some of our 'helicopter parenting' items did not correlate with our

outcome variables their results were surprising and therefore merit discussion. For example, two participants (2.3%) reported that their mother wrote papers for them "often," 6 participants (6.9%) reported that their mothers "sometimes" wrote papers for them and 4 participants (4.6%) indicated that their mother "rarely" wrote papers for them. It is surprising that any mother would write a paper, let alone 13.8 %. Another surprising result was that 3 participants (3.4 %) indicated that their mother accessed their cell phone history or text messages "often" and 3 participants (3.4%) reported that their mother "always" accessed their cell phone history or text messages. Three participants (3.4 %) reported that their mother "often" attends class for them if they cannot because of another reason other than being sick. Seven participants (8 %) said that their mother "sometimes" attends class for them because of another reason other than being sick. Eight participants (9.2%) reported that their mother "sometimes" attends class for them and takes notes for them if they're sick. This is far more support than expected for college aged students. However, as these behaviors are not related to depression, worry, or student self-efficacy while the student is receiving the support, then what do these results mean? To answer this question we must examine the correlates of these behaviors over a longer period of time.

'Helicopter Parenting' and Well-Being

'Helicopter parenting' was predicted to be related positively with worry and depression and negatively with self-efficacy. This parenting style did correlate positively with worry and depression. Why are 'helicopter parenting' behaviors associated with depression and worry in college students? To answer this question one ought to consider the possible message these parenting behaviors send to college students. For example, if

mothers routinely do things for their offspring that are not age-appropriate, then the student may perceive that the mother views them as helpless, not efficacious, and so forth. These messages in turn may then affect the student cognitions about him/herself. Of course, the direction of this relationship cannot be determines based on our current study. Specifically, some college students, such as those with depression or worry, may elicit these 'helicopter parenting' behaviors from their mothers.

In contrast, however, none of the 'helicopter parenting' subscales were related to self-efficacy. One individual item (i.e., "How willing is your mother to help you solve a problem that happens at college?") correlated with self-efficacy, although its direction was positive instead of negative, as predicted.

Our results for self-efficacy may have differed from those of other studies because of our conceptualization of 'helicopter parenting.' For example Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan's (2014) definition of 'helicopter parenting' focused on the youngster's opinion of their parents' level of involvement in the offspring's life (e.g. "My parents/guardians are too controlling of me and my life"). Although youngster's interpretations of the level of support they received was assessed by our scale, only a few items did so. Instead, the HPQ items focused more on whether the offspring thought they needed the support (e.g., "Is your mother involved in aspects of your college life that you could handle on your own?"); whereas the other scale focused on whether they disliked the level of received support (e.g., "I sometimes wish my parents/guardian would back off and stay out of my business").

Limitations

Although this study helps to contribute to the growing literature on the link between 'helicopter parenting' and student well-being, a few limitations should be noted. For example, our sample size was somewhat limited ($N = 87$), which may have affected our power to detect relationships. In addition, the study only examined 'helicopter parenting' in mothers. We focused on mothers because we wanted to evaluate the possible effects of parenting separately for mothers and father, and we wanted to limit the number of items participants had to complete to minimize attrition. If 'helicopter fathers' perform different behaviors to those typically found in 'helicopter mothers,' then the current list of behaviors in the literature would be insufficient to study the phenomenon or create a scale for it. For example 'helicopter fathers' may perform car maintenance, plumbing, and/or be over protective of their child when dating. Why evaluate 'helicopter parent' gender separately? It is important to study 'helicopter mothers' and fathers separately because their behaviors might have different correlates because of the offspring's interpretation of the parent's behaviors based on social norms. For example a father being more controlling with his daughter's social life might be seen as more socially expectable and therefore less distressing than a mother being more controlling over her son's social life.

In addition, we should note that we neglected to ask participants whether they had a mother (e.g., as opposed to their mother being deceased or being raised in by a father/male only). Thus, we cannot be sure whether all participants were responding about their mother. On a related note, all data were self-reported by the students, which may have resulted in biases. For example, students with depression may have been more

likely to view their mothers' behaviors in a negative light and under- or over-report certain aspects.

Clinical Implications

Although the findings of the current study are tentative, several clinical implications merit discussion. First, the study attempted to address the scope of 'helicopter parenting.' The prevalence rate determined by the HPQ may help provide the first step to revealing a more realistic view of 'helicopter parenting.' Knowing how large the potential problem is can help determine the appropriate resources that should be devoted to the issue. For example, anecdotal reports of 'helicopter parenting' in the press may not accurately reflect the scope of the issue and may persuade colleges and universities to devote more resources to the problem than is needed. Our study suggests that 'helicopter parenting' may occur at moderate rates (i.e., between 12.6% and 18.4%); thus, although colleges and universities may want to address this problem, universal prevention or intervention programs are probably unwarranted.

However, just because 'helicopter parenting' is not an epidemic does not mean that students who experience problems related to it should be ignored. If a student has elevated levels of worry or depression symptoms, then evaluating whether 'helicopter parenting' plays a role (perhaps as part of a larger assessment of their social support system) may be helpful. Therefore, total HPQ scores could help identify whether 'helicopter parenting' is contributing to their problems.

Overall HPQ scores correlated with worry, but when the subscales were assessed individually worry only correlated with Parental Attitude. Therefore, the parental behaviors that should be evaluated and potentially modified for youngsters with increased

anxiety should be identified in our Parental Attitude subscale. Parental Control and Parental Attitude should both be considered when treating youngsters with depression symptoms because not only did the over all HPQ score correlate with depression scores, but both individual subscales did as well.

Future Research

Future research could focus on further development of the HPQ as well as addressing the limitations of this study. To further develop this measure, researchers should use the variables identified in this study (e.g., in the new sub-scales mentioned below) as well as other studies that were published after we collected our data. Due to the proposed changes to the HPQ, the prevalence rate should be evaluated further after the changes to the scale have been made.

To investigate the variables identified in this study, three new subscales should be added to the HPQ. The first new subscale should evaluate the relationship between the control mechanisms mothers used to shape their adult offspring's behaviors and the youngster's well-being. The second new subscale should assess how the students view the level of support provided by their mother. Finally, the third subscale should assess whether students think that they require the level of support provided.

The first additional subscale (i.e., Control Mechanism) should be added because different control mechanisms could have different correlates. Also the current study only focused on what the parent controlled (e.g., drinking habits) and not how they controlled the behavior (e.g., using negative methods such as withholding affection versus positive methods such as praise when the student engages in the desired behaviors). The second subscale, participant's affinity for the level of support provided (i.e., Support Affinity)

should be integrated into the HPQ because it was not assessed previously. The third subscale (Support Need) should be added to the HPQ because only a few items currently evaluate how necessary the offspring thought the support they received was and there wasn't a specific subscale solely dedicated to it in the original scale. Having a subscale solely dedicated to whether the student thought they needed the level of support they received could also improve the original subscale's internal consistency (i.e., Self – Confidence).

The first step to addressing the limitations of the current study is to increase the generalizability of our findings. The generalizability of our findings was limited because our sample only came from one mid-sized midwestern University, our sample size was ($N = 87$), our findings only pertained to 'helicopter mothers' and the data was only taken once. Ways of increasing the generalizability of our findings are: administering our questionnaire to different sized universities in different parts of the country, increasing our sample size, evaluating 'helicopter fathers' and doing a longitudinal study on 'helicopter parenting.'

To adequately study 'helicopter parenting' in fathers a pilot study could derive behaviors are associated with 'helicopter fathers.' The data from the pilot study would be used to develop a 'helicopter father' scale. One way to do the pilot study is to interview or survey university staff and students. University staff and the student body would be asked about which behaviors come to mind when they think of a father who is overly involved? The results of this focus group would be used to create questions to add to the current scale.

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Table 1

Internal Consistencies, Standard Deviations, Means, Minimum, and Maximum Values and Ranges for the Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire and Subscales

Measure	α	M	SD	Minimum-Maximum
HPQ - Invasion Living Space	.70	8.91	3.81	2-20
HPQ - Invasion of Privacy	.82	19.89	7.57	4-41
HPQ - Financial Dependence	.84	29.64	9.84	10-49
HPQ - Assisting	.79	16.32	6.14	0-32
HPQ - Homework	.86	7.05	3.40	0-17
HPQ - Reminders	.78	15.18	5.69	3-29
HPQ - Contacting School Personal	.82	16.63	5.92	6-33
HPQ - Parental Control	.78	13.39	5.50	1-30
HPQ - Aid With Attendance	.85	4.86	2.22	0-13
HPQ - Involvement	.72	11.70	4.09	0-22
HPQ - Major/ Career Issues	.82	22.13	8.83	0-62
HPQ - General Visits	.65	15.62	4.31	0-28
HPQ - Required Visits	.67	8.17	3.40	0-16
HPQ - Requested Visits	.69	10.01	3.71	1-17
HPQ - General Communication	.78	23.90	6.90	9-40
HPQ - Required Communication	.76	8.69	4.06	0-23
HPQ - Parental Attitude	.63	18.67	5.08	3-34
HPQ - Perceived Self-Confidence	.43	12.99	3.52	2-20
HPQ - Total Score	.97	263.42	66.01	41-406
PSWQ -Total	.82	48.36	17.09	0-75
CED-S - Total	.83	19.22	12.41	0-54
CASES - Total	.93	3.30	.94	0-5

Note: HPQ = Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire; PSWQ = Penn State Worry Questionnaire; CEDS = Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale and CASES = College Academic Self-Efficacy Scale

Table 2

Correlations Between HPQ Sub-scales and Other Study Variables

Sub-scale	PSWQ	CES-D	CASES
HPQ- Invasion Living Space	.09	.30	.09
HPQ- Invasion of Privacy	.08	.21	.08
HPQ- Financial Dependence	.04	.06	.14
HPQ- Assisting	.13	.31	.10
HPQ- Homework	.02	.13	.09
HPQ- Reminders	.09	.21	.14
HPQ- Contacting School Personal	.10	.16	.10
HPQ- Parental Control	.18	.38*	.07
HPQ- Aid With Attendance	.03	.11	.03
HPQ- Involvement	.17	.22	.04
HPQ- Major/ Career Issues	.27	.23	.08
HPQ- General Visits	.25	.26	.18
HPQ- Required Visits	.29	.29	.11
HPQ- Requested Visits	.23	.29	.07
HPQ- General Communication	.10	.10	.19
HPQ- Required Communication	.06	.21	.05
HPQ- Parental Attitude	.38*	.53*	.23
HPQ- Perceived Self-Confidence	.26	.41*	.01

Note: *Correlations significant after Bonferroni correction was applied (1-tailed). p<.001
HPBQ = Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire, PSWQ = Penn State Worry Questionnaire,
CES-D = Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale, and CASES = College
Academic Self-Efficacy Scale

Table 3

Correlations between Parental Control Items and Parental Attitude Items, and Other Study Variables

Parental Control Items		Dep	Worry	SE
B1	Do you have to ask your mother's permission to go on the trip?	.17	-.02	-.08
B2	If you're going to be out late do you have to contact to let her know that you have gotten back home?	.23*	.12	.06
B3	Does your mother tell you to not drink alcohol?	.36*	.23*.	-.01
B4	Do you have to ask permission to go out with friends on the weekend?	.23*	.14	.02
B5	Do you have to ask permission to go out with friends on a weeknight?	.25*	.03	-.08
B6	Do you have to ask permission to go out to drink?	.08	-.02	-.04
B7	Does your mother tell you whom you should have as friends?	.33*	.13	.02

Parental Attitude Items		Dep	Worry	SE
B1	Describe your mother's level of involvement now compared to before you started college?	.21*	.15	.08
B2	How involved is your mother in your college life?	.24*	.18	.12
B3	Does your mother express worry to you about how you're doing academically at college?	.38*	.18*	-.10
B4	Does your mother express worry to you about how you're doing socially at college?	.50*	.25*	.09
B5	Does your mother express worry to you about how you're doing in other ways at college?	.39*	.29*	-.09
B6	Does your mother try to solve problems that come up at college before you ask her for help?	.19*	.01	.02
B7	How willing is your mother to help you solve a problem that happens at college?	-.03	.05	.40*

Note: Dep = Depression, SE = Self-Efficacy, B1= Behavior 1, B2 = Behavior 2, B3 = Behavior 3, B4= Behavior 4, B5= Behavior 5, B6= Behavior 6, B7= Behavior 7.
*Correlations significant (1-tailed) p<.05

Appendix A

Helicopter Parenting Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions regarding your relationship with your mother during the current academic year.

<u>Invasion of:</u>
Living Space:

Does your mother clean your living space?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother let herself into your living space <u>without your permission</u>?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother remove objects from your living space <u>without your permission</u>?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother decorate or add items to your living space?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother search through your drawers, closets, or other personal spaces?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Privacy:

Has your mother checked in with one of your friends or a roommate and asked them how you are <u>doing with classes</u>?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Has your mother checked in with one of your friends or a roommate and asked them how you are <u>doing with making friends</u>?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Has your mother checked in with one of your friends or a roommate and asked them how you are <u>doing emotionally or with your mood</u>?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother <u>require</u> that you tell her your grades?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother <u>require</u> that you give her a copy of your grades?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother access your PAWS information?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother access your email account?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother <u>require</u> that you tell her about any alcohol or drug use?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother monitor your social networking information/page(s) (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother access your cell phone call history or text messages?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother monitor your purchases and/or bank statements?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Financial Dependence:

Does your mother know the particulars of your finances?

0----------------1--------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother pay for the cost of your classes?

0----------------1--------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother pay your fees and other university costs (e.g., textbook rentals)?

0----------------1--------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother pay for your room and board at the university (i.e., dorm or Greek house)?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother pay your rent if living off-campus?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother pay for other costs of living off campus (utilities, etc.)?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother pay your credit card bills?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3--------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother pay your phone bills?

0----------------1--------------2----------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother directly <u>receive</u> your bills other than tuition (e.g., credit cards, utilities)?

0----------------1--------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

How dependent financially are you on your mother?

0------------------1----------------2------------------3------------------4
Not at all   Very Little   Somewhat   Significantly   Fully Dependent

Assisting:
Running Errands:

Does your mother order your textbooks for you (e.g., from half-price.com, amazon.com, etc.)?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother go to textbook rental or the bookstore to get your textbooks?

0----------------1--------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother find campus housing or off-campus apartments for you?

0---------------1----------------2-------------3-------------4---------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother help you find a summer job?

0---------------1----------------2-------------3--------------4---------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother help you find an off-campus job?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3--------------4---------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother do your grocery shopping and/or meal planning?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother shop for or deliver your clothing items?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother do your laundry?

0----------------1---------------2--------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother make post office trips and/or send faxes for you?

```
0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never      Rarely     Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Homework:

Does your mother help you with class assignments?

```
0---------------1--------------2---------------3---------------4
Never      Rarely     Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Does your mother proofread or edit papers for you?

```
0---------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never      Rarely     Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Does your mother write papers for you?

```
0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never      Rarely     Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Does your mother <u>require</u> that you show her class assignments before turning them in?

```
0--------------1----------------2--------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely     Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Does your mother obtain sources/articles for your assignments?

```
0----------------1---------------2---------------3----------------4------------------5
Never      Rarely     Sometimes      Often      Always      Does Not Apply
```

Reminders:

Does your mother have copies of your class syllabi in order to remind you of important due dates and exams?

```
0----------------1---------------2---------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely     Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Does your mother know your class schedule?

0----------------1--------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother call you in the morning to wake you up in time for class?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother give you a reminder to attend class?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother give you reminders of dorm inspections/floor meetings?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3----------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother give you reminders about loan paperwork/bill due dates?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother give you reminders about meetings/registering for classes?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3----------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother give you reminders about club meetings/sporting events?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother ever give you to-do lists?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3----------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

<u>Visits:</u>
General:

How often do <u>you</u> visit your mother at her home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often do <u>you</u> spend the weekends at your mother's home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often do <u>you</u> spend holidays at your mother's home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often does <u>your mother</u> visit you?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

If you have a car, does your mother ever pick you up to make it easier for you to visit?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother ever visit you unannounced?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Required Visits:

How often are you <u>required</u> to visit your mother at her home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often are you <u>required</u> to spend the weekends at your mother's home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often are you <u>required</u> to spend holidays at your mother's home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Requested Visits:

How often does your mother <u>request</u> that you visit her home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often does your mother <u>request</u> that you spend the weekends at her home?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often does your mother <u>request</u> that you spend holidays at her home each year?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

How often does your mother <u>request</u> that you visit during the school week?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Communication:
Calling/Texting/Emailing:

How often do you call your mother compared to your peers?

0----------------------1-----------------------2------------------------3------------------4
Much Less   Slightly Less   the Same Amount   Slightly More   Much More

How often do <u>you</u> <u>call</u> your mother on the phone?

0--------------------1-----------------2------------------3-------------------4
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times a Week   Daily   Few Times a Day
Month or Less

How often do <u>you</u> <u>text</u> your mother?

0--------------------1-----------------2------------------3-------------------4
1-2 Times   Weekly   Few Times a Week   Daily   Few Times a Day
a Month or Less

How often do <u>you</u> <u>email</u> your mother?

0--------------------1-----------------2------------------3-------------------4
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times a Week   Daily   Few Times a Day
Month or Less

How often do <u>you</u> <u>IM</u> (instant message) your mother?

0--------------------1-----------------2------------------3-------------------4-----------------5
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times   Daily   Few Times a Day   Does Not
Month or Less   a Week   Apply

How often do <u>you</u> contact your mother via <u>social networking</u> (e.g., Facebook)?

0--------------------1-----------------2------------------3-------------------4-----------------5
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times   Daily   Few Times a Day   Does Not
Month or Less   a Week   Apply

How often does <u>your mother call</u> you on the phone?

0--------------------1-----------------2------------------3-------------------4
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times a Week   Daily   Few Times a Day
Month or Less

How often does <u>your mother text</u> you?

0--------------------1-----------------2------------------3-------------------4
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times a Week   Daily   Few Times a Day
Month or Less

How often does <u>your mother email</u> you?

0---------------------1------------------2------------------3------------------4
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times a Week   Daily   Few Times a Day
Month or Less

How often does <u>your mother IM</u> (instant message) you?

0---------------------1-----------------2------------------3------------------4-----------------5
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times   Daily   Few Times a Day   Does Not
Month or Less   a Week   Apply

How often does <u>your mother</u> contact you via <u>social networking</u> (e.g., Facebook)?

0---------------------1-----------------2------------------3------------------4-----------------5
1-2 Times a   Weekly   Few Times   Daily   Few Times a Day   Does Not
Month or Less   a Week   Apply

Required Communication:

Are you <u>required</u> to <u>call</u> your mother on the phone?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Are you <u>required</u> to <u>text</u> your mother?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Are you <u>required</u> to <u>email</u> your mother?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Are you <u>required</u> to <u>IM</u> (instant message) your mother?

0----------------1----------------2--------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Are you <u>required</u> to contact your mother via <u>social networking</u> (e.g., Facebook)?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Contacting School Personnel

Has your mother contacted a professor because you were unhappy with a <u>class</u>?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Has your mother contacted a professor because you were unhappy with a <u>grade</u>?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Has your mother contacted other university personnel because you were unhappy with a class or a grade?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Has your mother had to mediate between you and college personnel (e.g., professors)?

0----------------1----------------2---------------3---------------4----------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Do you think your mother is better at expressing your needs to college personnel than you are?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3-----------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother contact your academic advisor?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother make advising appointments for you?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother make appointments for you with other school personnel?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother help you with financial aid paperwork?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4---------------5
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always   Does Not Apply

Does your mother contact financial aid if you have problems with them?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Other:
Parental Control:

Do you have to ask your mother for permission to go on a trip?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

If you're going to be out late, do you have to contact your mother to let her know that you have gotten back home?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does our mother tell you not to drink alcohol?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Do you have to ask permission to go out with friends <u>on the weekend</u>?

```
0----------------1----------------2----------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Do you have to ask permission to go out with friends <u>on a week night</u>?

```
0----------------1----------------2----------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Do you have to ask permission to go out to drink?

```
0----------------1----------------2----------------3----------------4----------------5
Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often      Always      Does Not Apply
```

Does your mother tell you who you should have as friends?

```
0----------------1----------------2----------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often      Always
```

Aid with Attendance:

If you are sick, does your mother call your professor to let him/her know?

```
0----------------1----------------2----------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often      Always
```

If you are sick, does your mother attend class to take notes?

```
0----------------1----------------2----------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often      Always
```

If you cannot attend class due to another reason, other than being sick, does your mother <u>call your professor</u> to let him/her know?

```
0----------------1----------------2----------------3----------------4
Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often      Always
```

If you cannot attend class dues to another reason, other than being sick, does your mother <u>attend class</u> to take notes?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Involvement:

How often does your mother attend university-sponsored events <u>intended for parents</u>?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

How often does your mother attend university-sponsored events <u>intended for students</u>?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

How often does your mother attend university sports events in which <u>you are not a participant</u>?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

How often does your mother attend university sports events that <u>you do not attend</u>?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always
How often does your mother bring up campus safety alerts?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother read the annual campus safety report?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

How often does your mother express worry to you about campus safety?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Parental Attitude:

Describe your mother's level of involvement now compared to before you started college?

0----------------------1------------------------2--------------------------3-------------------4
Much Less   Slightly Less   The Same Amount   Slightly More   Much More

How involved is your mother in your college life?

0--------------------1------------------2----------------------3--------------------------4
Not At All   Very Little   Somewhat   Moderate Amount   Very Large Amount

Does your mother express worry to you about how you're doing <u>academically</u> at college?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother express worry to you about how you're doing <u>socially</u> at college?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother express worry to you about how you're doing in <u>other ways</u> at college?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Does your mother try to solve problems that come up at college before you ask her for help?

0----------------1--------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Usually   Always

How willing is your mother to help you solve a problem that happens at college?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Perceived Self-Confidence:

When dealing with various problems that arise at college, how often are you confident in handling the issues <u>without</u> the help of your mother?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Is your mother involved in aspects of your <u>college life</u> that you could handle on your own?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Is your mother involved in aspects of your <u>social life</u> that you could handle on your own?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Do you worry that you will disappoint your mother with your academics?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3---------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Do you worry that you will disappoint your mother with your social activities?

0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Please answer the following questions regarding your relationship with your mother during your high school and college career.

<u>Intruding on Major/Career Issues:</u>

Did your mother give you feedback about selecting a college?

```
0--------------------1-----------------2----------------------3-------------------------4
```
Not At All   Very Little   Somewhat   Moderate Amount   Very Large Amount

How much did your mother influence your selection of a college?

```
0--------------------1-----------------2----------------------3-------------------------4
```
Not At All   Very Little   Somewhat   Moderate Amount   Very Large Amount

Does your mother help you select your courses?

```
0----------------1---------------2---------------3--------------4
```
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

Did your mother give you feedback on choosing a major?

```
0----------------1--------------2----------------3--------------4---------------5
```
Not At All   Very   Somewhat   Moderate   Very Large   Does Not
             Little   Amount   Amount   Apply

If you have a major, does your mother try to pressure you to select a different one?

```
0----------------1--------------2----------------3--------------4---------------5
```
Not At All   Very   Somewhat   Moderate   Very Large   Does Not
             Little   Amount   Amount   Apply

Did your mother give you feedback about selecting a post baccalaureate school (e.g., graduate school, medical school, law school, etc.)?

```
0----------------1--------------2----------------3--------------4---------------5
```
Not At All   Very   Somewhat   Moderate   Very Large   Does Not
             Little   Amount   Amount   Apply

How much did your mother influence your selection of a post baccalaureate school?

```
0----------------1--------------2----------------3--------------4---------------5
```

Not At All   Very   Somewhat   Moderate   Very Large   Does Not
              Little   Amount   Amount   Apply

Did your mother give you feedback on choosing a career?

0----------------1--------------2----------------3--------------4----------------5
Not At All   Very   Somewhat   Moderate   Very Large   Does Not
              Little   Amount   Amount   Apply

If you have selected a future career, does your mother try to pressure you to select a different one?

0----------------1------------2----------------3--------------4----------------5
Not At All   Very   Somewhat   Moderate   Very Large   Does Not
              Little   Amount   Amount   Apply

Appendix B

Demographics Form

Because this study focuses on your communication with your parents, we would like to know a few things about you as well as them.

About You

(1) Your Gender

Male
Female

(2) Your year at EIU

Freshman
Sophomore
Junior
Senior

(3) Your date of birth (month/day/year):

(4) Your major at EIU:

(5) What is your approximate GPA at EIU?

(6) During this semester, in what town and state do you live?

(7) During this semester, do you live: (Please check one)

At home with one or both of your parents
In a dorm at EIU
In a sorority or fraternity at EIU
Alone in off-campus housing in the Charleston area
With friends or roommates in off-campus housing in the Charleston area
With a spouse or significant other in off-campus housing in the
Charleston area
Other – Please describe:

(8) If you do not currently live with one or both of your parents, then approximately how long (in minutes) does it take to drive from your home to your parents' home?

(9) During this semester, do you:

> Have a part-time job on-campus
> Have a part-time job off-campus
> Have a full-time job on-campus
> Have a full-time job off-campus

(10) Ethnicity

> African-American/Black
> Asian-American/Pacific-Islander
> Hispanic-American/Latino-American
> Native American/Indian
> White/Caucasian
> Other – Please describe:

(11) How many brothers and sisters do you have?

About Your Parents

(12) What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?

> Less then High School
> High School/GED
> Some College
> 2-year College Degree (Associate Degree)
> 4-year College Degree (BA, BS)
> Master's Degree
> Doctoral Degree
> Professional Degree (MD, JD)

(13) What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?

> Less then High School
> High School/GED
> Some College
> 2-year College Degree (Associate Degree)
> 4-year College Degree (BA, BS)
> Master's Degree
> Doctoral Degree
> Professional Degree (MD, JD)