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CAREGIVER CHARACTERISTICS THAT FOSTER SECURE
ATTACHMENT STYLES IN CHILDREN

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Anna Marie Avila

June 2006

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Approved by:



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between foster parents' attachment to their parents, their own marital satisfaction and their attachment with their foster children. Participants for this quantitative study included 50 foster parents. Data were collected through the use of a self-administered questionnaire. Participants responded to three scales: Mother-Infant Attachment Scale, Parental Nurturance Scale, and the Marital Comparison Level Index. The study found two significant positive correlations. The first correlation revealed that foster parents who had a secure attachment to their parents were more likely to demonstrate secure attachments with their foster children. The second correlation revealed that foster parents who had a high level of marital satisfaction were more likely to demonstrate secure attachment with their foster child. Recommendations for social work practice, policy, and research were identified.

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DEDICATION

To my mother and father who have supported me the entire time. Thank you so much for your love and support.

To my best buddy, Claudia who has seen me through some very difficult times in my life. Without your support, help, and laughter, I never would have graduated. Thank you so much, Claudia.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Foster care organizations were formed to help children. Children were taken out of their abusive homes and placed in a safe and secure home where they would receive shelter, food, clothing and medical care. Children were supposed to be re-located somewhere safe and better for them than their biological homes. In theory this sounds wonderful, but in reality all these young children are taken from a place of familiarity, even though abusive, and placed in a stranger's house. Vig, Chinitz, and Shulman (2005) state that babies and very young children are entering foster care at a growing rate with children under the age of six forming the largest population of children entering foster care. Wulczyn and Brunner (2000) remark that children under four are twice as likely to be placed in foster care than older children and stay twice as long. Not only do younger children face this hardship, but are also less likely to be reunified with their biological parents (Vig et al., 2005).

When children are young is the crucial time that attachment styles are being formed (Karen, 1994). Many of these children did not have the resources to form a secure attachment style with their biological parents and now, after being relocated, have the difficult task of trying to form a bond with a foster parent. In order to grow up in a world that holds trust, love, and emotion, it is essential for these children to form a secure relationship with their foster parents (Fahlberg, 1991).

From the early 1980s till now, the number of children in out-of-home care has risen from 260,000 to over 550,000 (Rhodes, Orme, and Buehler, 2001). The number of children that have entered foster care has increased dramatically and this population is vulnerable to developing dysfunctional emotional, physical, psychological, and physiological outcomes because first they were living in a home where abuse and neglect were present and then they are placed in a new environment with new caregivers. Most of these children do not have a clue what a secure attachment style feels like (Dozier, Stovall, Albus, & Bates, 2001; Fish & Chapman, 2004; Wulczyn & Brunner, 2000). According to the national statistics of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and

Reporting System (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003), there were 542,000 children in foster care on September 30, 2001. An electronic article, Child Welfare League of America concurred with Dozier et al., (2001) findings that admissions into foster care have been increasing and that the number of children in out-of-home care increased by 44% between 1986 and 1995, from 280,000 to 486,000. The Foster Care Fact Sheet also reported that from 1990 to 1995 the United States saw a 21% increase in the number of children entering the foster care system. Forty states in the nation saw an increase in the number of children entering out-of-home care, and four states out of those forty saw increases that were more than 100%. All of the child welfare systems are overloaded because it is difficult re-uniting these children with their biological families or finding them a new home, therefore, children are staying in the system longer (Rhodes, Orme, and Buehler, 2001).

Children enter the foster care system for various reasons; some of the most common are neglect, physical abuse, abandonment, sexual abuse, parental substance abuse, and medical problems (Vig et al., 2005; Silver, DiLorenzo, Zukoski, Ross, Amster, & Schlegel, 1999).

Rosenfeld, Pilowsky, Fine, Thorpe, Fein, Simms, et al. (1997, p. 449) claim that a large number of the children in foster care have serious "...medical, mental health, and/or developmental problems..." and they estimate that these children encounter more health problems, emotional adjustment problems, and developmental setbacks than other children who are not in out-of-home care. Vig et al., (2005) revealed some surprising statistics in the foster care population, 92% of children ages 37 months to 60 months displayed developmental and/or emotional problems.

Before they enter the foster care system, babies and young children have already battled obstacles such as drug/physical/mental abuse from parental figures, resulting in neglect, medical, and physiological problems. But now, social services have stepped in and "rescued" them from their turbulent past, placing them in out-of-home locations so that they receive the medical and emotional support that they deserve. Additionally, Fish and Chapman (2004) state that many young foster children are often placed in several locations and must reconnect with new caretakers in each location, which further damages the already fragile attachment system.

For example, a new hardship arises for these resilient children; they are placed in an unfamiliar environment with new people and stimuli and face the challenge of forming attachments to people who are new to them (Dozier et al., 2001). According to Bowlby (1977), attachment theory is an internal working model of self and attachment figures developing in the context of early parent-child interactions. Internal working models are cognitive representations of early caregiving experiences that serve as a guide for the child's interactions with others in the social world. Unfortunately, there are many developmental and socially negative behaviors children exhibit if they form disorganized attachment styles with their primary caregivers. These behaviors include lying, stealing, aggressive behaviors, having difficulties trusting anyone or forming any relationship with anyone. Children will have difficulties monitoring their emotional reactions and coping abilities along with regulating their aggressive behaviors (Dozier et al., 2001; Fish & Chapman, 2005; Karen, 1994). Because these children are confused, they also seek continuous physical attention from unfamiliar adults or rebuffing the attention from a caregiver. Because so many infants and

young children are placed in foster care, many researchers are concerned about their mental health when it comes to forming crucial caregiver-child attachment relationships.

For a young child, the consequences of never forming a secure attachment with a primary caregiver can be profound. The child may display behavioral problems such as sexual aggressiveness, temper tantrums, infantile demands, and failure to make meaningful relationships throughout his/her entire lifespan (Fahlberg, 1991). Other symptoms can include difficulty learning toilet training, flat affect, indiscriminate and/or superficial affectionateness (Fahlberg, 1991; Karen, 1994). These behaviors may continue into adulthood. Because some children never form a secure attachment with a primary caregiver, they may never learn how to feel anything towards anyone and one day, these children will become adults (Karen, 1994).

Because foster children may already exhibit these behaviors when placed into different homes, the foster parents face great challenges in parenting the child. Dozier, Higley, Albus, and Nutter (2002) have identified three problems areas that impede the attachment process.

First, foster parents might perceive that foster children don't need them because they give behavioral signals that indicate that they don't want to be touched or soothed, such as arching their back when held or crying. Second, some foster parents might have personality traits that make them less prone to providing nurturing behaviors. Lastly, foster children are vulnerable for developing affective dysregulation because of the trauma experienced from multiple placements and fear of new environments and people. Affective dysregulatory behavior can be displayed as chronic, inconsolable crying, sleeping and eating problems, head banging, and symptoms of posttraumatic stress or attachment disorder (Fish & Chapman, 2004). All of the previously mentioned behaviors are looking at the challenges of forming a secure attachment style from the child's perspective.

However, there are also the challenges of attachment from the parents' perspectives. When it comes to forming a secure attachment with anyone, the foster parent needs a schema of attachment that was attentive, protective, and trusting. Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978) mention that one third of the children in middle-class homes suffer from insecure attachments and in low-income,

unstable homes the percentage was higher. These percentages indicate that there is a high probability that many people were not reared by parents that supplied a warm, inviting, attentive upbringing that is a necessary component to forming a secure attachment. Unfortunately, these adults have attachment styles that do not promote security. This could mean that many foster children are being cared for by adults that have an insecure attachment style.

Another characteristic that may contribute to a child's attachment style is the parent's level of marital satisfaction. Extensive research on children and families in the general population has identified marital satisfaction as a parental characteristic that contributed to children's behavioral and emotional adjustment in the home (Rothbaum & Weisz, 1994). Keller, Cummings, and Davies (2005) found that marital conflict was related to ineffective parenting which was in turn related to poorer child adjustment. When investigating marital satisfaction among parents, Papp, Goeke-Morey, and Cummings (2004) found that couples who reported higher levels of marital satisfaction in their marriage, had children who displayed fewer emotional and behavioral

problems. Rhodes, Orme, Cox, and Buehler (2003) also found that in marriages that were stable and relatively free of hostile conflict, marital satisfaction provided emotional support and assistance to spouses as they handled the challenges of taking care of foster children. Belsky and Vondra (1989) argued that the marital relationship is the principle support system for parents and that spousal support may have a direct effect on quality of parenting.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between foster parents' attachment style in their family of origin, marital support and their attachment styles with their foster children. Specifically, foster parents who have an autonomous attachment to their parents, and who have marital support from their spouses will be more likely to demonstrate autonomous attachment styles with their foster children.

This study employed a quantitative survey research design. The sample used for this study included married foster parents with at least one foster child in the home. The sample was collected from foster parents who

attended classes held at the San Bernardino Valley College. A self-administered questionnaire will be administered to obtain information regarding foster parents' family of origin, marital satisfaction and attachment style. The Inland Empire is composed of a diverse population from different cultures and social economic statuses so the participants offered this study a richness that perhaps would not have been possible to obtain from other regions of the country.

Significance of the Project for Social Work

It is crucial for social workers to recognize the complex dynamics that face foster families today. As one of the largest groups of professionals to whom foster families turn, social workers play a vital part to providing essential tools for foster parents. Rhodes, Orme, and Buehler (2001) suggests that one of the most important aspects in having a successful relationship with a foster family is the social worker's knowledge of the foster family, personal and family validation and support, normalization of the parent's experience, education about what to expect, and strengthening of the parent's relationship with their foster child and the

foster family agency. Those who counseled families have recently become aware of and more sensitive to the emotional complexities faced by the foster parent as they struggle to supply a caring home for their child. This study would enhance social workers' understanding of the needs of the foster family population. This study would provide essential and critical tools that will promote social workers' competency, efficiency, and knowledge base, particularly in the assessment and intervention phase of the foster family population.

At the agency level, the findings of this research will enhance the knowledge and provide a foundation that can structure foster parent programs. Educational workshops are a necessary component for foster parents on how to raise a child who has formed an insecure attachment and what to expect from this child. Agencies can develop these types of programs for foster parents.

At the governmental level, this study could provide support for social workers who wish to advocate for foster parents with the local county. Social workers' advocacy this study further suggests a better understanding of the complexities and sensibilities encountered within foster family systems, and bridge the

gap between foster family needs and social support systems. To summarize, it is hypothesized that there is a positive relationship between foster parents' family of origin and marital satisfaction and their ability to develop a secure attachment with their foster child.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapter Two consists of a discussion of the relevant literature. Specifically, this chapter is divided into four sections: parents' attachment styles with their families of origin, marital satisfaction of parents with children, attachment styles with children and theories guiding conceptualization. Each subsection will review qualitative and quantitative studies that help guide further research on the foster parent population.

Attachment Styles with Family of Origin

The attachment style one develops with one's family of origin sets the foundation for developing an attachment to anyone. The strongest predictor of children's attachment relationship with their caregiver is the caregiver's attachment to their own family of origin (or the caregiver's state of mind) with regard to attachment (Main & Goldwyn, 1998). Attachment state of mind refers to the way in which adults process thoughts and emotions regarding their own attachment experiences.

Adults who were raised in responsive and sensitive environments and are cognizant of attachment experiences are classified as having secure states of mind. As parents, these adults are more likely to have infants who are securely attached to them (van IJzendoorn, 1995). Adults who are not coherent in their processing of their attachment experiences are said to have insecure states of mind.

Insecure adults are classified into three subcategories: Dismissing, preoccupied, and unresolved. Parents with dismissing states of mind are most likely to have infants with avoidant attachments to them. This means that these infants develop strategies for interacting with their parents when distressed. These infants may turn away from caregivers when distressed, giving the appearance of not needing attention.

Parents in the pre-occupied category show angry involvement with attachment figures. They provide excessive, irrelevant detail in their discussion of attachment issues. These adults have infants with resistant attachments. These infants may show a pattern of seeking out caregivers while simultaneously resisting contact.

The third category, unresolved, occurs among adults who show a breakdown in reasoning when discussing a loss or trauma, and they may also behave in ways that are frightening to children. These adults are likely to have infants with disorganized attachments which mean that these infants show a breakdown in strategy when distressed. Their children are thus disorganized in the face of threat because they need comfort from caregivers, but caregivers are frightening to them (van IJzendoorn, 1995).

In biological dyads, mothers' states of mind regarding attachment influence the quality of care provided to infants (Main & Goldwyn, 1988), and are a reliable predictor of infant classification. Mothers' states of mind regarding attachment are thought to affect how mothers interpret and respond to their babies' needs, especially in distress situations. In other words, a mother's understanding of her infant, and her response to the baby, are thought to be related to the mother's own state of mind regarding attachment. Therefore, this experiment hypothesized that a foster mother's state of mind would be systematically related to how she understands the needs of her foster baby.

Marital Satisfaction

Another characteristic that may contribute to a child's attachment style is the parent's level of marital satisfaction. Rothbaum and Weisz (1994) have done extensive research on children and families in the general population and have identified marital satisfaction as a parental characteristic that contributed to children's behavioral and emotional adjustment in the home. Keller, Cummings, and Davies (2005) found that marital conflict was related to ineffective parenting which was in turn related to poorer child adjustment. Simons, Lorenz, Conger, and Wu (1992) state that the construct most often considered in research of the determinants of parenting is quality of the marital relationship. An association between marital satisfaction and skillful parenting has been found for both mothers and fathers, in the United States and other countries, and for parents of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Belsky and Vondra (1989) argued that the marital relationship is the principle support system for parents and states that spousal support is likely to have a direct effect on quality of parenting. A supportive

spouse is likely to listen and provide advice, support, and assistance to his or her mate regarding the tasks and responsibilities of parenting.

When investigating marital satisfaction among parents, Papp, Goeke-Morey, and Cummings (2004) found that couples who reported higher levels of marital satisfaction in their marriage, had children who displayed fewer emotional and behavioral problems. Rhodes, Orme, Cox, and Buehler (2003) also found that in marriages that were stable and relatively free of hostile conflict, marital satisfaction provided emotional support and assistance to spouses as they handled the challenges of taking care of foster children. Belsky and Vondra (1989) argued that the marital relationship is the principle support system for parents and that spousal support may have a direct effect on quality of parenting. In addition, marital support lessened the disruptive impact of economic stressors on quality of parenting more than having a strong social support (Simons, Lorenz, Conger, and Wu, (1992); Simons, Lorenz, Wu, and Conger, 1993). Cox, Owen, Lewis, and Henderson (1989) state that the existing literature addressing the association between marital quality and parenting has suggested that

marital support predicts feelings of parental competence, responsive parenting, and the development of secure infant-parent attachments.

Attachment Style with Children

In our society, forming a secure and trusting attachment seems to be taken for granted like seeing or walking. People believe that mothers and fathers are supposed to be responsive, consistent, affectionate, patient, and mature. In an idealistic world this would be the norm. However, in a world where drugs are readily available and nearly 1 in 3 adult women experience at least one physical assault by a partner during adulthood it appears that we live in a potentially dangerous community. In addition, people live with the pressures and stressors of keeping a job, finding affordable housing, food, clothing and medical care, this idealistic world quickly disappears and children are faced with the possibility of being abused and neglected (Bowlby, 1953; Dozier et al., 2001).

Children in foster care have already been abused or neglected in some form or another in order to become part of the foster care system. Many children in foster care

start their arduous journey from an abusive or neglectful background where they never had the necessary resources to form a secure attachment to their primary caregiver. Then, they are removed from their home and placed in a foster home with the difficult task of trying to form a bond with a complete stranger in a new environment (Falhberg, 1991) While most biological children in the never worry about abuse or neglect, the foster child finds it very difficult to trust anyone (Karen, 1994). The foster child has learned that mom and dad were never around when they needed them so why would any other adult be available to meet their needs.

What does a secure attachment between a caregiver and a child look like and how is one formed? From experience, children form a schema of their expectations or perceptions about the responsiveness of their caregiver and this forms the foundation for their attachment style with this caregiver (Collins & Read, 1990). Ainsworth et al. (1978) observed what took place when they separated and then reunited young children from their biological mothers. Using the Strange Situation which is a laboratory procedure in which young children are separated and then later reunited with their primary

caregivers several times. Children's behavior, when reunited with their caregiver, was assessed for attachment styles. Using the Strange Situation study, two categories were formed to organize infants' attachment styles.

1. Secure

Infants would explore new surroundings and stimuli knowing that their mothers would always be available to them when they returned and when they needed them.

2. Insecure

A. Avoidant Attachment - When a child's attachment needs have not been responded to, he/she can behave as if he/she do not emotionally need their mother, but in reality they desperately want to be soothed and touched. When placed in foster care, many of these children carry with them the memory of parental non-responsiveness they received from their biological parents when they needed attention when distressed and now give the foster parent the impression that attention to their needs is unnecessary (Ainsworth, et al. 1978).

B. Resistant-Ambivalent - This is the scene where the infant or young child desperately clings to the caregiver, but cannot be comforted and/or makes eye contact and seeks comfort from a complete stranger.

Children with insecure attachment styles can stress any foster parent who becomes frustrated from months of being rebuffed or unable to fill their chronic, insatiable needs. It can turn into a play where the child unconsciously sets up a self-fulfilling prophecy where each caregiver will add validation to this belief that this child is unlovable and this is all that they deserve.

The quality of the attachment infants develop follows them throughout their entire lives. It affects them socially, emotionally, and physically. How the primary caregiver(s) and the infant interact reflects how this child will interact with other people their entire life. There are many benefits that can follow children who form secure attachments in infancy and childhood. In school, children with secure attachments display confident and more independent behaviors with their classmates and their instructors. They also display

better problem-solving capabilities as toddlers (Dozier et al., 2001). Almost all the children in foster care will be emancipated one day, regardless of their attachment style. Those unfortunate children that did not have the opportunity to form a secure attachment with any caregiver will someday be a co-worker, a neighbor, and live in one's community. These children do not disappear, but become a vital part of our lives. As social workers we need to be aware of this population and the problems they encounter.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Over half a million children are involved in the foster care system right now. Therefore, half a million children will struggle with trying to form an attachment with a primary caregiver. According to Bowlby (1977), attachment theory is an internal working model of self and the primary caregivers developing in the context of early parent-child interactions. Internal working models are cognitive representations of early care giving experiences that serve as a guide for the child's interactions with others in the social world. If unable to form a secure attachment in childhood, many

developmental and socially negative behaviors can be the result. These behaviors include, lying, stealing, aggressive behaviors, having difficulties trusting anyone or forming any relationship with anyone. These behaviors may continue into adulthood. Because some children never form a secure attachment with a primary caregiver, they may never learn how to feel anything towards anyone and one day, these children will become adults (Karen, 1994).

In addition, foster children may exhibit these behaviors when placed into different homes; the foster parents face great challenges in parenting the child and forming an attachment to this child. Many children are placed in foster care each year and many researchers are concerned about their mental and physical health when it comes to forming crucial caregiver-child attachment relationships.

Dozier et al., (2001) stated that there are a dearth of studies examining the relationship between foster children forming a secure attachment with their foster parents. With so many children in the foster care system it seems imperative that this area of study be researched especially when this cycle can be prevented in the early stages of the child's placement in foster care.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between foster parents' attachment styles in their families of origin and marital satisfaction and their attachment styles with their foster children.

Summary

The literature important to the project was presented in Chapter Two. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were reviewed to provide information on foster family attachment styles. As revealed, there is a dearth of studies that have examined the relationship between foster parents' attachment style with family of origin, marital satisfaction and their attachment styles with their foster children and how this information relates to forming a secure attachment with their children.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

The current study will examine the strength of the relationships between foster parents' attachment with their parents, their level of marital satisfaction and the strength of their attachment with their foster children. This section will describe the study's design, sampling criteria, data collection, instruments, and procedures employed to analyze the results. This section also goes into detail on how participants' anonymity will be preserved, and provides a basis for how the data will be analyzed.

Study Design

The purpose of this exploratory study will be to examine the strength of the relationships between the two independent variables, (attachment with parents and marital satisfaction) and the dependent variable (attachment with foster children). The current study hypothesized that foster parents who have a secure attachment to their parents and who have a high level of marital satisfaction will be more likely to demonstrate

secure attachment with their foster children. Two correlations will be run, the first between attachment with parents and attachment with foster children, and the second between marital satisfaction and attachment with foster children.

All three variables will be measured using surveys. There are several limitations when using surveys as tools to gather participant information. For example, participants may not tell the truth or may try to please the researcher with their answers. Another limitation may be that the participant may be paranoid that the researcher might want to remove their foster children from their homes.

Other limitations may occur with the sample chosen for the study. It is the hope of this study to produce results that will be generalized to other foster parents; however, the study will use a convenience sample of foster parents taking classes at Valley College. Also, this sample may not be diverse enough culturally or socio-economically.

To measure the three variables, participants will be asked questions about their attachment to their parents,

marital satisfaction, and attachment with their foster children.

Sampling

The researcher is anticipating that at least fifty foster parents, age 18 years or older, with at least one foster child living in the home will participate in this study. The participants will be recruited from classes held at the San Bernardino Valley College Child Development Center. Permission to distribute a self-administered questionnaire will be obtained from the director of the Child Development Center.

Data Collection and Instruments

To introduce the study to the participants, the researcher will briefly explain the three surveys they will be answering, the steps taken to maintain their confidentiality, and how to complete the informed consent form. Participants will be asked to sign with an "X" and date the informed consent letter.

By marking the page with an "X", this will indicate to the researcher that the participants have been informed of the nature and purpose of the study and that they freely consent to participate. After marking and

dating the informed consent, they will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire asks them to indicate their age, gender, religion, marital status, educational level, income, and number of children living in the home.

After completing the demographic questionnaire, they will fill out the three questionnaires to measure attachment with their parents, marital satisfaction, and attachment with their foster child. After completing the self-administered questionnaires, the participants will receive a debriefing statement from the researcher to explain the purpose of the study. More specifically, to investigate if foster parents who have a secure attachment to their parents and who have a high level of marital satisfaction will be more likely to demonstrate secure attachment with their foster children.

In describing the properties of the scales, the levels of measurement for all three scales will be ordinal. The first independent variable, attachment with parents, will be measured by the Parental Nurturance Scale (PNS). The PNS is a 24-item instrument designed to measure parental nurturance from the point of view of the child (of any age). Parental nurturance includes parental

approval, acceptance, and affirmation of their children. Items on the PNS are rated 1 = strongly disagree through 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores indicate more nurturing relationships with the parents.

The PNS' main focus is on the attachment between the participant and the mother. The author used the same scale to measure the relationship with fathers. The scale was re-written to include the father by replacing the word "mother" with "father" for each question. Since this researcher is interested in the parental nurturance between both fathers and mothers with the participants, the questions will be written for both mother and father. Participants will receive a scale that has 24 questions in total. Participants will receive a question with part A being related to mothers, and B being questions related to fathers.

Examples of some of the questions that will be asked are as follows: "My mother expresses her warmth and affection to me" and "My father is often critical of me and nothing I do ever seems to please him" (Buri, 1989).

The PNS is easily scored by summing up individual items for a total score. Items 1, 3, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, and 24 are reversed-scored. The PNS has

excellent internal consistency, with alphas of .95 for mothers and .93 for fathers. The PNS also has excellent stability with test-retest reliabilities of .92 for mothers and .94 for fathers. The PNS has good concurrent validity, with significant positive correlations with self-esteem for both mother's and father's PNS (Buri, 1989).

To measure the second independent variable, marital satisfaction, the Marital Comparison Level Index (MCLI) will be used. The MCLI contains 32-items that are rated -3 = "Worse than I expect" to +3 = "Better than I expect."

The MCLI contains questions that were designed to measure an individual's perception of the degree to which his or her marital relationship is living up to his or her expectations. The MCLI is scored by assigning 1 point to an answer of -3, 2 points to -2, 3 points to -1, 4 points when a person circles "0", 5 points to +1, 6 points to +2, and 7 when a person circles +3. The individual items are then summed; higher scores indicate more marital satisfaction. Examples of some of the questions that will be used are as follows: "The amount your partner is trusting of you" and "The amount of

commitment you experience from your spouse" (Sabatelli, 1984).

The MCLI instrument demonstrated excellent internal consistency with an alpha of .93. No test-retest data were reported. The MCLI has good concurrent validity, correlating significantly with scores on measures of relational equity and marital commitment (Sabatelli, 1984).

To measure the dependent variable, attachment with foster children, the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS) will be used. The MIAS is a 15-item instrument designed to measure the attachment between infant and mother. All of the questions on this scale could be asked of foster fathers since the scale is not gender specific. For this study, the researcher will administer this survey to not only foster mothers, but foster fathers as well. There is a dearth of studies examining attachment of foster mothers and even less looking at foster fathers and attachment (Dozier et al., 2001).

Items on the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale were rated 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores indicate a stronger attachment between parent and child. Examples of some of the questions that will be

asked are as follows: "I am extremely proud of this child" and "I am often angry with this child" (Bhakoo, Pershad, Mahajan, & Gambhir, 1994). The Mother-Infant Attachment Scale is easily scored by summing up individual items for a total score. Items 1, 3, 6, 9, 11, and 12 are reversed-scored.

The reliability of the scale was tested by split-half method, dividing the scale into two halves, the first half contained all the odd numbers and the second half contained items placed at even numbers. The correlation of each half with the total score was .90 and .87 for odd and even items, respectively. The Mother-Infant Attachment Scale has high face and construct validity (Bhakoo et al., 1994)

Procedures

Permission was obtained from the director of the Child Development Department at San Bernardino Valley College to allow the researcher to survey participants. The sample will be drawn from foster parents attending classes held at the San Bernardino Valley College. Data will be collected through the use of self-administered questionnaires.

The researcher will introduce herself and inform the foster parents of the purpose of the study. She will briefly explain the three surveys and the demographics questionnaire. Next, confidentiality will be explained to the participants. Participants will mark the informed consent form with an "X" and date it. Therefore, participants' responses and their identities cannot be connected. Next, the researcher will explain the qualifications to participate in the study. The researcher will request that participants fill out the questionnaires in class. When completed, participants will be asked to return the questionnaires to the researcher who will then hand each participant a debriefing form.

Protection of Human Subjects

Participants will be informed that the information they will provide in the questionnaire will be strictly confidential. No names or identifying information will be published. Participants' responses and their identities cannot be connected.

Questionnaires given to participants to complete will include an informed consent statement. This

statement is comprised of the purpose of the study, the approximate time it will take to complete the questionnaire, and the protection of confidentiality throughout the study. The informed consent will also indicate that participation is voluntary and that the participants could exercise the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The phone number to the counseling center will be provided to participants who may feel distressed as a result of responding to the questionnaire because the questionnaire will present questions that could evoke negative reactions. See Appendix B for the informed consent.

Data Analysis

A quantitative research approach will be used for the current study. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency distribution, measures of central tendency and variability will be employed to summarize and describe the data set. The first independent variable, attachment with parents, will be obtained from items using an ordinal level of measurement. The Parental Nurture questionnaire is easily scored by summing up individual

items for a total score. Higher scores indicate more nurturing relationships with the parents.

The second independent variable, marital satisfaction, will be obtained from items using an ordinal level of measurement. The individual items scores will then be summed; higher scores indicate more marital satisfaction.

The dependent variable, attachment with their foster children, will be obtained from items using an ordinal level of measurement. Higher scores indicate more secure attachments with their children.

In order to analyze the data, a Pearson's correlation, a statistical technique which can show whether and how strongly pairs of variables are related, will be used to describe the relationship between attachment with parents and attachment to their foster child and the second relationship between marital satisfaction and attachment to their foster child. The correlational analysis will determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between the first independent variable and the dependent variable and the second independent variable and the dependent variable,

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

Chapter Four consists of a presentation of the study's findings. Descriptive statistics describe the demographic variables and the dependent and independent variables, followed by bivariate findings. Relevant probability levels of the statistical findings are also presented.

Presentation of the Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 in appendix E presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The sample consists of 46 females and 4 males (N = 50) ranging in age from 29 to 68 years of age with a mean age of 50.34 years. The ethnic breakdown of respondents was as follows: 58% identified themselves as African-American, 20% identified as Hispanic/Latino, 18% identified as Non-Hispanic White, and 4% identified themselves in the Other category.

The marital status of the respondents was as follows: the majority of the respondents (94%) were married and the remaining 6% had never been married.

The religious affiliation of the respondents was as follows: 60% were Protestant (Christian), 26% were Catholic, 4% reported that they were members of an "Other" religion, and 2% reported having no religion.

The educational level of the respondents was as follows: 46% reported finishing high school, 40% reported attending college, 8% reported never graduating from high school, 4% reported that they had graduated from college, and 2% reported attending graduate or professional school.

The number of children living in the households ranged from 1 to 13 with the average number of children per household being 3. This included both biological and foster children.

Lastly, the income level breakdown of the respondents was as follows: 38.8% earned between \$30,001 to \$40,000, 32.7% earned between \$40,001 to \$50,000, 14.3% earned between \$20,001 to \$30,000, 12.2% earned \$50,001 or over, and 2% earned under \$20,000

Scales

The participants responded to three scales, the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS), the Parental Nurturance Scale (PNS), and the Marital Comparison Level

Index (MCLI). Table 2 in Appendix F presents the participants' mean responses to questions from the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS), the dependent variable. The MIAS, is a 15-item instrument designed to measure the strength of attachment between infant and mother. However, all of the questions on this scale could be asked of foster fathers since the scale is not gender specific. Items on the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale were rated 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores indicate a stronger attachment between parent and child.

The range of the mean scores for the MIAS ranged from 2.70 to 4.50. Item 4, "I am extremely proud of this child" had the highest mean score of 4.50 and item 2, "I love this child so much that I can not bear to be away from him/her even for a short time" had the lowest mean response score of 2.70.

Table 3 in appendix G presents the participants' mean responses to the Parental Nurture Scale (PNS), one of the independent variables. The PNS is a 24-item instrument designed to measure respondents' attachment level to their parents. There were two parts to each question, with part A being questions related to mothers,

and B being questions related to fathers. Participants answered 48 questions in total.

Parental nurturance includes parental approval, acceptance, and affirmation of their children. Items on the PNS are rated 1 = strongly disagree through 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores indicate the respondents had more nurturing parents.

The range of the mean scores for the PNS ranged from 3.40 to 4.60. Item 24(a), "My mother does not really care very much what happens to me" was an inverse-scored item and had the highest mean score of 4.60, indicating that participants believed their mothers cared what happened to them. Other items with high mean scores that also were inverse-scored items were item 21(a), "My mother is generally cold and removed when I am with her" and item 3(a), "My mother often acts as if she doesn't care about me" had mean scores of 4.56 and 4.50, respectively. The lowest mean score of 3.70 was on item 22(b), "I received a lot of affirmation from my father."

Table 4 in appendix H presents the participants' mean responses to Marital Comparison Level Index (MCLI) questions, one of the independent variables. The MCLI contains questions that are designed to measure an

individual's perception of the degree to which his or her marital relationship is living up to his or her expectations, or marital satisfaction. The range for the MCLI goes from -3 to 3, with -3 being "Worse than I expect" and +3 being "Better than I expect." The MCLI is scored by assigning 1 point to an answer of -3, 2 points to -2, 3 points to -1, 4 points when a person circles "0", 5 points to +1, 6 points to +2, and 7 when a person circles +3. The individual items are then summed; higher scores indicate more marital satisfaction. All of the mean scores for this scale were high, meaning that out of a range from 4.92 to 6.06, 28 out of 32 items had mean scores over 5.00. Items 26, 27, and 28 had mean scores of 6.00, 6.00, and 6.06 respectively. The lowest mean response score was for item 3, "The amount of sexual activity that you experience" had a mean score of 4.92.

Correlational Analysis

Two Pearson correlation coefficient tests were conducted; the first was between the Parental Nurture Scale (PNS) and the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS) and the second was between the Marital Comparison Level Index (MCLI) and the MIAS. The first correlation indicated a significant moderate positive correlation

($r = .324$, $p < .05$) between scores on the Parental Nurturance Scale (PNS) and the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS). Thus, foster parents who had a secure attachment to their parents were more likely to demonstrate secure attachments with their foster children.

In addition, the second correlation indicated a significant moderate positive correlation ($r = .301$, $p < .05$) between responses on the MCLI and the MIAS. Therefore, foster parents who had a high level of marital satisfaction were more likely to demonstrate secure attachment with their foster child.

Summary

The sample in this study consisted of 46 females and 4 males ranging in age from 39 to 68 years with an average of 50 years. Over one-half of the respondents were African-American and nearly all of the respondents were married. Also, a large portion had a Protestant religious background and had graduated from high school. Over one-third made over \$30,000. The participants responded to three scales: Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS), the Parental Nurturance Scale (PNS), and the

Pearson correlations indicated a significant moderate positive correlation. The first correlation was between the PNS and the MIAS. Thus, foster parents who had a secure attachment to their parents were more likely to demonstrate secure attachments with their foster children. And, the second correlation was between the MCLI and the MIAS which demonstrated that foster parents that had a high level of marital satisfaction had a secure attachment with their foster child.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

Included in Chapter Five is a presentation and discussion of the study's results. Chapter five also presents the limitations of the study, gives recommendations, and concludes with a summary.

Discussion

The participants for this study were primarily African-American women with a mean age of 50 who had high school educations and Protestant religious backgrounds. One-third of the respondents came from households with incomes of approximately \$35,000.

The study found two significant positive correlations. The first correlation was between the Parental Nurturance Scale (PNS) and the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS). Thus, foster parents who had a secure attachment to their parents were more likely to demonstrate secure attachments with their foster children. The second correlation was between the Marital Comparison Level Index (MCLI) and the MIAS which demonstrated that foster parents who had a high level of

marital satisfaction had a secure attachment with their foster child(ren).

The findings of this study are consistent with Main and Goldwyn's study (1998), that the strongest predictor of children's attachment relationship with their caregiver is the caregiver's attachment to their parents. In addition, Cox, Owen, Lewis, and Henderson (1989) found that the strength of the relationship between marital satisfaction and parenting significantly predicted feelings of parental competence, responsive parenting and development of secure infant-parent attachments in the research literature.

It was hypothesized that foster parents who had high levels of marital satisfaction and a secure attachment to their parents would also have a secure attachment with their foster child. Thus, the hypothesis was supported.

Limitations

The study had several limitations. The first limitation was that the sample was a convenient sample; married foster parents were recruited from one location in San Bernardino, California. This approach limits the

reliability of the study's results and also limits extrapolation of the results to other samples.

The second limitation is that the study had a small sample size (N = 50), which may compromise the generalizability of the results to other married foster parents. Another limitation could have been the translation of the Mother-Infant Attachment Scale from Indian to English. The participants could have misinterpreted the meaning of the questions. Also, because of the high mean scores on all three scales, the respondents might have employed a social desirability response in order to please the researcher.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research

There are several recommendations given as a result of this study. The first relates to the social work practice, it is critical for social workers to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of the complexities of the foster care system. It is evident from the study that practitioners are not providing the appropriate therapeutic treatment for foster families or facilitating venues to help foster families develop secure attachments to their foster children. Therefore, social service

agencies that employ social workers need to provide a foundation that can structure foster family programs. These programs need to encourage the participation of all family members on effective communication with each other and facilitate discussion about the responsibilities about their individual roles. These types of programs may enrich the family's relationship and promote the establishment of secure attachments.

It is also recommended that educational workshops be a necessary component for foster parents on how to raise a child who has formed an insecure attachment to adults and what to expect from this child. Again, social service agencies can develop these types of workshops for foster parents. Lastly, a thorough psychosocial assessment of the foster family before and during placement is a necessary component of understanding the dynamics of the foster family. A better understanding of the foster family may help children have a smoother transition from their biological homes to a foster placement and aid the child in forming a secure attachment to their new caregiver.

One recommendation relates to public policy for social workers to advocate for foster parents with their

local governments. In order to help foster parents develop a secure attachment to their foster child, multiple placements of the foster child need to be reduced. Also, training classes need to be included in the foster parent training such as couples counseling and attachment courses. Last, foster parents might need their own couple or individual counseling to help them understand how their attachment to their foster child is related to their attachment to their parents.

One recommendation for future research is to create profiles of foster families to develop good screening programs. The screening process would select well-adjusted happy parents with good relationships to provide emotionally healthy environments for foster children. This would promote secure attachments between foster parents and children. Dozier et al. (2001) stated that there are a dearth of studies examining the relationship between foster children forming a secure attachment with their foster parents. With so many children in the foster care system it seems imperative that this area of study be researched especially when this cycle of not forming an attachment to a new

caregiver can be prevented in the early stages of the child's placement in foster care.

Another recommendation for future research includes using a more diverse representative sample. Single as well as married foster parents should be studied, along with using a multi-cultural/ethnic sample. The sample of the current study consisted of married foster parents. Also, a larger sample should be obtained from a wider geographical region. Participants need to be recruited from several locations in Southern California. This step will increase statistical power as well as generalizability. Last, researchers need to investigate the original language of their scales to prevent any ambiguity or misinterpretation by participants.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between foster parents' attachment to their parents, their own marital satisfaction and their attachment with their foster children. Two Pearson correlations tests indicated significant moderate positive correlations. The first correlation was between foster parents' attachment to their parents and their

attachment with their foster children. Thus, foster parents who had a secure attachment to their parents were more likely to demonstrate secure attachments with their foster children. The second correlation between foster parents' marital satisfaction and their attachment to their foster children demonstrated that foster parents who had a high level of marital satisfaction had a secure attachment with their foster children.

Recommendations for social work practice, policy, and research were identified. Social Workers need to acquire an extensive knowledge base about the foster care system and their complex roles. Agencies need to be better equipped with educational workshops that encourage the development of secure attachments between caregivers and foster parents. Social workers should advocate for foster parents. Further suggestions for research need to include a larger, more representative sample of diverse ethnic groups in future research studies.

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

MCLI

Indicate by circling the **appropriate number** how your current experiences compare to your expectations in your marital relationship.

	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
	Worse than I expect			About what I expect	Better than I expect		
1. The amount of companionship you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
2. The amount your partner is trusting of you	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
3. The amount of sexual activity that you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
4. The amount of confiding that occurs between you and your spouse	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
5. The amount of conflict over daily decisions that exists	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
6. The amount of time you spend together	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
7. The amount of affection your partner displays	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
8. The amount of responsibility for household tasks is shared	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
9. The amount your partner is willing to listen to you	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
10. The amount of relationship equality you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
11. The amount of conflict over money you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
12. The amount of compatibility that you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
13. The amount of conflict over the use of leisure time that you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
14. The amount of disagreement over friends that you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
15. The amount of interest in sex your partner expresses	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
16. The fairness with which money is spent	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
17. The amount of criticism your partner expresses	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
18. The amount of mutual respect you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3

MCLI

Indicate by circling the appropriate number how your current experiences compare to your expectations.

	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
	Worse than I expect			About what I expect	Better than I expect		
19. The degree to which your interpersonal communications are effective	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
20. The amount of love you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
21. The degree to which your needs are met	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
22. The amount of freedom you experience in pursuing other friendships	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
23. The amount of responsibility your partner accepts for household chores	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
24. The amount that you and your partner discuss sex	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
25. The amount of privacy you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
26. The amount to which your spouse supports your choice of an occupation	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
27. The amount to which you and your spouse agree on your life-style	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
28. The amount to which you and your spouse agree on the number of children to have	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
29. The degree of physical attractiveness of your partner	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
30. The amount of arguing over petty issues that you experience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
31. The amount of jealousy your partner expresses	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
31. The amount of commitment you experience from your spouse	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3

In this section indicate the number on the 5-point scale below that best describes how each statement best applies to you and your foster child who is under 18 years. There are no right or wrong answers.

Please circle the appropriate number for your answer.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I feel that this child does not love me.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I love this child so much that I can not bear to be away from him/her even for a short time.	5	4	3	2	1
3. This child is difficult to raise:	5	4	3	2	1
4. I am extremely proud of this child.	5	4	3	2	1
5. When this child is out of my sight I always worry that something bad may happen to him/her.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I am annoyed by this child.	5	4	3	2	1
7. This child has a promising future.	5	4	3	2	1
8. This child obeys me.	5	4	3	2	1
9. This child has caused me a lot of trouble	5	4	3	2	1
10. This child is of my expectation	5	4	3	2	1
11. This child has increased our difficulties	5	4	3	2	1
12. I am often angry with this child.	5	4	3	2	1
13. This child is very affectionate toward me.	5	4	3	2	1
14. This child seems to be a promising child.	5	4	3	2	1
15. This child has a lot of patience.	5	4	3	2	1

pa

pns

For each of the following statements, indicate the number on the 5-point scale below that best describes how that statement applies to you and your mother/father. Try to read and think about each statement as it applies to you and your mother/father during your years of growing up at home. There are no right or wrong answers, so don't spend a lot of time on any one item. We are looking for your overall impression regarding each statement. Be sure not to omit any items. Circle the appropriate number for your answer.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	a) My mother seldom says nice things about me.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father seldom says nice things about me.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	a) I am an important person in my mother's eyes.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) I am an important person in my father's eyes.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	a) My mother often acts as if she doesn't care about me.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father often acts as if he doesn't care about me.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	a) My mother enjoys spending time with me.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father enjoys spending time with me.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	a) My mother expresses her warmth and affection for me.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father expresses his warmth and affection for me.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	a) My mother is easy for me to talk to.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father is easy for me to talk to.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	a) I am tense and uneasy when my mother and I are together.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) I am tense and uneasy when my father and I are together	5	4	3	2	1
8.	a) I feel that my mother finds fault with me more often than I deserve.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) I feel that my father finds fault with me more often than I deserve.	5	4	3	2	1
9.	a) My mother takes an active interest in my affairs.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father takes an active interest in my affairs.	5	4	3	2	1

Circle the appropriate number for your answer.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10. a) I feel very close to my mother.	5	4	3	2	1
b) I feel very close to my father.	5	4	3	2	1
11. a) My mother does not understand me.	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father does not understand me.	5	4	3	2	1
12. a) My mother believes in me.	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father believes in me.	5	4	3	2	1
13. a) I don't feel that my mother enjoys being with me.	5	4	3	2	1
b) I don't feel that my father enjoys being with me.	5	4	3	2	1
14. a) My mother doesn't really know what kind of person I am.	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father doesn't really know what kind of person I am.	5	4	3	2	1
15. a) My mother is a warm and caring individual.	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father is a warm and caring individual.	5	4	3	2	1
16. a) My mother does not feel that I am important and interesting.	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father does not feel that I am important and interesting.	5	4	3	2	1
17. a) My mother is very interested in those things that concern me.	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father is very interested in those things that concern me.	5	4	3	2	1
18. a) My mother is often critical of me and nothing I do ever seems to please her.	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father is often critical of me and nothing I do ever seems to please him.	5	4	3	2	1
19. a) My mother seldom shows me any affection	5	4	3	2	1
b) My father seldom shows me any affection.	5	4	3	2	1

Circle the appropriate number for your answer.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
20.	a) My mother consoles me and helps me when I am unhappy or in trouble.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father consoles me and helps me when I am unhappy or in trouble.	5	4	3	2	1
21.	a) My mother is generally cold and removed when I am with her.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father is generally cold and removed when I am with him	5	4	3	2	1
22.	a) I received a lot of affirmation from my mother.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) I received a lot of affirmation from my father.	5	4	3	2	1
23.	a) My mother is very understanding and sympathetic.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father is very understanding and sympathetic.	5	4	3	2	1
24.	a) My mother does not really care much what happens to me.	5	4	3	2	1
	b) My father does not really care much what happens to me.	5	4	3	2	1

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate the relationship between parenting characteristics that foster secure relationships in children. This study is being conducted by Anna M. Avila under the supervision of Dr. Janet Chang, Professor of Social Work. This study has been approved by the Department of Social Work subcommittee of the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

In this study, you will be asked to respond to several questions regarding your parents' attachment styles with you, your marital satisfaction, and your attachment style with your foster child. The questionnaire should take about 25 minutes to complete. All of your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence by the researcher. Your name will not be reported with your responses. All data will be reported in-group form only. You may receive the group results of this study upon completion in July, 2006 at the following location, Pfau Library, California State University, San Bernardino

Your participation in this study is totally voluntary. You are free not to answer any questions and withdraw at any time during this study without penalty. When you have completed the questionnaire, you will receive a debriefing statement describing the study in more detail. In order to ensure the validity of the study, we ask that you do not discuss this study with other participants.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Janet Chang, Professor of Social Work at (909) 537-5184. By placing a check mark on the line below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand the nature and the purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

Please check mark here: _____ Today's Date: _____

APPENDIX C
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

This study you have just completed was designed to investigate the relationships between you and your parents' attachment styles, your marital satisfaction, and your attachment style with your foster child to see if all of these characteristics foster secure attachments with your foster children. We are particularly interested to see if these characteristics will promote a secure attachment with your foster children.

Thank you for your participation and for not discussing the contents of this survey with other parents. It is not anticipated that this survey will cause any emotional distress, however, if it does, please call Cal State's counseling center at (909) 880-5040. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Anna Avila or Professor Janet Chang at (909) 537-5184. If you like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact the Pfau library at California State University, San Bernardino after September, 2006.

APPENDIX D
DEMOGRAPHICS

DEMOGRAPHICS

Now we would like to know about you. Please read the following questions and circle your answer. This survey is anonymous.

1. Gender:
 1. Male
 2. Female

2. Age _____

3. Ethnicity
 1. African-American
 2. Asian/Pacific Islander
 3. Hispanic/Latino
 4. Native American
 5. Non-Hispanic White
 6. Other

4. Marital Status
 1. Never Married
 2. Married
 3. Divorced
 4. Widowed
 5. Other

5. Religion
 1. Catholic
 2. Protestant (Christian)
 3. Buddhist
 4. No Religion
 5. Other

6. Highest level of education achieved
 1. Less than high school
 2. High school graduate
 3. Some college
 4. College graduate
 5. Graduate or professional school

7. Number of children living in your household _____

8. Income level:
 1. Under \$20,000
 2. \$20,001-\$30,000
 3. \$30,001-\$40,000
 4. \$40,001-\$50,000
 5. \$50,001- Over

APPENDIX E

TABLE 1. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE RESPONDENTS

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender (N = 50)		
Male	4	8.0%
Female	46	92.0%
Ethnicity (N = 50)		
African-American	29	58.0%
Hispanic	10	20.0%
Non-Hispanic	9	18.0%
Other	2	4.0%
Marital Status (N = 50)		
Never Married	3	6.0%
Married	47	94.0%
Religion (N = 50)		
Catholic	13	26.0%
Protestant (Christian)	30	60.0%
No Religion	1	2.0%
Other	6	12.0%
Highest level of education (N = 50)		
Less than High School	4	8.0%
High School graduate	23	46.0%
Some College	20	40.0%
College graduate	2	4.0%
Graduate/Professional School	1	2.0%
Income (N = 49)		
Under \$20,000	1	2.0%
\$20,000-\$30,000	7	14.3%
\$30,001-\$40,000	19	38.8%
\$40,001-\$50,000	16	32.7%
\$50,001-above	6	12.2%
Age (N = 47)		
29-40	5	10.6%
41-50	16	34.0%
51-60	22	46.8%
61-70	4	8.51%
Number of children living in your household (N = 50)		
1 child	9	18.0%
2 children	8	16.0%
3 children	12	24.0%
4 children	8	16.0%
5 children	6	12.0%
6 children	2	4.0%
7 children	2	4.0%
9 children	1	2.0%
10 children	1	2.0%
13 children	1	2.0%

APPENDIX F

TABLE 2. MOTHER-INFANT ATTACHMENT SCALE

Mother-Infant Attachment Scale (MIAS)

Items	Means
1. I feel that this child does not love me.	4.26
2. I love this child so much that I can not bear to be away from him/her even for a short time.	2.70
3. This child is difficult to raise.	3.58
4. I am extremely proud of this child.	4.50
5. When this child is out of my sight I always worry that something bad may happen to him/her.	3.06
6. I am annoyed by this child.	4.22
7. This child has a promising future.	3.94
8. This child obeys me.	4.06
9. This child has caused me a lot of trouble	3.90
10. This child is of my expectation	3.88
11. This child has increased our difficulties	3.80
12. I am often angry with this child.	4.24
13. This child is very affectionate toward me.	4.28
14. This child seems to be a promising child.	4.14
15. This child has a lot of patience.	3.48

APPENDIX G

TABLE 3. PARENTAL NURTURANCE SCALE

Parental Nurture Scale (PNS)

Items (N = 50)	Means	
	Mother	Father
1. a) My mother seldom says nice things about me.	4.44	
b) My father seldom says nice things about me.		4.12
2. a) I am an important person in my mother's eyes.	4.22	
b) I am an important person in my father's eyes.		4.54
3. a) My mother often acts as if she doesn't care about me.	4.50	
b) My father often acts as if he doesn't care about me.		4.20
4. a) My mother enjoys spending time with me.	4.32	
b) My father enjoys spending time with me.		4.00
5. a) My mother expresses her warmth and affection for me.	4.36	
b) My father expresses his warmth and affection for me.		4.06
6. a) My mother is easy for me to talk to.	4.28	
b) My father is easy for me to talk to.		3.80
7. a) I am tense and uneasy when my mother and I are together.	4.30	
b) I am tense and uneasy when my father and I are together.		4.00
8. a) I feel that my mother finds fault with me more often than I deserve.	4.12	
b) I feel that my father finds fault with me more often than I deserve.		4.06
9. a) My mother takes an active interest in my affairs.	4.30	
b) My father takes an active interest in my affairs.		4.00
10. a) I feel very close to my mother.	4.50	
b) I feel very close to my father.		4.04
11. a) My mother does not understand me.	4.20	
b) My father does not understand me.		3.90
12. a) My mother believes in me.	4.50	
b) My father believes in me.		4.08
13. a) I don't feel that my mother enjoys being with me.	4.45	
b) I don't feel that my father enjoys being with me.		4.20
14. a) My mother doesn't really know what kind of person I am.	4.25	
b) My father doesn't really know what kind of person I am.		4.00

Items (N = 50)	Means	
	Mother	Father
15. a) My mother is a warm and caring individual.	4.40	
b) My father is a warm and caring individual.		4.02
16. a) My mother does not feel that I am important and interesting.	4.36	
b) My father does not feel that I am important and interesting.		4.12
17. a) My mother is very interested in those things that concern me.	4.29	
b) My father is very interested in those things that concern me.		3.90
18. a) My mother is often critical of me and nothing I do ever seems to please her.	4.42	
b) My father is often critical of me and nothing I do ever seems to please him.		3.40
19. a) My mother seldom shows me any affection	4.35	
b) My father seldom shows me any affection.		4.00
20. a) My mother consoles me and helps me when I am unhappy or in trouble.	4.40	
b) My father consoles me and helps me when I am unhappy or in trouble.		3.95
21. a) My mother is generally cold and removed when I am with her	4.56	
b) My father is generally cold and removed when I am with		4.30
22. a) I received a lot of affirmation from my mother.	4.00	
b) I received a lot of affirmation from my father.		3.70
23. a) My mother is very understanding and sympathetic.	4.24	
b) My father is very understanding and sympathetic.		3.85
24. a) My mother does not really care much what happens to me.	4.60	
b) My father does not really care much what happens to me.		4.33

APPENDIX H

TABLE 4. MARITAL COMPARISON LEVEL INDEX

Marital Comparison Level Index (MCLI)

Items (N = 50)	Means
1. The amount of companionship you experience	5.73
2. The amount your partner is trusting of you	5.92
3. The amount of sexual activity that you experience	4.92
4. The amount of confiding that occurs between you and your spouse	5.48
5. The amount of conflict over daily decisions that exists	5.23
6. The amount of time you spend together	5.40
7. The amount of affection your partner displays	5.56
8. The amount of responsibility for household tasks is shared	5.27
9. The amount your partner is willing to listen to you	5.65
10. The amount of relationship equality you experience	5.71
11. The amount of conflict over money you experience	5.25
12. The amount of compatibility that you experience	5.75
13. The amount of conflict over the use of leisure time that you experience	5.00
14. The amount of disagreement over friends that you experience	5.48
15. The amount of interest in sex your partner expresses	5.17
16. The fairness with which money is spent	5.52
17. The amount of criticism your partner expresses	5.33
18. The amount of mutual respect you experience	5.80
19. The degree to which your interpersonal communications are effective	5.52
20. The amount of love you experience	5.96
21. The degree to which your needs are met	5.85
22. The amount of freedom you experience in pursuing other friendships	5.88
23. The amount of responsibility your partner accepts for household chores	5.58
24. The amount that you and your partner discuss sex	5.35
25. The amount of privacy you experience	5.35
26. The amount to which your spouse supports your choice of an occupation	6.00
27. The amount to which you and your spouse agree on your life-style	6.00
28. The amount to which you and your spouse agree on the number of children to have	6.06
29. The degree of physical attractiveness of your partner	5.73
30. The amount of arguing over petty issues that you experience	5.33
31. The amount of jealousy your partner expresses	5.52
32. The amount of commitment you experience from your spouse	5.98

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