

자녀 양육 방식에 대한 청소년과 어머니의 지각 차이와 청소년의 적응

Adolescent-Mother Discrepancies in Perceptions of Parenting And Adolescent Adjustment

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참고문헌

<Abstract>

이 연구에서는 어머니의 자녀 양육 행동에 대한 청소년과 어머니간의 지각 차이와 청소년의 적응을 연관시켜 고찰하였다. 자료 수집은 질문지를 통해 이루어졌으며, 참여자들은 미국 동부 소도시에 거주하는 82 명의 9 학년 남녀 학생과 어머니들이었다. 자료 분석 결과, 평균적으로는 어머니들이 청소년 자녀들보다 자신의 자녀 양육 행동을 더 긍정적으로 지각했다. 청소년의 적응을 어머니와의 지각 차이에 따라 살펴 본 결과, 어머니의 양육 행동을 어머니 보다 긍정적으로 지각하는 청소년들이 어머니 보다 부정적으로 지각하는 청소년 보다 문제 행동을 하는 경향이 낮았으며, 자신감은 높았다. 또한, 어머니의 양육 행동을 어머니 보다 긍정적으로 지각하는 청소년들이 그렇지 못한 청소년들에 비해 어머니와 원활한 의사소통을 하는 것으로 나타났다. 이 연구의 결과들은 청소년과 어머니 간의 지각 차이가 측정 상의 문제만이 아닌 청소년 발달과 연관있는 요인임을 지적한다. 그리고, 지각 차이를 연구할 때는 그 차이의 크기 뿐만 아니라 청소년과 어머니 중 어느 편의 지각이 더 부정적인지도 고려해야 한다는 점을 지적한다.

주제어(Key Words): Parenting(자녀 양육 행동), Perceptual Discrepancies(지각 차이), Adolescent Adjustment(청소년의 적응), Adolescent-Parent Communication(청소년과 부모간의 의사소통)

I. Introduction

Adolescents and their parents tend to have different perceptions of what is happening in their relationships. Previous research has found a low level of agreement between adolescent and parent reports concerning their family characteristics and each other's behavior (e.g., Carlson, Cooper, & Spradling, 1991; Demo, Small, & Savin-Williams, 1987; Feldman, Wentzel, & Gehring, 1989; Noller & Callan, 1986; Tein, Roosa, & Michaels, 1994). Studies examining adolescent-parent relationships or parenting during adolescence have shown that family characteristics and parenting behavior are rated more favorably by parents than by their adolescent children. For example, parents describe their relationships with their adolescent children as being more affectionate and supportive than their adolescents do (Ohannessian, Lerner, Lerner, & von Eye, 1995; Welsh, Galliher, & Powers, 1998), and perceive themselves as more responsive and demanding toward their adolescents than the adolescents reported their parents to be (Gonzales, Cauce, & Mason, 1996; Paulson, Hill, & Holmbeck, 1991; Paulson, 1994; Schwarz, Barton-Henry, & Pruzinsky, 1985). Despite the discrepancies described above, most research examining the relationship between parenting and adolescent development has used a single perspective to measure parenting, through either parental reports or adolescent reports, without paying much attention to the perceptual discrepancies between parents and adolescents. However, perceptual discrepancies between parents and adolescents concerning parenting could be an indication that adolescents and their parents are not able to communicate clearly and openly with each other

or that the parenting is not effective in socializing adolescent children. Examining the perceptual discrepancies will further the understanding of parenting process and contribute to the literature on adolescent development in relation to parenting and the quality of relationship with parents. To better understand the implications for adolescent development of these discrepancies between parents and adolescents concerning their perceptions of parenting, the present study examined the links between perceptual discrepancies and indicators of adolescent adjustment.

There have been various views of the perceptual differences between parents and adolescents. Some researchers have treated the discrepancies as a measurement issue (e.g., Schwarz, Barton-Henry, & Pruzinsky, 1985) and have attempted to deal with the issue by, for example, aggregating scores across multiple reporters to create a single report representing each family. Although methodological approaches may improve the reliability of the measure, they disregard the possible psychological implications of perceptual discrepancies by blurring the differences in the perspectives of parents and adolescents.

Alternative approaches to perceptual discrepancies focus more on the psychological implications than on the methodological aspects of the phenomenon. Collins (1995) views the perceptual discrepancies between adolescents and parents as an impetus to the adjustment process for adolescent-parent relationships in response to adolescents' changing needs. According to this view, discrepant perceptions are likely to worsen the conflict between parents and adolescents, helping them to realize that the relationship needs to be changed. On the other hand, some family

researchers have viewed perceptual discrepancies among family members concerning the family environment as a sign of dysfunction (Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1983; Reiss, 1981) linked to maladjustment in children.

There have been only a few empirical studies examining the implications of perceptual discrepancies between parents and adolescents (e.g., Carlson et al, 1990; Feinberg, Howe, Reiss, & Hetherington, 2000; Ohannessian, Lerner, Lerner, & von Eye, 1995, 2000; Paikoff, Carlton-Ford, & Brooks-Gunn, 1993). These studies examined associations between adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies and indicators of adolescent adjustment such as depressive symptoms and antisocial behavior. However, the findings of these studies have not been consistent as to whether perceptual discrepancies should be viewed as part of a relationship adjustment process during adolescence or as a sign of unhealthy family relationships. The relationships between adolescent-parent discrepancies in perceptions of the family environment and adolescent adjustment varied depending on the domain of perceptual discrepancies and indicators of adolescent adjustment, and the gender of both parents and adolescents.

Carlson et al. (1991) found significant correlations between adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies concerning overall family environment and adolescents' self-competence¹. They also found that adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies in adolescent-parent dyadic relationships to be related to adolescents' self-competence. However, the relationships varied depending on the domain of the discrepancy and the gender of the family members. Perceptual discrepancies concerning

family cohesion were positively related to self-competence in boys, but negatively related to self-competence in girls. In contrast, perceptual differences over conflict were related to lower self-competence for both boys and girls. As for perceptions of dyadic relationships, discrepancies between adolescents' and fathers' perceptions of their relationships were positively related to adolescent self-competence, whereas discrepancies between adolescents and their mothers were negatively related to adolescent self-competence.

On the same note, Ohannessian et al. (2000) used both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses to determine whether adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies concerning family functioning, that is, family cohesion, adaptability, and adjustment, were related to adolescent self-competence. In the cross-sectional analysis, discrepancies between mothers and girls and between fathers and girls in perceptions of family adjustment were negatively related to adolescent self-competence. In contrast to the results for girls, discrepancies between parents and boys were not correlated with the boys' self-competence. The results of the longitudinal analysis were somewhat different from those of the cross-sectional analysis. Discrepancies in perceptions of family functioning between mothers and girls, fathers and girls, and mothers and boys all predicted lower self-competence in the adolescents. However, similar to Carlson et al. (1991), discrepancies in perceptions of family adjustment between boys and fathers were positively related to self-competence in boys.

1) Self-competence, in this study, is defined as perception of one's capability of producing success or desired results.

Feinberg, Howe, Reiss, and Hetherington (2000) examined adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies concerning parenting in relation to antisocial behavior and depressive symptoms among adolescents. Overall, they found that perceptual discrepancies concerning positive parenting behavior were positively and perceptual discrepancies concerning negative parenting behavior were negatively related to adolescent antisocial behavior. However, the findings differed according to the gender of both parents and adolescents. Higher perceptual discrepancies concerning maternal warmth were related to higher levels of antisocial behavior among adolescents, whereas perceptual discrepancies concerning paternal warmth were not related to adolescents' antisocial behavior. Perceptual discrepancies concerning mothers' negativity were related to lower levels of antisocial behavior and lower levels of depressive symptoms in girls but were related to maladjustment in boys. These results suggest that discrepancies between parents' and adolescents' perceptions of parenting may have different effects on adolescent development depending on the gender of both the parent and the adolescent.

These few studies examining the association between adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies concerning the family environment and adolescent adjustment have provided mixed findings. Some of the findings suggest that perceptual discrepancies are not necessarily a sign of family dysfunction and may instead be linked to positive adolescent adjustment. Other findings suggest that perceptual discrepancies between parents and adolescents are related to higher levels of adolescent maladjustment. The inconsistency in

the findings may be partially due to the fact that the direction of the discrepancy was not taken into consideration. Most of the studies examining the link between adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies and adolescent adjustment have used absolute difference scores, which are not capable of making distinctions between different types of discrepancies. However, the relationship between the perceptual discrepancies and adolescent adjustment may vary depending on the direction of the discrepancy. For example, a group of adolescents whose reports on their parents are more positive than their parents' reports on themselves may be different from a group of adolescents whose reports on their parents are less positive than their parents' reports on themselves. To examine this possible difference, this study made a distinction between two types of perceptual discrepancies, and classified mother-adolescent dyads into three groups: (1) a group consisting of dyads with little discrepancy in perception (same group), (2) a group consisting of dyads with discrepancies due to the mothers having higher scores (mother-higher group), and (3) a group consisting of dyads with discrepancies due to adolescents having higher scores (adolescent-higher group). Examining the different types of discrepancy may provide additional information regarding the meanings of perceptual discrepancies and their implications for adolescent development.

Research on adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies has focused on overall family environment and only a few studies have examined the discrepancies between parents' and adolescents' perceptions of parenting. Moreover, although the important influence of parenting on

adolescent development has been established (e.g., Barnes & Farrell, 1992; Baumrind, 1991; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994), most research has used a single perspective to measure parenting. Since differences in the perceptions of parenting of parents and adolescents may indicate how effectively parenting effort is transmitted to adolescents, as suggested by Tein et al. (1997), studies linking discrepancies in parenting perceptions and adolescent adjustment would contribute to our understanding of parenting processes. In the present study, discrepancies in perceptions of two dimensions of parenting, responsiveness and demandingness, were examined.

In previous studies examining the link between perceptual discrepancies and adolescent adjustment, both positive and negative indicators of adolescent adjustment (e.g., self-competence and antisocial behavior) were used. However, other problem behaviors, such as substance use, physical fighting, and vandalism, which have been found to be related to parenting during adolescence, were not linked to perceptual discrepancies. Because the present study focuses on perceptual discrepancies concerning parenting, it seems reasonable to examine these indicators of adolescent adjustment.

There has been some discussion in the literature on factors contributing to discrepancies in parents' and adolescents' perceptions of family characteristics and parenting. For example, Tein et al. (1994) found that the demographic characteristics of parents and children were related to agreement between parents and children concerning parental behaviors. Another explanation for the perceptual differences between parents and adolescents may be found in the quality of communication. According

to Barnes and Olson (1985), open communication is a dimension of family functioning that enables the family to move along the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability to better meet its members' needs. If adolescents' feelings and needs are not well communicated to their parents, the parents will not be able to adjust their parenting to better serve their adolescents. This may affect how adolescents behave and how they feel about themselves. Accordingly, this study examined possible differences between the discrepancy groups in the quality of adolescent-parent communication.

In previous studies, findings on the association between the perceptual differences and adolescent adjustment vary by gender of both parents and adolescents. However, because no clear pattern of gender differences has been found, there is a need for more research on gender differences. This study examined whether the links between perceptual discrepancies and adolescent adjustment are different for boys and girls. It would have been ideal to examine whether the link between perceptual discrepancies concerning parenting and adolescent adjustment differs by the gender of the parent. However, because no data were available for fathers, this was not possible.

On the basis of the current literature, this study addressed the following research questions.

- Question 1: Are there differences between mothers and adolescents in their perceptions of mothers' responsiveness?
- Question 2: Are there differences between mothers and adolescents in their perceptions of mothers' demandingness?
- Question 3: Are the levels of adolescents' adjustment indicators (substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence)

different by the responsiveness discrepancy group and adolescents' gender?

Question 4: Are the levels of adolescents' adjustment indicators (substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence) different by the demandingness discrepancy group and adolescents' gender?

Question 5: Is the mean level of the quality of communication with mother different by the responsiveness discrepancy group and adolescents' gender?

Question 6: Is the mean level of the quality of communication with mother different by the demandingness discrepancy group and adolescents' gender?

II. Methods

1. Participants

The participants in this study were eighty-two adolescents (forty-one boys and forty-one girls) in the ninth grade and their mothers, from a semi-rural mid-Atlantic community in the United States of America. Of the eighty-two adolescents whose questionnaires were used for the analyses, seventy-eight (95.1 percent) reported that they were white and the rest reported that they were Asian American, Pacific Islanders, or multi-racial. Sixty (73.2 percent) adolescents were living with both biological parents, nine (11 percent) were living with their mothers only, eight (10 percent) were living with their mothers and stepfathers, and the rest were living with their fathers and stepmothers or with foster parents. The ages of the participating adolescents ranged from 14.5 to 16.6, and the mean

was 15.3.

In order to check if the participating adolescents and mothers with different demographic backgrounds are comparable in terms of the characteristics examined in this study (adolescents' perceptions of maternal responsiveness and demandingness, mothers' perceptions of their own responsiveness and demandingness, adolescent-mother discrepancies in their perceptions of maternal responsiveness and demandingness, substance use, deviant behavior, self-competence, and quality of communication), one-way ANOVA was conducted for these variables with age, race, parents' marital status, and family structure (adults the adolescents live with) as the independent variables. The results indicated that the adolescents are not significantly different in the characteristics examined in this study by their age, race, parents' marital status, and family structure, and confirmed the comparability of the demographic subgroups in the sample.

2. Procedure

One hundred and forty adolescents in the ninth grade and their parents were sent letters explaining the study and asking for their participation. One hundred and five adolescents and their parents were agreed to participate by responding to the letters. Although all of the 105 adolescents participated in the study, only 57 fathers and 92 mothers did. Due to the low response rate among the fathers, their questionnaires were not used in this study. Of the 92 sets of the surveys from the adolescents and their mothers, only 82 sets were used in the analysis because ten had to be excluded from the

analysis due to incomplete answers.

Participating adolescents completed the questionnaires in a group setting during non-academic periods in school. The questionnaires took approximately thirty-five minutes to complete, and students who were absent on the day of administration or received parental permission after the day of administration were mailed questionnaires to complete at home and return. Mothers completed their questionnaires at home and returned them through the mail. The questionnaire distribution and collection took about two month, from March 5th to April 28th in 1999 .

3. Measures

The measures used in this study were mothers' parenting, adolescent-mother communication, and adolescent adjustment. Mothers' parenting was measured through responsiveness and demandingness dimensions, and both adolescents' and mothers' responses were used in this study. Adolescent adjustment consisted of both negative and positive indicators, including substance use, deviant behaviors, and self-competence; these were measured by the adolescents' self-reports.

1) Mothers' Responsiveness

Mothers' responsiveness was measured using the responsiveness subscale of the Parenting Style Inventory II (Darling & Toyokawa, 1997). Adolescents were asked to respond to five questions about their mothers ($M = 3.90$; $SD = 0.76$; $\alpha = .78$) and mothers were asked to respond to the same questions about themselves ($M = 4.48$; $SD = 0.44$; $\alpha = .64$). The responsiveness subscale consisted of five items that were rated on a five-

point scale; for example, "My mother doesn't really like me to tell her my troubles (I don't really like my child to tell me his/her troubles)," and "My mother hardly ever praises me for doing well (I hardly ever praise my child for doing well)." Responses ranged from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree." The scores were averaged to create a single scale score. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for mothers' self-perceived responsiveness was relatively low. The alpha coefficient for the same scale has been found to be ranging from .78 to .83 in other samples. The relatively low alpha coefficient yielded for mothers' responsiveness in this study may be due to some characteristics of the sample used for this study but it seems to suggest further examination of the scale in future research.

2) Mothers' Demandingness

Mothers' demandingness was measured using the demandingness subscale of the same parenting inventory. Mothers ($M = 3.91$; $SD = 0.48$; $\alpha = .62$) and adolescents ($M = 3.71$; $SD = 0.63$; $\alpha = .61$) responded to five questions in the same way as for the responsiveness measure. The demandingness subscale consisted of five items that were rated on a five-point scale; for example, "My mother really expects me to follow family rules (I really expect my child to follow family rules)," and "If I don't behave myself, my mother will punish me (If my child doesn't behave, I punish him/her)." Responses ranged from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree." The scores were averaged to create a single scale score. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for mothers' demandingness perceived by adolescents and mothers were relatively low. The alpha coefficient for the same

scale has been reported to be ranging from .73 to .81 in other samples. The relatively low alpha coefficients for mothers' demandingness in this study may be due to some characteristics of the sample used for this study but it seems to suggest further examination of the scale in future research.

3) Deviant Behavior

Deviant behavior was assessed using two items. Adolescents were asked how often in the past thirty days they had "damaged property for fun," and "gotten into a physical fight." Responses ranged from 0 = "never" to 3 = "3 times or more." Items were averaged to create a single scale score ($M = 1.27$; $SD = 0.65$; $\alpha = .85$).

4) Substance Use

Substance use was assessed using three items. Adolescents were asked how often in the past thirty days they had "smoked cigarettes," "had a drink of alcohol," and "had five or more drinks in a row." Responses ranged from 0 = "never" to 3 = "3 times or more." Items were averaged to create a single scale score ($M = 1.62$; $SD = 0.96$; $\alpha = .85$).

5) Adolescent Self-Competence

Adolescents' self-competence was measured using a modification of the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988). Harter's Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents was developed to measure adolescents' perceived competence, which is a dimension of self-perception, and is composed of nine subscales: Academic Competence, Athletic Competence, Social Acceptance, Physical Appearance, Job Competence, Close Friendship, Romantic Appeal, Behavioral Conduct, and Global Self-Worth. In this

study, 34 items measuring Academic Competence, Social Acceptance, Physical Appearance, Close Friendship, Romantic Appeal, Behavioral Conduct, and Global Self-Worth were used. This scale included items such as "I like the way I'm leading my life," "I am often disappointed with myself," and "I am kind of hard to like." rated on a four-point scale. Responses ranged from 1 = "not at all like me" to 4 = "really like me." The items were averaged to create a single scale score ($M = 2.93$; $SD = 0.40$; $\alpha = .87$).

6) Quality of Communication with Mother

Adolescents completed the Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale (PACS) (Barnes & Olson, 1982), consisting of ten items measuring openness of communication and ten items measuring problem communication. This scale included items such as "I can discuss my beliefs with my mother without feeling restrained or embarrassed," and "I am careful about what I say to my mother." Responses ranged from 1 = "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Items measuring problem communication were re-coded so that higher scores represented fewer problems with communication. The twenty items were averaged to create a single scale score ($M = 3.26$; $SD = 0.54$; $\alpha = .93$).

7) Discrepancies in the Perceptions of Parenting between Mothers and Adolescents

Discrepancy scores for adolescents' and mothers' perceptions of mothers' responsiveness ($M = -0.52$; $SD = 0.68$) and demandingness ($M = -0.18$; $SD = 0.64$) were computed by subtracting mother-reported scores from adolescent-reported scores. Positive scores indicated that the adolescent perceived the mother to be more responsive or

demanding than the mother did, whereas negative scores indicated that the adolescent perceived the mother to be less responsive or demanding than the mother did. The size of the discrepancy scores indicated the extent to which adolescents' perceptions diverged from their mothers'.

8) Perceptual discrepancy groups

The participating adolescents and mothers were classified into three groups depending on the direction and extent of the mother-adolescent perceptual discrepancies. Participants with discrepancy scores within one standard deviation from zero were classified into the "same" group. Because the distributions of difference scores were negatively skewed, participants whose discrepancy scores were between 0.75 standard deviation below zero and 0.25 standard deviation above zero, rather than between 0.5 standard deviation below and above zero, were classified into the "same" group. Then participants whose difference scores were higher than 0.75 SD were placed in the "adolescent-higher" group, and those with difference scores lower than 0.25 SD were placed in the "mother-higher" group.

4. Data Analysis

In order to examine if there are mean level differences between mothers' and adolescents' perceptions of maternal responsiveness and demandingness (Questions 1 and 2), paired sample t-tests were conducted. Paired sample t-tests were used because the mothers' and the adolescents' perceptions of maternal responsiveness and demandingness were related variables.

In order to examine if the mean levels of

adolescents' adjustment indicators (substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence) are different by the responsiveness discrepancy group and adolescents' gender (Question 3), a 3 (responsiveness discrepancy group) X 2 (gender) two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted for each of the adjustment indicators. Tukey test was performed as a post hoc test for the mean level differences in the substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence by the responsiveness discrepancy group.

In order to examine if the mean levels of adolescents' adjustment indicators (substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence) are different by the demandingness discrepancy group and adolescents' gender (Question 4), a 3 (demandingness discrepancy group) X 2 (gender) two-way ANOVA was conducted for each of the adjustment indicators. Tukey test was performed as a post hoc test for the mean level differences in the substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence by the demandingness discrepancy group.

In order to examine if the mean level of the quality of communication with mother is different by the responsiveness group and adolescents' gender (Question 5), a 3 (responsiveness discrepancy group) X 2 (gender) two-way ANOVA was conducted. Tukey test was performed as a post hoc test for the mean level differences in the quality of communication with mother by the responsiveness discrepancy group.

In order to examine if the mean level of the quality of communication with mother is different by the demandingness discrepancy group and adolescents' gender (Question 6), a 3 (demandingness discrepancy group) X 2 (gender) two-way ANOVA was conducted. Tukey test was

performed as a post hoc test for the mean level differences in the quality of communication with mother by the demandingness discrepancy group.

III. Results

1. Mother-Adolescent Perceptual Discrepancies in Parenting

Paired-samples t-tests were conducted to examine whether there were differences between mothers and adolescents in their perceptions of mothers' responsiveness and demandingness. As predicted, adolescents ($M = 3.90$; $SD = .76$ for responsiveness, $M = 3.67$; $SD = .54$ for demandingness) perceived their mothers as less responsive and less demanding than the mothers ($M = 4.48$; $SD = .44$ for responsiveness, $M = 3.93$; $SD = .40$ for demandingness) perceived themselves to be ($t = -6.93$, $p < .001$ for responsiveness, and $t = -3.66$, $p < .001$ for demandingness).

2. Adolescents' Adjustment by Discrepancy Group and Gender

A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for each of the adjustment indicators, with the discrepancy groups and adolescents' gender as the independent variables. As shown in Table 1, adolescents in the three responsiveness discrepancy groups were significantly different in their levels of substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence. A main effect for gender was significant only for deviant behavior. This revealed that boys ($M = 1.44$; $SD = .74$) are more likely to be involved in deviant behavior than are girls ($M =$

<Table 1> ANOVA Results for Indicators of Adolescent Adjustment as a Function of Responsiveness Perceptual Discrepancy Group and Adolescent Gender

Source	df	MS	F
Substance Use			
Discrepancy Group	2	3.23	4.04*
Gender	1	1.61	2.02
Group \times Gender	2	1.96	2.46
Error	76	0.80	
Deviant Behavior			
Discrepancy Group	2	1.06	3.86*
Gender	1	1.30	4.72*
Group \times Gender	2	0.26	0.94
Error	75	0.27	
Self-Competence			
Discrepancy Group	2	0.53	3.71*
Gender	1	0.05	0.37
Group \times Gender	2	0.07	0.47
Error	75	0.14	

* $p < .05$.

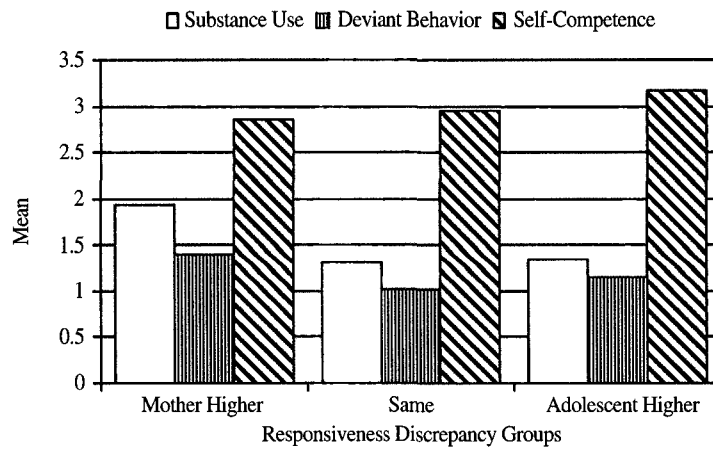
1.11; $SD = .52$). Responsiveness discrepancy group \times gender interaction was not significant for any of the adolescent adjustment indicators.

As presented in Table 2, results of the post hoc test using the Tukey test indicated that those adolescents whose reports on maternal responsiveness were similar to those of their mothers reported significantly lower levels of substance use and deviant behavior than adolescents whose reports on maternal responsiveness were lower than those of their mothers. Also, adolescents whose reports of maternal responsiveness were higher than those of their mothers reported significantly higher levels of self-competence than adolescents whose reports were lower than those of their mothers. Means for substance use, deviant behavior, and self-competence for the three responsiveness discrepancy groups are shown in <Figure 1>.

<Table 2> Means, Standard Deviations, and the Tukey test results for the Adolescent Adjustment Indicators by the Responsiveness Discrepancy Group and the Demandingness Discrepancy Group

	Responsiveness Discrepancy Group					
	Mother Higher(n = 38)		Same(n = 26)		Adolescent Higher(n = 16)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Substance Use	1.93 _a	1.09	1.31 _b	.67	1.35 _{a,b}	.82
Deviant Behavior	1.41 _a	.72	1.02 _b	.10	1.16 _{a,b}	.44
Self-Competence	2.86 _a	.38	2.96 _{a,b}	.33	3.17 _b	.42

Note. Means in the same row that do not share subscripts differ at $p < .05$ in the Tukey test.



<Fig. 1> Means for Adolescent Adjustment Indicators for the Responsiveness Discrepancy Groups

In contrast to the results for responsiveness, the three maternal demandingness discrepancy groups did not turn out to be significantly different for any of the adolescent adjustment indicators.

3. Quality of Communication by Discrepancy Group and Gender

A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for adolescent-reported quality of communication, with discrepancy groups concerning mothers' responsiveness and demandingness and adolescents' gender as the

independent variables. As shown in Table 3, adolescents in the different responsiveness and demandingness discrepancy groups were significantly different in their levels of quality of communication with their mothers. As presented in Table 4, post hoc tests using the Tukey test indicated that adolescents whose reports of maternal responsiveness were higher than or similar to those of their mothers reported significantly better communication with their mothers than adolescents whose reports were lower than those of their mothers. Similarly, adolescents whose reports on maternal

<Table 3> ANOVA Results for Adolescent Reports of Communication with their Mothers as a Function of Discrepancy Groups and Adolescent Gender

Source	df	MS	F
Responsiveness Discrepancy Group	2	2.31	10.00***
Gender	1	0.10	0.41
Group x Gender	2	0.04	0.18
Error	76	0.23	
Demandingness Discrepancy Group	2	0.85	3.16*
Gender	1	0.00	0.01
Group x Gender	2	0.07	0.27
Error	76	0.27	

*** p < .001. * p < .05.

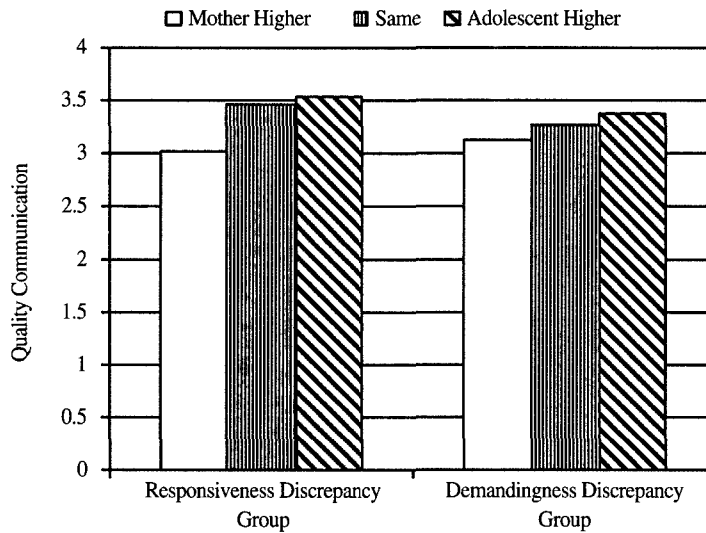
demandingness were higher than those of their mothers reported better communication than adolescents whose reports of maternal demandingness were lower than their mothers' reports. Gender did not make a significant difference in the association between discrepancy type for the two parenting dimensions and quality of communication. Means of adolescent-reported quality of communication with their mothers for the discrepancy groups are shown in <Figure 2>.

In summary, the results indicate that mothers

<Table 4> Means, Standard Deviations, and the Tukey test results for the Quality of Communication by the Responsiveness Discrepancy Group and the Demandingness Discrepancy Group

Variable	Responsiveness Discrepancy Group						Demandingness Discrepancy Group					
	Mother Higher (n = 38)		Same (n = 26)		Adolescent Higher (n = 16)		Mother Higher (n = 38)		Same (n = 26)		Adolescent Higher (n = 16)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Quality of Communication	3.02 _a	.43	3.47 _b	.50	3.54 _b	.53	3.08 _a	.50	3.33 _{a,b}	.47	3.45 _b	.57

Note. Means in the same row, within each discrepancy group classification, that do not share subscripts differ at p < .05 in the Tukey test.



<Fig. 2> Means for Adolescent Reports of Quality of Communication with their Mothers by Responsiveness and Demandingness Discrepancy Group

tend to perceive themselves to be more responsive and demanding than their adolescents perceive them to be. It was also found that adolescents whose reports on maternal responsiveness were lower than their mothers' reports reported higher levels of substance use and deviant behavior and lower levels of self-competence than adolescents whose reports on maternal responsiveness were higher than their mothers' reports. No gender differences were found in the association between mother-adolescent perceptual discrepancies concerning responsiveness and demandingness and indicators of adolescent adjustment. As for the differences in quality of communication among the discrepancy groups, adolescents who perceived their mothers as more responsive and demanding than their mothers perceived themselves to be reported significantly more positive communication with their mothers.

IV. Discussion

As expected, results of this study indicate that adolescents perceive their mothers less positively than their mothers perceive themselves. The finding that mothers tend to have more positive perceptions of their parenting than their adolescent children seems to support the generational stake hypothesis (Bengtson & Kuypers, 1971; Noller, 1994). This hypothesis suggests that parents and adolescents have different interests in their relationship because they are at different stages of development, and that these differences lead them to view their relationship differently. That is, because it is important for the parent generation to ensure that traditions and values are passed on to

the next generation, parents tend to have positive views about themselves as parents. On the other hand, because it is important for adolescents to develop as independent individuals, they tend to view their parents less positively. However, there is also a possibility that mothers are simply not comfortable reporting that they are less responsive and demanding than they think they should be. Some mothers may have reported themselves to be the way they think they are supposed to be rather than the way they actually perceive themselves.

The results indicate, as well, that the discrepancies between parents and adolescents in their perceptions of mothers' responsiveness are related to adolescent adjustment. The results of the ANOVA examining differences among the responsiveness discrepancy groups in levels of substance use and deviance revealed that adolescents whose perceptions of their mothers were more negative than their mothers' self-perceptions were more likely to be involved in problem behaviors than were adolescents whose perceptions of their mothers were similar to their mothers' self-perceptions. This is in line with previous research that found adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies over mothers' warmth to be positively related to levels of adolescent antisocial behavior (Feinberg et al., 2000).

As with the results for substance use and deviant behavior, adolescents in the mother-higher group reported significantly lower self-competence than adolescents in the adolescent-higher group. This finding shows that adolescents whose perceptions of their mothers' responsiveness are more negative than their mothers' are worse off than adolescents whose perceptions of their mothers' responsiveness are similar to or more

positive than their mothers' self-perceptions. It may be that mothers whose reports of their responsiveness were lower than those of their adolescents set higher standards for themselves as parents and were therefore more critical of their own parenting. The adolescents quite likely sense their mothers' efforts and are better adjusted.

The different levels of adolescent adjustment found among the responsiveness discrepancy groups support the idea that perceptual discrepancies between parents and adolescents should not be viewed as just a measurement issue but rather as an element of the adolescent-parent relationship. Furthermore, the results of the comparisons between the three responsiveness discrepancy groups indicate that when there are discrepancies in perceived maternal responsiveness between mother and adolescent, the adolescent is more likely to have positive self-concept if the adolescent views the mother as more responsive than mother sees herself. The differences found between the mother-higher and adolescent-higher groups suggest that not only the extent to which mothers' and adolescents' perceptions of parenting differ from each other but also the direction of the discrepancy needs to be taken into consideration in studies examining perceptual discrepancies.

Discrepancies between mothers' and adolescents' perceptions of demandingness were not related to the adolescents adjustment indicators. As with the discrepancies in perceptions of responsiveness, mothers generally reported higher levels of demandingness than did adolescents. However, the discrepancies were much smaller for demandingness. It is interesting to note that the demandingness discrepancy

groups did not differ in terms of levels of substance use and deviant behavior. Because demandingness assesses the extent to which mothers set standards for their adolescents to behave maturely and properly, it was expected that adolescents who reported lower levels of demandingness than their mothers would be involved more in problem behaviors because the mothers' messages were not well conveyed to their children. However, those expected differences were not found. This may be because there were only small discrepancies between mothers and adolescents in the perceptions of mothers' demandingness. This finding suggests that in terms of adolescent adjustment, perceptual discrepancies concerning demandingness are less important than those concerning responsiveness.

To find a possible explanation for why some adolescents are more negative about their mothers' parenting and for why the discrepancies are related to adolescent adjustment, mean differences in the quality of communication were examined among the discrepancy groups. As expected, it was found that adolescents whose perceptions of their mothers were more negative than their mothers' self-perceptions also reported lower quality communication with their mothers. This finding suggests that the extent to which adolescents and their mothers communicate openly and clearly can make a difference in how adolescents perceive their mothers' parenting and affect adolescent adjustment. It may be that adolescents who are not able to communicate openly with their mothers do not feel supported or cared for by their mothers because their feelings and needs are not clearly transmitted to the latter. Adolescents who feel less supported by their mothers may also feel less

worthwhile and less happy with themselves. Similarly, in mother-adolescent dyads with less open communication, the mothers may not be able to adjust their parenting to match their children's needs and feelings.

No significant gender difference was found in the relationships between perceptual discrepancies concerning mothers' responsiveness and adolescent adjustment indicators. This result is consistent with previous research findings. For example, Feinberg et al. (2000) found that the relationship between adolescent-mother perceptual discrepancies concerning mothers' warmth and adolescents' antisocial behavior was negative for both boys and girls. Likewise, Carlson et al. (1991) failed to find any difference between boys and girls in the relationship between adolescent-mother perceptual discrepancies concerning family functioning and adolescents' self-competence. However, it is possible that this study's failure to find any significant gender difference may be due to statistical power loss. According to Cohen (1988), the ANOVA approach reduces the statistical power to find existing relationships between variables. ANOVA was useful in this study to examine whether the direction of perceptual difference was related to adolescent adjustment. However, this analytical approach may have limited statistical power.

In summary, the results of this study support the idea that perceptual discrepancies between mothers and adolescents concerning parenting should be viewed as a psychological characteristic of mother-adolescent relationships. The results also suggest that the direction of the discrepancy between mothers and adolescents is as important to adolescent adjustment as the degree of

discrepancy, and that open communication between adolescents and their mothers is related to positive perceptions of mothers' parenting on the part of adolescents.

Although these findings contribute to the current literature, the study is not without limitations. Because cross-sectional data were used, the relationships between the variables found in this study cannot be interpreted as causal. For example, differences in quality of communication among the discrepancy groups cannot be used as evidence that less than adequate mother-adolescent communication caused the perceptual discrepancies. Studies using longitudinal data are needed to determine causal relationships.

The external validity of this study is also limited because the sample was composed mostly of white adolescents from middle class families. The findings cannot be generalized to adolescents with other demographic backgrounds. Future research using more demographically diverse samples is needed.

Another limitation of this study is that there is a possibility that the sample used for this study could be biased because only a small number of adolescents and mothers participated and they were recruited through the mail. Adolescents and mothers who were asked to participate in the study but decided not to participate might have different characteristics that are not shared by the participating adolescents and mothers.

In the present study, quality of communication was examined in relation to perceptual discrepancies between mothers and adolescents. However, there may be other factors in the adolescent-parent relationship that make a difference in perceptual discrepancies. More

research is needed to find additional factors associated with adolescent-parent perceptual discrepancies.

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