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Blair Warren

Amy Nguyen

Ashley Van Dusen

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Social Support and Well-being in College Students

Blair Warren, Amy Nguyen, Ashley Van Dusen

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Amy Hayes

bwarren6@patriots.uttyler.edu

The University of Texas at Tyler

anguyen22@patriots.uttyler.edu

Introduction and Purpose

- Between 1960 and 2016, the percentage of children living in families with two parents decreased from 88 to 69 (Census Bureau Parents, 2016).
- The purpose of the present study was to examine the effects of different types of family structure on a diverse array of outcomes. The researchers defined family structure as whether the individual has lived in a single-parent, two-parent, cohabitant/joint, or adoptive/foster care household for the majority of their life or up until the age of 18.
- The researchers hypothesized that college students who grew up in a two-parent household would have higher academic achievement and fewer deviant behaviors than those in other family structures. There is a direct relationship between academic achievement and deviant behaviors (Fite et al, 2012; Savolainen et. al, 2012).

Method

Participants

- Participants were recruited from the University of Texas at Tyler SONA system, as well as Facebook. The sample consisted of 100 participants. There were 26 men, 73 women, and an individual who preferred not to specify their gender.

Procedure

Results

Breakdown of Family Structures in the Sample

- The majority (78%) of participants in our sample came from two-parent households (See Figure 1).

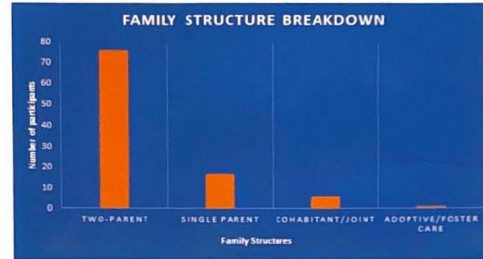


Figure 1. Breakdown of family structures.

- We found that participants' stress levels after their family structure changed to cohabiting/joint was correlated with their level of deviant behavior ($r = -.911, p < 0.05$).
- Further, participants who had the lowest income, the lowest level of

Results Continued

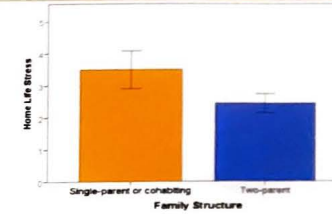


Figure 2. Effects of Family Structure on Home Life Stress.

- Family structure (two-parent versus other) was unrelated to students' GPA or level of deviant behaviors. However, it was related to students' overall stress when they were growing up, $t(98) = 3.3, p < .01$ (See Figure 2).
- The researchers found that, regardless of family structure, there was a significant gender difference in deviant behavior, such that men had significantly more deviant behaviors than women did, $t(94) = 3.05, p < .01$.

Discussion

Our results indicated no significant difference between those