

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASPECTS OF PERSONAL AUTHORITY  
IN THE INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY SYSTEM AND  
INTIMACY BETWEEN MARRIED INDIVIDUALS

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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by John V. Carmack entitled "The Relationship Between Aspects of Personal Authority in the Intergenerational Family System and Intimacy Between Married Individuals." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Family Therapy.

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Lynn, for the encouragement, support, and incredible patience she provided during the twenty years of our marriage. I thank God for you. This is also dedicated to my family of origin, especially my father, whose impact I continue to remember.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## ABSTRACT

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASPECTS OF PERSONAL AUTHORITY IN THE INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY SYSTEM AND INTIMACY BETWEEN MARRIED INDIVIDUALS

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The purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between intergenerational family processes and intimacy between married individuals. Intergenerational family process variables were measured by the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire developed by Bray, Williamson, and Malone. Intimacy between married individuals was measured by the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships inventory developed by Olson and Schaefer.

This project investigated the relationship between individual scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire and individual scores on the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships Inventory. Likewise, this project studied which aspects of personal authority in the intergenerational family system affected intimacy between married individuals.

Correlations were made between the scores on various subscales from both instruments and utilized step-wise regression analysis to determine which aspects of personal authority in the family system predict intimacy between married individuals. Five hypotheses were used. The sample was obtained from appeals to local churches, employees from a private psychiatric hospital, a weekend retreat for men and women, and a civic organization.

The findings indicate that Spousal Intimacy was a significant predictor of intimacy between married individuals. Personal Authority was a significant contributor to Sexual Intimacy. Other aspects of Personal Authority in the Family System which measured intergenerational processes were not significant predictors of intimacy between married individuals. Correlation results were consistent with the regression analysis.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Hypotheses.....	5
Definition of Terms.....	6
Assumptions of the Study.....	10
Delimitations of the Study.....	10
Summary.....	11
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	12
Intergenerational Family Systems Theory.....	12
Personal Authority: A Synthesized Construct...	18
Research and Theory Application.....	22
Intimacy A Multidimensional Construct.....	28
Research and Theory Application.....	34
The Relationship Between Personal Authority and	
Intimacy in Marriage.....	36
Summary.....	41
III. METHODOLOGY.....	42
Subjects.....	42
Protection of Human Rights.....	43
Instruments.....	43
Personal Authority in the Family System	
Questionnaire.....	44

## CHAPTER

Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships.....	48
Data Collection.....	50
Analysis of Data.....	52
Summary.....	52
IV. RESULTS.....	54
Description of Sample.....	55
Findings.....	57
Additional Findings.....	67
Summary.....	68
V. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS.....	70
Discussion of the Findings.....	71
Hypothesis 1.....	71
Hypothesis 2.....	72
Hypothesis 3.....	72
Hypothesis 4.....	74
Hypothesis 5.....	74
Discussion of Additional Findings.....	75
Correlational Matrix.....	75
Demographic Findings.....	76
Conclusions.....	77
Implications.....	78
Recommendations for Future Research.....	80
Summary.....	81
REFERENCES.....	82
APPENDICES.....	90
A. Demographic Data Sheet.....	91
B. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.....	93
C. Letter of Permission to Use the Personal Authority in Family System Questionnaire.....	96

## APPENDICES

D. Letter of Permission to Use the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships.....	98
E. Personal Authority in the Family System.....	100
F. Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships.	102

## LIST OF TABLES

### Table

1. Descriptive Statistics: PAFS-Q and PAIR.....	60
2. Subscale Correlations: PAFS-Q and PAIR.....	61
3. Intercorrelation Matrix among Eight PAFS-Q Subscale Scores ( <u>N</u> =120) .....	62
4. Intercorrelation Matrix among Five PAIRS Subscale Scores ( <u>N</u> =120) .....	62
5. Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables Predicting the PAIRS Emotional Subscale Scores ( <u>N</u> =120) .....	63
6. Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables Predicting the PAIRS Social Subscale Scores ( <u>N</u> =120) .....	64
7. Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables Predicting the PAIRS Sexual Subscale Scores ( <u>N</u> =120) .....	65
8. Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables Predicting the PAIRS Intellectual Subscale Scores ( <u>N</u> =120) .....	66
9. Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables Predicting the PAIRS Recreational Subscale Scores ( <u>N</u> =120) .....	67

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

All individuals are the products of their family of origin and each tends to operate in the world according to the patterns learned from their respective family of origin. Kramer (1985) emphasizes how an individual's relationships interface with family relationships or larger system relationships. Interface involves not only the interaction of two individuals but also the influence of the systems on each member.

Interface has particular application to the concept of intimacy. Due to the intergenerational nature of the concept, some have described intimacy in terms of a family dance (Lerner, 1989; Watanabe-Hammond, 1990). An individuals' current problems with intimacy are not caused by the bad things that one or two family members have done to us. They are part of a much larger, multigenerational picture of events, patterns, and triangles that have come down through many generations. Eventually each generation of couples modifies its original family dances by weaving them together to create the latest dance in an endless lineage of family dances. For the couple's children, there are no careful observations, or dance lessons. The parents's dance

is simply picked up and becomes basic knowledge of how to be in and what to expect from a partner in an intimate relationship (Watanabe-Hammond, 1990).

Williamson (1991) notes how each family faces an intimacy paradox in the context of the intergenerational relationships within the family of origin. He writes, "how one finally resolves this issue of relationship to the members of the family of origin . . . will largely determine how one handles this matter in all intimate relationships to follow in life, most especially in marriage." (p. 4)

Over the past decade, the influence of the family of origin upon a widespread number of variables has drawn considerable attention among researchers. The relationship between the family of origin and the variables studied include: health distress (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987; Fine, 1988; Fine & Hovestadt, 1984; Harvey & Bray, 1991; Harvey, Curry, & Bray, 1991), divorce (Guttmann, 1989; Hepworth, Ryder, & Dryer, 1984), career indecision (Kinnier, Brigman, & Noble, 1990), adjustment in late adolescence (Fleming & Anderson, 1986; Sabatelli & Mazor, 1985; Searight et al., 1991; Yelsma, Yelsma, & Hovestadt, 1991), discovery of meaning in life (Reid & Anderson, 1992), defense mechanisms (Juni, 1992), attachment styles (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Doane, Hill, & Diamond, 1991), sexual abuse



(Carson, Gertz, Donaldson, & Wonderlich, 1990; Ingram, 1985; Marshall, 1989; Taylor, 1984), and drug abuse (Searight et al., 1991).

A review of the literature concerning intimacy indicated a difficulty in defining intimacy (Descuter & Thelen, 1991; Schaefer & Olson, 1981; Stevens & L'Abate, 1989; Waring & Reddon, 1983). Most of the research has explored the concept of intimacy from a dyadic perspective, examining a wide array of variables that affect intimacy within the partner's relationship. Only a few studies have focused on the intergenerational influence on intimacy in marriage (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Birtchnell, 1986; Stauffer, 1987; Watanabe-Hammond, 1990; West, Zarski, & Harvill, 1986). Even these attempts are inadequate since they contain several weaknesses within the research. These weaknesses are addressed in the literature review. Fleming and Anderson (1986) emphasize that the intergenerational family system model has been widely adopted by clinicians and theorists, but little empirical support has been provided for its constructs. This study contributes to the lack of empirical studies concerning the influence of the family of origin upon a person's experience of intimacy between married individuals.

### Statement of the Problem

Bowen's theory emphasizes that wherever we go, we carry unresolved emotional reactivity to our parents, in the form of vulnerability to repeat the same old patterns in every new intense relationship we enter into (Nichols & Schwartz, 1991). While several studies have attempted to focus on the effect of intergenerational family processes on intimacy in current relationships, one area of research has been lacking. That area is a study of the different aspects of generational processes which effect intimacy in marriage.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between intergenerational family processes and intimacy in marriage. Specifically, this study focused on the problem of determining the aspects of intergenerational family processes that influence intimacy in marriage.

As noted above, there have been a large number of studies which have focused on the influence of a person's family of origin on a wide array of variables. There have been a few studies which have focused on the relationship between the influence of one's family of origin and intimacy in marriage. This study provided empirical support to the

exploration of the relationship between personal authority in the family system and intimacy between married individuals. The purpose of this study was to examine the aspects of personal authority in the family system that predict intimacy between married individuals.

### Hypotheses

This study had five hypotheses:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the Personal Authority In The Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and scores on the subscale "Emotional Intimacy" of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory, at the  $p < .05$  level.
2. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the PAFS-Q and scores on the PAIR subscale "Social Intimacy" at the  $p < .05$  level.
3. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the PAFS-Q and scores on the PAIR subscale "Sexual Intimacy" at the  $p < .05$  level.
4. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the PAFS-Q and scores on the PAIR subscale "Intellectual Intimacy" at the  $p < .05$  level.

5. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the PAFS-Q and scores on the PAIR subscale "Recreational Intimacy" at the  $p < .05$  level.

#### Definition of Terms

Personal Authority. The term refers to the ability to claim authorship and responsibility for all of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions and to do so voluntarily. This ability exists along with the ability to choose consciously and spontaneously to be connected to and in relationship with other persons, especially those in the family of origin, to whatever degree of intimacy one desires (Williamson, 1991). This variable was measured by the Personal Authority Subscale on the PAFS-Q. Items reflect topics of conversation that require an intimate interaction with a parent while maintaining an individuated stance. Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate more personal authority (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984a).

Spousal Fusion--Individuation. Items measure the degree to which a person operates in an emotionally fused or individuated manner in relationship with the spouse or significant other. Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate more individuation (Bray, Williamson, & Malone,

1984a). This variable was measured by the Spousal Fusion--Individuation subscale on the PAFS-Q.

Intergenerational Fusion--Individuation. Items measure the degree to which a person operates in an emotionally fused or individuated manner with parents. Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate more individuation (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984a). This variable was measured by the Intergenerational Fusion--Individuation subscale on the PAFS-Q.

Spousal Intimacy. Items assess the degree of intimacy and satisfaction with the mate or significant other. Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate more intimacy (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984a). This variable was measured by the Spousal Intimacy subscale of the PAFS-Q.

Intergenerational Intimacy. Items assess the degree of intimacy and satisfaction with parents. Items are answered separately for mother and father. Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate more intimacy (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984a). This variable was measured by the Intergenerational Intimacy subscale of the PAFS-Q.

Nuclear Family Triangulation. Items measure triangulation between spouses and their children (these items are completed only by people who have children). Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate less triangulation (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984a). This variable will be

measured by the Nuclear Family Triangulation subscale of the PAFS-Q.

Intergenerational Triangulation. The items measure triangulation between a person and his or her parents. Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate less triangulation (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984a). This variable was measured by the Intergenerational Triangulation Subscale on the PAFS-Q.

Intergenerational Intimidation. Items assess the degree of personal intimidation experienced by an individual in relation to his or her parents. Items are scaled so that larger scores indicate less intimidation (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984a). This variable was measured by the Intergenerational Intimidation subscale of the PAFS-Q.

Intimacy. Intimacy is both a process and an experience which is the outcome of the disclosure of intimate topics and sharing of intimate experiences (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). It is the experience of sharing and being close in five areas: emotional intimacy, social intimacy, sexual intimacy, intellectual intimacy, and recreational intimacy (Olson & Schaefer, 1981).

Emotional Intimacy. Items assess the experiencing of closeness of feeling; the ability to share openly, in a non-defensive atmosphere when there is supportiveness and

general understanding (Olson & Schaefer, 1981). This variable was measured by the Emotional Intimacy subscale of the PAIR.

Social Intimacy. Items assess the experience of having common friends and a similar social network (Olson & Schaefer, 1981). This variable was measured by the Social Intimacy subscale of the PAIR.

Sexual Intimacy. Items assess the experience of showing general affection, touching, physical closeness, and/or sexual activity (Olson & Schaefer, 1981). This variable was measured by the Sexual Intimacy subscale of the PAIR.

Intellectual Intimacy. Items assess the experience of sharing ideas, such as talking about events in one's life, or discussing job related issues, current affairs, and so forth (Olson & Schaefer, 1981). This variable was measured by the Intellectual Intimacy Subscale on the PAIR.

Recreational Intimacy. Items assess shared experiences of interests in pastimes or hobbies; mutual participation in sporting events, mutual involvement in any general recreational or leisure activity (Olson & Schaefer, 1981). This variable will be measured by the Recreational Intimacy subscale on the PAIR.

### Assumptions Of Study

This study assumed that subjects did not collaborate with spouses or significant others when completing the instruments. It was assumed that spouses did not attempt to intimidate one another prior to completion of the instruments. It was assumed that the subjects responded to the instruments accurately and truthfully.

### Delimitations of Study

This study had the following delimitations:

1. Perceptions of one's family of origin are susceptible to distortion over time.
2. The presence of spouses or significant others could influence responses.
3. One instrument could influence another.
4. Newly married respondents could have a tendency to respond to the items in a favorable way.
5. Factors other than the constructs in the PAFS-Q are influential on personal authority within the family system.
6. Factors other than the constructs in the PAIR inventory are influential on intimacy in marriage.



### Summary

This chapter provided an introduction to this study's overall focus on the relationship between personal authority in the family system and intimacy between married individuals. Then, the rationale and purpose for the study were described. The hypotheses of the study were outlined, definitions of the key terms and variables were described, and the assumptions and delimitations of the study concluded the chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter includes an overview of the theoretical foundation of this study which is based on intergenerational family systems theory. The works of Bowen, Framo, Williamson, and Boszormenyi-Nagy will be discussed. A review of intimacy variables are discussed with particular focus on the use of the concept by Olson and Schaefer. Last, this chapter emphasizes the relationship between personal authority in the family system and perceived intimacy in marriage.

#### Intergenerational Family Systems Theory

Intergenerational family systems theory considers the family of origin as the most important social group which influences an individual's development. It is hypothesized that this influence is sustained whether or not the person continues to interact with the family (Bowen, 1978; Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981; Williamson, 1981). The influence is constituted by the individual's current perceptions of the characteristics and quality of his or her family relationships. The transmission of significant

relational patterns are reproduced from generation to generation (Bowen, 1978) through the process of social modeling within the family (Williamson & Bray, 1988). These intergenerational relationship patterns are maintained out of a sense of covert loyalty to the preceding generation (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981).

Although Bowenian theory has evolved and expanded through the years, it has always emphasized two primary processes: those within the family of origin that bind individuals in family togetherness, and those that help the person to break free toward individuality (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Unbalance in the direction of togetherness is called "fusion," "stuck-togetherness," and "undifferentiation." Differentiation of self is the chief cornerstone of Bowen's theory. Differentiation is the capacity for autonomous thinking and the ability to separate thinking and feeling. Lack of differentiation between thinking and feeling reveals a lack of differentiation between oneself and others, i.e., family members. Undifferentiated people react emotionally to the dictates of family members. In contrast, differentiated people are able to balance thinking and feeling. This enables them to be in intimate contact with family members and others without being reflexively shaped by them (Bowen, 1978). In Bowen's framework, an individual moves toward

differentiation in the family of origin by developing a person to person relationship with nuclear and extended family members, and by controlling their own emotional reactivity to family members. However phrased, the central premise is that unresolved emotional attachment to one's family must be resolved, rather than passively accepted or reactively rejected, before one can differentiate as a mature, healthy individual.

Bowen initially described six interlocking concepts that were essential to the theory: differentiation of self, triangles, nuclear family emotional process, family projection process, multigenerational transmission process, and sibling position. He added two additional concepts: emotional cutoff and societal emotional process (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

While Framo is often thought of as a colleague of Boszormenyi-Nagy, he incorporates many of Bowen's ideas that contribute to intergenerational family systems theory. Framo (1981) integrated object relations theory and family systems theory since he emphasized unsatisfactory object relation development as a part of the intergenerational transmission process culminating in marital discord. According to Framo, primary object relations developed within the family of origin context were internalized, and

successive close relationships were projected onto this internalized structure. Resulting conflicts with both mates and children were a replay of the projected family of origin conflict (Framo, 1976).

Framo (1976) stressed a need for balancing closeness and separation between generations in order to ensure autonomy without isolation. He emphasized the ideal as someone who has developed a sense of self before separation from the family of origin through marriage. Through family of origin sessions, adults begin to view their relationships from a broad perspective without the distortions of old issues and conflicts. This enhances the possibility of increased intimacy and autonomy. Adults are able to deal directly with their parents and children about previously avoided transactional issues that have existed between them (Framo, 1981).

Boszormenyi-Nagy and his colleagues (Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark 1973; Boszormenyi-Nagy and Ulrich, 1981) have provided major contributions to intergenerational family theory by stressing the idea of ethical accountability within families. Contextual family theory emphasizes the intergenerational ledger in that family members owe one another loyalty, and they acquire merit by supporting each other. To the degree that parents are fair and responsible,

they engender loyalty to their children. Similar to Bowen's concept of triangulation, parents create loyalty conflicts when they ask their children to be loyal to one parent at the expense of disloyalty to the other (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981).

Invisible loyalties are developed when children make unconscious commitments to relate to their families at the expense and detriment of their own well-being. The intergenerational expectations demand some form of repayment. Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner (1987) emphasize the necessity of "genuine dialogue" between the generations. A genuine dialogue, with its emphasis on fairness, trust, and ongoing relatedness, offers both the potential for self-delineation and self-validation. This in turn diminishes the individual's need to engage in self-destructive efforts to fulfill family obligations (invisible loyalties) and to affirm parental identifications (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Spark, 1973). The capacity for genuine affection and intimacy will be hampered if no honest effort is made to balance the ledger (repay parents and generational expectations). Genuine autonomy and individuation are marked by increasing freedom of choice regarding parental or generational expectations (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981).

Williamson (1991) emphasizes that although his contribution to intergenerational theory contains different language and concepts, there is in fact an underlying similar theoretical continuum in the work of Bowen and Boszormenyi-Nagy. On his continuum, differentiation of self and relational justice are at one end, with the latter concept implying the former. At the other end of the continuum are the concepts of fusion--triangulation and covert loyalties--split loyalties. These terms present differing perspectives on the same underlying phenomena.

Williamson (1981) refined Bowen's theory by clarifying that individuation within the family of origin is not a form of distance or detachment from other family members, but it is associated with affectionate, mutually respectful relationships that allow for separateness and differences; in other words, intimacy with individuation. Williamson (1981, 1982) describes a more developmentally advanced form of intimacy with individuation, personal authority in the family system. The ultimate goal is not simply to achieve a differentiated self but to achieve a differentiated position in the context of warm and intimate relationships with members of the family of origin (Williamson, 1991).

Williamson (1991) proposes six theoretical assumptions about human behavior which provide the basis for understanding personal authority in the family system.

1. Well-being is indivisible; at the heart of human well-being is psychological integrity.
2. Psychological integrity is the result of the integration of various aspects of the self.
3. Most of life is managed most of the time by most people at an unconscious level.
4. The integration of self implies a harmony between the conscious and the unconscious aspects of the mind. It also requires an integration not only within the larger social context in general but within the family of origin in particular.
5. Healthy family organization requires a renegotiation of family politics in the fourth decade of the lives of sons and daughters. By the time most adults are in their thirties they are ready to deal and therefore to permit much more material to become conscious.
6. The essence of this psychological and political change is that the healthy adult gives up once and for all, the "parent as parent" and consequently relinquishes the need to be parented. (pp. 23-24)

#### Personal Authority: A Synthesized Construct

Personal authority refers to the ability to assume peerhood with all other human beings by taking responsibility for one's experience of life and simultaneously being intimately related with important others (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987). Personal authority reflects a synthesis of intimacy and



differentiation in relationships and represents an ability to relate to parents as peers. It is viewed as simultaneously an individual and family life-cycle developmental stage that is accomplished during the fourth and fifth decades of an individual's life.

The central task of this stage is to gain psychosocial peerhood with the previous generation by terminating the intergenerational hierarchical boundary between parents and their adult offspring (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987). This process involves a radical shifting of power alignments between the two generations. Through the reciprocal nature of renegotiation of previous patterns of relatedness, comes peerhood and psychosocial equality evidenced in the individual's current relationship experiences (Williamson, 1981). Thus, personal authority in the family system is not viewed as a personality construct, but rather as a set of relational skills, interactional behavior patterns, and a way-of-being in the world that can be observed in family interactions and other significant interpersonal relationships (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984b).

Personal authority is described as a synthesis between differentiation of self and intimacy. Differentiation of self or individuation refers to the individual's ability to function in an autonomous and self-directed manner without

being controlled or impaired by significant others (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987; Bowen, 1978; Williamson, 1991). Fusion is the opposite pole of differentiation and refers not only to diminished autonomous functioning in relationships, but to more emotional reactivity in interactions. Relationships that are experiencing fusion are indicated by the tendency to take undue responsibility for others and the avoidance of taking responsibility for self (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987). Similar to Bowen's theory (1978), the level of fusion reflects the degree of unresolved emotional attachment to the parental family.

A second process related to fusion is intergenerational intimidation. Intergenerational intimidation is the opposite pole of personal authority and reflects a lack of individuation and adult intimacy and the presence of the intergenerational power hierarchy between parents and their offspring (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987; Harvey & Bray, 1991; Williamson, 1991). Relationships within families are assumed to be hierarchical in nature, which leads to the possibility of intimidation between the generations, particularly between children and their parents. Intergenerational intimidation is indicated by the dependency of children on their parents as the physical and psychological source of their being and the fear that

withdrawal of parental support will result in personal harm (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987; Harvey & Bray, 1991; Williamson, 1982). Intergenerational intimidation parallels the family processes of Bowen's (1978) concept of triangulation and Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich's (1981) emphasis on the expression of covert loyalties.

The Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) is a self-report measure that assesses three generational family relationships identified by intergenerational family theory. The PAFS-Q operationalizes key concepts of intergenerational family theory into scales for use in research and clinical practice. The PAFS-Q is recognized as one of the few published instruments that measure intergenerational family relationships for research and clinical purposes (Grotevant & Carlson, 1989).

The PAFS-Q assesses each individual in the family's self-reported perceptions of intergenerational family relationships. A person describes current relationships with parents in the family of origin, spouse, or current significant dyadic relationship, and children. Current perceptions of family relationships are more significant and useful than historical viewpoints according to intergenerational family theory (Bray, Williamson, & Malone,

1984a; Harvey & Bray, 1991; Williamson, 1991). The key concepts and behaviors measured by the PAFS-Q include individuation, emotional fusion, triangulation, intimacy, isolation, personal authority, and intergenerational intimidation. These concepts and behaviors apply to the family of origin and the current nuclear family as well.

#### Research and Theory Application

The PAFS-Q has been used in various studies exploring intergenerational family processes, marital relations, meaning in life, career issues, identity formation, identity adjustment in adolescence, and health issues in both psychological and medical contexts (Anderson & Fleming, 1986; Bayer, 1987; Bray, Harvey et al., 1987; Fleming & Anderson, 1986; Gottlieb, 1987, Harvey & Bray, 1991; Harvey, Curry, & Bray, 1991; Johansen, 1987; Kinnier, Brigman, & Noble, 1990; Reid & Anderson, 1992; St. Clair, 1984; Van Amburgh, 1987).

The PAFS-Q has been used to empirically investigate the ability of intergenerational theory to predict healthy, illness, and psychological distress in adult and college-age populations (Bray, Harvey et al., 1987; Harvey & Bray, 1991; Harvey et al., 1991). These studies support the theory that the intergenerational processes of individuation--intimacy and fusion--intimidation are primary influences on the life

stress and the psychological and physical health or illness of family members.

Bray, Harvey et al. (1987) examined intergenerational family processes using the PAFS-Q and their relationship to life stress and health distress. In the first of this two-part study, several family process measurements were used to predict health distress in an adult clinical sample. Using multiple regression analysis, family process variables accounted for 53% of the variance in health distress. The data indicated that individuals who reported more individuated relationships with their parents and spouse experienced fewer SI's symptom index. The PAFS-Q scales accounted for a significant increase in the variance beyond the FACES II DAS. The fact that the PAFS-Q scales added significant predictive power beyond the other family and marital scales indicates that the PAFS-Q measures unique aspects of family processes not assessed by the other instruments. The results of the study indicate the importance of assessing both family of origin and nuclear family relations influence on health status.

Study 2 was designed to evaluate the importance of life stress in the prediction of health distress. Using a college-aged sample, the goal of this study was to determine the importance of life stress for increasing the predictive

power of health distress over and above intergenerational family processes. The results of the study found that family process variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in health distress over and above life stress.

Harvey and Bray (1991) conducted a similar study to test the intergenerational family system theory hypothesis that the quality of family relationships effects one's psychological and health functioning. This multifactor model of the predicted relationships between family and peer relationship factors and life stress, health-related behaviors, and psychological and health distress was evaluated using structural equation analysis. College students ( $N = 319$ ) were administered a battery of questionnaires on two separate occasions. Following the first administration, findings indicated that the degree of individuation/intimacy in intergenerational and peer relationships was directly related to subjects' health-related behaviors. The individuation/intimacy variables accounted for 30% of the variance for this factor. Intergenerational intimidation/fusion resulted in a direct relationship to higher levels of health distress accounting for 35% of the variance in this factor. The complete causal model accounted for 73% of the variance in the psychological distress factor.

Harvey, et al. (1991) have replicated the previous studies and extended their study to include a sample of middle-aged adults and their college-aged offspring. The PAFS-Q was utilized to measure family and intimate peer relational patterns. Both versions of the PAFS-Q were employed, Version A for parents and Version C for the college students. Results indicated that individuation and intimacy were significant predictors of health distress and psychological distress for both mothers and fathers. Parents' relational patterns of individuation and intimacy directly and indirectly influenced their offspring's patterns, which provides partial support for the intergenerational transmission of family patterns. The findings indicate that the relationship with the mother may be more critical to this transmission process. Mothers' intergenerational and nuclear family relationships had stronger influences on their children's relationships and adjustment than did fathers' relationships.

Reid and Anderson (1992) conducted a study to explore the relationship between intergenerational family relationships and the discovery of meaning in life. Five subscales of the PAFS-Q were utilized to measure the family of origin factors. Results yielded seven statistically significant relationships. The researchers noted that



interpretation of the relationship should be guarded since the correlations were weak. Findings revealed a positive relationship for the subscales of Purpose and Intergenerational Intimidation ( $\underline{r} = .271$ ), and for the subscales of Purpose and Personal Authority ( $\underline{r} = .285$ ). A positive relationship was found for the subscales of Coherence and Personal Authority ( $\underline{r} = .285$ ), and for the subscales of Life Control and Spousal Fusion/Individuation ( $\underline{r} = .270$ ). A negative relationship was found for Existential Vacuum and the subscale Intergenerational Intimidation ( $\underline{r} = -.374$ ), Intergenerational Fusion/Individuation ( $\underline{r} = -.274$ ), and Spousal Fusion/Intimidation ( $\underline{r} = -.293$ ). The findings, although modest, might suggest the existence of a relationship between intergenerational family process variables and the discovery of meaning in life.

Kinnier et al. (1990) conducted a study using the PAFS-Q and the two scales from Version C (for college students), to examine the relationship between family enmeshment and career indecision. The results provide support (albeit weak) for the hypothesis that those who are enmeshed in their families of origin are more likely than those who are not enmeshed to experience difficulty in making decisions about their careers. The results, although statistically



significant, are clearly weak. The total variance accounted for by the variables of age, student status, individuation, and triangulation was a meager 11%.

The research by Anderson and Fleming (1986) and Fleming and Anderson (1986) added support to the validity of the PAFS-Q and intergenerational family systems theory. Using a sample of college students ( $N = 93$ ), the results indicated a significant relationship between adolescents' perceived involvement in their family's patterns of fusion and triangulation, and the development of ego identity (Anderson & Fleming, 1986). College students who report lower levels of intergenerational fusion and triangulation have better ego identity and autonomy. Similarly, the relationship between late adolescents' personal adjustment and individuation from their families of origin also was explored (Fleming & Anderson, 1986). The results indicated a significant relationship between college students ( $N = 126$ ) perceived involvement in their family's patterns of fusion and self-esteem, mastery, college maladjustment and the number of reported health problems. Less triangulation was significantly related to greater self-esteem and mastery.

Protinsky and Ecker (1990) administered the PAFS-Q Version C to 195 college students. Subjects were divided into 44 adult children of alcoholics and 151 adult children

of nonalcoholics to determine whether parental alcoholism significantly altered intergenerational relationship variables between parents and offspring. Results indicated that adult children of alcoholics experience less intimacy and less triangulation with parents than do adult children of nonalcoholics. They are, however, no more likely than their nonalcoholic counterparts to experience more intergenerational intimidation or less personal authority with parents. Findings also showed a tendency for adult children of alcoholics to experience greater levels of fusion (lower levels of individuation) with parents than do adult children of nonalcoholics.

#### Intimacy: A Multidimensional Construct

Intimacy is a term widely used by various researchers and clinicians. It is a word that is frequently used by clinicians but rarely defined or operationalized. The research literature mentions the term with some frequency, but has not clearly conceptualized it, nor validated the nature of its presence in human relationships.

Some aspect of the concept of intimacy has been the focus of several studies. Researchers have studied intimacy and its relationship to depression, divorce, psychiatric

illnesses, parental loss, incest, drug abuse, marital adjustment, and interactional patterns (Doane et al., 1991; Guttman, 1989; Harper & Elliot, 1988; Hepworth et al., 1984; Ingram, 1985; Israelstam, 1989; L'Abate, 1983; Patton & Waring, 1984; Searight et al., 1991; Stauffer, 1987; Taylor, 1984).

One of the problems associated with research on intimacy has been the varying definitions of the term (Doherty, Colangelo, & Horander, 1991; Harper & Elliot, 1988; L'Abate & Sloan, 1984; Schaefer & Olson, 1981; Weingarten, 1991). Stevens and L'Abate (1989) describe intimacy as the sharing of hurt feelings and have developed the Sharing of Hurts Scale to measure the concept. One of the problems with this definition is that it does not encompass aspects of intimacy other than the communication of hurt feelings between partners.

One of the areas of research most closely related to, or confused with, intimacy, is that of self-disclosure. Waring and colleagues (Chelune et al., 1984; Patton & Waring, 1984; Waring & Chelune, 1983; Waring & Reddon, 1983) developed a measurement of marital intimacy involving eight components which include conflict resolution, affection, cohesion, sexuality, identity, compatibility, autonomy, and expressiveness. Self-disclosure, the revelation of personal

information to another, has often been implicated as an important factor in the development of interpersonal intimacy (Chelune et al., 1984; Doherty et al., 1991). It has been argued that intimacy is more than just self-disclosure. For instance, self-disclosure does not always involve commitment, as intimacy does, and it may adversely damage self-esteem rather than create a sense of closeness. It is possible that too much self-disclosure could push individuals apart (Gilbert, 1976; Harper & Elliott, 1988; Schaefer & Olson, 1981). At the same time, self-disclosure is considered an important dimension of the concept of intimacy.

Other writers have attempted to develop models of intimacy with particular emphasis on the multidimensional nature of the concept. Spooner (1982) developed a model of intimacy consisting of two spheres, sexual and nonsexual and three modalities: physical, mental, and emotional/spiritual. In the sexual sphere there is sensuality, meaning, and transcendence. In the nonsexual sphere there is continuity/privacy, sex-role interaction, and person-to-person interaction. These six categories are facets of intimacy.

Clinebell and Clinebell (1970) define intimacy as mutual need satisfaction. They identify several facets of

intimacy including: sexual, emotional, aesthetic, creative, recreational, work, crisis, conflict, commitment, spiritual, and communication intimacy. One of the problems with their view of intimacy is the lack of a clear conceptual and theoretical framework. While most researchers define the dimensions of intimacy too narrowly, Clinebell and Clinebell (1970) have attempted a definition that is so broad that conceptual clarity is lacking.

Dahms (1972) views intimacy as closeness to another human being on a variety of levels. Dahms proposes a conceptual hierarchy of three dimensions of intimacy: intellectual, physical, and emotional. The writer emphasizes the concept with four inherent qualities: mutual accessibility, naturalness, non-possessiveness, and the need to view it as a process.

The work of Dahms (1972) and Clinebell and Clinebell (1970) are addressed because Schaefer and Olson (1981) have developed a conceptual definition of intimacy that best integrates the multi-dimensional approaches in the literature. Intimacy is both a process and an experience which is the outcome of the disclosure of intimate topics and sharing of intimate experiences.

Schaefer and Olson (1981) emphasize the process aspect of intimacy and distinguish between intimate experiences and

an intimate relationship. An intimate experience is a feeling of closeness or sharing with another person in one or more of the seven areas described below. An intimate relationship is one in which an individual shares intimate experiences in several areas, and there is the expectation that the experiences and relationship will persist over time.

Seven types of intimacy were originally designed to include: emotional intimacy, social intimacy, intellectual intimacy, sexual intimacy, recreational intimacy, spiritual intimacy, and aesthetic intimacy. Emotional intimacy is defined as the experiencing of closeness of feeling. It involves the ability and freedom to share openly, in a non-defensive atmosphere when there is supportiveness and genuine understanding. Social intimacy is the experience of having common friends and sharing a similar social network. Sexual intimacy is defined as the experience of showing general affection, touching, physical closeness, and/or sexual activity. Intellectual intimacy is the experience of sharing ideas, talking about events in one's life or discussing job related issues, current affairs, and so forth. Recreational intimacy is defined as shared experiences of interests in pastimes or hobbies. This involves mutual participation in sporting events, mutual

involvement in any general recreational or leisure activity (Olson & Schaefer, 1981). Spiritual intimacy is defined as the experience of showing ultimate concerns, a similar sense of meaning in life, and/or religious faiths. Aesthetic intimacy is the closeness that results from the experience of sharing beauty (Schaefer & Olson, 1981).

According to Olson and Schaefer (1981), intimacy is not equated with self-disclosure, cohesion, empathy, nor limited to sexual activity. It is the experience of sharing and being close in the variety of areas mentioned above. Individuals desire differing degrees of each kind of intimacy. While some degree of intimacy is necessary for normal human development (Erickson, 1950; Harlow & Zimmerman, 1953; Maslow, 1970), it is difficult to know the minimum or maximum amount required for each individual. Since intimacy is a process that occurs over time and is never completed or fully accomplished, it is difficult to ascertain the ideal amount or degree of intimacy for any person.

Olson and Schaefer (1981) developed the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory to assess five types of intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational. The spiritual and aesthetic subscales were not included in the final inventory due to

the lack of conceptual and empirical clarity (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). This self-report inventory was designed to assess dyadic heterosexual relationships, from friendship to steady dating to marriage. The PAIR attempts to identify the degree to which each partner presently feels intimate in the various areas of the relationship (realized). The PAIR also attempts to identify the degree to which each partner would like to be intimate (expected). The PAIR does not claim any ideal or absolute degree of intimacy, but in validity tests couples were generally normally distributed around the mean (Schaefer & Olson, 1981).

In addition, the PAIR contains a Conventionality Scale to assess the individual's attempt to provide socially desirable responses. The Conventionality score indicates the extent to which an individual is responding to the PAIR items in a socially desirable fashion. This means that the higher the Conventionality score, the more the individual is responding in a socially desirable manner (Olson & Schaefer, 1981).

#### Research and Theory Application

Harper and Elliot (1988) used the PAIR in a study that explored the relationship between intimacy and marital adjustment in 185 randomly selected couples. The researchers utilized the PAIR in a unique way. By subtracting the actual



intimacy score from the desired intimacy score, a discrepancy measure was obtained which reflects whether spouses want more or less intimacy in their marriage. By using this discrepancy score, the problem of what constitutes an ideal degree of intimacy in marriage is avoided as husbands and wives define for themselves the amount of intimacy with which they would be happy.

Through multivariate and univariate regression analyses, results indicated that the discrepancy between actual and desired intimacy of husbands and wives was highly predictive of marital adjustment. The intimacy discrepancy score accounted for a very large part of the variability observed in marital adjustment scores ( $R^2 = 0.665$ ). Likewise, results showed a curvilinear relationship between marital adjustment and marital intimacy, indicating that couples who have exceptionally high intimacy scores may experience decreasing marital adjustment scores. Finally, an exceptionally high or low discrepancy score resulted in a significant decline in marital adjustment for the wife more than the husband (Harper & Elliot, 1988).

Talmadge and Dabbs (1990) explored the relationship between intimacy and behavior, perception, and affect during conversation between 30 couples. Results indicated that positive affect was associated with faster cycles of

alternating in talking and with increased emotional intimacy as measured by the PAIR. Greater age and length of relationship was negatively correlated with subjective intimacy but positively correlated with smoothness in interaction.

Worthington and colleagues (1989) utilized the PAIR to investigate the effectiveness of various components of marriage enrichment on 36 married couples' satisfaction and intimacy. Couples volunteered for a marriage enrichment program and were assigned to one of four conditions: (a) assessment only, (b) information only, (c) an unstructured discussion group, and (d) a structured group with both information and group discussion. Results indicated that information had little apparent effect on couples, but discussion in groups improved couples' marriage satisfaction and their sexual and intellectual intimacy as opposed to couples who did not receive group discussion.

#### The Relationship Between Personal Authority and Intimacy in Marriage

Williamson (1991) writes that "how an individual resolves the issue of relationship to the members of their family of origin, especially their mother and father, will largely determine how one handles this matter in all

intimate relationships to follow in life, most especially in marriage" (p. 4). The capacity to achieve an intimate relationship within one's family of origin and yet remain separate is defined as "the intimacy paradox" (Williamson, 1991). If an individual is unable to leave the parental home psychologically then the individual will experience intimacy problems in marriage (Trent, 1984).

Williamson (1982) views personal authority in the family system as a synthesized construct, combining differentiation and intimacy. The underlying dilemma is this: How does one embrace and cherish family heritage and simultaneously transcend family emotionality (Bowen, 1978; Williamson, 1991)? How does an individual integrate the family's identity and values and not be driven by covert intergenerational loyalties and mandates (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Spark, 1973)? How does an individual belong to the old generation and yet create a unique self in a new generation? How does one deal with the issue of relational justice (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Krasner, 1986) toward one's parents and simultaneously place higher priority to one's spouse?

Each of these questions indicate a natural connection between the primary variables of this study. Does an individual who is experiencing personal authority in their family system have a greater chance of experiencing intimacy

in their marriage? What aspects of personal authority are most influential on experiencing intimacy in marriage? Personal authority in the family system emphasizes how an individual can be independent and differentiated in the family of origin, while simultaneously remaining emotionally connected with the transgenerational family, and still feel free to establish an intimate relationship with his or her spouse.

Researchers have recently criticized the ambiguity of the Spousal Intimacy and Spousal Fusion scales on the PAFS-Q (Anderson & Sabatelli, 1990; Sabatelli, 1988). Nine of the items from the Spousal Fusion scale loaded with the Spousal Intimacy items and failed to load with other Spousal Fusion items. As a result, the PAFS-Q does not have operationally distinct Spousal Intimacy or Fusion scales. The PAFS-Q confounds personal authority in relationship to parents with personal authority in relationship to spouse, and it may be a more useful measure of individuation if the Spousal Fusion/Individuation, Spousal Intimacy, and Nuclear Family Triangulation scales were reconceptualized as outcomes of negotiations in the parent/child relationship system (Anderson & Sabatelli, 1990). Hence, personal authority within the parent/child relationship theoretically would predict personal authority between husband and wife. This

study will use multiple regression analyses to determine which PAFS-Q subscales predict intimacy between married individuals as measured by the PAIR inventory. If Anderson and Sabatelli (1990) are correct, then the Intergenerational scales would have greater predictive value upon intimacy between married individuals than the Spousal Fusion/Individuation scales or the Nuclear Family Triangulation scale.

Watanabe-Hammond (1990) emphasizes how each generation of couples make one dance (i.e., rhythmic patterns of relationship) out of two in every marriage. From the dances of the family of origin to the current dance of a couple, the impact of the rhythmic patterns of intimacy can be seen. One of the weaknesses of this study is that it is not empirical research but designed to be used by therapists. Stauffer (1987) studied the influence of the family of origin on a couple's fear of intimacy. Once again, this study was not empirical research and intended for the therapist.

Birtchnell (1986) repeated the same mistakes of the prior two studies except that this study used case studies. The researcher concluded that relationships which are not intimate are characterized by excessive degrees of dependence, directiveness, or detachment. Partners must each

attain an adequate degree of separateness and at the same time allow themselves to become physically and emotionally close. The researcher emphasized that two individuals' ability to differentiate from their family of origin would stand a good chance of forming an enduring and successful relationship (Birtchnell, 1986).

Bayer (1987) performed a cluster analysis on PAFS-Q scores from 103 couples and then examined differences in marital intimacy and adjustment across the clusters. The researcher found four distinct couple profiles: (a) Contemporary-male intergenerationally intimate, (b) Contemporary-female intergenerationally intimate, (c) male intergenerationally distressed, and (d) female intergenerationally distressed. Analysis of the couple type called "contemporary-male intergenerationally intimate" supported the hypothesis that differentiation is related to intimacy. Results showed that males who were defined as being emotionally cut off demonstrated a relatively low level of intimacy.

A similar study assessed attachment styles within the family of origin and with peers (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Findings showed that college student's representations of familial relationships predispose them toward particular styles of relating to friends. One of the

weaknesses of this research, which was noted by the researchers, involved the college-age sample. The mean age was 19 years old. It was noted that the achievement of an individuated stance in relation to parents would probably occur later in life and this would affect attachment representations.

West et al. (1986) studied the effects of cross-generational coalitions on satisfaction with sexual, emotional, and intellectual intimacy. This study used 107 undergraduates with a mean age of 19.5 years. Cross-generational coalitions in the family of origin had some impact on the student's ability to negotiate sexual, emotional, and intellectual intimacy but had little effect on their social and recreational satisfaction.

### Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of intergenerational family systems theory. Personal authority in the family system was described along with recent studies using the PAFS-Q. Intimacy was described and studies using the PAIR inventory were investigated. Finally, the relationship between personal authority and intimacy in marriage was addressed along with prior studies.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between a person's family of origin and intimacy in marriage. This study focused on the relationship between aspects of personal authority in the family system and their effect on intimacy between married individuals. The Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) were used to measure the variables.

#### Subjects

The subjects were individuals who had been married at least once and who were at least 21 years old. If currently married, they must have been married for at least 6 months. This time frame enables the newlywed couple to begin to exit the Honeymoon Stage of the relationship and perceive their relationship in a more realistic fashion. Subjects who had experienced multiple marriages responded to the PAIR inventory pertaining to their most recent divorce or current marriage. Olson and Schaefer (1981) emphasize that the PAIR was developed to assess intimacy in dyadic relationships.



Subjects who had been divorced and/or remarried in their family of origin responded to the questions from the family in which they lived the most years. The subjects were obtained from a non-clinical population largely through appeals from conservative churches in East Texas, a civic organization, and individuals employed in a private psychiatric hospital where the researcher was employed. A convenience sample was utilized through snowball sampling. The sample size was set at 120 subjects.

#### Protection of Human Rights

The subjects were informed about the purpose of the research and the nature of the instruments through verbal and written instructions contained within the instruments package. The subjects were assured of confidentiality by responding to the instruments and filling out a demographic sheet which does not ask for their name. The subjects were informed that they may obtain the results of the research through contacting the researcher. This was contained in the instructions of the instrument package.

#### Instruments

Personal authority in the family system was measured by the PAFS-Q. Intimacy in the marital relationship was

measured by the PAIR inventory. Subjects completed the PAIR twice. The first score measured the individuals currently perceived experience of intimacy in marriage. Only this score was utilized in this study. The second score measured the ideal or desired level of intimacy which did not concern this study. Both instruments contain acceptable levels of reliability and validity.

#### Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire

The PAFS-Q was used to measure the intergenerational processes within the subject's family of origin. In 1982, Bray, Williamson, and Malone developed this instrument due to the lack of available instruments designed to measure these types of processes. There are three versions of the PAFS-Q. Version A is for adults with children. Version B is for adults without children. Version C is a modification of Version B for college students, older adolescents, and young adults without children, and was developed by Bray and Harvey (1989). This study utilized version A. The final version of the PAFS-Q (Version A) contains 132 items grouped into eight non-overlapping scales: Spousal Fusion--Individuation, Intergenerational Fusion--Individuation, Spousal Intimacy, Intergenerational Intimacy, Nuclear Family Triangulation, Intergenerational Triangulation, Intergenerational Intimidation, and Personal Authority. All

items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (Bray, Williamson, & Malone, 1984b). Statistical analysis was performed using all eight subscales of Version A.

Bray, Williamson, and Malone (1984a) have reported reliability of the PAFS-Q in several studies. Alpha coefficients for a sample of nonclinical adults ( $N = 90$ ) ranged from .82 to .95 at a first testing and from .80 to .95 at a second testing, with means of .90 and .89, respectively. Internal consistency coefficients for empirically derived factors ranged from .74 to .96 ( $N = 400$ ). Test-retest reliability was acceptable for all scales except Intergenerational Fusion/Individuation in a sample of 90 nonclinical adults ranging from .55 to .95, with mean of .75 (Bray, Williamson et al., 1984a). The authors emphasize that this subscale has a treatment effect on the subject so that poor reliability is caused by changes in perception rather than an unstable variable (Bray, Williamson et al., 1984a).

The PAFS-Q correlates with other measures of family functioning to a moderate degree but also reflects unique aspects of family functioning. In a nonclinical sample, correlations between PAFS-Q scales and the Adaptability Scale of the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES) were generally low. The Spousal Intimacy and Intergenerational Intimacy Scales correlated significantly

with the FACES Cohesion scale, and several PAFS-Q scales correlated significantly with the Dyadic Adjustment scale (Bray, Williamson et al., 1984a). Correlations between the PAFS scales and the Social Desirability Scale (SDS) were generally low. However, the Spousal Intimacy subscale, the Intergenerational Fusion/Individuation subscale, and the Intergenerational Intimacy subscale had correlations above 0.30 with the Social Desirability Scale. This correlation indicates that respondents tend to answer on these scales in a manner that is perceived as socially desirable (Bray, Williamson et al., 1984a).

In a clinical sample, there were correlations between all but the Intergenerational Intimacy subscale of the PAFS-Q scales and the Symptom Index, which measures physical and psychosomatic symptoms and stress (Bray, Harvey, & Williamson, 1987). Previous correlation findings were replicated between PAFS-Q scales and the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales II (FACES II), and the DAS.

Multiple regression analyses showed that the PAFS-Q assesses aspects of family process not assessed by FACES II or the DAS. These family process measures were used to predict health distress and PAFS-Q scores accounted for a significant amount of the variance over and above the other two measures (Bray, Harvey et al., 1987). In part II of the

same study, PAFS-Q scores of college students were correlated with measures of life stress and health distress. Findings indicate better health was predicted by less life stress, less intergenerational intimidation, and more individuation with parents and significant others. The findings of this study indicate that lower scores on the Personal Authority scale in predicting better health for college age students supports the theory that lack of personal authority is age appropriate prior to the fourth decade of life.

Construct validity was established through factor analysis on a sample of 400 nonclinical volunteers. The first factor analysis produced seven factors which loaded .35 or above on a particular factor. A second factor analysis was performed which produced an eight factor. Cronbach's alpha was calculated on each unit-weighted factor. The coefficients ranged from .74 to .96 and are all within an acceptable range (Bray, Williamson et al., 1984a).

A second-order factor analysis was performed on the eight unit-weighted factor scores. Three higher-order factors emerged with equal values greater than one. The first higher-order factor includes the Intergenerational Fusion factor, Intergenerational Intimacy factor and the Personal Authority factor. The second higher-order factor

includes the Intergenerational Intimidation factor, the Spousal Fusion factor and the Intergenerational Triangulation factor. The third higher-order factor included the Spousal Intimacy/Individuation factor and the Nuclear Family Triangulation factor (Bray, Williamson et al., 1984a).

Reliability and validity data for the PAFS-Q fall within acceptable ranges. The PAFS-Q continues to be utilized in a number of studies in conjunction with several variables. Williamson (1991) notes that further validity studies that compare PAFS-Q scales with behavioral observations of families are projected.

#### Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships

The PAIR is a 36-item self-report instrument that assesses five types of marital intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational. All five subscales were utilized in this study. The PAIR inventory enables a couple to describe intimacy in their own relationship as they perceive and experience it. In addition to the five areas of intimacy, there is a scale on conventionality, which measures the extent to which the couple is "faking good" (Olson & Schaefer, 1981).

Reliability testing of the PAIR subscales consisted of a split-half method of analysis. Using Cronbach's alpha, all

six scales had coefficients of at least .70 (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). Both an item analysis and factor analysis were conducted to test for content and construct validity. The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale, Jourard's Self-Disclosure Scale, and the Moos Family Environment Scale have been used to test concurrent validity.

Except for the Spiritual subscale, all of the other PAIR subscales positively correlate with the Locke-Wallace coefficients consistently exceeding .30. A significant positive correlation also was found between the PAIR and Jourard's Self-Disclosure Scale. Each PAIR subscale correlated significantly and positively with the Moos subscale of Cohesion and Expressiveness. As expected by the PAIR developers, the Control and Conflict scales of the Moos had significant negative correlations with the PAIR subscales for emotional, intellectual, and recreational intimacy (Schaefer & Olson, 1981).

Concurrent validity was also found between the PAIR subscales and the total score of the Sharing of Hurts scale. The six PAIR subscales correlated significantly with each of the Sharing of Hurts subscales except for the Conflict Resolution subscale (Stevens & L'Abate, 1989). The PAIR was also compared with the Waring Intimacy Questionnaire

yielding significant correlations of .77 (Waring, 1984; Waring & Reddon, 1983).

The PAIR was designed to assess an individual's actual experience of intimacy and the individual's expected or ideal degree of intimacy. This study utilized the individual's actual, perceived experience of intimacy in current relationships. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of an individual's experience within their family of origin on their actual experience of intimacy within the marital relationship, not their ideal or potential experience of intimacy. Therefore, individuals completed the PAIR according to instructions by taking the inventory twice. Only the first set of scores were used which measure the individual's actual experience of intimacy. The second set of scores which measure the individual's expected or ideal degree of intimacy were not utilized.

#### Data Collection

The unit of analysis was the individual. Each individual subject was married at least once. The individual completed both instruments along with a demographic data sheet. If an individual's family of origin experience involved multiple marriages, then they answered the PAFS-Q questions based on



the parent(s) with which they lived the most years. If an individual had been married more than once, then they answered the PAIR questions based on their most recent marriage.

Subjects were contacted through adult Sunday School classes from a church, a weekend retreat for men, a weekend retreat for women, and a civic organization. Each of these groups responded to the instruments as a group and returned them to the researcher at the end of the meeting. Subjects who worked at a private psychiatric hospital responded to the instruments individually and returned the completed packet to the researcher. Verbal and written instructions pertaining to the research accompanied each group administration. Only written instructions accompanied the packets given to individuals employed at the private psychiatric hospital.

The information was collected in the form of scores. The demographic data sheet contained questions to gather descriptive data about the sample. These questions dealt with gender, age, marital status, length of marriage, educational level, occupation, income, numbers of siblings, divorced family of origin, and history of recent counseling. A copy of the data sheet is found in Appendix A.

A pilot study was performed to determine if any potential problems existed with the study. The PAFS-Q, the PAIR, and the demographic data sheet was administered to a small group at a local church. The packet was given to 14 married individuals to complete and return to the researcher. The only change made as a result of the pilot study was that directions on completing the PAIR inventory were given in greater detail. Likewise, the expected scores on the PAIR were not useful for this study.

#### Analysis of Data

The level of data was interval for both the dependent and independent variable. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation and a Step-wise Regression was used to analyze the data to determine the influence of each of the PAFS-Q subscales on each of the PAIR subscales. T-test were computed to determine differences between females' and males' responses to the PAFS questionnaire and the PAIRS Inventory.

#### Summary

This chapter has included a brief description of the subjects and a thorough description of the instruments utilized in the study. The PAFS-Q and the PAIR both have

acceptable levels of reliability and validity. Appeals for participants were made through a church in East Texas, a civic organization, and employees at a private psychiatric hospital. This chapter concluded with a description of how the data were analyzed.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between aspects of personal authority in the family system and intimacy between married individuals. The primary focus was to determine which aspects of personal authority predict intimacy between married individuals.

Five stepwise regression analyses were used to estimate the relationship between eight predictor variables (spousal intimacy, spousal fusion/individuation, nuclear family triangulation, intergenerational intimacy, intergenerational fusion/individuation, intergenerational triangulation, intergenerational intimidation, and personal authority) and five criterion variables (emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational intimacy). The results of these analyses are organized in terms of hypotheses 1 through 5. Descriptive statistics and correlation matrices are presented in tables. This chapter includes a description of the sample and concludes with a description of additional findings.

### Description of Sample

The total number of respondents was 129. Of these 120 were included in the final analysis of the data. All nine of the excluded packets were either filled out incompletely or one of the components of the packet were not returned (i.e., demographic data sheet). Snowball sampling was utilized to obtain an equal number of men and women respondents. Of the 120 respondents, 60 were men and 60 were women. The purpose of having an equal number was to determine any differences between the groups to responses on the questionnaires.

The age range was 21 years to 66 years of age. The mean age for the sample was 36.9 and the median age was 37. The marital status of the sample included 107 who were married, 6 who were separated, 5 who were divorced, and 2 who were widowed. The married respondents comprised 89.2% of the sample. The length of marriage for this sample was relatively high with 68 (56.7%) who were married over 10 years. This corresponds to the age of the respondents who were over 30 years of age (84.2%).

The educational level for this sample was relatively high with 26 respondents having some college, 47 respondents possessing a bachelor's degree, and 26 respondents

possessing some type of graduate degree. Those respondents possessing a bachelor's degree comprised 39.2% of the sample. Those respondents possessing a graduate degree comprised 21.7% of the sample.

The occupational level for this sample revealed 34 (28.3%) who were in management, 17 (14.2%) who were homemakers, and the next highest category was a miscellaneous category with 18 (15%) respondents. Thus, the occupational category was diverse.

Household income ranged from 6 respondents whose combined income was below \$19,999 annually, to 8 respondents whose combined income was \$100,000 and up. There were 35 (29.2%) respondents who had a combined income of \$60,000 and over, and 70 (58.3%) respondents who ranged between \$30,000 and \$59,999.

The number of siblings in the parental home during days of residence ranged from no siblings in the home to 8 siblings in the home. The mean average number of siblings was 2.6, the median average was 2 siblings in the home, and the modal average was also 2 siblings in the home.

Respondents whose parents were divorced while living in their home totaled 16 (13.3%). Therefore, 104 respondents

did not experience divorce in their family of origin which comprised 86.7% of the sample.

Respondents were asked to report if they have attended marital therapy or a marriage enrichment program during the past six months. Seven indicated that they had attended one of these during the past 6 months representing 5.8% of the sample. The demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in tabular form in Appendix B.

### Findings

All eight subscales from the PAFS-Q were utilized in this study. Scores on the Spousal Intimacy (SI) subscale range from a low score of 11 to a high score of 55. Higher scores on this subscale indicate more spousal intimacy. The Spousal Fusion/ Individuation (SFI) subscale scores range from a low score of 20 and a high score of 100. Higher scores indicate more spousal individuation. The Nuclear Family Triangulation (NFT) subscale scores range from a low of 10 to a high score of 50. Higher scores indicate less nuclear family triangulation. The Intergenerational Intimacy (IIy) subscale scores range from a low score of 25 to a high score of 125. Higher scores indicate more intergenerational intimacy. The Intergenerational Fusion/ Individuation (IFI)

subscale scores range from a low score of 8 to a high score of 40. Higher scores indicate more intergenerational individuation. The Intergenerational Triangulation (IT) subscale scores range from a low score of 11 to a high score of 55. Higher scores indicate less intergenerational triangulation. The Intergenerational Intimidation (IIn) subscale scores range from a low score of 29 to a high score of 145. Higher scores indicate less intimidation. The Personal Authority (PA) subscale scores range from a low score of 18 to a high score of 63. Higher scores indicate more personal authority. Each of the mean subscale scores on the PAFS-Q can be found in Table 1.

All five subscales on the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship's inventory were utilized in this study to measure intimacy between married individuals. The absolute range of scores for each subscale is zero to 96. For each of the subscales on the PAIR, higher scores indicate a higher degree of intimacy for each aspect (i.e., social intimacy, sexual intimacy, intellectual intimacy, recreational intimacy, emotional intimacy). A review of the mean scores for the sample indicate slightly higher scores for a non-clinical sample, but well within the range of acceptance. The average discrepancy for perceived scores of



the normative sample was 14 to 20 points. Each of the mean subscale scores on the PAIR can be found in Table 1.

Eight subscale scores on the PASF questionnaire were significantly intercorrelated. All PAIRS subscale scores were significantly intercorrelated. The results of these correlations can be found in Tables 2 through 4. Test of assumptions for linearity, homogeneity, independence and normality were unremarkable. There were no significant outliers.

Five stepwise regression analyses were used to explore the relationship between the eight predictor variables on the PAFS-Q and the five criterion variables on the PAIRS inventory. The results of these analyses are organized in terms of hypotheses 1 through 5. In summary, all five null hypotheses were rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis that a linear combination of PAFS subscale scores significantly predict subscale scores on the PAIRS. Spousal Intimacy was a significant contributor in predicting all five PAIRS subscale scores. Collectively, Personal Authority and Spousal Intimacy were significant predictors of the Sexual PAIRS subscale scores. Detail on these analyses follow.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics on Eight Subscale Scores for the  
Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-  
Q) and Five Subscale Scores on the Personal Assessment of  
Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) Inventory (N=120)

Subscale	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
PAFS-Q		
SI	44.48	8.27
SFI	67.73	8.53
NFT	33.65	10.10
IIy	95.25	15.32
IFI	29.83	5.39
IT	30.04	11.70
IIn	107.18	19.56
PA	42.94	8.82
PAIRS		
Emotional	60.70	22.11
Social	64.64	20.42
Sexual	70.63	21.77
Intellectual	62.55	19.66
Recreational	64.08	20.22

NOTE: Spousal Intimacy (SI) Spousal Fusion/Individuation (SFI) Nuclear Family Triangulation (NFT) Intergenerational Intimacy (IIy) Intergenerational Fusion/Individuation (IFI) Intergenerational Triangulation (IT) Intergenerational Intimidation (IIn) Personal Authority (PA)

Table 2

Correlation Matrix of Eight Subscale Scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and Five Subscale Scores on the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) Inventory (N=120)

	SI	SFI	NFT	IIy	IFI	IT	IIn	PA
EMO	.774**	.241**	-.004	.278**	.195*	-.103	.024	.004
SOC	.446**	.167	.150	.224*	.051	-.007	-.009	.030
SEX	.557**	.207*	.032	.321**	.067	-.064	.002	.166
INT	.755*	.282**	-.005	.323**	.119	-.134	-.027	-.050
REC	.681**	.226**	.018	.384**	.213*	-.009	-.027	.107

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed)

Note: Emotional (EMO) Social (SOC) Sexual (SEX)  
Intellectual (INT) Recreational (REC)

Table 3

Intercorrelation Matrix Among Eight PASF Subscale Scores  
(N=120)

	SI	SFI	NFT	IIy	IFI	IT	IIn	PA
SFI	.258**	1.00						
NFT	.011	.034	1.00					
IIy	.309**	.222	-.069	1.00				
IFI	.134	.160	.007	.464**	1.00			
IT	-.111	.175	.048	.069	.139	1.00		
IIn	-.007	.252**	.101	-.292**	.116	.061	1.00	
PA	.013	.131	.041	.366**	.023*	.321*	.014	1.00

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed)

Table 4

Intercorrelation Matrix Among Five PAIRS Subscale Scores  
(N=120)

	EMO	SOC	SEX	INT	REC
EMO	1.00				
SOC	.439*	1.00			
SEX	.512*	.280*	1.00		
INT	.804*	.445*	.433*	1.00	
REC	.601*	.474*	.568*	.592*	1.00

\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed)

Hypothesis 1. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and the Emotional Intimacy (EI) subscale of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory at the  $p < .05$  level of significance. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables Predicting the PAIRS Emotional Subscale Scores (N=120)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u><math>\beta</math></u>
Spousal Intimacy	2.07	.156	.774*

Note: Adjusted  $R^2 = .600$ ,  $p < .01$

\* $p < .01$

The Spousal Intimacy subscale alone accounted for 60% of the variance in the PAIRS EI subscale scores. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and the Social Intimacy (SI) subscale of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory at the  $p < .05$  level of

significance. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables  
Predicting the PAIRS Social Subscale Scores (N=120)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u><math>\beta</math></u>
Spousal Intimacy	1.10	.203	.446*

Note: Adjusted  $R^2 = .192$ ,  $p < .01$

\* $p < .01$

The Spousal Intimacy subscale alone accounted for 19.2% of the variance in the PAIRS SI subscale. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 3. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and the Sexual Intimacy (SI) subscale of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory at the  $p < .05$  level of significance. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables  
Predicting the PAIRS Sexual Subscale Scores (N=120)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u><math>\beta</math></u>
Spousal Intimacy	1.46	.198	.555**
Personal Authority	.392	.186	.159*

Note: Adjusted  $R^2 = .324$ ,  $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

The Spousal Intimacy and Personal Authority subscales accounted for 32.4% of the variance in PAIRS Sexual Intimacy subscale scores. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 4. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and the Intellectual (INT) subscale of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory at the  $p < .05$  level of significance. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables  
Predicting the PAIRS Intellectual Subscale Scores (N=120)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u><math>\beta</math></u>
Spousal Intimacy	1.79	.144	.754*

Note: Adjusted  $R^2 = .566$ ,  $p < .01$

\* $p < .01$

The Spousal Intimacy subscale alone accounted for 56.6% of the variance in the PAIRS Intellectual Intimacy subscale scores. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 5. There is no statistically significant relationship between scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFS-Q) and the Recreational Intimacy (RI) subscale of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory at the  $p < .05$  level of significance. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 9.



Table 9

Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for PAFS Variables  
Predicting the PAIRS Recreational Subscale Scores (N=120)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u><math>\beta</math></u>
Spousal Intimacy	.254	.091	.192*

Note: Adjusted  $R^2 = .489$ ,  $p < .01$

\* $p < .01$

The Spousal Intimacy subscale alone accounted for 48.9% of the variance in the PAIRS Recreational Intimacy subscale scores. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Additional Findings. The sample consisted of 60 female and 60 male subjects. T-tests were computed to determine differences between females and males to responses to the PAFS questionnaire and PAIRS inventory. Using the Bonferroni adjustment for inflated Type I error rate technique (Huck & Cromier, 1996) there were no differences between groups among all subscale scores ( $p > .004$ ).

Since Personal Authority was the only other predictor variable, besides Spousal Intimacy, that significantly affected the criterion variable Sexual Intimacy, a bivariate correlation between the variables was performed.

Bivariately, Personal Authority and Sexual Intimacy were not significantly correlated ( $r=.013$ ). A partial correlation, which controlled for the effects of Spousal Intimacy between Personal Authority and Sexual Intimacy ( $r=.1913$ ), revealed that Spousal Intimacy moderated the relationship. Therefore, the bivariate relationship between Sexual Intimacy (DV) and Personal Authority is spurious. Personal Authority showed significant correlation with Sexual Intimacy only when it was influenced by Spousal Intimacy.

#### Summary

This chapter began with a description of the sample from which the results have been obtained. Five hypotheses regarding the predictive effect of subscale scores on the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire on subscale scores on the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships Survey were tested using stepwise regression. All null hypotheses were rejected. Spousal intimacy was a significant predictor of all five PAIRS subscale scores; Personal Authority was a significant contributor to predicting Sexual Intimacy. Additional findings presented test results which revealed no differences between males' and females' responses to the PAFS-Q or PAIRS inventory. A

bivariate correlation was performed which indicated the relationship between Personal Authority and Sexual Intimacy was spurious.

## CHAPTER V

### FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The central purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between aspects of personal authority in the intergenerational family system and intimacy between married individuals. Aspects of personal authority in the family system were measured by the PAFS-Q; intimacy between married individuals was measured by the PAIR inventory. The overall research question of this study addressed the possibility that unresolved family of origin relationships might inhibit intimacy between married individuals.

The null hypothesis was assumed for the major hypotheses of the study; statistical analysis was performed on the test score results to determine if the null was confirmed or rejected. As indicated in Chapter IV, the results of the study revealed all five null hypotheses were rejected. Five stepwise regression analyses favored an alternative hypothesis that a linear combination of PAFS-Q subscale scores significantly predict subscale scores on the PAIR inventory.

## Discussion of the Findings

This section will discuss the findings of the study consistent with each hypothesis found in Chapter I. A discussion of additional findings from the results in Chapter V will conclude this section.

### Hypothesis 1

A statistically significant relationship was indicated between the predictor variable Spousal Intimacy and the criterion variable Emotional Intimacy ( $R^2=.600$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Spousal Intimacy refers to the degree of intimacy and satisfaction with the mate or significant other. Emotional Intimacy refers to the experiencing of closeness of feeling; the ability to share openly, in a non-defensive atmosphere when there is supportiveness and genuine understanding. The Spousal Intimacy subscale scores on the PAFS-Q predicted 60% of the variance on the Emotional Intimacy subscale scores on the PAIR inventory. This result revealed the highest degree of variance among any of the predictor and criterion variables in this study. It also is significant that the highest statistical correlation in this study was between these variables ( $r=.774$ ). Thus, the statistical relationship between these two subscales indicates that these two variables tend to vary together; therefore, a higher degree of spousal intimacy occurs along with a higher degree of

emotional intimacy. It appears that these subscales tend to measure similar aspects of the same variable. Thus, spousal intimacy was a statistically significant predictor of emotional intimacy.

### Hypothesis 2

A statistically significant relationship was indicated between the subscale scores of the predictor variable Spousal Intimacy and the subscale scores of the criterion variable Social Intimacy ( $R^2=.192$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Social Intimacy refers to the experience of having common friends and a similar social network. Spousal Intimacy predicted 19.2% of the variance on the Social Intimacy subscale scores. While this relationship was statistically significant, it is considered fairly weak. Thus, intimacy between spouses tends to have a positive effect on a married individuals experience of social intimacy.

### Hypothesis 3

A statistically significant relationship was indicated between the subscale scores of the predictor variables Spousal Intimacy and Personal Authority and the subscale scores of the criterion variable Sexual Intimacy ( $R^2=.324$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Personal Authority refers to an individual's level of comfort in talking to one's parents about sensitive topics and the ability to actually talk to one's parents

about sensitive topics. Sexual Intimacy refers to the experience of showing general affection, touching, physical closeness, and/or sexual activity. Bivariately, Spousal Intimacy and Personal Authority accounted for 32.4% of the variance on the Sexual Intimacy subscale scores. An individual who is experiencing intimacy and satisfaction with their spouse and who is comfortable and able to talk to their own parents about sensitive topics, that individual tends to experience a greater degree of sexual intimacy in their current marital relationship. It is worthy of noting that one of the sensitive topics measured by the Personal Authority subscale is the ability to talk to parents about topics concerning sex.

The results of a bivariate and partial correlation concerning these variables indicated that Spousal Intimacy was a moderator of the relationship with Personal Authority. The relationship between Spousal Intimacy and Personal Authority was influenced by the other variables. This is expected since Williamson (1991) emphasizes that the Personal Authority subscale assesses the application of the other family of origin variables measured in the entire questionnaire. Thus, this subscale could be considered a synthesis of the entire questionnaire. This could account

for the combination of Spousal Intimacy and Personal Authority's prediction of Sexual Intimacy.

#### Hypothesis 4

A statistically significant relationship was indicated between the subscale scores of the predictor variable Spousal Intimacy and the subscale scores of the criterion variable Intellectual Intimacy ( $R^2=.566$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Intellectual Intimacy refers to the experience of sharing ideas, such as talking about events in one's life, or discussing job related issues, current affairs, and so forth. The Spousal Intimacy subscale accounted for 56.6% of the variance in the Intellectual Intimacy subscale scores. It should be noted that Intellectual Intimacy had the second strongest correlation ( $r=.755$ ,  $p<.05$ ) with Spousal Intimacy, next to Emotional Intimacy ( $r=.774$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Thus, spousal intimacy and satisfaction tend to vary together with the experience of communicating with one's partner concerning a wide range of topics. The more one experiences spousal satisfaction and intimacy, the more one tends to experience intellectual intimacy.

#### Hypothesis 5

A statistically significant relationship was indicated between the subscale scores of the predictor variable Spousal Intimacy and the subscale scores of the criterion



variable Recreational Intimacy ( $R^2=.489$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

Recreational Intimacy refers to shared experiences of interests in pastimes or hobbies; mutual participation in sporting events, mutual involvement in any general recreational or leisure activity. Spousal Intimacy predicted 48.9% of the variance in the Recreational Intimacy subscale scores. Individuals who are experiencing spousal intimacy and satisfaction tend to experience shared experiences of togetherness with their partner. This mutual involvement applies to a wide array of activities categorized as recreational in nature.

### Discussion of Additional Findings

#### Correlational Matrix

It is important to note that all five subscale scores on the PAIR inventory were statistically significantly strong correlations with PAFS-Q (see Table 2). While correlation statistics do not indicate causality, they do reveal that the variables measured tend to vary together. The results of the correlation matrix were consistent with the results of the step-wise regression. Spousal Intimacy, a measure of intimacy and satisfaction between spouses, predicts each of the dimensions of intimacy between married individuals as measured by the PAIR inventory. Spousal

Intimacy subscale scores account for the variance in the scores on each of the PAIR subscales as noted in the previous discussion.

The interesting finding regarding this study is that none of the subscales on the PAFS-Q which measure an aspect of intergenerational processes were significant predictors of intimacy between married individuals, except for Personal Authority. It was noted earlier that this variable was moderated by Spousal Intimacy.

While all the correlations of the other PAFS-Q subscales which measure intergenerational processes were statistically significant, all of these relationships were very weak relationships. Intergenerational Intimacy correlated the highest with each of the PAIR subscales apart from Spousal Intimacy. This relationship is still considered statistically weak. Compey (1973) emphasizes that a correlation of .45 indicates 20% of overlapping variance and is considered a fair relationship statistically. Only Spousal Intimacy had statistical correlations with the PAIRS subscales that were .45 or over.

#### Demographic Findings

The demographics revealed two significant and possibly influential characteristics of the sample concerning the results of this study. First, the length of marriage

category revealed that 56.7% of the respondents were married over 10 years. Second, the mean age for the sample was 36.9 years and the median age was 37 years. Both of these results could have influenced the intergenerational subscale scores effect on their current relationship with their partner. Williamson (1991) emphasized that most individuals do not accomplish differentiation from their family of origin until the 4th decade of their adult life. Thus, this sample was both older and a significant percentage who were married over ten years, it is possible that their current spousal satisfaction and intimacy, not their family of origin factors, accounted for the scores on the PAIR subscales.

T-tests revealed no differences between male and female groups among all subscale scores. T-tests were not performed to control for length of marriage or age of respondent.

### Conclusions

Spousal Intimacy as measured by the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire is a significant predictor of intimacy between married individuals as measured by the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships Inventory. Spousal Intimacy refers to the degree of intimacy and satisfaction with a mate or significant other. Spousal Intimacy is a significant

predictor of each of the subscales on the PAIR inventory. An individual's degree of satisfaction and intimacy with their mate, not the influence of their family of origin, predict intimacy in their current relationship or marriage.

The only aspect of intergenerational family processes which demonstrated any influence on intimacy between married individuals was the measure of Personal Authority. The Personal Authority subscale was a significant contributor to predicting Sexual Intimacy. This conclusion is drawn with caution due to the previous discussions regarding the findings, which revealed Spousal Intimacy was a moderator of the relationship between Personal Authority and Sexual Intimacy. Finally, this study contributes further empirical findings to the field of intergenerational family processes and the effect upon intimacy in marriage.

### Implications

The application of these findings to the practice of working with individuals and families in therapy or through marriage and family education has demonstrated that certain aspects of Personal Authority within the intergenerational family system affect intimacy between married individuals. An individual's family of origin processes are not significant predictors of intimacy between married

individuals, except for spousal intimacy and personal authority.

An individual's current degree of intimacy or satisfaction with their mate or significant other is a significant predictor of emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational intimacy. Except for personal authority, no intergenerational process variable was a significant predictor of intimacy between married individuals. Marriage and Family Therapists and Family Life Educators should note that an individual's family of origin experiences and processes are not significant predictors of intimacy between married individuals, as compared to the effect of the individual's degree of intimacy and satisfaction with their mate or significant other. Thus, helping a couple to focus on making changes in the present that promote intimacy in their relationship could be more useful than focusing on past family of origin influences.

As educators, marriage and family specialists need to emphasize current, present oriented approaches that empower and promote strategies for a couple to practice in their current relationship. It is important that intimacy between married individuals be seen as a relational, more than an intergenerational construct. The current relationship

dynamics can take precedence over past intergenerational dynamics when dealing with this construct.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

If indeed men and women in the fourth decade of life do deal with differentiation issues more successfully, it would be interesting to control for age and determine if there would be any differences between groups on the subscale scores. It is recommended that this study be replicated to determine if age and length of marriage are factors that influenced the results of this study.

Likewise, this study could be replicated using a canonical correlation to determine which of the five subscale scores on the PAIRS inventory significantly predict the other seven subscale scores on the PAFS-Q. This would set up a different design to determine which of the criterion variables used in this study collectively predict the predictor variables. The result of such a design could reveal that the criterion variables and the significant predictor variable of this study in fact measure the same construct.

Finally, this study could be replicated to control for religiosity. The sample of this study was obtained from a population of church attending individuals and couples. This

could be compared to a sample of non-church individuals to determine any differences between the groups on the subscale scores.

### Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of this study in indicating that Spousal Intimacy was a significant predictor of each of the PAIR subscales which measured intimacy between married individuals. A combination of Spousal Intimacy and Personal Authority as significant predictors of Sexual Intimacy was discussed in detail. Additional findings from the correlation matrix and demographic characteristics were detailed. Finally, this chapter included the conclusions, implications and recommendations for future research.

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## APPENDICES



Appendix A  
Demographic Data Sheet

## Demographic Data Sheet

- (1) Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Age \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Married \_\_\_\_\_ Separated \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_  
Never Married \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Occupation \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) Length of current or most recent marriage:  
\_\_\_\_\_ less than 6 months  
\_\_\_\_\_ 6 months to 2 years  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2 years to 10 years  
\_\_\_\_\_ over 10 years
- (6) Highest Level of Education Attained:  
Some High School \_\_\_\_\_  
High School or G.E.D. \_\_\_\_\_  
Some College \_\_\_\_\_  
Bachelor's Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Degree \_\_\_\_\_
- (7) Please indicate where your gross household income would fall on the following list:
- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Up to \$19,999 _____   | 60,000 to 69,999 _____ |
| 20,000 to 29,000 _____ | 70,000 to 79,999 _____ |
| 30,000 to 39,000 _____ | 80,000 to 89,999 _____ |
| 40,000 to 49,000 _____ | 90,000 to 99,999 _____ |
| 50,000 to 59,000 _____ | 100,000 and up _____   |
- (8) Your Ethnicity: Caucasian \_\_\_\_\_ Black \_\_\_\_\_  
Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- (9) Number of brothers and sisters in your family during the time you were living at home \_\_\_\_\_
- (10) Were your parents divorced while you were living in their home? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no
- (11) Have you and your spouse attended marital therapy or a marital enrichment program over the past six months? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

Appendix B

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (n=120)

<u>Gender</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Female	60	50.0%
Male	60	50.0%
<u>Age of Respondent</u>		
21-29	19	15.8%
30-39	53	44.2%
40-49	33	27.5%
50-59	9	7.5%
60-over	6	1.7%
<u>Marital Status</u>		
Married	107	89.2%
Separated	6	5.0%
Divorced	5	4.2%
Widowed	2	1.7%
<u>Length of Marriage</u>		
6Mo-2Yrs	14	11.7%
2Yrs-10Yrs	38	31.7%
Over 10Yrs	68	56.7%
<u>Education Level</u>		
Some High School	1	0.8%
High School or GED	20	16.7%
Some College	26	21.7%
Bachelor's Degree	47	39.2%
Graduate Degree	26	21.7%
<u>Occupation</u>		
School Teacher	7	5.8%
Counselor	9	7.5%
Clerical	14	11.7%
Engineer	14	11.7%

	<u>n</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Homemaker	17	14.2%
Management	34	28.3%
Nurse	7	5.8%
Miscellaneous	18	15.0%

Income

Less than \$19,999	6	5.0%
\$20,000 to \$29,999	9	7.5%
\$30,000 to \$39,999	22	18.3%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	27	22.5%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	21	17.5%
\$60,000 to \$69,999	12	10.0%
\$70,000 to \$79,999	8	6.7%
\$80,000 to \$89,999	3	2.5%
\$90,000 to \$99,999	4	3.3%
\$100,000 and up	8	6.7%

Number of Siblings in Parental Home during days of Residence

0	6	5.0%
1	28	23.3%
2	28	23.3%
3	28	23.3%
4	17	14.2%
5	7	5.8%
6	1	0.8%
7	4	3.3%
8	1	0.8%

Parents were Divorced while living in their home

16	13.3%
----	-------

Have attended Marital Therapy or Marital Enrichment Program  
over last six (6) months

7	5.8%
---	------

Appendix C

Letter of Permission to Use the Personal  
Authority in the Family System  
Questionnaire



BAYLOR  
COLLEGE OF  
MEDICINE

One Baylor Plaza  
Houston, Texas 77030

Department of Family  
Medicine  
(713) 798-7700

Address correspondence to:  
5510 Greenbriar  
Houston, Texas 77005

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your request of the **Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire**. Enclosed are the materials that you requested.

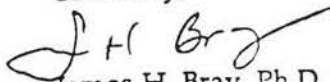
You are hereby granted permission to reproduce the **PAFS-Q** and answer sheet for your proposed project. You may not alter the original **scales or use items from a single scale**. Be sure to reference the 1984 article or manual in any articles.

If you plan to use the **PAFS-Q** in your thesis or dissertation, **do not put a copy of the instrument and how to score it in your final manuscript**. Indicate that people should contact me for copies of the instrument.

We may contact you in the future to receive your feedback on the instrument. Since this is the first printing we would greatly appreciate any feedback you have on the instrument and manual.

We will keep your name on our mailing list for future updates. Thank you for your interest in our work. If you have any questions feel free to write or call me at (713) 798-7751.

Sincerely,

  
James H. Bray, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor

JHB:jb

Appendix D

Letter of Permission to Use the Personal  
Assessment of Intimacy in  
Relationships Inventory



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
TWIN CITIES

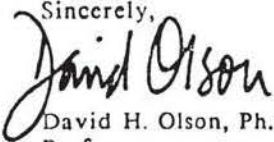
Family Social Science  
290 McNeal Hall  
1935 Buford Avenue  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108  
(612) 625-7250

### PERMISSION TO USE PAIR

I am pleased to give you permission to use PAIR in your research project, teaching, or clinical work with couples and families. You can either duplicate the materials directly or have them retyped for use in a new format. If they are retyped, acknowledgement should be given regarding the name of the instrument, the developer's name, and the University of Minnesota.

In exchange for providing this permission, we would appreciate a copy of any papers, thesis, or reports that you complete using these inventories. This will help us in staying abreast of the most recent development and research with these scales. Thank you for your cooperation.

In closing, I hope you find PAIR of value in your work with couples and families. I would appreciate hearing from you as you make use of this inventory.

Sincerely,  
  
David H. Olson, Ph.D.  
Professor

DHO:vmw

Appendix E  
Personal Authority in the Family  
System Questionnaire

At the author's request, a copy of the PAFS-Q is not included; interested parties should contact the author at the enclosed address for a copy of the  
PAFS-Q:

James H. Bray, Ph.D.  
5510 Greenbriar  
Houston, Texas 77005

Appendix F  
Personal Assessment of Intimacy  
in Relationships

INSTRUCTIONS: This Inventory is used to measure different kinds of "intimacy" in your relationship. You are to indicate your response to each statement by using the following five point scale.

---

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly	Somewhat	Neutral	Somewhat	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree

---

There are two steps to the Inventory. In Part I you are to respond in the way you feel about the item at present. Use Step One of the ANSWER SHEET for this step. It is labeled "How it is Now."

In the second step you are to respond according to the way you would like it to be, that is, if you could have your relationship be any way that you may want it to be. Use Step Two for this step. It is labeled "How I would like it to be." There are no right or wrong answers.

Respond to all the items in Step One before proceeding to Step Two.

\*\*\*\*\*

---

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

---

1. My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to.
2. We enjoy spending time with other couples.
3. I am satisfied with our sex life.
4. My partner helps me clarify my thoughts.
5. We enjoy the same recreational activities.
6. My partner has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.
7. I can state my feelings without him/her getting defensive.
8. We usually "Keep to ourselves."
9. I feel our sexual activity is just routine.
10. When it comes to having a serious discussion, it seems we have little in common.
11. I share in few of my partner's interests.
12. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my partner.
13. I often feel distant from my partner.
14. We have few friends in common.
15. I am able to tell my partner when I want sexual intercourse.
16. I feel "put-down" in a serious conversation with my partner.
17. We like playing together.
18. Every new thing I have learned about my partner has pleased me.
19. My partner can really understand my hurts and joys.
20. Having time together with friends is an important part of our shared activities.

0 Strongly Disagree	1 Somewhat Disagree	2 Neutral	3 Somewhat Agree	4 Strongly Agree
21. I "hold back" my sexual interest because my partner makes me feel uncomfortable.				
22. I feel it is useless to discuss some things with my partner.				
23. We enjoy the out-of-doors together.				
24. My partner and I understand each other completely.				
25. I feel neglected at times by my partner.				
26. Many of my partner's closest friends are also my closest friends.				
27. Sexual expression is an essential part of our relationship.				
28. My partner frequently tries to change my ideas.				
29. We seldom find time to do fun things together.				
30. I don't think anyone could possibly be happier than my partner and I when we are with one another.				
31. I sometimes feel lonely when we're together.				
32. My partner disapproves of some of my friends.				
33. My partner seems disinterested in sex.				
34. We have an endless number of things to talk about.				
35. I feel we share some of the same interests.				
36. I have some needs that are not being met by my relationship.				