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# Approaches to Parenting and Information Processing

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APPROACHES TO PARENTING AND INFORMATION PROCESSING

A Capstone Project Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

with Honors College Graduate Distinction at

Western Kentucky University

By

Alyssa G. Berry

April 2019

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mother, whose sacrifices and lifelong dedication to creating a positive future for me have built the foundation for my education, success, and happiness.

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## ABSTRACT

Corporal punishment can be defined as using physical force with intent to cause pain when punishing a child (Straus, 2000). A substantial amount of research supports that corporal punishment has a negative effect on a child's social and emotional development, specifically empathy and moral development. Studies also support that those who received corporal punishment as children are more likely to use corporal punishment with their own children (Gagné, Tourigny, & Pouliot-Lapointe, 2007). This current study elaborates on both these aspects of previous research. Three hypotheses frame this study: 1) Receiving corporal punishment as a child predicts lower empathy and moral judgment development. 2) Parental usage of corporal punishment (PUCP) predicts the likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent (LUCPP). 3) LUCPP mediates the effect of PUCP such that increased and decreased LUCPP respectively account for PUCP's effect on empathy and moral development. Results from this study showed a significant correlation between corporal punishment and moral judgement development, but not empathy. There was also a positive significant correlation between PUCP and LUCPP. However, LUCPP was not found to mediate the effect of PUCP on moral development.

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One of the most impactful decisions parents can make is how they plan to raise their children. From nutrition, education, and how much screen time is allotted, every decision parents make can affect their child's development. The decision of how to discipline one's child may perhaps have the largest impact. A common, yet destructive, form of discipline is corporal punishment, which is the focus of this study.

Corporal punishment can be defined as the act of using physical force to discipline a child with the intent of causing pain (Straus, 2000). This can vary in intensity from mild (spanking on the buttocks with an open palm) to more severe (hitting with hand or foreign object, slapping, or kicking). Although corporal punishment may not result in physical injuries that can be seen by others, the effects of corporal punishment can have long-term, negative effects on the child mentally. Afifi et al. (2017) assert that spanking should be considered an adverse childhood experience, as it is associated with increased mental health impairment in adults such as increased depressed affect (observable symptoms of depression) and even suicide attempts. Even if a child has only been spanked once or twice, there can still be negative effects (Straus, 1994).

Research reveals that a host of other negative outcomes are associated with parental discipline involving corporal punishment as was shown in a study from Aucoin, Frick, and Bodin (2006). Specifically, Aucoin et al. found that children who frequently received corporal punishment had lower adjustment and lower IQ scores than children who only received mild physical punishment. Also, they found that children who received no corporal punishment at all scored higher in self-esteem than those who did experience corporal punishment. Aucoin et al. noted that children who received corporal punishment had lower overall emotional well-being than those who did not. Finally,

Aucoin et al. supported that corporal punishment was also found to have a significant correlation with conduct problems.

Although there are a variety of negative outcomes associated with receiving corporal punishment as a form of parental discipline, the current study specifically focuses on the relationship between receiving corporal punishment and outcomes pertaining to social development. These outcomes include empathy and moral development. Where the current study is concerned, empathy is defined as the ability to vicariously feel others' emotions and place oneself in their situation (Hoffman, 2000). Moral development is a broad term but for the purposes of this study refers to attributes impacting moral functioning such as prosocial behavior (i.e, honesty, integrity, volunteerism, etc.), moral reasoning, and moral decision making (Killen & Smetana, 2006). A review of the relationship between corporal punishment and these variables follows.

Hoffman (1994) states that power-assertive forms of discipline, such as corporal punishment, are correlated with low empathy, guilt, and helping. Hoffman (1994) concludes that harsh discipline, such as corporal punishment, causes the child to focus on personal consequences and distracts the child from the consequences their actions have on others thereby making it more difficult for them to feel empathy. According to Hoffman (2001), induction is a much more appropriate discipline method. In using induction, the parent shows and discusses with a child the distress and harm their actions cause to others so that the child understands why the behavior is inappropriate. Demonstrating to a child that their actions caused harm to someone else results in the child feeling empathy and perhaps even guilt, which can lead them to discontinue the

undesirable behavior in the future. Hoffman (2001) found use of induction to be one of the most likely discipline methods to contribute to empathy, as well as guilt over harming others and helping behaviors. Therefore, the limitation of corporal punishment as a discipline method for Hoffman (1994, 2001) is that it keeps the child's focus solely on the self and does not allow the child to focus on how others are impacted.

Others have corroborated the work of Hoffman (1994, 2001). For example, Lopez, Bonenberger, and Schneider (2001) noted corporal punishment to be a significant predictor of low empathy. Relatedly, they found that parents who used induction had children with more empathy. Cornell and Frick (2007) found that regardless of a child's temperament, the use of corporal punishment significantly and negatively impacts the child's levels of empathy and is detrimental to a child's overall prosocial development.

Corporal punishment has been shown to have long-lasting effects into college on variables pertaining to moral development such as academic dishonesty (Qualls, 2014). Qualls found among 231 undergraduate students that those who received corporal punishment were more likely to be academically dishonest in college. For example, 80% of Qualls' total participants admitted to cheating in college at some point. Over 50% of the total participants stated that they were spanked as a child. Additionally, one third of their participants reported receiving severe physical punishment as a child. Results showed that this group engaged in academic dishonesty more frequently overall.

Although there was no correlation between milder spanking (hand on buttocks rather than object on buttocks or hitting or slapping) and academic dishonesty, many participants who reported being spanked also reported being physically punished by hitting, kicking, or slapping. Therefore, Qualls (2014) concluded that spanking was still

related to higher frequency of academic dishonesty through its relationship with more severe punishment. That is, those who were spanked were more likely to also receive other forms corporal punishment, and those who received corporal punishment were more likely to cheat in college. Qualls' study touches on how corporal punishment can lead to making immoral decisions and gives reason to look further into how corporal punishment may affect moral development. The authors offer in their discussion that those who receive harsh physical punishment have lower levels of moral reasoning because they did not internalize values through discipline. They asserted that those who were physically punished were more likely to engage in academic dishonesty because they did not internalize appropriate moral values. This coincides with findings from previous studies that corporal punishment does not facilitate the internalization of moral values because corporal punishment does not involve discussing with the child how their behavior may negatively affect others (Devi, 2014).

According to Lopez, Bonenberger, and Schneider (2001), the use of corporal punishment correlates with lower levels of moral reasoning. Lopez et al. maintain that aggressive parenting styles like those involving corporal punishment to discipline may prevent the child from developing a set of internalized moral values. They infer that using physical punishment could result in the child relying on external sanctions when using moral reasoning. For example, when considering if they should hit another child or not, Lopez et al. argue that a child who was physically punished might use the reasoning, "If I hit them, I will be put in time out." This would be in contrast to a child who has internalized moral values, who may think, "If I hit them, that will hurt them and they will feel bad."

Inferentially supportive of the link between corporal punishment and its relationship with moral development is the work of Carlo, Mestre, Samper, Tur, and Armenta (2010), who illustrated a positive relationship between parental warmth and moral reasoning. According to Carlo et al., parents who exhibit a high degree of parental warmth are supportive, responsive, and exhibit a positive attitude. Carlo et al. found that parental warmth was a strong predictor of prosocial behavior, sympathy for others, and prosocial moral reasoning. Prosocial behavior can be defined as voluntary behavior that benefits someone else (Eisenberg & Miller, 1986). As such, the main takeaway from the work of Carlo et al. are the inferences taken from their findings. Specifically, whereas parents who are more warm and loving support positive development of prosocial values and moral reasoning, those parents who reflect the opposite of such attributes (as could be the case among those who use corporal punishment) do not.

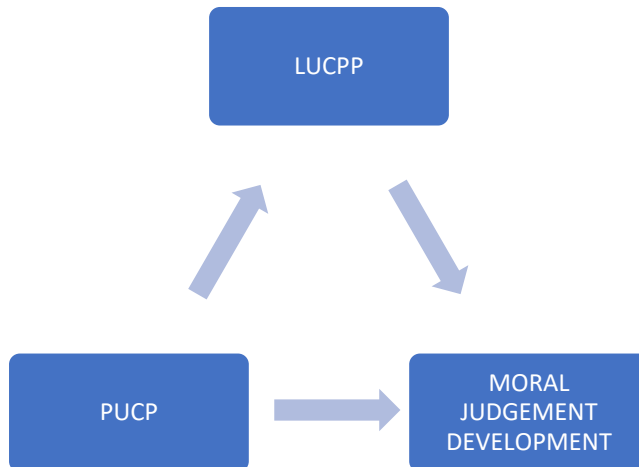
Research on corporal punishment also supports that those who experienced corporal punishment as children are more likely to use corporal punishment in the future with their own children (Gagné, Tourigny, & Pouliot-Lapointe, 2007). According to Gagné et al., those who experienced frequent corporal punishment, those who do not think corporal punishment can cause any injuries, and those who did not feel especially harmed or threatened have the highest opinions supporting corporal punishment. On the other hand, those who experienced severe physical punishment had less favorable attitudes towards corporal punishment because they remembered the pain and negative emotions more vividly. As such, the findings of Gagné et al. suggest that the effects of corporal punishment where moral development and empathy are concerned can extend beyond a single generation thereby creating a dangerous cycle.

Likelihood of future use of corporal punishment can even be predicted amongst school children. Simons and Wurtele (2010) interviewed both parents and their children (ages 3-7 years old) and found that not only were parents who experienced corporal punishment as a child more likely to approve of it as a discipline technique, their children were also more likely to endorse spanking as a form of punishment. Not only that, but children whose parents use and approve of corporal punishment were more likely to use hitting or physical force to resolve conflicts with their friends or siblings (Simons & Wurtele, 2010). The results of this study indicate that use of corporal punishment teaches children that aggression is an acceptable way to deal with conflict at a young age and can be a predictor of future use of corporal punishment.

The purpose of this research is to examine how receiving corporal punishment as a form of parental discipline, along with one's thoughts on using corporal punishment as a form of discipline, specifically relate to moral reasoning and empathy. The study aims to elaborate on previous research, but also considers the relevance of the participant's thoughts about using corporal punishment as a parent in the future in the context of corporal punishment, moral reasoning, and empathy. Three hypotheses frame the current study:

- 1) Receiving corporal punishment as a child predicts lower empathy and moral reasoning.
- 2) Parental usage of corporal punishment (PUCP) predicts the likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent (LUCPP).

3) LUCPP mediates the effect of PUCP such that increased and decreased LUCPP respectively account for PUCP's effect on empathy and moral reasoning.



## METHOD

### Participants

Participants were 133 undergraduate students from Western Kentucky University. Ages ranged from 18 – 46 years old ( $m = 20.1$ ,  $sd = 3.54$ ). Among those surveyed, 23 were male, 110 were female. Among the participants, 62 were Freshmen, 30 were Sophomores, 20 were Juniors, 19 were Seniors, and 2 were listed as Other. Among the participants who provided information about their ethnicity, 94 were White, 20 were African American, 3 were Asian American, 8 were Hispanic or Latino, and 8 indicated Other.

### Materials

**Demographics Questionnaire.** Each participant completed a demographics questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of questions about the participants'



background. Items included age, gender, college classification, ACT and/or SAT score, GPA, and ethnicity.

**Moral Reasoning.** The Defining Issues Test-2 (DIT2; Thoma, 2006) was used to measure the moral reasoning of participants. On the DIT2, participants are asked to read five vignettes in which a moral dilemma is posed and are then asked to make a decision on behalf of the acting character as to whether the character should or should not pursue an action. Participants can also indicate that they “can’t decide.” For example, after reading a vignette about a cancer patient wanting to end her suffering, participants are asked “Should the doctor give her an increased dosage? Do you favor the action of giving more medicine?” Next are 12 issues that participants are asked to rate in terms of its importance toward making the moral decision they did. An example from the cancer vignette includes “Should only God decide when a person’s life should end” (Thoma, 2006). Participants then rank the top four most important items in regard to making a decision. The DIT2 takes 25-40 minutes to complete.

From the ranking information from each vignette, three developmental indices of moral reasoning are generated: Personal Interest (PI), Maintaining Norms (MN), and Postconventional (P). Personal interest indicates the degree to which one’s own interests motivate their moral decision making. Maintaining norms indicates the degree to which societal norms and laws motivate one’s moral decision making. Postconventional indicates the degree to which one makes decisions based on their own moral principles that are self-chosen based on their values. Scores in each of the indices range from 0 to 95, in which higher scores mean more frequent usage of the reasoning the index

represents. Cronbach's alpha coefficients found in this study were: Personal Interest:  $\alpha = .65$ ; Maintaining Norms  $\alpha = .59$ ; and Postconventional  $\alpha = .78$ .

**Empathy.** The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI, Davis, 1980) measured empathy by asking participants to rank each item from "1=Does not describe me well" to "5=describes me very well" on a 5-point Likert scale. Items include statements like "I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me", or "I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me" (Davis, 1980). Although the IRI produces four subscales, the current study solely references the composite scores. Thus, scores range from 28 – 90 with higher scores indicating increased empathy. Cronbach's alpha found for this measure was:  $\alpha = .80$ . From start to finish, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index takes 5-15 minutes.

**Parental Usage of Corporal Punishment and Likelihood of Using Corporal Punishment as a Parent.** Both parental usage of corporal punishment (PUCP) and likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent (LUCPP) were measured by an adapted version of the Parent Practices Interview (Evidence-based Prevention & Intervention Support Center, 2015) in which only the corporal punishment index was used. This was split into two parts: Parent Practices Interview (PPI) and Future Parent Practices Interview (FPPI). Each version consisted of the same content, just worded differently. For example, where the PPI asked, "How often did your parents do each of the following things when you misbehaved as a child", the FPPI asked, "In the future when you are a parent, how often do you *expect* to do these things when your child misbehaves? If you already are a parent, how often do you do these things when your child misbehaves" (Evidence-based Prevention & Intervention Support Center, 2015).

Each question was followed by 8 items containing a different type of disciplinary practice, such as “give him/her a time out” or “slap or hit your child (but not spanking)” (Evidence-based Prevention & Intervention Support Center, 2015). Two of these items measured corporal punishment. Participants ranked the likelihood that they would use each form of discipline on a 7-point likert scale ranging from “1=never” to “7=always.” In the current study, only items pertaining to corporal punishment were addressed. Across the scale, there are six total items pertaining to corporal punishment. Scores may range from 6 to 42. On the PPI, higher scores indicate having experienced corporal punishment more as a child. Cronbach’s alpha for the PPI was:  $\alpha = .86$ . On the FPPI, higher scores indicate a higher likelihood of using corporal punishment in the future. Cronbach’s alpha for the FPPI was .82.

## **Procedure**

Participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent document. After signing the document, participants were given a packet that contained the demographic questionnaire, the DIT2, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, and the adapted version of the Parent Practices Interview. Each packet began with the demographic questionnaire, with the other three surveys counterbalanced. Data collection took no longer than 45 to 60 minutes per session and was completed in the Research of Ethical Social Topics (REST) Lab.

## **RESULTS**

Descriptive statistics for all variables are listed in Table 1. As noted in Table 1, participants scored low in moral reasoning overall. The table also shows that participants

had average scores in empathy. Overall, participants reported sometimes experiencing parental usage of corporal punishment and slightly likely to use corporal punishment in the future.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

	<u>Total</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
P	30.5669	16.51880
MN	28.8370	11.66770
PI	32.3295	10.98739
irisum	100.0677	11.94951
PPI	15.4444	8.37427
FPPI	11.5203	6.21783

*Note:* P= DIT2 Postconventional score, MN = DIT2 Maintaining Norms score, PI = DIT2 Personal Interests score, irisum = Interpersonal Reactivity Index score, PPI= Parent Practices Interview score, and FPPI = Future Parent Practices Interview score.

To address the three hypotheses, bivariate correlations were first computed among the variables included in Table 1. The results are reported in Table 2. Consistent with hypothesis 1, there was a statistically significant correlation observed between postconventional reasoning and parental use of corporal punishment. A statistically significant relationship was also observed between parental use of corporal punishment

and future use of corporal punishment, consistent with hypothesis 2. There was also a statistically significant relationship between future use of corporal punishment and postconventional reasoning, thereby supporting the plausibility and further investigation of hypothesis 3. There was not a statistically significant relationship among empathy and other variables of interest, which was not consistent with hypothesis 1. Additionally, there were no consistent relationships observed with maintaining norms and personal interest moral reasoning scores and the corporal punishment variables. As such, these latter three variables are not included in further analyses.

Table 2

*Correlation Matrix for DIT2, IRI, PPI and FPPI*

	PI	MN	P	irisum	CPParent	CPFuture
PI	1.0					
MN	-.379**	1.0				
P	-.461**	-.582**	1.0			
irisum	-.035	-.223*	.246**	1.0		
CPParent	.132	.025	-.196*	-.021	1.0	
CPFuture	.051	.193*	-.231*	-.101	.553**	1.0

*Note:* \*\*p < .01 \*p < .05; P= DIT2 Postconventional score, MN = DIT2 Maintaining Norms score, PI = DIT2 Personal Interests score, irisum = Interpersonal Reactivity Index score, CPParent= Parent Practices Interview score, and CPFuture = Future Parent Practices Interview score.

Three linear regression analyses were conducted for those variables in which there were statistically significant correlations corresponding with the hypotheses. The first regression analysis (see Table 3) revealed that parental use of corporal punishment was a negative and significant predictor of postconventional reasoning.

Table 3

*Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for Postconventional Reasoning*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
( $R^2 = .041, p = .028$ ) CPParent	-.393	.177	-.203	-2.222	.028

The second regression analysis (see Table 4) revealed that parental use of corporal punishment was a positive and significant predictor of intended future use of corporal punishment.

Table 4

*Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for Intended Future Use of Corporal Punishment*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
( $R^2 = .304, p = .000$ ) CPParent	.414	.059	.552	7.001	.000

The third regression analysis (see Table 5) was a two-block hierarchical linear regression analysis, which accounted for the contributions of parental use of corporal punishment and intended future use of corporal punishment as a parent on postconventional reasoning. Parental use of corporal punishment was entered in the first block, and intended future use of corporal punishment as a parent was entered in the second block. In addition to duplicating the first regression analysis in the first block, also shown in the second block was that a) inclusion of likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent in the future did not add a statistically significant amount of shared variance relative to the first block, and b) neither of the independent variables pertaining to corporal punishment were significant predictors of postconventional reasoning. Therefore, likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent in the future cannot be considered a mediating variable according to the criteria of Baron and Kenny (1986) since there was no significant contribution from likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent in the future on postconventional reasoning observed in Block 2.

Table 5

*Summary of Linear Regression Analyses for Postconventional Reasoning*

		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	Sig.
Block 1	CPParent	-.373	.176	-.196	-2.119	.036
<i>(R<sup>2</sup> = .039, p = .036)</i>						
Block 2	CPParent	-.189	.210	-.099	-.900	.370

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$(R^2 = .060, p = .114)$	CPFuture	-.445	.279	-.176	-1.594	.114
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## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research study was to examine how receiving corporal punishment as a form of parental discipline, along with one's thoughts on using corporal punishment as a form of discipline, relate to moral reasoning and empathy. The study addressed previous research which stated that receiving corporal punishment as a child correlates with lower levels of moral reasoning and empathy. The study sought to further address these relationships by also considering the relevance of the participant's thoughts about using corporal punishment as a parent in the future in the context of corporal punishment, moral judgment development, and empathy. Three hypotheses framed the current study: 1) Receiving corporal punishment as a child predicts lower empathy and moral reasoning, 2) Parental usage of corporal punishment (PUCP) predicts the likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent (LUCPP), and 3) LUCPP mediates the effect of PUCP such that increased and decreased LUCPP respectively account for PUCP's effect on empathy and moral reasoning.

The first hypothesis was partially supported. A significant and negative correlation was observed between receiving corporal punishment and postconventional



moral reasoning. Regression analysis showed that parental use of corporal punishment negatively and significantly predicted postconventional reasoning. This result is consistent with the findings of Lopez, Bonenberger, and Schneider (2001) who also found corporal punishment to be a significant predictor of moral judgement. The findings are also consistent with Carlo et al. (2010), who found that participants whose parents were not warm and loving did not show positive development of prosocial values and moral reasoning. According to Hoffman (1994), receiving corporal punishment may cause the child to focus on personal consequences rather than how their decisions affect others. Ancillary support for this from the current study can also be seen through the three DIT2 indices, which together reveal a preference for personal interests reasoning.

Receiving corporal punishment was not a significant correlate of empathy, which does not support hypothesis 1. This latter result contrasts the findings of Lopez, Bonenberger, and Schneider (2001), who found corporal punishment to predict empathy. There are multiple reasons why these findings could be different. Notably, decreases in college students' level of empathy overall have been observed in recent years. A study by Konrath, O'Brien, and Ksing (2011) that used the IRI as a measure of empathy found empathetic concern and perspective taking decreased in college students over time, with the most significant decline between the years 2000 and 2009. This decline in empathy in college students over time could account for the average scores on the IRI and the difference in findings between the present study and Lopez et al., since there is an 18 year time difference between the studies.

Additionally, the present study used the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI, Davis, 1980) to measure empathy whereas Lopez et al. measured empathy with the

Questionnaire Measure of Emotional Empathy (QMEE; Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972).

The QMEE was not used in the present study due to cost and accessibility restrictions.

The IRI is more readily accessible and is also widely used in research. The difference in measures could also account for the difference in findings. When examining the differences in the measures, one difference between the two is that the IRI includes more items that are more focused on putting oneself in *fictional* scenarios, such as movies and books, rather than realistic situations that everyone can relate to. The QMEE has fewer items related to fantasy than the IRI. The items in the QMEE lean more towards how the participant may judge other's emotional reactions, whereas the IRI focuses more on the participant's personal reactions. This could account for differences.

The second hypothesis was fully supported with a significant and positive correlation between PUCP and LUCPP and regression analysis revealing PUCP to be a positive and significant predictor of LUCPP. These findings are consistent with the Simons and Wurtele (2010) in which parents who reported experiencing corporal punishment as a child also approved the use of corporal punishment with their own children. These findings are also consistent with the findings of Gagné et al. (2007) who had similar findings. Gagné et al. elaborated on these findings by noting that those who experienced corporal punishment frequently, who felt they had not been harmed, and those who thought that it could not cause any serious harm or injury were more likely to endorse future use of corporal punishment. This present study did not account for such reasons. Nonetheless, the current study supports that the relationship between receiving corporal punishment from a parent and intending to use it as a parent is strong.

The third hypothesis was not supported. Although there was a positive and significant negative correlation between LUCPP and PUCP and also a negative and significant correlation between LUCPP and postconventional reasoning scores (see Table 2), LUCPP cannot be properly considered a mediator of the effect of PUCP on moral judgment development since a significant contribution from LUCPP to postconventional reasoning was not observed in the hierarchical linear regression analysis (Baron & Kenny, 1986). It should be acknowledged, however, LUCPP reduced the contribution of PUCP on postconventional reasoning scores in the second block of the hierarchical linear regression. Since there was such a strong correlation between PUCP and FUCPP, repeated analysis may have weakened the individual contributions of PUCP and FUCP on postconventional reasoning scores. Future research should include an opportunity for participants to explain why they do or do not plan to use corporal punishment in order to have a better understanding of the subject. Failure to do so in the current study may have been the reason why intention to use corporal punishment failed to mediate the effect of having received corporal punishment on moral judgment development. As Gagné et al. (2007) noted, those who felt they were not seriously harmed by corporal punishment were more likely to endorse it, whereas those who remembered the pain and negative emotions associated with corporal punishment disapproved of the practice. Knowing why participants make these decisions can help professionals to know how to approach the topic in a way that better convey the negative effects of corporal punishment on children. We must first understand why parents are making these decisions before we can try to convince them otherwise.

The present study was conducted in Southeastern United States, which is an important limitation of this study. Specifically, corporal punishment is often seen as common practice in this region. For example, Flynn (1994) found that 86.1% of southern participants favored corporal punishment, which was higher than any of the other regions. Had this study been conducted in another part of the country, the results may have been different. Participants from the Northeastern United States had the least favorable opinions toward corporal punishment. If this study had been completed in the northeast, it is fair to assume that the results could have been different. Future research should compare regional differences on corporal punishment, since there is a surprising lack of literature on the subject within psychological research.

Another limitation of the current study is the low moral reasoning of the sample overall. Lower moral reasoning scores on the DIT2 fall under the personal interest and the maintaining norms indices. As such, the participants in the present sample were more likely to make decisions based on what would benefit them the most or abiding by the law without questioning how just the law is. This finding could imply that the participants of the present study could have engaged in self-serving bias. Such a bias could have resulted in a deflation of their reports about their intention to use corporal punishment. For example, indicating that one would cause harm to their own child can make them seem less favorable. Therefore, many participants may not have been completely honest in their responses about whether they intended to use corporal punishment.

Another limitation is that there may also be a difference amongst participants who are already parents and those who have little to no plans regarding parenthood. The

questionnaires did not ask participants if they already have children or if they plan to. Those who are already parents and are currently facing decisions regarding corporal punishment may have different responses than those who have not started to think about what they will be like as a parent. Therefore, future studies should account for this by asking participants to state if they currently have children.

A surprising finding from the present study was the number of participants who indicated a likelihood of using corporal punishment as a parent. For example, a LUCPP score of 12 would reflect that a participant was slightly likely to use corporal punishment as a parent; the mean LUCPP score in the current study was 11.5. Though the majority of participants ( $n = 74$ ) scored between 6 and 11 on the scale, it is concerning that 49 participants scored 12 or above with the highest score reaching 40 (42 is the highest possible score). College students are often known for being more progressive in thought and willing to challenge the way things have historically been done. However, in this study, many of those who received corporal punishment indicated that they will likely use corporal punishment in the future with their own children, regardless of participant age. There are several possible explanations for this. First, perhaps those who received corporal punishment, as noted in Gagné et al., believed that they were not seriously harmed and therefore feel it is safe to use on their own children.

A second reason for endorsement of corporal punishment stems from a common response heard when discussing the present topic in various presentations of this study's data. On a number of occasions, presentation attendees made comments such as, "I was spanked and I'm fine." It can be postulated that it makes people uncomfortable to think that their parents could have done anything to cause them harm. So, rather than feel this

discomfort by questioning their parents' decisions, they accept their parents' methods as being reasonable and therefore endorse it as well. When people become parents, they can think back to what their parents did when it comes to decision making. It may be easier to accept one's parents' methods as the "right" way rather than question it.

In conclusion, the current study found corporal punishment to be a significant predictor of moral judgement development, but not empathy. Also, those who received corporal punishment in the past were found to be more likely to use corporal punishment in the future. However, likelihood of using corporal punishment in the future was not found to mediate moral judgement development even though inclusion of this variable resulted in the attenuation of the effect that receiving corporal punishment had on moral judgment development. Future studies should seek further explanations regarding *why* participants chose to use corporal punishment or not. Future research should also distinguish which participants are already parents, because their responses may differ from those who have not considered how they plan to discipline their future children. Overall, the present study elaborated on previous research while also contributing new insights into what future studies can do in order to learn more about the cyclical nature of corporal punishment and its long-lasting negative effects.

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d. Major (if you uncertain, please state “undeclared”):

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Ethnicity (*optional*):

\_\_\_\_\_ African American/Black

\_\_\_\_\_ American Indian or Alaska Native

\_\_\_\_\_ Asian

\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino

\_\_\_\_\_ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_\_ White

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### APENDIX B: DEFINING ISSUES TEST 2 (DIT2)

This questionnaire is concerned with how you define the issues in a social problem. Several stories about social problems will be described. After each story, there will be a list of questions. The questions that follow each story represent different issues that might be raised by the problem. In other words, the questions/issues raise different ways of judging what is important in making a decision about the social problem. You will be asked to rate and rank the questions in terms of how important each one seems to you. Please turn the page to begin.

## FAMINE

The small village in northern India has experienced shortages of food before, but this year's famine is worse than ever. Some families are even trying to sustain themselves by making soup from tree bark. Mustaq Singh's family is near starvation. He had heard that a rich man in his village has supplies of food stored away and is hoarding food while its price goes higher so that he can sell the food later at a huge profit. Mustaq was desperate and thinks about stealing some food from the rich man's warehouse. The small amount of food that he needs for his family probably wouldn't be missed.

What should Mustaq Singh do? Do you favor the action of taking the food? (*Mark one*)

\_\_\_ Should take the food \_\_\_ Can't Decide \_\_\_ Should not take the food

Please rate in the space beside each statement how important each particular item/question is in making a decision about what you should do one way or another.

1=Great 2=Much 3=Some 4=Little 5=No

1. Is Mustaq Singh courageous enough to risk getting caught stealing? \_\_\_\_
2. Isn't it only natural for a loving father to care so much for his family that he would steal? \_\_\_\_
3. Shouldn't the community's laws be upheld? \_\_\_\_
4. Does Mustaq Singh know a good recipe for preparing soup from tree bark? \_\_\_\_
5. Does the rich man have any legal right to store food when other people are starving? \_\_\_\_
6. Is the motive of Mustaq Singh to steal for himself or to steal for his family? \_\_\_\_
7. What values are going to be the basis for social cooperation? \_\_\_\_
8. Is the epitome of eating reconcilable with the culpability of stealing? \_\_\_\_
9. Does the rich man deserve to be robbed for being so greedy? \_\_\_\_
10. Isn't private property an institution to enable the rich to exploit the poor? \_\_\_\_
11. Would stealing bring about more total good for everybody concerned or not? \_\_\_\_
12. Are laws getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of society? \_\_\_\_

Now that you have rated these items, please rank them below from most important to fourth most important in making a decision about what Mustaq Singh should do.

\_\_\_\_\_ # of Most important item      \_\_\_\_\_ # of Third most important item  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of Second most important      \_\_\_\_\_ # of Fourth most important item

## REPORTER

Molly Dayton has been a news reporter for the *Gazette* newspaper for over a decade. Almost by accident, she learned that one of the candidates for Lieutenant Governor for her state, Grover Thompson, had been arrested for shop-lifting, 20 years earlier. Reporter

Dayton found out that early in his life, Candidate Thompson had undergone a confused period and done things he later regretted which were very out-of-character now. His shop-lifting had been a minor offense and charges had been dropped by the department store. Thompson has not only straightened himself out since then, but in addition built a distinguished record in helping many people and in leading community projects. Now, Reporter Dayton regards Thompson as the best candidate in the field and likely to go on to important leadership positions in the state. Reporter Dayton wonders whether or not she should write the story about Thompson's earlier troubles because in the upcoming close and heated election, she fears that such a news story would wreck Thompson's chance to win.

Do you favor the action of reporting the story? (*Mark one*)

\_\_\_ Should report the story \_\_\_ Can't Decide \_\_\_ Should not report the story

Please rate in the space beside each statement how important each particular item/question is in making a decision about what you should do one way or another.

1=Great 2=Much 3=Some 4=Little 5=No

1. Doesn't the public have a right to know all the facts about all the candidates for office?  
\_\_\_
2. Would publishing the story help Reporter Dayton's reputation for investigative reporting? \_\_\_
3. If Dayton doesn't publish the story wouldn't another reporter get the story anyway and get the credit for investigative reporting? \_\_\_
4. Since voting is such a joke anyway, does it make any difference what reporter Dayton does? \_\_\_
5. Hasn't Thompson shown in the past 20 years that he is a better person than his earlier days as a shop-lifter? \_\_\_
6. What would best serve society? \_\_\_
7. If the story is true, how can it be wrong to report it? \_\_\_
8. How could reporter Dayton be so cruel and heartless as to report the damaging story about candidate Thompson? \_\_\_
9. Does the right of 'habeas corpus' apply in this case? \_\_\_

10. Would the election process be more fair with or without reporting the story? \_\_\_\_
11. Should reporter Dayton treat all candidates for office in the same way by reporting everything she learns about them, good and bad? \_\_\_\_
12. Isn't it a reporter's duty to report all the news regardless of the circumstances? \_\_\_\_

Now that you have rated these items, please rank them below from most important to fourth most important in making a decision about what Reporter Dayton should do.

\_\_\_\_\_ # of Most important item \_\_\_\_\_ # of Third most important item  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of Second most important \_\_\_\_\_ # of Fourth most important item

## SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Grant was elected to the School Board District 190 and was chosen to be Chairman. The district was bitterly divided over the closing of one of the high schools. One of the high schools had to be closed for financial reasons, but there was no agreement over which school to close. During his election to the School Board, Mr. Grant had proposed a series of "Open Meetings" in which members of the community could voice their opinions. He hoped that dialogue would make the community realize the necessity of closing one high school. Also he hoped that through open discussion, the difficulty of the decision would be appreciated, and the community would ultimately support the school board decision. The first Open Meeting was a disaster. Passionate speeches dominated the microphones and threatened violence. The meeting barely closed without fist-fights. Later in the week, school board members received threatening phone calls. Mr. Grant wonders if he ought to call off the next Open Meeting.

Do you favor calling off the next Open Meeting? (*Mark one*)

\_\_\_ Should call off the next open meeting \_\_\_ Can't Decide \_\_\_ Should have the next open meeting

Please rate in the space beside each statement how important each particular item/question is in making a decision about what you should do one way or another.

1=Great 2=Much 3=Some 4=Little 5=No

1. Is Mr. Grant required by law to have Open Meetings on major school board decisions?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Would Mr. Grant be breaking his election campaign promises to the community by discontinuing the Open Meetings? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would the community be even angrier with Mr. Grant if he stopped the Open Meetings? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Would the change in plans prevent scientific assessment? \_\_\_\_\_
5. If the school board is threatened, does the chairman have the legal authority to protect the Board by making decisions in closed meetings? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Would the community regard Mr. Grant as a coward if he stopped the Open Meetings?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Does Mr. Grant have another procedure in mind for ensuring that divergent views are heard? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Does Mr. Grant have the authority to expel troublemakers from the meetings or prevent them from making long speeches? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are some people deliberately undermining the school board process by playing some sort of power game? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What effect would stopping the discussion have on the community's ability to handle controversial issues in the future? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Is the trouble coming from only a few hotheads, and is the community in general really fair-minded and democratic? \_\_\_\_\_
12. What is the likelihood that a good decision could be made without open discussion from the community? \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have rated these items, please rank them below from most important to fourth most important in making a decision about what Mr. Grant should do.

\_\_\_\_\_ # of Most important item \_\_\_\_\_ # of Third most important item

\_\_\_\_\_ # of Second most important \_\_\_\_\_ # of Fourth most important item

## CANCER

Mrs. Bennett is 62 years old, and in the last phases of colon cancer. She is in terrible pain and asks the doctor to give her more pain-killer medicine. The doctor has given her the maximum safe dose already and is reluctant to increase the dosage because it would probably hasten her death. In a clear and rational mental state, Mrs. Bennett says that she realizes this; but she wants to end her suffering even if it means ending her life.

Should the doctor give her an increased dosage?

Do you favor the action of giving more medicine? (*Mark one*)

Should give Mrs. Bennett an increased dosage to make her die

Can't Decide

Should not give her an increased dosage

Please rate in the space beside each statement how important each particular item/question is in making a decision about what you should do one way or another.

1=Great 2=Much 3=Some 4=Little 5=No

1. Isn't the doctor obligated by the same laws as everybody else if giving an overdose would be the same as killing her? \_\_\_\_
2. Wouldn't society be better off without so many laws about what doctors can and cannot do? \_\_\_\_
3. If Mrs. Bennett dies, would the doctor be legally responsible for malpractice? \_\_\_\_
4. Does the family of Mrs. Bennett agree that she should get more painkiller medicine? \_\_\_\_
5. Is the painkiller medicine an active heliotropic drug? \_\_\_\_



6. Does the state have the right to force continued existence on those who don't want to live? \_\_\_\_
7. Is helping to end another's life ever a responsible act of cooperation? \_\_\_\_
8. Would the doctor show more sympathy for Mrs. Bennett by giving the medicine or not? \_\_\_\_
9. Wouldn't the doctor feel guilty from giving Mrs. Bennett so much drug that she died? \_\_\_\_
10. Should only God decide when a person's life should end? \_\_\_\_
11. Shouldn't society protect everyone against being killed? \_\_\_\_
12. Where should society draw the line between protecting life and allowing someone to die if the person wants to? \_\_\_\_

Now that you have rated these items, please rank them below from most important to fourth most important in making a decision about what the doctor should do.

\_\_\_\_\_ # of Most important item    \_\_\_\_\_ # of Third most important item  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of Second most important    \_\_\_\_\_ # of Fourth most important item

## DEMONSTRATION

Political and economic instability in a South American country prompted the President of the United States to send troops to "police" the area. Students at many campuses in the U.S.A. have protested that the United States was using its military might for economic advantage. There is widespread suspicion that big oil multinational companies were pressuring the President to safeguard a cheap oil supply even if it means loss of life. Students at one campus took to the streets in demonstration, tying up traffic and stopping regular business in town. The president of the university demanded that the students stop their illegal demonstrations. Students then took over the college's administration building, completely paralyzing the college. Are the students right to demonstrate in these ways?

Do you favor the action of demonstrating in these ways?

\_\_\_\_ Should continue demonstrating in these ways

\_\_\_\_ Can't Decide

\_\_\_\_ Should not continue demonstrating in these ways

Please rate in the space beside each statement how important each particular item/question is in making a decision about what you should do one way or another.

1=Great 2=Much 3=Some 4=Little 5=No

1. Do the students have any right to take over property that doesn't belong to them? \_\_\_\_
2. Do the students realize that they might be arrested and fined, and even expelled from school? \_\_\_\_
3. Are the students serious about their cause or are they doing it just for fun? \_\_\_\_
4. If the university president is soft on students this time, will it lead to more disorder? \_\_\_\_
5. Will the public blame all students for the actions of a few demonstrators? \_\_\_\_
6. Are the authorities to blame by giving in to the greed of the multinational oil companies? \_\_\_\_
7. Why should a few people like the Presidents and business leaders have more power than ordinary people? \_\_\_\_
8. Does this student demonstration bring about more or less good in the long run to all people? \_\_\_\_
9. Can the students justify their civil disobedience? \_\_\_\_
10. Shouldn't the authorities be respected by students? \_\_\_\_
11. Is taking over a building consistent with principles of justice? \_\_\_\_
12. Isn't it everyone's duty to obey the law, whether one likes it or not? \_\_\_\_

Now that you have rated these items, please rank them below from most important to fourth most important in making a decision about what the students should do.

\_\_\_\_\_ # of Most important item \_\_\_\_\_ # of Third most important item  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of Second most important \_\_\_\_\_ # of Fourth most important item

APENDIX C: FUTURE PARENT PRACTICES INTERVIEW

This questionnaire asks questions about different ways of disciplining children and teaching them right from wrong and asks you to think about how you will discipline your child when you are a parent (or how you provide discipline if you are a parent). Please circle the number that best corresponds to how you would answer the following questions. Please only circle one number for each item.

<b>1. The following is a list of things that parents have told us they do when their children misbehave. In the future <u>when you are a parent</u>, how often do you <i>expect</i> to do these things when your child misbehaves? <u>If you already are a parent</u>, how often do you do these things when your child misbehaves?</b>							
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	About half the time	Often	Very often	Always
A) Raise your voice (scold or yell).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B) Get him/her to correct the problem or make up for his/her mistake.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C) Threaten to punish him/her	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(but not really punish him/her.)							
D) Give him/her a time out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E) Take away privileges (like TV, playing with friends).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F) Give him/her a spanking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G) Slap or hit your child (but not spanking).							
H) Discuss the problem with child or ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**2. In the future when you are a parent and your child *hit* another child, how likely is it that you would discipline your child in the following ways? If you already are a parent and your child *hit* another child, how likely is it that you would discipline your child in the following ways?**

	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Moderately likely	Quite likely	Very likely	Extremely likely
A) Raise your voice (scold or yell).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B) Get him/her to correct the problem or make up for his/her mistake.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C) Threaten to punish him/her (but not really punish him/her.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D) Give him/her a time out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E) Take away privileges (like TV, playing with friends).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F) Give him/her a spanking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G) Slap or hit your child (but not spanking).							
H) Discuss the problem with child or ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<b>3. <u>In the future when you are a parent</u> and your child <i>refused to do what you wanted him/her to do</i>, how likely is it that you would use each of the following discipline techniques? <u>If you already are a parent</u> and your child <i>refused to do what you wanted him/her to do</i>, how likely is it that you would use each of the following discipline techniques?</b>							
	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Moderately likely	Quite likely	Very likely	Extremely likely
A) Raise your voice (scold or yell).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B) Get him/her to correct the problem or make up for his/her mistake.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C) Threaten to punish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

him/her (but not really punish him/her.)							
D) Give him/her a time out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E) Take away privileges (like TV, playing with friends).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F) Give him/her a spanking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G) Slap or hit your child (but not spanking).							
H) Discuss the problem with child or ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

#### APPENDIX D: PARENT PRACTICES INTERVIEW

This questionnaire asks questions about different ways of disciplining children and teaching them right from wrong and asks you to think of how you were disciplined as a child. Please circle the number that best corresponds to you. Please only circle one number for each item.

<b>1. The following is a list of things that parents have told us they do when their children misbehave. How often did <u>your parents</u> do each of the following things when you misbehaved as a child?</b>							
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	About half the time	Often	Very often	Always
A) Raise their voice (scold or yell).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B) Get you to correct the problem or make up for your mistake.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C) Threaten to punish you (but not really punish you.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D) Give you a time out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E) Take away privileges (like TV, playing with friends).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F) Give you a spanking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G) Slap or hit you (but not spanking).							
H) Discuss the problem with you or ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<b>2. When you were a child, how likely is it that your parents would have disciplined you in the following ways if you hit another child?</b>							
	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Moderately likely	Quite likely	Very likely	Extremely likely
A) Raise their voice (scold or yell).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B) Get you to correct the problem or make up for your mistake.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C) Threaten to punish you (but not really punish you.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D) Give you a time out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E) Take away privileges (like TV, playing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



with friends).							
F) Give you a spanking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G) Slap or hit you (but not spanking).							
H) Discuss the problem with you or ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<b>3. <u>When you were a child, how likely is it your parent would use each of the following discipline techniques if you refused to do what your parent wanted you to do?</u></b>							
	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Moderately likely	Quite likely	Very likely	Extremely likely
A) Raise their voice (scold or yell).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B) Get you to correct the problem or make up for your mistake.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C) Threaten to punish you (but not really punish you.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D) Give you a time out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E) Take away privileges (like TV, playing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

with friends).							
F) Give you a spanking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G) Slap or hit you (but not spanking).							
H) Discuss the problem with you or ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## APPENDIX E: INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter on the answer sheet next to the item number. **READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING.** Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

### ANSWER SCALE:

A	B	C	D	E
DOES NOT				DESCRIBES ME
DESCRIBE ME				VERY
WELL				WELL

1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me.
2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.
3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.
4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.
5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.
6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease.
7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.
8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.
10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation.
11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me.
13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm.
14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.
15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's

arguments.

16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.
17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.
18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.
19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.
20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.
21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.
23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.
24. I tend to lose control during emergencies.
25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.
26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.
27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces.
28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.

## APPENDIX F: HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



*INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY*

DATE: February 16, 2018

TO: Alyssa Berry  
FROM: Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [1199492-1] Approaches to Parenting and Social Information Processing  
REFERENCE #: IRB 18-274  
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED  
APPROVAL DATE: February 16, 2018  
EXPIRATION DATE: February 16, 2019  
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of February 16, 2019.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Mooney at (270) 745-2129 or [irb@wku.edu](mailto:irb@wku.edu). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB's records.