

Reaction to Romance: Adolescent Female Depression

Reaction to Romance: Adolescent Female Depression

Scholarly Project of Excellence

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Abstract

This study examines the differences in levels of depression when female adolescents are involved in romantic relationships and when they are not. Furthermore, it will assess the ways in which they deal with conflict and provide subjects with tools to handle conflict more effectively. After a period of three to six months, the same participants will be given the same tests again to compare results. (The results will be included in this abstract after completion of the study.)

Chapter I

Introduction

Adolescent females seem to be mesmerized by the romantic idealism of “falling in love.” Even though the act of “falling in love” is difficult to define, most teenagers appear to understand it. LaGreca and Mackey (2007) define a romantic partner “as ‘someone you are physically attracted to, have had intimate contact with, you consider to be more than a friend, and go out on dates with’” (524). For example, on dates a couple might hand hold or kiss with someone she considers to be more than a friend. Apparently, there is a distinct difference between friendships and romantic relationships.

Clearly, love and romance are important parts of American culture, of which adolescents have developed ideological beliefs (Eder, Evans, & Simon 1992). Female adolescents are very interested in romantic relationships with the opposite sex. In addition romantic relationships play a significant role in the life of many adolescents and affect the development of later more significant relationships (Kipnis & Shulman 2001). In fact, by the age of 16 most adolescents report having had a romantic relationship (LaGreca & Mackey 2007). Being involved in romantic relationships may have positive and negative affects on the psychological well being of teenage girls. However, the question is whether the good outweighs the bad.

Statement of the Problem

The involvement in a romantic relationship has the potential to cause feelings of depression (La Greca & Mackey 2007). Depression is very influential on adolescents’ academic and interpersonal problems (Joyner & Udry 2000). In fact, depressive symptoms and major depressive episodes are reported by females between the ages of 13-

16 (Jose & Brown 2008). Romantic relationships require compromise and cooperation, which requires conflict resolution skills. Unfortunately, adolescent females report more interpersonal distress than boys and an inability to cope which threatens their psychological health (Brody, Lambidoni, & Vashchenko 2007).

The purpose of this research is to explore the affects of romantic relationships on female adolescents' psychological well-being and assist them in developing coping strategies to deal with depressive symptoms. Providing female adolescents with coping skills in dealing with interpersonal relationships will enable them to be involved in longer lasting relationships. Furthermore, it may increase their chance of being involved in higher quality interpersonal relationships, which will reduce stress and symptoms of depression in their adult life (Anbar, Levran, Turval-Mashiach, & Shulman 2006). On the other hand, equipping female teens with coping skills to deal with their interpersonal problems may increase their ability to focus on their academic goals, which will help to maintain or heighten their academic progress.

This paper consists of five chapters. Chapter two is a literature review that discusses adolescent relationship conceptualization, the affects of adolescent relationships, adolescent female stressors and depression, and coping styles and techniques. The methodology is discussed in chapter three along with the research question and hypothesis. Chapter three also includes the sample and instrument that will be used within the study. In addition, the data collection process will be discussed and analyzed, which will include the limitations of the study. Lastly, chapter three will include a hopeful timeline to conduct the proposed research. Chapter four will include the

results of the study. Chapter five will include an evaluation of the study and recommendations for future research with a conclusion.

Chapter II

Literature Review

This literature review is divided into themes which provide orienting information for the understanding of depressive symptoms as it relates to adolescent female romantic relationships, and the ways in which teenage girls cope with these feelings. In order to discuss romantic relationships as it relates to depression in adolescent females, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the way teens conceptualize their intimate relationships, which is the first theme discussed. Because adolescent relationships are so important in the lives of many teens, it is useful to discuss the significance of these relationships, which is the second theme in the literature review. On the other hand, there are many factors in the lives of adolescents that may cause stress or depressive symptoms. For this reason, it is important to have a thorough understanding of adolescent female stressors and depression. In addition, it is vital to discover normative trends of behavior in adolescent females as well as some of the ways that stress and depression affect female youth. The literature review will specifically address the topic of adolescent female stressors and depression as the third theme. It is possible that the way that young females cope with depressive symptoms may intensify or disintegrate future depressive symptoms, which is the reason for the discussion of coping styles and techniques as the last theme discussed in the literature review.

Adolescent Relationship Conceptualization

Dating and romantic relationships are a significant part of many adolescents' lives. In fact, young people have their own unique point of view of their romantic relationships with the opposite sex. Louisa Allen (2004) found that young adults have

classified relationships into categories such as one-night stands, short-term relationships, casual dating and “going out.” One night stands were defined as a single event that may or may not involve sexual activity; whereas short-term relationships went beyond a single event; and this type of relationship is outwardly recognized by others. On the other hand, casual dating is having sexual encounters with an individual at different intervals.

However, “going out” was defined as a committed relationship. It is important to have an understanding of these concepts in order to understand the ways in which adolescents deal with conflict in romantic relationships (Allen 2004).

There are a few other interesting ways that adolescents perceive their relationships. Kipnis and Shulman (2001) assert that fascination is at the initial stage of romantic relationships. However, intimacy and support are also important factors followed by friendship, social status, and learning about the opposite sex. According to Kipnis and Shulman (2001) romantic relationships go through a natural progression which consists of the initial infatuation state, affiliative romantic stage, intimate romantic relationship stage, followed by the committed romantic relationship, and finally leading to a committed relationship. In the initial stage, attraction and passion are most important. During the course of the second stage, males and females go out on group dates. At the intimate stage, the relationship transitions into a dyadic relationship. “Committed relationships are long-term, combine attraction, intimacy, and care and somewhat resemble marital relations” (Kipnis & Shulman, 2001, p. 247). Of course, the progression can end at any stage if conflict occurs and cannot be resolved.

The literature suggests that the study of adolescent romantic relationships is limited. The area of adolescent romance does not have a wealth of research available

because “early relationships with romantic partners are casual, less intense, and short lived” (Kipnis and Shuman, 2001, p. 337). Some believe that adolescents are more focused on self concept issues and friendships instead, while others assert the importance of adolescent relationships. We must consider the importance of relationships due to the fact that “...considerable time, energy and emotional investment may be spent on initiating and or sustaining them, as well as recovering from their demise” (Allen, 2004, p. 463). Even though many adolescent relationships are short-term, it is important to consider the positive and negative aspects of romantic relationships at the adolescent level.

There are many reasons that adolescents get involved in relationships and their expectations for romantic involvement vary. It is important to acknowledge that some adolescent relationships are, “driven by a desire to experience and engage in sexual activity,” which can be “attributed to the conceptualization of ‘adolescence’ as a time of physiological maturation which signals preparation for reproductive capability and an increased interest in sexual activities” (Allen, p. 471, 2004). In other words, adolescence is a time for young people to experiment, gain experience, and therefore learn about how relationships form and develop. On the other hand, Allen (2004) explains that adolescents do have some rather respectable reasons for being romantically involved such as to fulfill their need for security and companionship.

We must acknowledge that all of the eagerness to become romantically involved is not due to hormones going wild. Peer pressure also plays a major role in adolescents’ decisions in becoming romantically involved. Evans and Simon (1992) assert that adolescents’ ideas about love are shaped by cultural beliefs. In addition, they assert that

socialization is formed through peers. Furthermore, they explain that there are actually many rewards for being in a relationship for females. For instance, being in a relationship may enhance peer group status, validate attractiveness, increase popularity, and self image. However, more importantly, one of the major reasons for adolescent females being in a relationship is the unspoken norm in adolescent female culture that “one should always be in love” (Eder, Evans & Simon, 1992, p. 41). This norm becomes more apparent when relationships end, and young girls quickly become involved with someone new.

Fortunately, maturity levels may impact the quality of romantic relationships. Kipnis and Shulman (2001) assert that experience may affect the quality and expectations within romantic relationships. They also explain that as young people “...grow older and acquire more experience in various romantic relationships, they may be more likely to turn to a partner to fulfill these functions than when they were younger and less experienced” (Kipnis & Shulman, p. 339, 2001). Studies show that mutual rewards within relationships encourage future cooperation, and as young people mature they learn to rely on each other for rewards. Even though adolescents within relationships may begin to rely on each other more for benefits, their relationships are still not based on commitment or care giving. In fact, Kipnis & Shulman (2001) describe their relationships as a transitional stage in which friendships and physical attraction are integrated; and mature and committed relationships develop later in life.

Significance of Adolescent Relationships

While there are differences between adolescent and young adult relationships it is not right to assume that it is not as serious (Kipnis & Shulman 2001). Love is actually a

frequent topic of young female conversations (Eder, Evans, Simon 1992). Korobov & Thorne's (2007) study on the importance of mitigating the seriousness of romantic relationships found that one-third of stories produced in non-structured environments are about romantic relationships, which suggest the importance of romantic relationships. Korobov & Thorne (2007) point out that people do not need to mitigate things that are of little concern. Certainly, romantic conflict issues may develop into problems. "Problems are ostensibly important matters that must be formulated in believable ways so as to be taken seriously" (Korobov & Thorne, 2007, p. 973). Unfortunately, adults may appear to approach teenage relational conflict lightly because of its frequency, but it is important that adolescent relational difficulties are treated as serious matters. For this reason along with many others there is a need to look more closely at teenage relational issues.

Clearly, adolescent romantic relationships are important for young females. In fact, "females report a higher level of affective intensity with their romantic partners" (Kipnis & Shulman, 2001, p. 339). Furthermore, females place more value on the care and attachment involved in intimate relationships. Because of this, girls spend more time with their boyfriends and thinking about them than male adolescents. It is not surprising "that girls reported having a current romantic partner than did boys and girls reported more positive interactions with their romantic partner than boys" (LaGreca & Mackey, 2007, p. 526). Because of the importance placed on significant-other relationships, it is important that females are equipped with skills to deal with relational conflict in these types of relationships.

The involvement in a relationship or lack thereof may impact young females in many different ways. Joyner and Udry (2001) claim that female social status and identity

depends on success of a romantic relationship. Unfortunately, some adolescents measure their self worth based on what their partners think about them (Eder et. al 1992). Research shows that being involved in a relationship enhances peer group status, validates attractiveness, increases popularity and self image (Eder et. al 1992). Allen (2004) asserts that heterosexual relationships help adolescents find a sense of self as sexual and gendered people. More specifically Allen's (2004) study concluded that there is a relationship between sexuality and gender. For instance, a participant of the study explained that being in a sexual relationship made her feel more like a woman. On the other hand, the involvement in a relationship has a major affect on the elements within the self. "Involvement in a close relationship may expand the contents of the self, verify the self, enhance the positivist of the self, and in some instances, even deflate the self" (Campbell, Davis & Green, 2007, p.243). According to this research, relationships have major affects on adolescents' self esteem as well as identity.

Romantic relationships can have a major impact on self-concept, which is the way that people see themselves (Campbell, Davis & Green 2007). Research shows that reflecting on past relationships causes people to feel more distant from their ideal self. The ideal self is the way that people hope and aspire to become. Becoming distant from one's ideal self, may cause depression. In fact, people with lower self-esteem fall in love more intensely and may cause a state of mania or joy that is paired with idealization of the partner. On the other hand, romantic relationships can be beneficial for people with higher self-esteem (Campbell et. al 2007).

Allen (2004) points out that dating relationships begin to develop around 14 to 15 years of age and take on increasing importance during adolescence. In addition,

adolescent relationships intensify over time and become increasingly more important. We must consider that “[p]ositive interactions with a romantic partner might provide an important source of emotional support and thereby contribute to adolescents’ mental health” (Allen, 2004, p. 524). On the other hand, negative contact with a romantic partner may contribute feelings of stress, which may lead to depression.

Social relationships are very important to adolescents and are one of the major ways that adolescents communicate. Research shows that adolescents spend a great deal of time discussing romantic relationships. Unfortunately, a substantial amount of these conversations have to do with romantic problems (Korobov & Thorne 2007). On the other hand, it is important to recognize that girls understand that “romantic relationships should be important, but not everything in life” (Eder et. al., 1992, p. 33). Research shows that girls who are perceived as “boy crazy,” meaning having a preoccupation with boys, are criticized.

Adolescent Female Stressors and Depression

Adolescence is a time in which many changes take place. Joyner and Udry (2000) explain that “[a]dolescence is a period during which levels of depression increase, especially for females” (p. 369). With this in mind, it is important to consider that this crucial period in human life is also a time when the majority of individuals form romantic relationships. Studies show that adolescents are more likely to attribute feelings of depression to romantic relationships rather than issues with friends and family. Unfortunately, “romantic relationships are associated with feelings of depression, especially among adolescent girls... and other “negative feelings such as anxiety, anger, and jealousy” (La Greca & Mackey, 2007, p. 522). Females are clearly vulnerable to

depression which is why it is important to study their conflict management styles to decrease the risks and stressors that romantic relationships cause.

Adolescents have many stressful experiences that are unrelated to romantic relationships, which may be controllable or uncontrollable. Income level would be considered an uncontrollable stressor. "Poverty brings with it a range of economic stressors" (Carleton, et.al., 2007, pg. 1052). In fact, Landis (2007) points out that there is a substantial amount of evidence which demonstrates that low-income urban youth are at higher risk for stressful life experiences. Furthermore, they are more likely to suffer physical abuse, witness divorce or separation and be exposed to violence. On the other hand, fighting with peers would be a controllable stressor for adolescents. Since there are so many uncontrollable stressors that may exist in the life a teenager, there is a need for young people to be taught ways to deal with stressors in their life in which they can control.

Clearly a substantial amount of stress rather controllable or not may lead to depression. Depression is an emotion that we want to monitor in adults and especially at its onset in adolescence. This mental health disorder has such a strong affect on many areas of lives. Research shows that depression increases adolescents' chances of experiencing academic and interpersonal problems, which creates more depression and an ongoing cycle of depression (Joyner & Udry 2000). Typically, female adolescents' self reported depression scores peak between the ages of 15 to 16 (Brown & Jose 2008). In fact, studies show that early adolescence is a time of increased risk for depressive symptoms and major depressive episodes for females (Brown & Jose 2008). Furthermore, by late adolescence females are at an even higher risk for developing depression (Brown

& Jose 2008). Sadly enough, young females respond to romantic relationships with a greater increase in depression (Joyner & Udry 2000). Actually, females have a “greater vulnerability to romantic involvement” which is why it is extremely important to explore possible coping strategies for dealing with interpersonal conflict (Joyner & Udry, 2000, pg. 388).

It is important to examine the affects of depression on adolescent females. Joyner and Udry (2000) explain that depression is an indicator of well being and it influences self esteem. They further explain that adolescents are more likely to associate depressive symptoms to romantic relationships rather than to school or family issues (Joyner & Udry 2000). Unfortunately, involved young females experience an increase of depression simply because of the deterioration of their parental relationships (Joyner & Udry 2000). Parents are often a source of support for teenagers, “it is thought to be of importance that a parent is available, loving, responsive, and helpful” (de Wilde et. al., 2003, pg. 186). In fact, “if the parent is unable to meet the requirements for comfort or protection, normal development might be impeded”(de Wilde et. al., 2003, pg. 186). Involvement within romantic relationship presents a risk to the existing relationships between parents due to arguments in their choice of partner or the amount of time they spend at home (Joyner & Udry 2000). Not to mention the conflict that romantic involvement could cause between friends who may not be romantically involved or who may feel a sense of disloyalty (Joyner & Udry 2000).

Even though some adolescents do not seem to realize it, they will eventually need the support of parents and friends when a break up occurs. “Breaking up with a partner is considered to be especially stressful” (Joyner & Udry, 2000, pg. 371). Joyner & Udry

(2000) explain that depending on how much adolescents determine their self worth through the judgment of their romantic partner, there is a possibility of feeling undesirable to the opposite sex which is a symptom of low self esteem. On the other hand, after experiencing a break-up teens may become preoccupied with negative thoughts. As a result, the young females may not be as focused on academics and receive lower grades.

Hopefully, teenage girls recover well from stressful events such as break-ups with a romantic partner. Even though they may have negative thoughts, the experience may be a source of growth. People tend to avoid unpleasant situations so, so reflecting back on a break-up may have prevent adolescent girls from being involved in similar situations in the future. As a result of the break-up, some of the idealism about romantic relationships that adolescent girls may have had prior to the relational break-up may become more realistic. It is always helpful to have realistic expectations when entering into romantic relationships (Joyner & Udry 2000).

Conflict and Coping Styles

Disagreements are bound to occur even with using all the preventive measures that are available. In order to understand this more clearly it is important to point out that “conflict is any situation in which you perceive another person might frustrate the satisfaction of some concern, need, want, or desire of yours” (Berko, Wolkin, & Wolkin, 2006, p. 186). With this in mind, conflict can be caused for many different reasons. For instance, a situation in which a girl’s boyfriend desires her to do something that she does not want to do, but because she cares about him she considers it may cause a conflict. This situation is common with youth today and it causes unnecessary stress. Similarly, if

a girl's boyfriend wants her to spend more time than she has available it may cause conflict within the relationship and even incite disagreements which involve the girl's parents. On the other hand, many conflicts are caused by unmet expectations (Berko et al. 2006). For instance, a teenage girl may expect flowers for Valentine's Day and when she does not receive them there may be a conflict.

Conflict will occur regardless of how well people get along, but there are choices in how to deal with it when it happens. In fact, researchers assert that "[b]y late adolescents, individuals should possess general knowledge about the meaning of relationship conflict" (Kobielski, Martin & Martin, 2008, pg. 325). During mid to late adolescence, conflict becomes more frequent, and intimacy becomes more central to romantic relationships. "The mere presence of a conflict, therefore, reveals less about the quality of a relationship than does the way in which the conflict is handled (Anbar, Levran Tuval-Mashiach, & Shulman, 2006, pg. 576). On the other hand, even though disagreements are not always threatening to a relationship, conflict can provoke relational difficulties and lead to physical and or emotional abuse. In fact, approximately 35-40 % of adolescents become physically or emotionally abused due to relational difficulties (Korobov & Thorne 2007). For this reason, there is a need for education on conflict resolution of adolescents.

Because of the harsh reality of the negative results of conflict, it is important to examine the ways in which adolescents deal with it. "Coping can be defined as a set of cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological processes that are consciously and or unconsciously used to deal with stress" (Brody, Lambidoni, Vashchenko, 2007, pg. 246). Research suggests that there are four basic types of coping which include: the cognitive

approach which utilizes logic, behavioral approach that involves an action plan, and behavioral avoidance which may involve acting out. Fortunately, “adolescent girls have particular strengths in coping with peer relationships (Brody et. al., 2007, pg. 253). In fact, Goodwin (2006) explains that female youth are more likely to pray, go for a walk, talk to someone or listen to music which are positive coping behaviors. On the other hand, sometimes adolescent females do not use positive coping behaviors. Unfortunately, some girls use rumination which is dwelling on a problem for extended periods of time by talking or writing about it (Brown & Jose 2008). In fact, experts say that gender difference in depression is due to greater stress and greater rumination for girls in early adolescence, and the “use of rumination as a coping strategy will extend and intensify their depressed mood regardless of gender” (Brown & Jose, 2008, pg. 181).

There is hope yet that in “latter adolescence the conflict management mode is probably more complex as it consists of constructive encounters that do not conceal existing difficulties or reservations and this ability is associated with relationship satisfaction” (Anbar et. al., 2006, pg. 577). Older adolescents with higher levels of conflict management, which means they acknowledge their disagreements and negotiate honestly are involved in more stable relationships for longer periods of time (Anbar et. al. 2006). In other words, they compromise which can be defined as allowing partners to protect their own needs while simultaneously being attentive to the needs of their partner and negotiating both sides. Research suggests that couples who lack conflict management skills will not be able to maintain their relationships beyond a period of three months (Anbar et. al. 2006). For this reason, it is important to continue research in conflict

management skills because there is a possible benefit of adolescents being less depressed and developing or maintaining longer-lasting relationships.

Chapter III

Methodology

Research Question and Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study is that there will be a difference in levels of depression between adolescent females involved in relationship and teenage females who are not involved in a relationship. Adolescent girls involved in a relationship will have more symptoms of depression. Adolescents who become romantically during the course of the study will experience a greater increase in depression than their peers who do not. Furthermore, some teenage females will have difficulty coping with their depressive symptoms. After utilizing coping techniques, the participants will have less symptoms of depression.

Research Design

Prospective participants will receive a parental consent form. In addition, they will also receive a description of the study, written documentation that their participation is completely voluntary, and that the data collected will be confidential. Parents will be instructed to contact school administration for any questions about the study. The investigator will coordinate with the school counselor and individual teachers to collect data necessary for the study at the end of a grading period. Initially, the participants will be given a Beck Depression Inventory, a questionnaire and a conflict scale. Information about the students past romantic relationships and how they deal with conflict, school performance, delinquency, and indulgence of drugs and alcohol will be collected through the questionnaire. All students will receive written and verbal information on conflict management through a focus group on ways that adolescent females deal with conflict.

At the start of the next grading period the students will be given the Beck Depression Inventory and the conflict scale. The results will be compared.

Sample

The participants will be selected from two to three classrooms at a suburban high school. The study will consist of approximately twenty students who are racially diverse. Students will be considered low-income if they are eligible for the free/reduced school lunch program. The specific demographic information and details about the school will be provided upon completion of this study.

Instruments

The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) retains a 21-item format with four options under each item ranging from not present (0) to severe. The inventory will assess items such as: agitation, worthlessness, loss of energy, concentration difficulty, sadness, pessimism, past failure, loss of pleasure, guilty feelings, self-dislike, self-criticalness, indecisiveness, punishment feelings, suicidal thoughts or wishes, crying, worthlessness, loss of energy, tiredness or fatigue, changes in sleeping pattern, changes in appetite, and loss of interest in sex. (Aaron et.al., 1996).

The students will complete a questionnaire to assess teenage females concerns and ways of coping with depression. The survey will include questions requesting specific demographic information, such as age, grade, and race/ethnicity (Hayes & Morgan, 2005). The questions will vary from closed, “yes” or “no” type of questions to likert-scale type questions. The questions will gather information about the worries and concerns of female youth as well as if they think that they need help in coping.

The female participants will also complete an adolescent coping scale to assess their current coping behavior. The short form of this assessment tool, which the manual includes evidence of its reliability and validity will be used instead of the longer 80 item form. This form will assess 18 distinct coping strategies. Factors such as “Reference to Others,” “Non-Productive Coping” and “Solving the Problem” are included in the survey (Hayes & Morgan, 2005, p.112).

Data Collection

In order to compare results and track the relationship status of each subject, the names of the participants will be collected. At the time that students, take the initial questionnaire they will be given the opportunity to choose a nickname to avoid issues with confidentiality. If the girls choose this option, the actual names of the students will not be used on any other subsequent questionnaires. Participants will be recruited from psychology and sociology classes. Students will receive a raffle entry to win a small prize for their participation. The BDI, questionnaire, and coping scales will be administered initially. After a period of three to six months, the BDI and coping scales will be administered again and results will be compared. Further details will be provided at the time the research project is implemented.

Data Analysis

Upon completion of this study, the data will be analyzed.

Limitations

This study relies on self-analysis, which will require participants to analyze themselves along with the questions thoroughly and accurately. There is the risk that

students will not carefully consider and answer each question. In addition, there is the chance that students will not fully understand the question.

The study does not specify or take into account the students who are in relationships with a party of the same sex. “Studies suggest that romantic relationships are stressful for adolescents who have no attraction to the opposite sex. Presumably, these adolescents end up in relationships for symbolic reasons” (Joyner & Udry, 2000, p. 371). There is much to be said about adolescents who enter into relationships to elevate their social status or demonstrate their maturity. This study focuses on heterosexual youth and cannot be generalized to sexual minority youth.

Adolescents between the ages of 15-19 greatly differ in physical and mental maturity. The measurements of physical maturity used may not explain the effects of romantic involvement variables.

Since parental consent forms will be used, there is a chance that the sample used be more higher functioning individuals and the study must take into account that there may be other variables that may cause the higher levels of depression such as history of behavior problems, abusive home environment, and overall mental health. Furthermore, some participants may be more vulnerable to stress than others, which is not considered in the study. It may also be helpful to incorporate input from parents, friends, teachers, and others who may be have significant contact with individual subjects.

There is also the issue of external validity due to using a smaller sample size. Furthermore, the effect of people who do not respond, choose not be participate being inaccessible or dropping out the study.

Hopeful Timeline

This study will occur over a period of approximately three to six months.

Chapter IV

Results

Upon completion of this study, the results will be provided in this chapter.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Discussion

Upon completion of this study, final thoughts will be discussed.

Implications for Future Research

The study does not consider cultural differences that can affect that way in which students answer questions. Further research may be done on the differences between how individuals with different backgrounds affect their attitudes toward relationships and conflict management styles. Upon completion of this study, more implications for future research will be discussed.

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Appendix

AUTHORIZATION FOR A MINOR TO SERVE AS A SUBJECT IN RESEARCH

I authorize Detra D. Wilson, graduate student, to use my child as a subject in the research investigation entitled: Reaction to Romance: Adolescent Female Depression.

The nature and general purpose of the research procedure and the known risks are as follows:

General Purpose of the Research Procedure

The purpose of this research is to explore the affects of romantic relationships on female adolescents' psychological well-being and assist them in developing coping strategies to deal with depressing symptoms.

Known Risks

The study has very minimal risks. Participants may experience sadness in reflecting on past negative relationship experiences.

I understand that _____ Will be given a preservice explanation of the
(name of minor)
research and that she may decline to serve. Further, I understand that she may terminate her service in this research at any time she so desires.

I understand also that is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and I believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and the potential but unknown risks.

I agree further to indemnify and hold harmless the University of Dayton and its agents and employees from any and all liability, actions, or causes of actions that may accrue to the subject minor as a result of her activities for which this consent is granted.

Witness _____

Signed _____
(parent or guardian)

Date _____

To be retained by researcher.