Parent-child relationship quality: How does it affect responses to parental social control?

Larissa A. Kraft & Kathleen S. Wilson

Methods

Participants
- Parents (N=50; 44 mothers & 6 fathers) reported on:
  - 21 boys and 29 girls
  - Average age of children = 6.9 years

Procedures
- Two online surveys completed one week apart

Measures
- SC Use: Frequency of each tactic (Wilson & Spink, 2010)
  - Positive – Encourage (4 items)
  - Collaborative – Offer to be active with (3 items)
  - Negative – Nag the child (2 items)
  - 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Very often)

Affective Response: (Lewis & Butterfield, 1999)
- How did your child’s behavior change: increase, decrease, same
  - -7 (Very much decrease) to +7 (Very much increase)

Results Summary

Discussion

Strengths
- Considered types of SC separately as responses to each type of SC are unique
- Congruence between use and the respective behavior and affect measures

Limitations
- Parent-report based on parents’ perspective only
- Retrospective recall of behavior change and affect
- Too few parents reported using negative SC to explore how relationship quality impacted behavior and affect

Future Directions
- Follow parents over time as they exert social control to see how behavior changes
- Use a dyadic approach to assess both parent and child perspectives